DEDICATION

We dedicate this book to the memory of our mother who sacrificed so much so that we would have a healthy and happy childhood, and who made every attempt to capture as many of these happy moments as possible on film. We also wish to acknowledge the impact her interest in and dedication to family history served as the groundwork for this publication.

Janet Elizabeth (Beth), Samuel Murray (Sam), Duncan Robert (Dunc), Elinor Mae (Elinor), Doris Annabelle (Doris), Richard Keith (Richard), Donald Findlay (Don), and Clifford John Acton (Cliff).

July 2014

FOREWORD

I was privileged to become the custodian of Mother's family photo album after she and Father died. Most of these photos were taken by her, although some pre-date her entry into the Acton family. Some of them go back to as early as 1900, so I am uncertain who the photographer(s) may have been. Her album had a few gaps in it as she gave some of her prints to her children. Fortunately, Beth, Sam, Elinor and others held these photos in high regard so that none were lost, and willingly permitted me to bring Mother's collection back together. Elinor may have been the first of my brothers and sisters to have a camera. She obviously shared Mother's enthusiasm for family photos and has shared many of these photos with me. I also wish to thank Pat Acton, Heather Devine, Eileen Merkley, Marg Taylor, Marjorie Mikasen, several members of the Hawkins family, Ron McKinnon and many others for sharing their photos of the larger Acton and McKinnon families.

At a family reunion at Clifford's in 2001 we decided that each of us should document their life story, especially the early years. Beth followed through within a year or so. This became the foundation of a photo album "Betty Heath - My Prairie Roots" that I prepared for her in July 2014 in hope that it would assist in her recovery from hip surgery. Once completed, I felt the need to share these photos and other historical information that I have collected over the years with others. At one point I had considered preparing a history of The Farm, from its beginnings in the 1880s to the present. However, broadening the focus of Beth's life on The Farm to the lives of all eight of us, and Mother and Dad, of course, seemed to be a more realistic start.

A first draft of Ten on Ten was completed and distributed to my brothers and sisters in 2014. It was incomplete in many ways as it asked many questions and requested additional contributions. Not all of the questions have been answered and nor have all of the stories been told. It is my desire, however, to publish what we have at this point in time. Do not be surprised to encounter duplication and contradiction in some stories as each of us tried to recall events of more than sixty years ago. Finally, do not hesitate to draw any technical errors related to historical facts to my attention as it is my wish to have historical information as accurate as possible.

Donald Acton
March 2016
4th Printing September 2016

PART 1: EARLY HISTORY
Homesteading Ten

Homestead. Samuel Acton homesteaded the southeast quarter of section 10 in township 19, range 9, west of the 2nd meridian in 1883. Samuel Acton, or 'Grandpa', as he often will be referred to in this document obtained entry to this homestead on May 23 of that year. His 'cousin' John Francis (Jack) Hartell obtained entry to his homestead on the NE quarter of the same section a few days later, on 29 May of 1883. Both of them proceeded to erect a house on their homesteads. Jack Hartell apparently completed his by July of that year, and Grandpa in September. Jack Hartell broke seven acres in the first summer, and Grandpa five acres. Both reported having one yoke of oxen at this time. Neither of them remained on their homesteads during the winter of 1883-84. Jack Hartell worked in the C.P.R. Land Office in Winnipeg in this and successive winters. Grandpa reports working as a carpenter in Winnipeg, Regina, Indian Head, Fort Qu'Appelle and neighbourhood when he was not on his homestead. More than likely he returned to Winnipeg in the winter of 1883-84.

The Homestead Act

As initially stipulated in the Dominion Lands Act of 1872, title to a 160-acre western homestead could be issued to any male over the age of 24. Before title to a homestead was granted by the Crown, however, the homesteader had to meet certain conditions of residency and cultivation for a fixed period of time. Although the details varied as government policy evolved, the homesteader was generally given three years to make some improvements to the land before the Crown would award a Land Patent on the grant. "Improvements" generally meant that the applicant resided on the land for at least a three-year period (and for at least six months in each of those years), built a residence, and broke (depending on the time period) from 15 to 50 acres of land and planted another 10 to 30 acres of crops. These conditions were necessary to keep land speculation to a minimum and to discourage all but genuine settlers from obtaining a homestead. Failure to comply with any of the regulations resulted in the loss of the homestead and its re-opening to other settlers. Until 1889, homesteaders could also "pre-empt" - that is, purchase an adjacent quarter-section homestead at a guaranteed low price when they received title to their free grant.

Grandpa and Jack Hartell returned to their homesteads about 1 April of 1884. Each of them broke 20 acres that summer, growing some crop on the land that they broke the previous year. Jack Hartell left for Winnipeg on 15 October of 1884 and did not return until 20 May 1885. On the contrary, Grandpa remained on his homestead through the winter of 1884-85 and into the spring of 1885. After getting his crop seeded he left for Fort Qu'Appelle to do transfer work as part of the Riel Rebellion. He returned once again for the fall and winter of 1885-86. Jack Hartell spent the winter of 1885-86 in Winnipeg. Grandpa broke seven acres and Jack Hartell broke eight acres in the summer of 1885, each of them growing crops on land previously broken. They still used oxen for this purpose.

Jack Hartell broke an additional four acres and cropped 29 acres in the summer of 1886. He still had one yoke of oxen, but also had three horses, seven cows and some chickens. He had a 10 by 12 foot house at this time and 30 acres of fencing, a stable and a granary. He filed for patent on his homestead, the NE quarter of Section 10 and for his pre-emption quarter on the NW quarter of Section 10 on 10 November of that year. He was successful in his application for patent on his homestead quarter. However, in a letter from the Dominion Land Office on 10 October, 1888, John Hartell was informed that in default of payment in the manner prescribed by the form accompanying C.O. Circular letter dated 5 March 1888 the pre-emption entry of John Hartell for the North West quarter of Section 10, Tp. 19, Range 9 west of the 2nd Meridian was cancelled.

It has been mentioned that both Jack Hartell and Grandpa built houses on their homesteads in 1883. Hartell's application for patent in 1886, indicates that he may have lived in a tent until his 10x12ft house on NE10 was completed in July. Grandpa's housing is much more uncertain. His application for patent on May 24, 1894 suggests that he was "living upon my own homestead" in the summer of 1883 and "from 4 April 1884 to July 1886, from September 1886 to July of 1887, from August 1887 to June 1888, from 1 August 1888 to May 1889, from 22 July 1889 to July 1891 living upon NE10 19 9 W2nd". He follows this with "From July 1891 to present time living on my own homestead". In a statement in support of Grandpa's application, William Thomson stated that he knew Grandpa from the spring of 1885, that his house was built when he first knew him, and that he was living upon the NE1/4 10-19-9-W2nd when he first knew him. In a similar statement, John Hartell indicated that he knew Grandpa since the year 1881. He also stated that Grandpa lived on his homestead from May to September of 1883 but lived on NE 1/4 10-19-9-W2nd, discontinuously, from 4 April 1884 to July 1891. There is some support to this but also some contradictions. Mother's family history suggests Grandpa homesteaded the NW10 and Hartell the NE10. It is unlikely Grandpa ever claimed NW10 but there may have been some understanding between him and Hartell that he would do so as, apparently, Grandpa wanted to live closer to the road that ran on the west side of section 10. The location of his shack near this road and the skeleton of an ox that was strangled nearby was shown to Duncan by his father many years later. More uncertainty arises when Grandpa states in his application document that he built houses on his homestead in 1883, 1885 and 1891. Was he referring to some further development of his original shack in 1885 or was this at a second site, perhaps on NE10? However, G.P. Campbell mentions that Sam Acton and John Hartell "batched together". It may be concluded that Grandpa had a sod shack near the road on NW10. However, it is uncertain just how long he lived in it. It is also uncertain whether he built another shack, on NE10 or spent most of his time, until 1891 when he was married, living with Hartell. The wording of William Thomson's support statement, above, could be interpreted to support the contention that he had built a house (without saying where it was located) but that he was living with Hartell in 1885, when he first knew him.

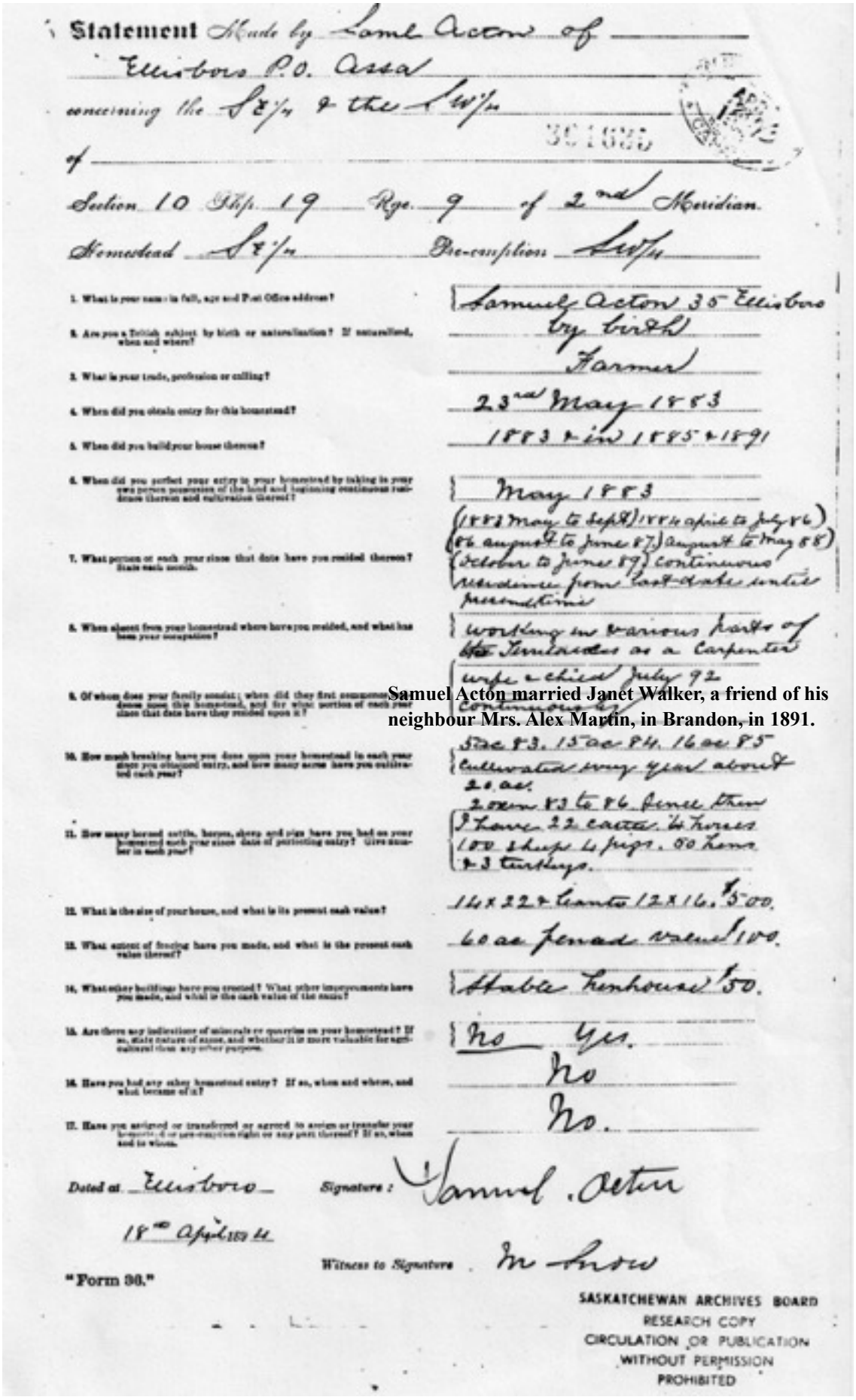
Their also is some uncertainty surrounding the 1891 house built on SE10. The patent application states this house to be "log house 14x22 and frame kitchen 12x16." The application document also indicates they began living in this house in July 1891. It must be remembered that Grandpa and Granny did not marry until August 1891. Mother's accounts tells us Granny had some of her treasured dishes broken when she moved to her new house following her marriage. And how Mrs. Thomson consoled her saying it is good luck to break a dish when you move into a new house. Also, G.P. Campbell indicated that the Actons lived in the Martin home for perhaps a year or two. It seems reasonable to suggest that there were no suitable living quarters on section 10 for Granny and Grandpa after their marriage so they chose to live with the Martins. They likely did not move into their new home on SE10 until 1892.

Grandpa received patent for his homestead quarter, the SE10, on 2 March 1899 and his pre-emption quarter, the SW of 10, in July 1907. He did not pay the fee for his homestead quarter until "6-9-98". Homesteaders usually received patent within a year of application. It took five years from the time of application before Grandpa was granted his patent. Was it because he had not paid the fee or was further clarification on how he

'proved up' his homestead required before patent was granted?.

In summary, it is fairly certain he had a shack, probably a sod house, on NW10. How much, and for how long, he lived in it is uncertain. It is also uncertain whether he built a house on NE10 or lived with Hartell in his house. Grandpa probably began building his log house with a kitchen lean-to, and began living with the Martins when Hartell was married in the spring of 1891.

Grandpa's farming activities in the first three years have been highlighted, above. His application for patent in 1894 provides considerable



Statement Made by Samuel Acton of
Ellisboro P.O. Assa
concerning the S½ & the SW¼
of
Section 10 Twp. 19 Rge. 9 of 2nd Meridian.
Homestead S½ Pre-emption SW¼

1. What is your name in full, age and Post Office address? — Samuel Acton 35 Ellisboro
2. Are you a British subject by birth or naturalization? If naturalized, when and where? — by birth
3. What is your trade, profession or calling? — Farmer
4. When did you obtain entry for this homestead? — 23rd May 1883
5. When did you build your house thereon? — 1883 & in 1885 & 1891
6. When did you perfect your entry by your homestead by taking in your own person possession of the land and beginning continuous residence thereon and cultivation thereof? — May 1883
7. What portion of each year since that date have you resided thereon? State each month. — (1883 May to Sept) 1884 April to July 86) (86 August to June 87) August to May 88) (October to June 89) continuous residence from last date until present time
8. When absent from your homestead where have you resided, and what has been your occupation? — working in various parts of the Territories as a Carpenter
9. Of whom does your family consist; when did they first commence to reside upon this homestead, and for what portion of each year since that date have they resided upon it? — wife & child July 92 Continuous
10. How much breaking have you done upon your homestead in each year since you obtained entry, and how many acres have you cultivated each year? — 5 ac 83. 15 ac 84. 16 ac 85 Cultivated every year about 20 ac. 20 acres 83 to 86 since then
11. How many horned cattle, horses, sheep and pigs have you had on your homestead each year since date of perfecting entry? Give number in each year? — I have 22 cattle 4 horses 100 sheep 4 pigs. 80 hens & 3 turkeys.
12. What is the size of your house, and what is its present cash value? — 14 x 22 & lean to 12 x 16. $300.
13. What extent of fencing have you made, and what is the present cash value thereof? — 60 ac fenced value $100.
14. What other buildings have you erected? What other improvements have you made, and what is the cash value of the same? — Stable Henhouse $50.
15. Are there any indications of minerals or quarries on your homestead? If so, state nature of same, and whether it is more valuable for agricultural than any other purpose. — No Yes.
16. Have you had any other homestead entry? If so, when and where, and what became of it? — No
17. Have you assigned or transferred or agreed to assign or transfer your homestead, or pre-emption right or any part thereof? If so, when and to whom. — No.

Dated at Ellisboro — Signature: Samuel Acton
18th April 1894
Witness to Signature: M Snow

"Form 30."

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Samuel Acton married Janet Walker, a friend of his neighbour Mrs. Alex Martin, in Brandon, in 1891.

insight into these activities from 1886 to 1894. Grandpa did not appear to do any further breaking in 1886, but cropped his previously broken 32 acres that summer. He did not break any additional land in 1887 and cultivated only 20 acres. He was back up to 32 acres cultivated in 1888, dropping again to 20 acres in 1889 and to 10 acres in 1890 (the year he built the Rosewood School). His cultivated acreage increased to 32, again, in 1891 but dropped to 25 in 1892 and 20 in each of 1893 (the year he helped build the cheese factory on the Perley Farm at Wolseley) and 1894. He had two horses in 1887, three in 1888 and six from 1889 to 1892, but only three in 1893 and 1894. Cattle numbers dropped from two in 1887 to one in 1888. They increased gradually to 23 in 1894. Sheep numbers rose from 21 in 1887 to 125 in 1894. He had only one or two pigs from 1887 to 1889, increasing to eight in 1894.

Samuel Acton married Janet Walker, a friend of his neighbour Mrs. Alex Martin, in Brandon, in 1891.

John Hartell and the North Half of Ten

On the advice of a land surveyor they met in Winnipeg, John Hartell and Grandpa laid claim to homesteads on section 10. As mentioned above, Grandpa chose the SE 1/4 as his homestead with pre-emption on the SW 1/4. John Hartell chose the NE for his homestead and the NW as his pre-emption quarter. He built a 10x12ft house and had about 50 acres under cultivation by 1886. He spent summer months on the farm and worked in the C.P.R. Land Office in Winnipeg in the winter. Hartell applied for patent to his homestead in 1886.

G.P. Campbell in 1925 and Angelina Campbell in her book “Man! Man! Just Look At That Land” referred to Samuel Acton and John Hartell as cousins. Mother mentioned that “John Hartell had been raised as a foster child of Sam Acton’s uncle”. Later, Dad confirmed that ‘Jack’ Hartell was Grandpa’s cousin, but was uncertain of the exact relationship. He reiterated this in a taped interview with Verna Lane and Eileen Merkley in 1982. Dad also remarked that ‘Jack’ received sums of money and gifts of livestock from one of his Dad’s uncles living in England. He also indicated that, after a few years on the original homestead, ‘Jack’ wanted to get into ranching. Dad said he started in the Qu’ Appelle Valley, near the Hyde Hill, later moved to Turner Valley, and that oil was struck on his land.

Cousins

“Father came west in '81. This Jack Hartell, I understand Jack was a cousin of my father's and he came to Rockingham, not too long before, from England. So they came west in '81 and he's supposed to be the one that got the Acton money. Just how it came about. Guess I often wonder about whether this Jack Hartell was a son of William Acton that went ..... William stayed in this country a short time and then went back to England . . . as in 1857.” - **Richard A.Acton on tape by Verna Lane, 1982.**

A genealogical search of the Hartell family could not determine a relationship between John Hartell and the Acton family. There is some circumstantial evidence, however, to support Dad's contention that Grandpa and 'Jack' Hartell were cousins (sometimes he described it as "some kind of a cousin"). Francis John Hartell was born at Lapley, Staffordshire in 1869, the fourth of nine children of Charles and Anna Hartell. A relative of Francis John Hartell commented in her genealogical analysis that "Francis John's story needs more research and may be the most interesting of all".

"Most Interesting Story of All"

"Until recently Francis John, an eighteen-year-old carpenter in 1881, seemed to have disappeared too. I had heard that "one of the Hartells went to Canada". But which one? There were so many Hartells and I had no idea which branch of the large family produced this adventurous son! Well, let me just say that Francis John's story needs more research and may be the most interesting of all!" **An Hartell Family Historian.**

'Jack' Hartell's son, Alex, indicated in the Turner Valley history book that his father came from England when he was 18. He worked for a year in the Ottawa Valley before moving to Manitoba, working in Winnipeg for awhile before taking up a homestead north of Wolseley, N.W.T. in 1884. Is it possible that Francis John was 'sent' to Canada as soon as he 'came of age', with his initial destination being Rockingham in the Ottawa Valley, where the Acton's lived? In his application for homestead patent, John Hartell indicated that he had known Samuel Acton since 1881. That is to say, since he arrived in Canada. And, as Alex continues his father's history, it is clear that 'Jack' Hartell did have some very impressive livestock.

Hartell Family History

Mother's parents' parents also came from England, settling first in Ontario for a while, and then moving to Winnipeg in 1884. Grandfather was a shoemaker. In 1885, they bought a homestead near my Dad. Mother and Dad were married in 1891. They left the Wolseley area in 1899 and, with my four brothers moved to the Cheadle area. They were one of the first settlers in that area. Dad liked good horses, and imported a Suffolk Punch Stallion from England. At one time he had four Punch studs on the farm. I have a number of ribbons that father won with his horses, dating back to 1907. He showed horses in Regina, Edmonton and Calgary. **Alex Hartell, Turner Valley History Book.**

As mentioned above, 'Jack' Hartell applied for patent on his homestead on NE 10 in 1886 and received patent in October 1887. He was refused patent for the NW quarter of section ten in a letter dated 10 October 1888. Jack Hartell married Carrie Sharpe in 1891, according to their son Alex. This date may be incorrect as their first child Charles, was born 10 April, 1891. His place of birth on his birth registration was simply "Saskatchewan". The birth was registered at Wolseley. The date the Hartell's left their homestead on NE quarter of Section 10 to live at the Hyde Hill in the Valley has not been established. What is known is that Jack Hartell was the first Chairman of the Rosewood School District. His name appears in minutes of this school up to and including 2 January, 1896. Although Grandpa received title to this land in May 1899, they must have moved before this time as a son, Albert, was born in 1898 at Hyde.

An 1881 Arrival

Mother's accounts and Man! Man! Just Look At That Land suggest that Hartell and Grandpa may have arrived in 1881 or 1882. Dad also used an early arrival date in a taped conversation with Verna Lane in 1982. Homestead files do not support this contention as they clearly indicate they obtained entry to their homesteads in 1883. Secondly, there is anecdotal evidence that John Hartell and Samuel Acton took the train

to Wolseley and then walked north to locate their proposed homestead. The railroad did not reach Wolseley until the fall of 1882, hence, an 1883 arrival seems more likely.

Acton and Hartell Homesteads

Enter Richard Acton

A 1906 Statutory Declaration by Richard Acton and an application for homestead patent on the NW 10 Tp. 19, Rg. 9, W2M in August 1910 provides considerable insight into the role played by Grandpa's elderly father in land ownership of Section 10.

In the 1906 declaration with the Commissioner of Dominion Lands, Richard declares that he obtained homestead entry on the NW10 on 21 February 1899 and that he had resided on this homestead ever since. It appears that Richard's statements on residency on his application for homestead quarter entry did not satisfy the authorities. Richard Acton was in contravention of the Homestead Act as he was living with his son, Samuel, on SE 10 and not on his homestead. As Dad explained, Levi Thompson advised them "a father could not live with a son but a son could live with his father". This would be overcome if ownership of SE10, where the house was located, was transferred from Samuel to Richard.

Richard Acton came to live with his son, Samuel, about 1897. When Jack Hartell lost his bid for patent on NW10, Richard filed for entry on this quarter. However, a homesteader had to live on his land; Richard was living with Samuel on the SE10. So Richard obtained title to SE10 and apparently was able to maintain his entry on NW10 until just before his death in 1911, when patent was obtained and the ownership was transferred to Samuel.

The 1910 application by Richard for patent on NW10 states that there was no residence on this homestead quarter, and that he lived with his son on SE10 from 1897. It further states that Richard purchased the SE10 on 20 October 1906 and has lived on it continuously from this date until the present time (date of application).

The 1910 application goes on to indicate that 30 acres were broken on NW10 in 1898, 10 acres broken and 30 acres cropped in 1899, 30 acres broken and 40 acres cropped in 1900, and 70 acres cropped in 1901. And, these 70 acres, presumably no more, were under cultivation in 1910.

It appears, then, that Richard Acton came to live with his son, Samuel, some time in 1897. Jack Hartell had title to the NE quarter of section ten at this time, but his entry for pre-emption on NW10 had been cancelled

as early as 1888. It appears as though this pre-emption quarter of John Hartell's remained uncontested from 1888, when Hartell's pre-emption entry was cancelled, until 1899, when Richard Acton filed for homestead entry. There is a curious document, dated 7 April, 1902, in which Richard Acton appeared to want title to the NW10 be transferred to Samuel. This date may represent the time that Samuel realized that his father was in contravention of the Homestead Act and had sought advise from Levi Thompson. This transaction was not executed at this time, probably because Richard had not received patent to it. It was not his to sell. It was not until 1906 that Richard received title to SE 10. This would legitimatize his pre-emption rights on NW10.

Richard Acton did not receive patent on NW10 until 21 January 1911, three months before his death. He apparently bequeathed the NW and SE quarters to his son as Samuel was issued title to these lands in 1919. The title to the NE10 moved to Samuel by purchase from Jack Hartell in 1899.

In summary, Grandpa obtained entry to the SE10 in 1883 with pre-emption on SW10. He applied for patent for SE10 in 1894 but did not receive same until 1898. He did not receive patent on SW10 until 1907. In the meantime he sold SE10 to his father Richard Acton in 1906. Jack Hartell obtained entry to homestead the NE10 in 1883 with pre-emption on NW10. He obtained patent to his homestead in 1886 but his application for patent on NW10 was cancelled. Samuel Acton purchased NE10 from Jack Hartell in 1899. Richard Acton came to live with his father in 1897. He applied for homestead entry on NW10 in 1899 but was in contravention of Homestead Act so he was given title to SE10 in 1906 as a means to overcome it. He applied for patent on NW10 in 1910 and did not receive patent until January 1911. He bequeathed the NW and SE quarters to his son, Samuel.

Expanding the Land Base

Dad related to Donald in 1984 how Grandpa doubled his land base from his holdings on section ten. Section 11 was school land. Grandpa bought the SW11 at an auction in Balcarres for approximately $7 an acre in 1910. A speculator, W.Molohan, bought the NW11 at the same time. Grandpa regretted not getting them both, so he contacted the speculator and was able to make a deal for $11 an acre. Dad and Uncle Bob broke the NW11 with a four-horse team and a sulky plough in 1911.

Grandpa bought the NW13 from the C.P.R., for wood, in 1900. He paid $60 a year for 10 years. George Calcutt and Joe Acton broke it in 1911 and Joe rented it from Grandpa in 1912. It became part of Uncle Bob's holdings in 1920, but Uncle Joe continued to rent it from Uncle Bob until Tom Acton bought it in about 1950. There was always a good crop on this quarter, even in the 1930s. C.P.R. Land Sales lists Samuel Acton as a purchaser of the NW13 in September 1900 at a price of $3.00 an acre. He was issued a certificate of title to this land on 4 February 1920.

Dad continued, section 3 was C.P.R. land. Grandpa bought the NW 1/4 of 3 from the C.P.R. for $5.00 an acre in 1904. He pastured this land for 2-3 years before breaking it in 1907. Additional research has determined that Grandpa purchased this quarter in 1903 and was issued title 4 February 1920.

To continue with Dad's recollections, Grandpa bought NE 9 in 1912 or 1913 after dickering for several years with the owner who lived in the U.S.A. He paid $18 an acre for this land. It was fenced in the summer of 1915. In 1920, Uncle Bob rented the north 80 acres and Dad the south 80 acres. The Land Titles inform us that Albert Hoskins of Precious Corners, Ontario purchased the SW and NE quarters of section 9 from the C.P.R., and was issued title in August 1909. It appears that Samuel Acton intended to purchase both quarters but settled with the purchase of the NE quarter. He was issued a certificate of title to the NE quarter on 26 December 1919. This certificate was cancelled and transferred to Janet Ethel Acton on 3 January 1949.

Grandpa divided his machinery and land between Dad and Uncle Bob on April 1, 1920. Dad got all of section 10 and 80 acres on section 9. Uncle Bob got the W1/2 of 11, NW3 and NW13. It has subsequently been determined that Richard A. Acton was issued a certificate of title to NE10 in February 1926, SE10 and NW10 in October 1948 and SW10 in December 1948. Robert W. Acton was issued certificate of title to NW3 in February 1926. It is important to note that Dad expanded upon his original land base with the purchase of S1/2 section 3 from the Great West Life Assurance Company. He was issued certificate of title in May 1945. Robert W. Acton purchased NE3 from the same Assurance Company, receiving title in November 1944. Richard A. Acton and Robert W. Acton exchanged titles for the NW3 and SE3, certificates being issued in December 1956.

Neighbours

As one ponders two young gentlemen, Grandpa and his cousin Jack Hartell, settling on land north of the Qu'Appelle Valley with Wolseley, the nearest town, more than ten miles away, thoughts soon turn to who were their neighbours. Just imagine to whom they may turn if one of them fell and broke an arm, ran out of food during a prairie blizzard, fell sick with a bad cold or stomach problems, or just needed some company to overcome loneliness. Their neighbours would be "homesteaders"; men, some with families, that settled on land in what would become the Rosewood District under the Homestead Act of the Dominion of Canada.

By all accounts, William John Greenland, an Englishman, bachelor in his late twenties and son of the Rectory, was the first permanent resident in what would later become the Rosewood District. After a long walk from Brandon in the company of Samuel Jolly and his son Robert, William Greenland "squatted" on the SW2-19-9-2 in the summer of 1882 (see map and legend on pages14 and 15). He built a house that summer and lived in it through the winter of 1882-83. He obtained entry to his homestead quarter with pre-emption on NW2-19-9-2 in April 1883. Alexander Duff, an Ontarian, also arrived in'82, claiming the SE2-19A-9-2 with pre-emption on NE2. He did some breaking that year but did not built his frame shack until 1883.

James Black and Isaac Cook came west in 1882. James Black homesteaded SE4-19A-9-2. He lived in a tent did some breaking in June, then laid his claim at the Dominion Land Office in Moosomin in August as he headed east for the winter. Thomas Sills, from a United Empire Loyalist family near Kingston, obtained entry to NW4-19A-9-2 in September 1882 and George Black, a brother of James, filed on SE6-19A-9-2 in October. A lady, Miss Jane Altana Brown, also filed in'82, on NW6-19A-9-2. None of these built houses until the the following year.

Samuel Jolly left his native Scotland in 1882 with son Robert and daughter Margaret, leaving his wife and nine children behind. Margaret stayed in Montreal to teach school but Samuel and Robert proceeded to Brandon where they picked up some oxen and, along with William Greenland, drove them to their homestead on SE6-19-9-2. Samuel and Robert lived in a 'shanty' on their homestead that winter.

It was likely a long and lonely winter for William Greenland and the Jollys but the spring of 1883 would see rapid change as Alexander Duff, the Black brothers, Tommy Sills and Miss Jane Brown returned to the land they claimed the previous summer and Samuel and Robert Jolly were joined by Mrs. Jolly and the other nine children, including sons William, James, John, Sam and Gordon, and a cousin Kenneth Watson in June 1883.

Richard Blundell, a 23 year-old bachelor, laid claim to a homestead on SW12-19-9-2 on 23 May 1883 with pre-emption on the NW12**.** Blundell was a carpenter so erecting a house on his homestead while he lived in a tent likely came easily to him. A mile or so to the west, in 10-19-9-2, is where Samuel Acton and John Hartell settled, also obtaining entry in May 1883. Another mile or two further west became the home of William Beasley, an Englishman. Beasley was a tradesman in England that married Hellen Knight in Toronto. They brought their three children, Frank, William and Louisa to their homestead on SW16-19-9-2, where they lived in a tent for a month while they put up their house.

Moving a mile or so to the west we find two Clarke brothers. Charles and Thomas Clarke were both single when they arrived in April 1883. Charles claimed SE18-19-9-2, put up a house for himself and his brother. Thomas filed a claim for SW20-19-9-2 in the fall of '83. Within a year or two the Clarke brothers had married Jolly sisters, Margaret and Jessie.

John Hermiston, a Scotsman who was to marry Hellen Beasley's mother, obtained entry to a homestead on NE20-19-9-2 in October 1883. He did not build a house until 1884. Charles Doig claimed NW20-19-9-2 in October 1883. He built his house in 1886 and began permanent residence in 1887. William Dench homesteaded W1/2 22-19-9-2**,** probably obtaining entry as early as 1883. He was granted patent on SW22-19-9-2 in 1887. Mr. Dench had mental health challenges, forcing him to return to his native Ontario. His entry on NW22-19-9-2 was consequently cancelled in September 1890.

Only William Greenland, the Beasleys, the Jollys, George Black, Thomas Sills and his sister-in-law Jane Brown, the Clarkes, and perhaps William Dench are thought to have spent the winter of 1883-84 in the district as Alexander Duff, Richard Blundell, Samuel Acton, John Hartell, James Black and John Hermiston

sought off-farm employment. There were no new arrivals in 1884, although several such as Alexander Martin and William Thomson had filed for entry by this time.

Homesteaders, some with families, continued to arrive in 1885. William Thomson brought his family from the Bell Farm at Indian Head and homesteaded the NE2-19-9-2, very close to the Greenlands. William Sharpe arrived in Wolseley with his wife and three children on Easter Sunday, 1885. After an arduous drive with two teams of oxen (one for Samuel Acton), he made it through the valley and to his homestead on the SE 4-19-9-2. George Campbell homesteaded SW2-19A-9-2. He obtained entry for this homestead in 1885 and began breaking his land that summer. He built a 16x24ft log house with a 12x16ft kitchen in 1887. He had married Mary Thomson and they had three children by the time he applied for patent in 1892.

Alexander Martin and his wife Elizabeth (Auntie Martin) and their 50 year-old Scottish bachelor-friend, Alexander (Sandy) Wilson came together from the Bell Farm and settled on 14-19-9-2. The Martins began living on their homestead in 1886. Sandy Wilson did not build a house until 1889 so he may have lived with the Martins for a few years. There would be excitement a short distance down a prairie trail to the east when George Simpson, a 31 year-old Englishman with a wife and children James and Albert arrived the same summer, homesteading on NE12-19-9-2. They had immigrated in 1880 but spent several years in Manitoba before moving to their homestead.

With the exception of a few quarters here and there, most of the Crown Land in Tp.19A and Tp.19 in Rg.9 was homesteaded within the first five or six years. Some that came after this included Michael Bender and William Oliver on 1-19A-9-2. They obtained homestead rights to land that was initially granted to the Canada North West Land Company. Others to arrive in the late 80s and early 90s were 55 year-old Adam Maier with his wife and nine children who joined the Sharpes on 4-19-9-2 . About the same time, William Sharpe's son-in-law, Douglas Ruinet, abandoned NW4-19-9-2 in favour of SW6-19A-9-2 and William Beasley's second son, William H. Beasley, homesteaded the NW4. Moving further north, Frederick Stoll, an Austrian, his large family that included his eldest son, John, immigrated in 1897. They homesteaded on NW16-19-9-2. About the same time, Samuel Jolly Jr. homesteaded NW18. The James Thompson family came to the district in 1886. James Sr. and his wife Matilda and son Richard homesteaded SW30-19-9-2. Another son James and his wife Rachel homesteaded the NE24-19-10-2. Hiram Thompson was one of James and Rachel's large family. Hiram served in the 60th Battalion CEF with Dad. They remained friends for life. This family moved to Kelliher to farm after WWI.

The William Chew family came out in 1887 and settled on E1/2 22-19-9-2. They brought her father, James Ingham, with them. He made the NW22 his homesteaded but he died in 1894. Their son William Chew Jr. came several years after his parents, claiming NE and NW22-19-9-2. They spent 10-12 years on this farm when they took a notion to get nearer the railway, moving to the Allindale district south of the Valley. There is a large slough on the land originally settled by the Chews called Chew's Lake. Walter Hermiston, a younger brother of John Hermiston, claimed the W1/2 24-19-9-2 in 1886. He began breaking his land in 1886 and built a house on this land in the fall of that year. Johan Hohn obtained entry for a homestead on

NE24-19-9-2 in 1896. He built his 16x36ft log with sod roof house in May 1896 and settled there with a wife and six children.

Settlement of Dominion Land in Range 8 in the 1890s and early 1900s expanded what would become the Rosewood district. Harriet Oliver a 36 year old spinster moved onto 'Westward Ho', as she called it, on the N 1/2 6-19A-8-2 in 1887. Her bachelor cousin, Percy Oliver, followed her onto the S1/2 6. Alexander Donald homesteaded NW6-19-8-2 in 1887 but it wasn't until the 1890s that Jacob Ring, Karl Schienbein and Paul Templin completed settlement of 6-19-8-2. George Hahn, Heinrich Schienbein, Christian Becker and Simon Repko obtained homesteads on 18-19-8-2.

Many of the original homesteaders in 19A-9-2 moved off after a few years. They were replaced in the late 1890s and early 1900s by newcomers anxious for land. Alex Duff had moved to a second homestead further south in 1895, opening NE2-19A-9-2 to a claim by Phillip Muller in 1899. Hiram Jackson came west in 1906 and lived north of the Qu'Appelle Valley until 1916. He was likely living on the SE2, owned by Alexander Duff, or W1/2 2, owned by George P. Campbell. James Black stayed on his homestead for only two years, but this was long enough for him to receive patent to SE4-19A-9-2 in 1886. Alexander (Sandy) Betker purchased it, and the NE4, some time later. Archibald Obleman obtained an entry on Black's pre-emption quarter, NE4-19A-9-2, and began living on it in 1896. Thomas Sills was accidentally shot and killed by his son Frederick in 1901. He had been granted patent to SW and NW4-19A-9-2 at the time of the tragedy. The Sills family had left this land by 1905. It became the home of the Thomas Watson family a number of years later. George Black and Miss Jane Brown left their homesteads on 6-19A-9-2. Douglas Ruinet and then Ralph Garden were granted patent for SW6, in land that was originally homesteaded by George Black. John Sauer was able to claim the SE6. Johann Christoffel, with his wife and seven children, homesteaded NE6 in 1898 on land that was originally homesteaded by Miss Jane Brown. Harold Fletcher was living on NW6 in the early 1900s. Walter Obleman and George Simpson claimed 10-19A-9-2; Phillip Schienbein and Henry Duff claimed 12 of 19A-9-2

By the turn of the century, most of the Crown land in the Rosewood area was settled by 'homesteaders'. But this only represented the even-numbered sections. The C.P.R., the Hudson Bay and several land companies, and schools had received patent on nearly all of the odd-numbered sections. Although most of this land was purchased by the 'homesteaders' wishing to enlarge their land base or their sons wishing to make a start, these lands also provided an opportunity for new families to come to the area. C.P.R. land sales are not available for 19A-8-2 and 19A-9-2 but other sources indicate that Thomas Jolly, one of Sam Jolly's sons, John Sauer and Fred Hodgkinson may have owned land on 5-19A-9-2 and Henry Foster and A.G.Ard lived on land in 7-19A-9-2 in the early 1900s, all on land that they may have purchased from the C.P.R.
John Robson and Ralph Henry Garden were brothers. John R, as he was called, arrived in Canada in 1896 and purchased C.P.R. land in 5-19-9-2 in 1896 or 1897. He built a shack, initially, but replaced this with a good house in 1898 before he married Sam Jolly's daughter, Catherine. He rented this land in 1906 and went into business in Wolseley. Ralph Garden joined his brother on SW5-19-9-2 in 1898. They lived together there until 1904 when Ralph bought N1/2 SW29-18-9-2. Ralph Garden and D.H.Maquire bought all of

7-19-9-2 in November 1899. Julius Patzwald may have purchased C.P.R. land on SW5-19-9-2 in 1899 but this contradicts sources stating John R. Garden lived on SW5 until 1906, at which time he rented it.

Fredrick Mohr, an Austrian, immigrated to Canada in 1894 with his wife and three children. Four more children were born after he arrived in Canada. He purchased the E1/2 15-19-9-2 from the C.P.R. in 1899 and1900. The Mohr family may not have stayed too long, renting or selling the land to a Bieber family. George Calcutt Sr. purchased this land in 1926. Carl, or, Karl, Baber, another of many Austrians that settled the area at the turn of the century, immigrated in 1892 along with his wife and one child. Karl Baber purchased W1/2 15-19-9-2 from the C.P.R. in 1900. James Devine purchased the Baber land in 1911.

Moving further north we find that Rudolph Mueller purchased E1/2 21-19-9-2 from the C.P.R. a few years earlier but he did not move onto the land until 1903. Daniel Hennig, Jacob Senft and John Senft purchased NW21-19-9-2 from the C.P.R. in 1904. It was assigned to John Senft in 1907. Gottlieb and his son Christian Betker purchased the SW21-19-9-2 from the C.P.R. in 1902. It was assigned to Christian Betker in 1910. Gottlieb Betker purchased S1/2 23-19-9-2 from the C.P.R. in 1898. Robert Gibson and John Middlemiss purchased NW23-19-9-2 in 1898 and Fanny Cruikshanks of Plainville, Ontario purchased NE23-19-9-2 from the C.P.R. in 1902. These likely were land speculators. It has not been determined to whom they may have sold.

Mention has already been made of families such as the Black brothers, the Sills, Miss Jane Brown and others that left the area after only a few years. Before the turn of the century, John Hartell moved to a ranch near the Hyde Hill and then to Alberta, Alex and Elizabeth Martin moved down to the Qu'Appelle Valley, William Greenland moved to a second homestead a few miles to the south of his original one and then sold everything he couldn't place in a trunk and took off to farm near Edmonton. Alex Duff also left his original homestead for one nearer the Qu'Appelle Valley, Alexander Donald moved to the Conmee farm near Wolseley and Richard Blundell left to become a gold miner in B.C. Samuel Jolly and his wife Catherine died within a month of each other in 1891. Two other 'originals', William Beasley and Samuel Clarke died in the early 1900s. A number of families left the area about 1910, most notable being many of the Jollys, Clarkes and Balfours (the Balfours farmed just west of the area) leaving to take up homesteads in the Mossbank area. After the death of her husband, William Beasley, Hellen Beasley married R.W.Allen. After a land swap with Henry Ruecker, they and her sons Harry, Frank and Tony moved to the Piapot area. They were joined there by the John Hermiston family (Mrs. Hermiston was Hellen Beasley's mother) and Gotlieb Betker and his son William and daughter, Christine, and her family. The Simpson family, including the parents George and sons Albert and James moved to B.C. and then to Alberta.

Rosewood Homestead Map- Legend

General

The Dominion of Canada granted patent to all lands in the area to homesteaders, the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. (CPR), the Hudson Bay Co. (HBC), the Canada North West Land Company (CNWLC), the Ontario and Qu'Appelle Land Company (OQLC) and school districts. The recipients of these grants are presented for relevant quarter sections within the study area.

Grants to Homesteaders

Name of homesteader:

HE: Date the homesteader filed for entry on a homestead quarter.

PE: Date of pre-emption claim, if there was one.

PH: Date the homesteader 'perfected' his entry by building and living in his house and by breaking some land.

HP: Date the Dominion Land Office granted patent to the homesteader for his homestead quarter.

PP: Date the Dominion Land Office granted patent to the homesteader for his pre-emption quarter.

Note: It is not unusual for a homesteader to abandon his homestead before title was granted or have his pre-emption claim cancelled, allowing a second homesteader to make a claim on that land.

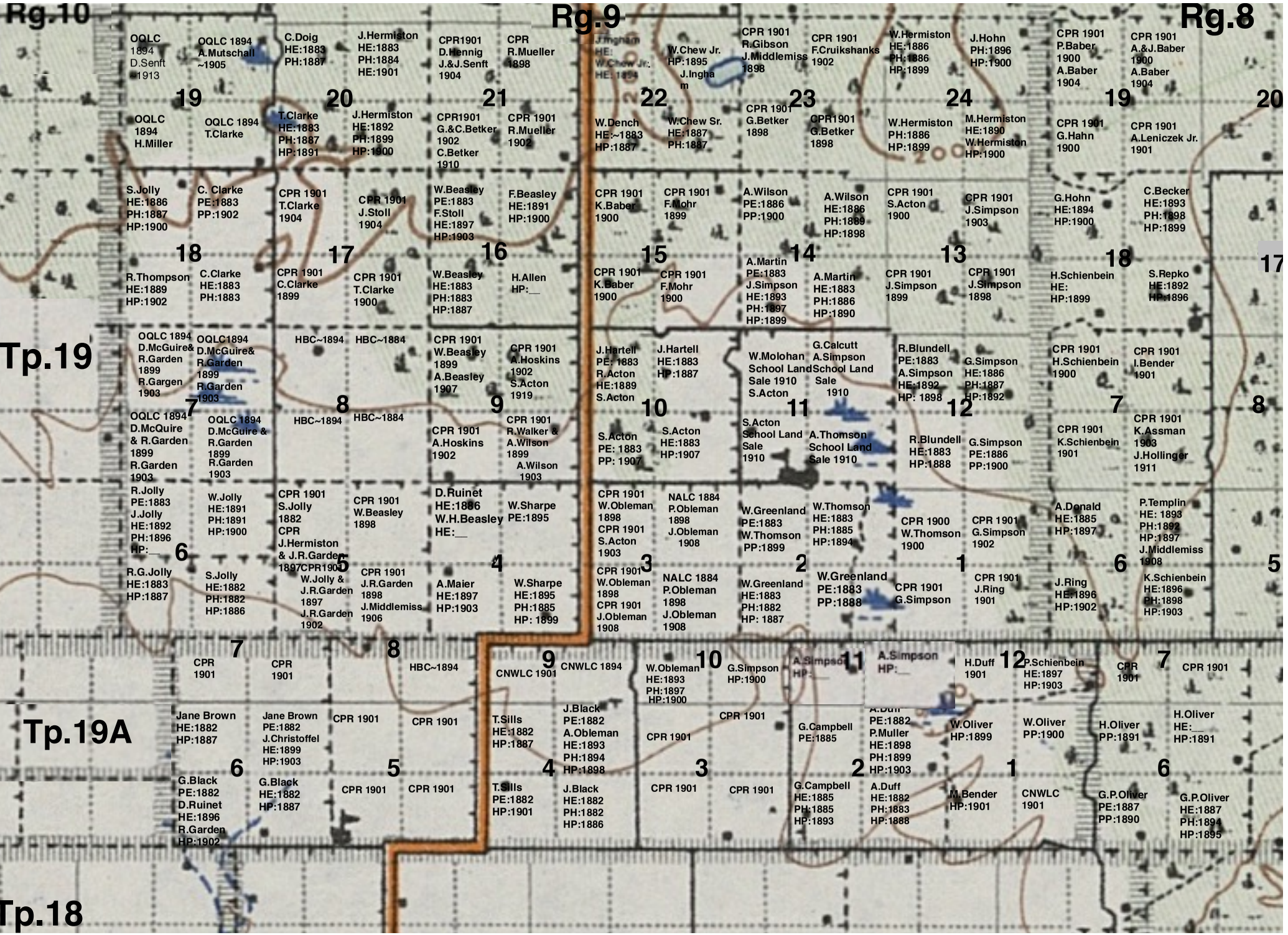
Grants to Land Companies

Name of Land Company

Date of Grant to Land Company

Name of purchaser of land from company

Date of land purchase .


Rg.10
Rg.9
Rg.8
Tp.19
Tp.19A
Tp.18
OQLC 1894 D.Senft ~1913
OQLC 1894 A.Mutschall ~1905
C.Doig HE:1883 PH:1887
J.Hermiston HE:1883 PH:1884 HE:1901
CPR1901 D.Hennig J.&J.Senft 1904
CPR R.Mueller 1898
J.Ingham HE: W.Chew Jr.: HE: 1894
W.Chew Jr. HP:1895
J.Ingham
CPR 1901 R.Gibson J.Middlemiss 1898
CPR 1901 F.Cruikshanks 1902
W.Hermiston HE:1886 PH:1886 HP:1899
J.Hohn PH:1896 HP:1900
CPR 1901 P.Baber 1900 A.Baber 1904
CPR 1901 A.&J.Baber 1900 A.Baber 1904
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20
OQLC 1894 H.Miller
OQLC 1894 T.Clarke
T.Clarke HE:1883 PH:1887 HP:1891
J.Hermiston HE:1892 PH:1899 HP:1900
CPR1901 G.&C.Betker 1902 C.Betker 1910
CPR 1901 R.Mueller 1902
W.Dench HE:~1883 HP:1887
W.Chew Sr. HE:1887 PH:1887
CPR 1901 G.Betker 1898
CPR1901 G.Betker 1898
W.Hermiston PH:1886 HP:1899
M.Hermiston HE:1890 W.Hermiston HP:1900
CPR 1901 G.Hahn 1900
CPR 1901 A.Leniczek Jr. 1901
S.Jolly HE:1886 PH:1887 HP:1900
C. Clarke PE:1883 PP:1902
CPR 1901 T.Clarke 1904
CPR 1901 J.Stoll 1904
W.Beasley PE:1883 F.Stoll HE:1897 HP:1903
F.Beasley HE:1891 HP:1900
CPR 1901 K.Baber 1900
CPR 1901 F.Mohr 1899
A.Wilson PE:1886 PP:1900
A.Wilson HE:1886 PH:1889 HP:1898
CPR 1901 S.Acton 1900
CPR 1901 J.Simpson 1903
G.Hohn HE:1894 HP:1900
C.Becker HE:1893 PH:1898 HP:1899
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16
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14
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17
R.Thompson HE:1889 HP:1902
C.Clarke HE:1883 PH:1883
CPR 1901 C.Clarke 1899
CPR 1901 T.Clarke 1900
W.Beasley HE:1883 PH:1883 HP:1887
H.Allen HP:__
CPR 1901 K.Baber 1900
CPR 1901 F.Mohr 1900
A.Martin PE:1883 J.Simpson HE:1893 PH:1897 HP:1899
A.Martin HE:1883 PH:1886 HP:1890
CPR 1901 J.Simpson 1899
CPR 1901 J.Simpson 1898
H.Schienbein HE: HP:1899
S.Repko HE:1892 HP:1896
OQLC 1894 D.McGuire& R.Garden 1899 R.Gargen 1903
OQLC1894 D.McGuire& R.Garden 1899 R.Garden 1903
HBC~1894
HBC~1884
CPR 1901 W.Beasley 1899 A.Beasley 1907
CPR 1901 A.Hoskins 1902 S.Acton 1919
J.Hartell PE: 1883 R.Acton HE:1889 S.Acton
J.Hartell HE:1883 HP:1887
W.Molohan School Land Sale 1910 S.Acton
G.Calcutt A.Simpson School Land Sale 1910
R.Blundell PE:1883 A.Simpson HE:1892 HP: 1898
G.Simpson HE:1886 PH:1887 HP:1892
CPR 1901 H.Schienbein 1900
CPR 1901 I.Bender 1901
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OQLC 1894 D.McGuire & R.Garden 1899 R.Garden 1903
OQLC 1894 D.McGuire & R.Garden 1899 R.Garden 1903
HBC~1894
HBC~1884
CPR 1901 A.Hoskins 1902
CPR 1901 R.Walker & A.Wilson 1899 A.Wilson 1903
S.Acton PE: 1883 PP: 1907
S.Acton HE:1883 HP:1907
S.Acton School Land Sale 1910
A.Thomson School Land Sale 1910
R.Blundell HE:1883 HP:1888
G.Simpson PE:1886 PP:1900
CPR 1901 K.Schienbein 1901
CPR 1901 K.Assman 1903 J.Hollinger 1911
R.Jolly PE:1883 J.Jolly HE:1892 PH:1896 HP:__
W.Jolly HE:1891 PH:1891 HP:1900
CPR 1901 S.Jolly 1882 CPR J.Hermiston & J.R.Garden 1897
CPR 1901 W.Beasley 1898
D.Ruinet HE:1886 W.H.Beasley HE:__
W.Sharpe PE:1895
CPR 1901 W.Obleman 1898 CPR 1901 S.Acton 1903
NALC 1884 P.Obleman 1898 J.Obleman 1908
W.Greenland PE:1883 W.Thomson PP:1899
W.Thomson HE:1883 PH:1885 HP:1894
CPR 1900 W.Thomson 1900
CPR 1901 G.Simpson 1902
A.Donald HE:1885 HP:1897
P.Templin HE: 1893 PH:1892 HP:1897 J.Middlemiss 1908
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5
R.G.Jolly HE:1883 HP:1887
S.Jolly HE:1882 PH:1882 HP:1886
W.Jolly & J.R.Garden 1897 J.R.Garden 1902
CPR1901
CPR 1901 J.R.Garden 1898 J.Middlemiss 1906
A.Maier HE:1897 HP:1903
W.Sharpe HE:1895 PH:1885 HP: 1899
CPR 1901 W.Obleman 1898 CPR 1901 J.Obleman 1908
NALC 1884 P.Obleman 1898 J.Obleman 1908
W.Greenland HE:1883 PH:1882 HP: 1887
W.Greenland PE:1883 PP:1888
CPR 1901 G.Simpson
CPR 1901 J.Ring 1901
J.Ring HE:1896 HP:1902
K.Schienbein HE:1896 PH:1898 HP:1903
CPR 1901
CPR 1901
HBC~1894
CNWLC 1901
CNWLC 1894
W.Obleman HE:1893 PH:1897 HP:1900
G.Simpson HP:1900
A.Simpson HP:__
A.Simpson HP:__
H.Duff 1901
P.Schienbein HE:1897 HP:1903
CPR 1901
CPR 1901
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8
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10
11
12
7
Jane Brown HE:1882 HP:1887
Jane Brown PE:1882 J.Christoffel HE:1899 HP:1903
CPR 1901
CPR 1901
T.Sills HE:1882 HP:1887
J.Black PE:1882 A.Obleman HE:1893 PH:1894 HP:1898
CPR 1901
CPR 1901
G.Campbell PE:1885
A.Duff PE:1882 P.Muller HE:1898 PH:1899 HP:1903
W.Oliver HP:1899
W.Oliver PP:1900
H.Oliver PP:1891
H.Oliver HE:__ HP:1891
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5
4
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2
1
6
G.Black PE:1882 D.Ruinet HE:1896 R.Garden HP:1902
G.Black HE:1882 HP:1887
CPR 1901
CPR 1901
T.Sills PE:1882 HP:1901
J.Black HE:1882 PH:1882 HP:1886
CPR 1901
CPR 1901
G.Campbell HE:1885 PH:1885 HP:1893
A.Duff HE:1882 PH:1883 HP:1888
M.Bender HP:1901
CNWLC 1901
G.P.Oliver PE:1887 PP:1890
G.P.Oliver HE:1887 PH:1894 HP:1895

Employees

Bob Walker Sr. The Census of Canada in 1901 enumerates Robert Walker and William Martin as residents at the home of Samuel Acton. Both are recorded as nephews and not employees. It indicates that Robert Walker came to Canada in 1898. He was still present in 1902 as related by Dad in the story of how he and Nancy nearly froze coming home from school, and again in1904 as indicated by Dad as he retold how he and 'Bob' met the negro theatre group on a trip into Lemberg. Dad also commented that "Bob spent a lot of time with us". He is listed as a "hired man" on the farm in 1906 census.

Bob's son Robert L. Walker told me that his Dad trained as a stone mason in Scotland. Also, that he tried to homestead at Gull Lake in 1906, but returned to the farm of Samuel as he couldn't stand the dry climate. He began working as a machinist's helper on the railroad at Rainy River in 1910. It can be assumed that 'Bob' , or 'Uncle Bob' as he became known to us in later years, was on the farm almost continuously from 1898, when he arrived in Canada, to 1910, and periodically thereafter. Dad refers to Bob as the fireman on the threshing crew in 1914. It also should be noted that Robert Walker and Alexander Wilson purchased SE9-Tp. 19-Rg.-9-W2nd. from the C.P.R. on August 2, 1899. It was assigned to Alexander Wilson on July 24, 1903.

Billy Martin. When did William ('Billy') Martin come to live with Grandpa? I recall Dad relating that his Dad took pity on his sister Sarah who was struggling to run a business and raise her family in Ottawa after the death of her husband. This contention can be disputed as Sarah's husband died in 1904, three years after 'Billie' being enumerated as living with Samuel Acton at Lemberg. Billie was born in 1884. 'Billie', nephew, was still at Grandpa's farm in 1916. William Watson was there as well, listed as a labourer, and Sandy Wilson, a boarder. It can be assumed 'Billie' came to live with Grandpa near the turn of the century. He remained on the farm until 1920, when Grandpa turned the farm over to Dad and Uncle Bob.

E.A.Churchman. In 1910, E.A.Churchman was to come out from England to become Grandpa's hired man. He was to arrive in early spring but couldn't get a sailing and did not arrive until the end of April. Mrs. Churchman and her sister Mrs. Allen came out in the fall of that year. They stayed at the farm for a few days then Mrs. Allen went to work for the Jamiesons. The Churchmans spent the winter at Grandpa's.

Circumstances in the spring of 1910 forced Dad, a 16 year-old, into the role of a hired man. Uncle Joe had come west that year to start farming. The former owner, Sandy Wilson, a bachelor, thought he should cook for Uncle Joe. He wasn't too clean. This and the 'bed bugs' got the better of Uncle Joe in the old shack that they had for a house. Uncle Joe got pretty fed up and was ready to throw the place up and go back east. Grandpa wasn't going to see this happen, so they decided to build a new house at Uncle Joe's. They used the kitchen lean-to from Grandpa's old house for part of it. The late arrival of Mr. Churchman combined with Grandpa and Uncle Joe being preoccupied with building the house meant that Dad not only had to seed all of Grandpa's land but Uncle Joe's as well.

Walter Sherrin and Will Johnson. Dad makes reference to a Walter Sherrin in a 1903 story on hauling grain. Duncan remembers Dad mentioning that Walter took size 13 or 14 shoes. They used to joke that his

shoes must be cowhide as no other animal was large enough to cover them. Walter and an Englishman, Will Johnson are shown in the 1908 postcard of the new house (see page 28). Will Johnson came out in 1907 and worked for Grandpa from 1907-09 or ’10. His wife, Ruth, followed him there a year later. Will Johnson and Walter Sherrin left the farm and were living south of Summerberry in 1911. Sometime later, Ruth and Will had a son Alfred. Ruth died in 1924 and is buried in the Summerberry Cemetery; at which time Will and Alfred returned to England. A grandson of the Johnsons, in search of information on his grandparents, had a copy of the 1908 postcard presented on page 28. He believes the lady identified as Daisy Cole is Ruth Johnson. He mentioned that Aunt Nancy had corresponded with Will Johnson through to his death.

Syd Davies. Dad mentions that Syd Davies helped him repair a bearing in the crankshaft of the 1912 Sawyer Massey tractor they used for threshing.

Robert Wood. An Englishman that worked for Grandpa in 1916. He may have been there as early as 1913. He joined the Canadian Army in 1915, served a few months in France with 28th Battalion before being killed in action at Courcelette, France on 26 September 1916. There is not a recognised gravesite for him, however, his name appears on the Vimy Memorial.

Niel Bundgard. A Dane, enumerated with Grandpa’s family in the spring of 1916. Duncan recalls family stories of his arrival in Lemberg on the train. He walked across the street to one of the merchants and asked where he could find work. The merchant enquired from Grandpa and was told to send him out to his farm. The next day, Grandpa put him to work digging a cistern beside the barn. Niel was so eager to impress that he dug this cistern much faster than expected. This was likely in the summer or fall of 1915 as Niel enlisted along with Dad in April 1916. He apparently was appointed to a special team in the British Army, for which he received the Military Medal. Impressing his Commanding Officer that he had suffered severely from poisonous gas he was one of the first of the 60th Battery to disembark in 1919. Dad never thought Niel had taken more gas than most of the rest.

Dad, Niel Bundgard, Mae Watson (Aunt Mae), Annie McKinnon (Mother), and Sarah Johnston (Aunt Sarah) the day that Dad and Niel joined up.

Phillip Erbach, Pete Bunke, Bert Sharp and Russell McKellar. Captions on several photographs make reference to several hired-men in the 1920s. In the photo of Richard Acton and his two 4-horse drawn

binders (page 38), there is reference to Phillip Erbach, and Pete Bunke or Bert Sharpe. This would be about 1924-1926. And the 1922 or 1923 photo, on the same page, of Richard Acton and his daughter Beth at the steamer makes reference to Phillip Erbach, Pete Bunke as well as Russell McKellar.

Jack Peagam and Gus Batke. Duncan remembers Jack Peagam often relating how he worked for Dad. This was before Jack was married, likely in the 1930s. In the 1930s Dad would hire Gus Batke to do the stooking.

Nice Man. Sam tells the story that there was another hired-man on the farm at the same time as Bob Walker Jr. He can't remember his name but does remember him as a very likeable person. He was a bit religious, and mother admired him for that. Dad could not afford to keep both men through the winter, so a decision had to be made as to which one to let go. A quite a few wanted to see the nice fellow stay, but family connections favoured Bob Jr., so he stayed.

Roy McKinnon. Uncle Roy came to Lemberg in 1931 to work on Dad's farm. He worked there until 1934 when he and Uncle Alex brought one of the first trucks into the community to haul grain, cattle, machinery, etc.

Tony Kohoniuk. Sam says he came in 1931. That his mother lived in Neudorf.

Robert Lorraine Walker *(*Bob) Walker was born in 1915 in Rainy River Ontario. In July 1933 he went west to Lemberg, Saskatchewan to work at the farm of Uncle Bob. In September of that year he moved to Wolseley where he worked at the 'Old Folks Home' and with his grandfather Baker. In the spring of 1934, Dad came to Wolseley and asked him to work for him. He worked on this farm until he joined the Canadian Army in September 1939.

Sam and Bob Walker.

One story Dad related to me that involved Bob Walker was hauling water in winter to feed livestock. Dad said that sloughs would freeze up by mid- December and wells could not supply enough water for the livestock. This meant hauling water, usually from Heil's Lake, formerly Chew's Lake, although one winter it went dry and they had to haul from a lake east of Jamieson's. A trip would be required every day and it was an awful job on a cold day. Water would be poured into the water tank using a pail with a long handle attached. Baffles had to be removed from the tank to avoid freezing. As a result, motion of the water in the tank would build up momentum in the sleighs causing them to slip off the track and overturn. This, of course, necessitated a return to the lake for more water. One day in March, Bob Walker got fed-up with this, and decided they should melt snow. This they did, successfully.

Ed Shierer. Sam remembered an incident on the farm the year after he finished High School. He and the hired man, Ed Shierer, had a lot of barley to haul. It stormed every day. They had King and Fly as one team. The other team was poor, so they split up King and Fly. This one day the snowbanks were so deep they couldn't get up the hill at Reitenbachs. The teams were up to their bellies in snow, and Sam to his waist. They finally got them unhitched, and put King and Fly together to pull the sleighs through the snow and up the hill. It was 3:30 before they reached town that day. Sam was glad to join the navy later that year. Ed Shierer built the pig barn in the 1940s.

Jack Ernie. I can remember Jack Ernie being on the farm at least one winter in the 1940s. He worked quite a bit for Uncle Bob but I don't think he worked for Dad all that often. He was a little Englishman. Cliff and I were staunch Maple Leaf fans. Jack was a real tease, so would choose any team but the Leafs. Imperial Oil's Hockey Night in Canada played on CBC radio on Saturday nights. Cliff and I would have our ears almost touching the radio to get every play as portrayed by Foster Hewitt. The Canadians had this rising star, Maurice Richard. Times were good and Dad was subscribing to the Leader Post. It took awhile for Cliff and I to figure out that "Morise Reeshar" as Foster pronounced it and "Maurice Richard" as the Leader printed it were one and the same person. Anyway, this one Saturday night, the Leafs were playing the Canadians. The Leafs won this game, so we let Jack know about it. He came back saying it was only because they never had "Richards" playing for them, pronouncing it as an Englishman would. Cliff and I were fit to be tied trying to tell him he didn't understand. Jack just grinned!. We got some satisfaction awhile later. Dad had a few sheep on the farm at this time. They were penned in the old cow barn in the winter. One afternoon we were moving them into their pens. Dad was trying to separate the ram from the ewes. Cliff and I were sheep-dogging it, chasing the flock into the barn. Jack was to hold this detached bin door in the alley to divert the ram into his designated pen. The ram was having nothing of this. He back-pedalled a few steps and took a run and a flying leap at this door. It fell in shatters, only the top board remaining in Jack's hands. I have never forgotten the look on Jack's face!

Early Houses

Homestead records indicate that Grandpa built a log shack of undetermined dimensions in 1883. This may have been enlarged to a 14x22ft shack in 1885, with a 12x16ft lean-to kitchen added in 1891. Dad related to me in 1984 that two second-story bedrooms were added in 1904. My notes of this conversation place the bedrooms above the kitchen but the photograph of the house taken a few years later suggest the bedrooms were situated above the 14x22ft shack, with the kitchen representing the lean-to on the right-hand side. There is a second lean-to in the aforementioned photograph. It appears to be masonry construction, likely with a cellar, and was used as a milk house or creamery.

All that is for certain is that the house above represents the 1904 construction when two upstairs bedrooms were added. The way Dad explained it to me, the bedrooms were added above the lean-to kitchen built in 1891. I doubt whether the lean-to kitchen was as large as the first floor of the house, above. Could it be that the bedrooms were added above the 14x22ft two-room log house he had built earlier and the building on the right is the lean-to kitchen?

Grandpa built the new stone house in 1908. The original house, with kitchen and creamery, likely remained intact until 1910 when the kitchen was moved to become part of a house for Uncle Joe. The original shack with bedrooms up may have been torn down at this time, or shortly after, but the creamery was maintained, albeit modified. In that the creamery was a lean-to, the east wall would be open when the shack was removed. A frame wall was constructed for this side of the remodelled creamery, as shown in the photographs of Mum and Dad, on the next page, painting the veranda and the cow and calf. A ‘shop’ was constructed on the south side of the creamery, perhaps at the same time or later. The creamery may have remained functional into the 1920s but it eventually fell into dis-repair. The roof, east wall and floor to the

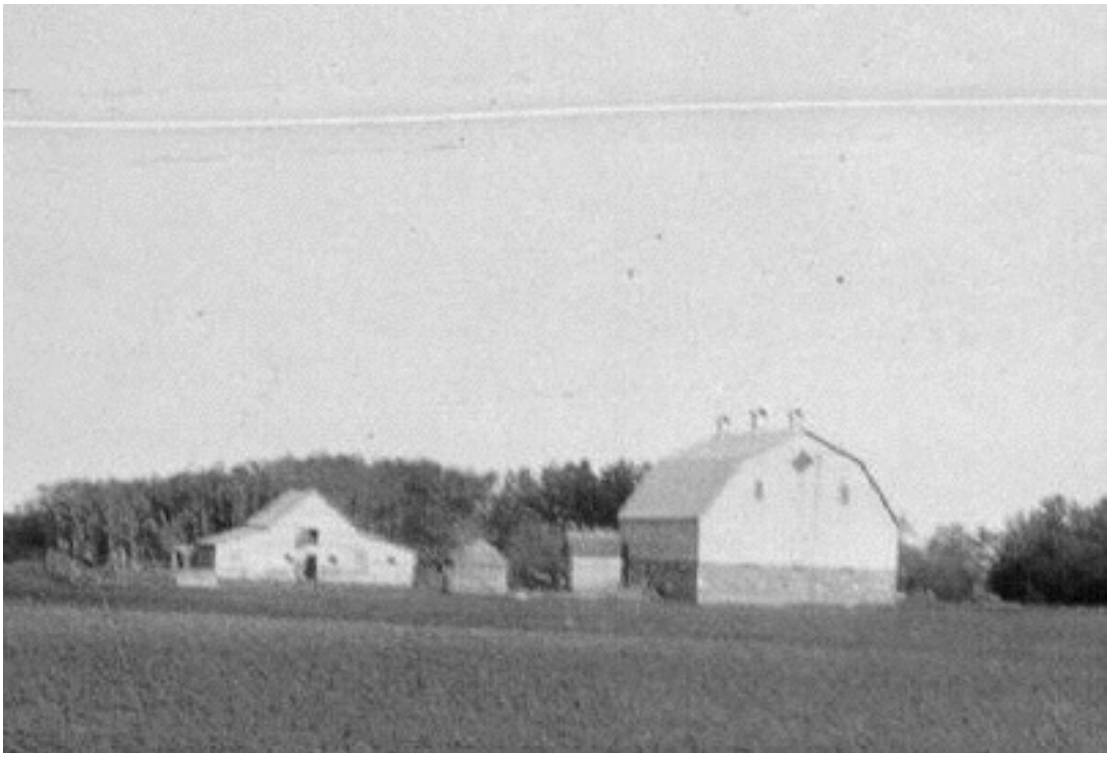
View of the creamery and shop from the veranda in the 1920s, above. The creamery and shop can be seen in the distance behind the cow and calf in the photograph below, which may have been taken any time between 1910 or 1911 and 1930.

cellar were removed, leaving the three masonry walls and a hole where the cellar once was (see photo of Duncan riding Sparkie). This hole eventually was filled with refuse, with some walls remaining into the 1940s when they were knocked down and a two-car garage constructed just to the east of them.

Duncan riding Sparkie. The 'shop' and remnants of the 'creamery' can be seen in the background.

Barns

In 1894 Grandpa reported that he had a 12 by 24 foot log stable and a 12 by 16 foot henhouse. The stone barn was built in 1912. It is uncertain whether the low barn in the upper photo on this page represents the log stable mentioned above. A possible explanation for the barn on the left side of the same photo may come from anecdotal evidence provided by Duncan. He relates his Dad telling him that a cow barn was destroyed by fire when Billie Martin was on the farm. (Billie lived on the farm from about 1900 to 1920) Duncan related the incident as follows. Granny wanted some warm milk for one of her children that had the colic. She asked Billie Martin to go to the barn and milk a cow to get some as Grandpa was bedridden with a bad cold or pneumonia. Billie set off begrudgingly but the lantern that he was carrying started a fire in the barn. Shortly after his return, Grandpa



"Braeside Farm. As you used to see it when you came to see me." In the handwriting of Dad on the back of the photograph.

looked out and saw the barn was ablaze. He rushed out and was able to lift some of the animals to safety. He had to have these cattle housed at neighbours while he built a barn, possibly the one shown on left hand side of lower photo on previous page. Dad was impressed by the strength of his father as he lifted the half-grown calves to safety as well as being impressed by the fact that he had the barn finished before spring, just a matter of a month or two. This anecdote raises the possibility that the barn with the loft in the upper photo represents the barn Grandpa built after the fire. Considering that Dad could vividly remember this incident and didn't appear to be old enough to assist his father suggests he was six to ten years old, dating the fire between 1900 and 1906. The desire to get milk for child with colic supports this date.

In the renovation to the horse barn, access was through a centre door with horse stalls part way down one side and box stalls at the far end and stanchions for cattle on the other side. Once again there were box stalls at the far end. The photo above shows the doorway at the north side prior to renovation. Edna Walker is on Don.

The photo above shows the reconfiguration of doorways as a result of the renovation to the horse barn. Also, just a bit of the henhouse can be seen on Clifford's left-hand side.

Both of the smaller barns in the top photo on the previous page have been removed and replaced with the barn shown on left hand side of lower photo on previous page. As it was inadequate for all the

livestock, a horse barn was built in 1912, the former becoming the cow barn. The lean-to on one side of the cow barn was torn down about 1945 and used to construct a pig barn. The remainder of the cow barn was demolished a year or two later.

The cow barn can be seen in the background of the above photo from the mid-1940s. Clearly, the north side of this barn has been removed. As I recall, it was used primarily for sheep for a few years after the horse barn was renovated to

Duncan describes the 1912 horse barn as follows: "I will start off with the big, stone barn which was built in 1912 to accommodate the horses. It was 46 feet wide by 86 feet long with a hayloft 32 feet in height. This had a hay sling on a track to pull one-half a rack of feed up into the loft at one time. The loft had to be replenished with oat sheaves and hay several times each year to feed the many working horses. There also was a granary in the loft for oats, which were fed with a spout to the feed alley below. The feed alley was in the middle and the manger was on each side. I believe there were eight stalls on each side, with two box stalls on the end for a stallion, maternity, etc. The floor was planking as this was easier on the horses hooves."

View of the farm in the late 1940s or early 1950s. Note the cow barn has been removed but the pig barn has not been added by this time.

It would appear from the foregoing that the 1912 horse barn and the cow barn were the two main barns on the farm when Dad took it over. There probably was a henhouse and perhaps a pig pen, but I am not aware of them. What I do recall is construction in the mid-1940s of a henhouse north of The Barn and a pig barn on the south side.

Other Buildings

Granny feeding her chickens. The building in the background may be the "henhouse' that Grandpa referred to in his 1894 declaration.

In this photo of Duncan and his Calf Club calf, the 'Granary' and several grain bins can be seen in the background. Elinor remembers Dad treating the grain with Formalin or Formaldehyde before seeding. It was done in front of the granary in sort of a metal funnel. During summer holidays Doris and I would plead with Dad to empty a bin so we could use it as a playhouse. That was probably about 1937 or '38.

Most of the grain bins were of wood construction, a metal one being an exception. They were most commonly 12x14ft; on skids to provide the necessary portability for stook-threshing. Expanding the farm size in the mid-forties and associated higher yields during that time necessitated building one or two a year for a few years. Dad was good at this but, according to Albert Allen, there was no-one like Grandpa when it came to building a bin. Apparently he could cut all the lumber, by hand, and put up a bin in one day. Dad was a bit more relaxed as he encouraged the help of his sons at various stages of construction. Getting good lumber during and for a few years after the War was a challenge. As a consequence, poorly-kilned spruce shiplap was sometimes used instead of the

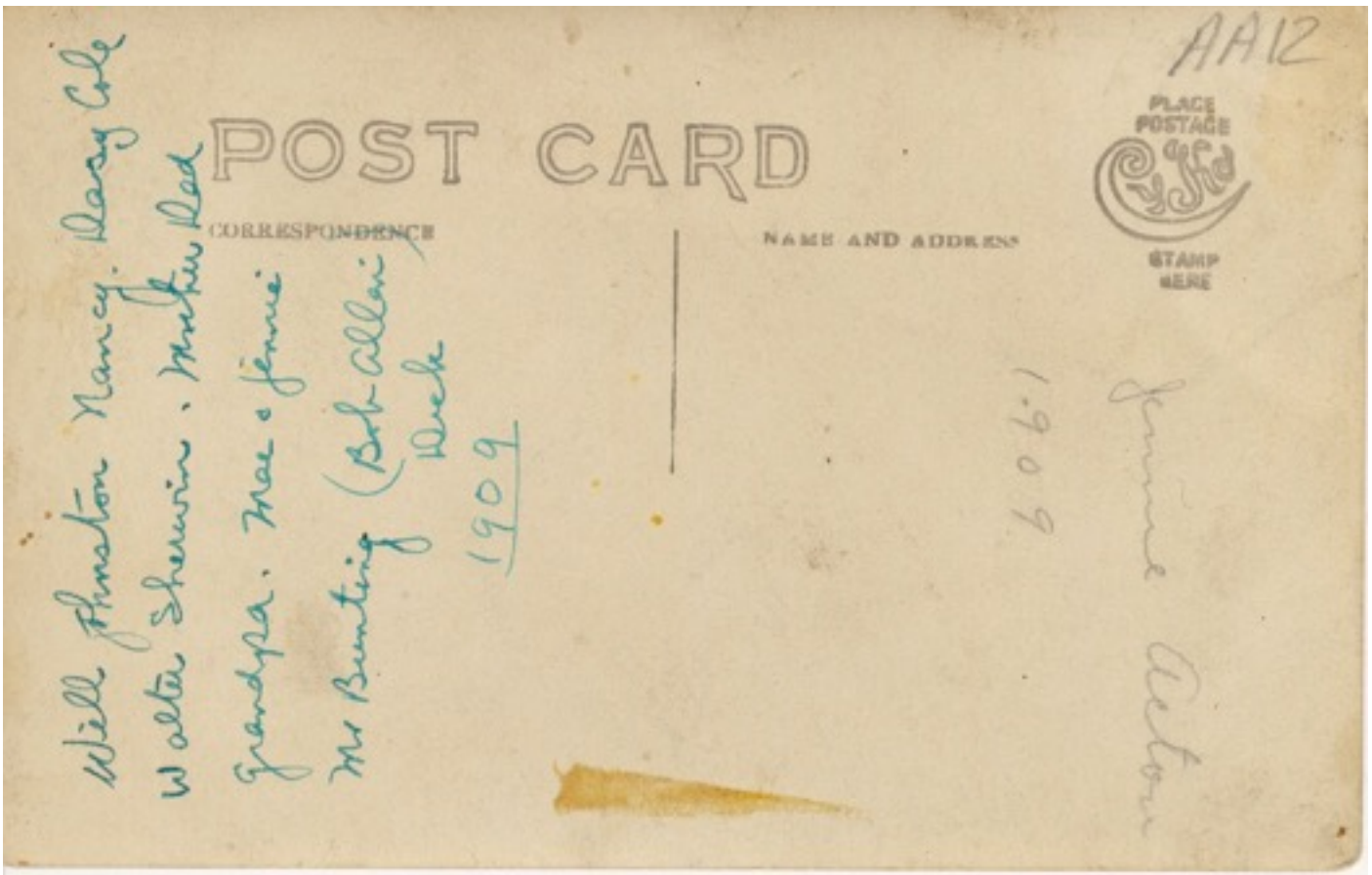
desired tongue-and-groove fir. High quality cedar shingles were also hard to come by, and even the nails were not well-hardened. With the advent of plywood in the late-forties, round, plywood bins replaced the 12x14s. Portability was not a requirement with trucks to move the grain from the combine to the bin, so they were often placed in the farmstead, on a concrete foundation. All of these wood structures were eventually replaced with steel bins holding at least twice the amount of their predecessors.

The 'implement shed' was built by Dad after he took over the farm in 1920. Cars were stored in it in winter in early years, as well as harvesting equipment.

The 1908 House

The Acton Farm celebrated a one hundred year anniversary in 1981. At that time, Dad vividly recalled his excitement as a 13 year-old as they began construction of a new stone house in 1908. "The previous winter was a busy time, hauling stones from as far away as the Qu'Appelle Valley. The basement was dug as soon as the frost was out of the ground. Local limestones were found and a kiln built to make the lime. About May15 the stone mason, Mr. Hunter, was ready to come with quite a large gang. He arrived about May 20 and about the first thing he wanted was window and door frames. George Cole, the carpenter, had been making some frames in Wolseley, so on May 23 Dad told me to take a team and democrat and go to Wolseley for Cole. I started out that morning with a team of work horses on the democrat and when I got to Wolseley I went to Cole's house, expecting him to be there. However, I found that he was down in Montmartre, 23 mile southwest of Wolseley. The railway had just come through there that spring and any man that could drive a nail could get a job.

Cole had left word about where he was and would come to us as soon as we wanted him, but the only way to let him know was to drive down to Montmartre. I had no idea where it was but was told the mailman left Wolseley about one o'clock and if I was at the Post Office I could follow him into Montmartre. He had a good team of drivers and I had those work horses, but they kept right behind him all the way. We got there about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and I then hunted up Cole. He said the horses had already travelled forty



A postcard depicting the house in 1909. The base has been laid for the veranda and balcony but they have not been completed. One small bit of the eave appears on the north side, so the kitchen was complete at that time. What became the kitchen sometime later began as the bedroom for our great grandfather, Richard.

miles that day so we agreed to start early the next morning. When we woke there was a foot or more of snow on the ground and still snowing. We ploughed snow all the way to Wolseley. We reached Wolseley and loaded up some door and window frames and carried on to the farm, arriving home about 6 p.m. They did not have as much snow on the farm so they did not know what had kept me. I never forgot the date as it was some way to spend the 24th of May. **From "Acton Farm Marks Milestone" by Donald Acton. Melville Advance, Wednesday July 8 1983.**

The postcard on the previous page clearly indicates the house proper was likely completed in 1908 but details, including the veranda and balcony were not completed until 1909. A photo sent to me by Norma Cutbil, a granddaughter of Agnes Eady shows the house with the completed veranda and balcony.

The completed house. Note handrails from the veranda were part of the original construction. Also it appears there was a veranda at the back door. There was a 12 or 14 inch railing at the top of the house in the 1940s. This may have been part of the original plan that had not been completed when this photo was taken but it may have been added some years later. Note the telephone line.

In the 1916 photo with Dad and Aunt May, there is still a veranda at back door. It will be replaced by an enclosed porch as shown in the photo with Mother and Duncan, which would have been taken about 1927. It likely was done by Grandpa before he left the farm.

A view from the east. The railing at top has now been installed and a fence is in place. It looks like the virginia creeper has been planted and maybe a few shrubs along the fence. Quite clearly, a telephone is in place by this time. Telephones were in the cities and other places by 1900 but when Saskatchewan became a province in 1905, Premier Scott focussed on telephones to rural communities and farms.

In the photo opposite where Mum and Dad are painting the veranda, small shrubs can be seen along the fence. Although our Great grandfather was a great gardener, some aspects of the landscape as we knew it may not have occurred until Dad and Mum took over the farm.

Beth and Sam are helping their mother shell peas. The maple trees east and north of the house may have been planted before 1920. They may have been planted as early as 1910.

Electricity

Dad addressed the topic of electric lights in his discussions with Donald in 1984. 'A 32 volt acid-battery with a gasoline generator was installed about 1917 to provide electricity for the house and barn. It was used primarily for lighting, but also drove the washing machine and cream separator. The generator would have to be started several times a day to charge the batteries, especially in winter. A wind charger was installed in the early 1940s. This was effective, in part, but always required the gas generator as back-up for periods of calm weather. The original bank of batteries (16 batteries, each with 2 volts for a total of 32 volts) lasted until 1927-28, when they were replaced. The 'power' came to the farm in 1945 or '46.

Elinor recalled that "the batteries also charged the radio and by the time I got home from school there was no charge left in them. I would run to the barn to ask Dad to come to the house to start the engine so I could listen to Little Orphan Annie. He would drop whatever he was doing and oblige. Unfortunately, when the engine was running the reception wasn't as good because of the noise from the motor. When I was nine, with tears running down my cheeks and my head almost inside the horn shaped speaker, I listened to King Edward V111 utter these words, " I give up the Throne of England for the woman I love." I hated Wallace Simpson because I wouldn't get a holiday on June 23 as the King and I shared the same birthday. When Bill and I got married in 1950 we bought the wind charger from Dad. The switch to turn it off was on the wind charger and Bill would go to the back of the house, turn off the switch, race upstairs and jump into bed just as the lights went out."

Harvesting

There is no record of how Grandpa harvested his 20 to 30 acres of crop in the 1880s and 1890s but George Hartwell in Man! Man! Just Look at that Land recalls the first crops were threshed by using a flail. The flail was made of two pieces of board three or four feet in length hinged by a strip of rawhide. With a whipping motion the grain was beaten until the kernels left the heads of grain. The straw was then removed from the threshing floor, after a good shake, leaving the kernels on the canvas.

There are three sources of information that provide some insight into threshing methods and machinery that Grandpa may have used in the early 1900s. Dad included this subject in his "Recollections". He reflected further in discussions with Donald in 1984. Then there are the half-dozen or so photos from mother's album and other sources.

In his 1984 reflections, Dad related that "One of the first machines used for threshing was horse-powered. Grandpa owned this machine jointly with George Campbell. With this machine, threshing involved cutting bands and pushing straw away by hand as there was no self-feeder nor blower. Several men would hold bags and carry them to the granary. The horses would walk in a circle to drive the cylinder and separator."

He continues: “In 1910 Beasleys threshed for Actons, again. Simpsons and Sharpes also had done some threshing in previous years. Grandpa would put up some money for repairs with the understanding they would do his threshing first.” Presumably these were gas or steam engines driving separators that may have had self- feeders, blowers and other features of models to come.

Dad goes on to say that “In 1912 Grandpa bought his first engine-driven threshing machine. This 1912 threshing outfit consisted of a Sawyer Massey thresher with a 4-cylinder Sawyer Massey gas tractor. He only kept this outfit for one year before he traded on a Sawyer Massey steamer and Sawyer Massey thresher, as the gas tractor was not very reliable (see photo below). They threshed Devine’s, Joe Acton’s, Calcutt’s, Jamieson’s, Bert Sharpe and Bill Oliver with the gas outfit. Dad was in charge of the tractor and Joe the separator. The 1912 separator was a cheaper model. Fortunately, 1912 was a dry fall, which enabled them to do as much as they did. They also were to have done Harry Birch’s but never made it over there. The tractor gave a lot of trouble with a bearing in the crankshaft. Dad had Syd Davis carry straw all one night to make a light for him to see. He got it going by morning but cylinder walls were scored.”

Threshing 1912. Sawyer Massey machine on Sam Acton’s farm. Joe Acton on top of separator. George Calcutt in rack at machine. Jim Devine in rack behind. Sam Acton standing on oil wagon, Duncan Obelman’s pony and wolf hounds. Duncan Obleman and Richard Arthur Acton standing on engine.

But in his ‘Recollections’, written in the early 1980s, he writes “It was in 1912 that we bought our first threshing machine and with no experience and new machinery coming on the market all the time, it was no wonder we had trouble. During the winter of 1911 and 1912, the University of Saskatchewan put on short courses in gasoline engines and I, and a lot more from Lemberg, took in this course lasting about ten days. I was quite green about gas engines and I learned a lot, but a lot of things I did not.”

“Anyway, we finally ordered a Sawyer Massey 25-45 tractor and a (Sawyer Massey) Daisy separator 35-52. I undertook to be engineer and Joe Acton separator man. We threshed for Jamiesons, Joe Devine, G. Calcutt, Joe Acton, Bert Sharpe, and William Oliver, finishing up around December 1. It was all stook threshing, with the exception of Oliver’s, which was all stacked. We had some trouble, but considering the poor quality of machines and no experience, we did fairly well.”

He goes on to write “We traded the gasoline outfit off at the end of the year for a steam engine and also had trouble before we learned how. When we unloaded the steam outfit, of course, Dad had Bert Sharpie help him. Things were not in very good shape as far as the engine was concerned and steam was leaking, making it hard to see how much water was in the boiler. About a half a mile south of Peace School, out went the soft plug and the outfit had to be left on the road all night. We eventually got her home and had a boilermaker fix her up.”

Sam Acton’s threshing machine and steamer, including a steamer pulling the thresher, with five men standing on thresher and three on steamer. Inscribed on back in unidentified handwriting ‘Sam Acton’s threshing machine’. The thresher in the photo above is a Red River Special. This may have been the replacement for the Sawyer Massey gas tractor and separator used in 1912.

'Threshing Sam Acton's 1916'. Includes a team on water wagon, steamer behind, team on hay rack, 6-8 people standing on wagon.

In his 'Reflections' in 1984, Dad goes on to relate "In 1914 Robert Walker was fireman with himself on separator. This outfit remained in tact for some time, except during the war when they used a Titan. In 1928 he purchased a new Red River Special that remained on the farm well into the 1950s."

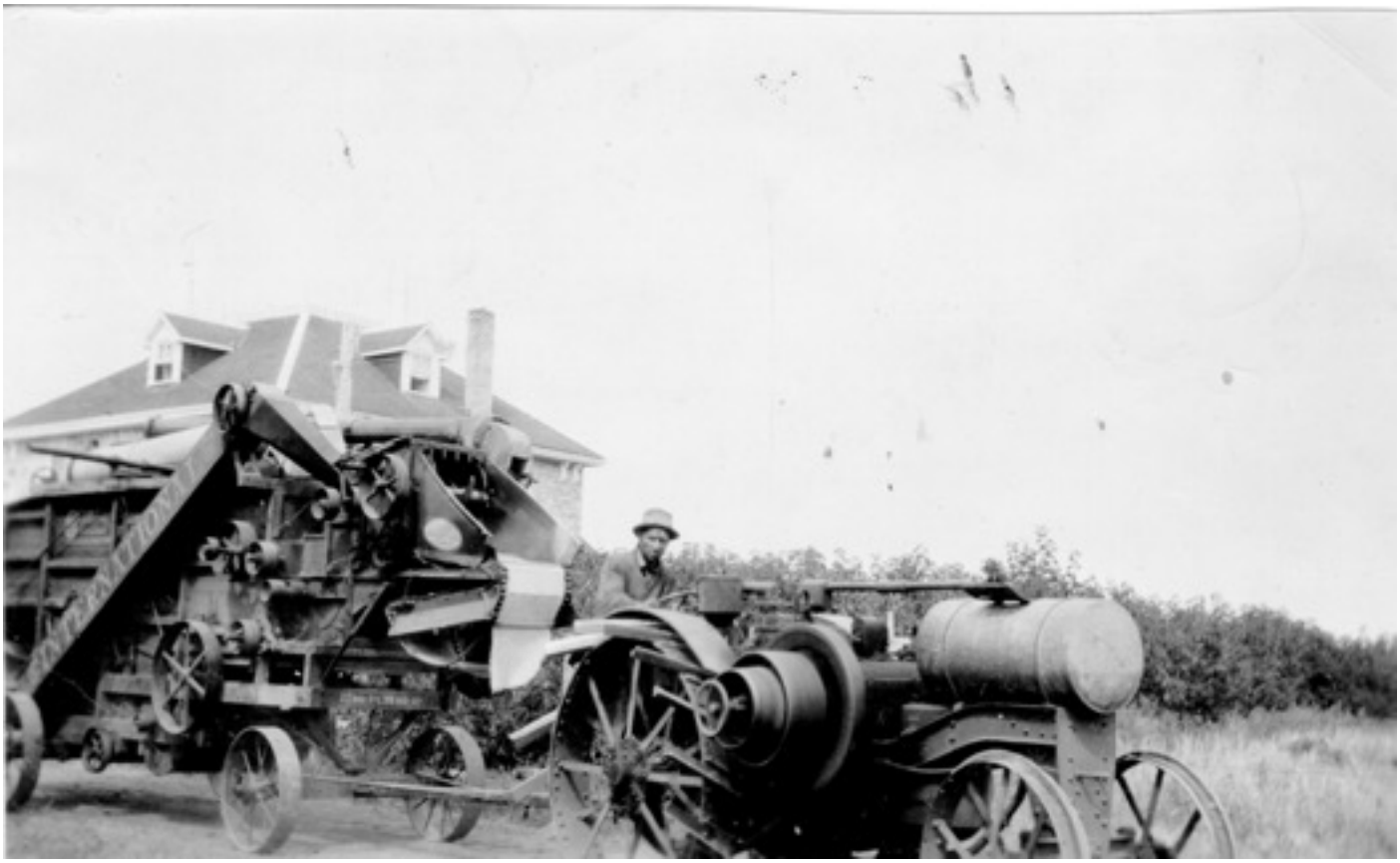
Photographs, on this page, of Grandpa's threshing outfit in 1916 suggest the steamer was used during the war, perhaps only up until 1916.

From the foregoing it appears the Sawyer-Massey steamer and Red River Special separator that Grandpa bought in 1913 lasted into and likely through the war, with a Titan replacing the steamer when manpower was in short supply. An International separator replaced the original Red River Special, likely in the early 1920s.

A photograph from Mother's album, below, supports the assertion that a Titan often was used on the separator in place of the steam engine. An

Grandpa's steamer and water wagon in 1916.

International separator is clearly visible in this photograph. Dad never made mention of such a machine in either of his accounts.



Dad driving Titan tractor and pulling an International separator.

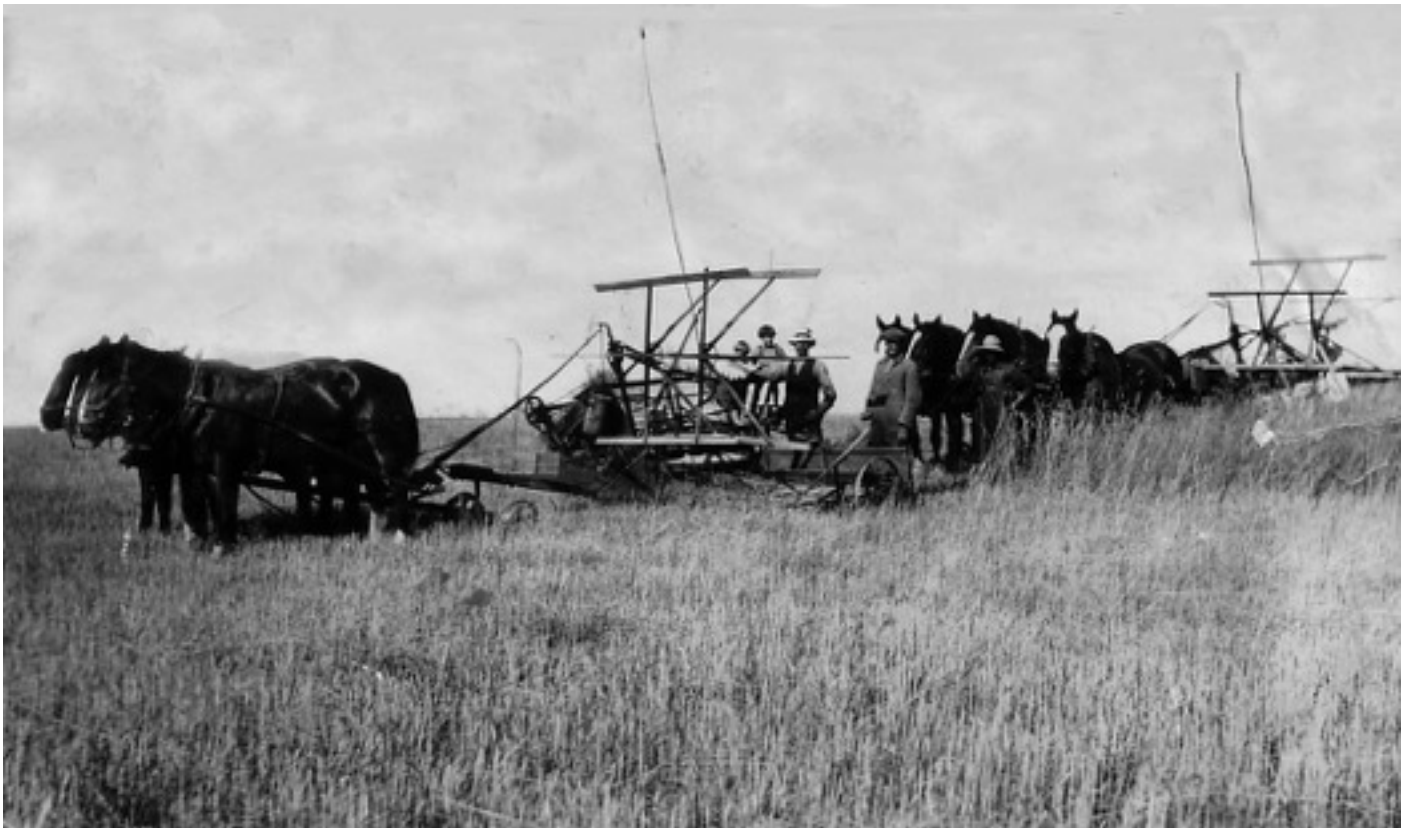
Dad replaced the original Sawyer Massey steamer with another one of the same make. Duncan recalls an incident that relates to the purchase of this machine as follow: "Duncan believes that Dad bought a Sawyer Massey steamer to replace the original one bought by Grandpa in 1913. He remembers Dad telling him he purchased it from someone near Melville. These monsters only moved about 2mph and were difficult to get up a steep incline. So, as he was bringing it to the farm he cut across a few fields. On one occasion north of Lemberg, the farmer took exception to him so doing. However, as their discussion went on, it became clear that both he and Dad had a distinct dislike for the reigning Reeve. The moment this was determined, the farmer declared "Go ahead. You can drive over my field." Dad ended up with a Red River Special separator, probably bought in the 1920s. This separator and the aforementioned steamer remained on the farm until the 1940s. The steamer was replaced by an Allis Chalmers gas engine for awhile but it, in turn, was replaced by McCormick Deering and Minneapolis Moline gas tractors. Oats continued to be cut with binders and threshed with the Red River Special, the objective being to provide straw in the loft for the cattle.

Sam recalled to Don that he was operating a binder on either his 13th or 14th birthday. "Dad would be on the front binder and I behind. I had to keep the horses going, and going where they were supposed to go. There was a big whip to help make it happen. I also had to trip the bundle carrier, releasing a bundle of sheaves

Dad's threshing outfit and Model T car, about 1924. Although the smoke stack differs from that in the photo below, this may be nothing more than a spark-catcher deployed on the steamer in the upper photo. As such, both photos likely portray the Sawyer-Massey steamer Dad bought in the 1920s.

Dad and Mum. An unidentified person is standing in the wheel of the steamer.

Dad and Beth, and Russell McKellar, at steamer in 1922 or 1923.



Dad and his two 4-horse drawn binders. Dad stands to the right of Beth and Sam. Phillip Erbach is on his left. Either Pete Bunke or Bert Sharp are tending the second team. 1924-1926.

Mother would bring lunches to the men in the field. Some days she also brought her camera. That is likely Dad holding Beth, with a hired-man on the stook loader.

every so often. About the same time, it was my job to get the steamer ready in the morning. I can remember we were threshing at Jamieson's. Stook teams were supposed to be there at 7 a.m., so I had to get to the steamer by 5 a.m. to get it ready. I had to clean out all of the clinkers in the firebox that were created the previous day, and brush out the valves. I then had to get a fire going and have enough steam up to blow the whistle by 6 a.m. There were other whistles around the neighbourhood. I tried to be the first whistle of the day but this depended upon how long it took me to clean out the clinkers. It was a challenge to be ready before neighbouring outfits such as the Schienbein's. Dad ran the steamer in those days, Uncle Bob the separator, I was the fireman and Bob Walker served as water-man."

Beth remembered what harvest was like for the women and girls in the family. "I learned to milk cows when I was seven or eight years old, often milking three cows before going to school. During harvest time I would go to the pasture for the milk cows on the Shetland. Women milked, fed calves, separated milk, gathered eggs, then fed 13 to 20 people. There would be 10 to 15 men for a huge noon meal in the big farm kitchen, then lunch at 4 p.m., taken to the field. All the bread was homemade. There were no deep-freezes to prepare ahead."

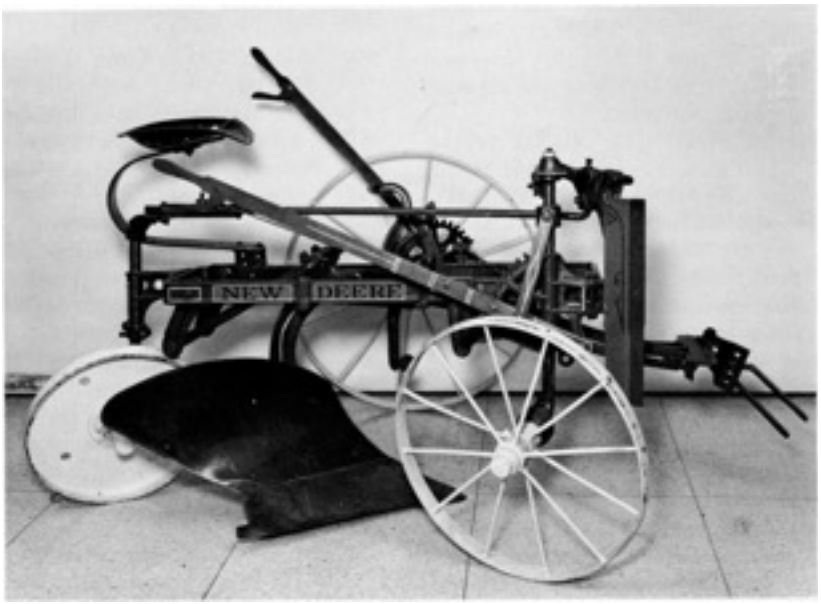
I can vaguely remember harvesting operations in this era. I remember there being two binders, a John Deere and a McCormick Deering. I can remember coming home from school and climbing aboard one of the stook

In the photo above, Mum has brought lunch (and maybe a bottle of beer) to the men working in the field. They include Bert Sharpe and Bob Walker. Keith, as he was known in those days, seems to think there is something good left in the bottle. The binder was drawn by three horses. The main role of the operator was to steer the horses, especially at corners, and to trip the bundle carrier to release 5 or 6 sheaves at a time, placing them to form rows with those released.

racks until quitting time. I can remember doing a bit of stooking, but this probably was when we only cut and stooked oats. I can remember the large crowds that Beth referred to, at the kitchen table and comments on how some of the teamsters were able to build a load on the rack that looked large but had a minimal amount of sheaves on board. I can remember coming home from University for Thanksgiving and helping with threshing oats. It was the day Don Larsen of the Yankees pitched the first 'no-hitter' in world series history against my beloved Dodgers. It was October 8, 1956. Probably the last time that we threshed oats into the loft.

Breaking and Ploughing

The moldboard plough was used by Grandpa and Jack Hartell to break the prairie sod on their homesteads. This was a one-furrow walking plough. It had two handles held by the farmer. In their case it was pulled by two oxen.



The Case Company had a race horse called Jay Eye See and they called a series of implements after this horse, including the Jay Eye See sulky plough in 1890. Dad mentions that he and Uncle Bob broke NW 11 with a sulky plough after Grandpa bought it in 1911. As you can see in the photo opposite it had a seat for the driver and a lever for depth control. It would be pulled by two, perhaps four, horses.

As far as I know, the sulky was just a one-furrow plough. They eventually 'ganged' two or more moldboards to form two-three- or more furrow ploughs. This is where six-horse teams came into the picture. More than three furrows probably required a tractor to pull it.

I don't know whether they used the sulky plough for general tillage but I imagine a disc implement was eventually used for pre-seeding and summerfallow purposes.

Seeding

Like most of the early settlers, Grandpa would broadcast his seed by hand. After a few years, broadcast seeders came on the scene. The land was then harrowed to cover the seed. Dad's 1984 account of his experience as a 16-year old in 1910 provides some insight into seeding and other farming practices at that time. He recalled that he had to seed the entire crop. "We used an 18-run Kentucky disc drill drawn by four horses. 1910 was an open spring and they ploughed 70 acres on NW3 with a gangue plough in March. The gangue plough had two discs cutting 9-10" on each disk. Most moldboard ploughs were 12-14". We could seed about 20 acres a day. There was 2/3 crop and 1/3 summerfallow. We would often burn the stubble and drill the seed in directly. Wild oats were becoming a problem by 1910. Grandpa tried to pull them by hand. In addition to the 70 acres on NW3, they seeded 200 acres on section 10. Crops consisted of wheat, oats and barley. They were cut with a 6 foot Massey Harris binder drawn by three horses." Dad continued "1910 was a dry year. Red Fyfe wheat yielded 20 bushels per acre. Marquis wheat came in later and yielded better."

Duncan's Recollections of the Tractors and Machinery.

"Grandfather, Samuel Acton, started out with 2 or 3 oxen, which he used for a few years, then had horses. Before Dad and Uncle Bob took over in 1919, he would probably have about 30 horses to do all the work for two sections of land. They had a steam engine to drive the separator for threshing. It was a huge Sawyer Massey with a 36-inch, Red River Special separator. The last year the steamer was used was 1939. Dad and Uncle Bob bought an Allis Chalmers tractor to drive the separator until 1948.

The one-way as it was also called, came in six- and eight-foot widths. It could be used for weed control and stubble management as well as for seeding. It could even be used for direct seeding. I believe we may have had horse drawn "Tiller Combines". I do remember the one pulled by the tractor.

Dad bought his first combine in 1941. It was a 6-foot Case, power take-off, driven by his McCormick Deering W30 tractor, bought in 1937. This was the first rubber-tired tractor bought in the Lemberg area. We straight-combined the wheat. Our first swather was a converted binder. An extended table made it possible to drop the swath off the end of the table. An 8-foot binder became a ten-foot swather. The pick-up on the combine wasn't too efficient. A lot of crop was lost. Our second combine was a Massey Harris, No.17, 8-foot bought in 1946. It was motor driven, and pulled by the W30 tractor. We also bought a 12-foot John Deere swather, a one-ton Ford truck to haul the grain, and a paddle type grain elevator to fill the bins. This sure beat hauling grain from the combine with a team of horses, and having to unload it into bins with a scoop shovel.

Sam came home after the war ended in 1946. He bought Uncle Harry Birch's farm near Wolseley. We helped him combine his crop until 1958, when he bought a Massey Harris 90SP from Stan Ingham. In 1948, we bought a Massey Harris model 21, self -propelled, 12 foot combine. Sam bought an Army truck. We put a box on it , with a spout on the side for hauling grain. We bought an auger-type grain elevator at this time.

In 1952, we bought a 27 Massey combine, with Dad, Sam and I sharing the cost. We also bought a hopper on a rubber-tired wagon to help haul grain. In 1956 we bought a 90 Massey combine and a 12-foot Cockshutt swather. We had a rye crop that was over 6-feet tall, and badly tangled. Cliff was helping me that year. We put a board behind the table for him to stand on. He kept the swath moving with a fork. It took us three days to do 35 acres. When we finished, I swore I would never grow rye again, and I never did.

Some of the tractors, as I remember them. There was an old Titan that wasn't used much. Then in 1937 we bought the McCormick Deering W30, on rubber. In 1940, we bought the Allis Chalmers for threshing. In

1946, we bought a Minneapolis Model U, about 35 horse power for $1600. We would sow the crop and do some summerfallowing with this tractor and an 8-foot Minneapolis one-way. We also had a 12-foot John Deere cultivator with duck-foot shovels. If the soil was loose, it did a fair job, but wouldn't penetrate in hard soils. In 1949, we bought another Minneapolis U. This one cost $1800."

Dad bought the W30 McCormick Deering tractor in 1937 and the first of two Minneapolis Us in 1946. Unlike the W30 that maxed out at 5 or 6mph, the Us could reach 25-30mph and were considered a bit dangerous, especially in the hands of teenage boys.

Drawing Grain

Dad recalled that grain was hauled to Wolseley until 1904 when rail came to Lemberg. The grain was bagged into 2 bushel bags with about 20 bags per load. With the Qu'Appelle Valley to cross, it meant that two teams were required to pull the load up the south hill. Often Grandpa would team up with another neighbour such as William Chew, Sandy Wilson or Bert Sharpe to do this. It would take about 2 hours just to cross the valley. They would leave home about 6 a.m. and not return until 8 p.m. Dad remembers being rousted from his bed early one morning to hold the bags while his Grandpa filled them for the 6 o'clock departure. The haul was hard on the teams, they were only able to make about three trips per week. People from Pheasant Forks would have to stop overnight at Actons or Sharpes (Stilborns and Websters would often stop at Actons). It would take two days for them to take the load to Wolseley and one day for the return.

We started hauling loose grain when the rail came to Lemberg. This was a cold trip, with the teamster walking a large part of the way to keep warm. William Allen used to walk all the way in and back.

We would start hauling as soon as we got some snow, however, one year there was good snow north of the valley and no snow to the south, so we had to transfer bags to a wagon that was left in the valley.

In 1903 Dad went to Wolseley with Walter Sherrin. It was in February and there was no snow from Birch's into Wolseley. The team played out; Walter was rough on the horses and started to beat them. Some of the people were very disgusted with this and were about to beat up Walter.

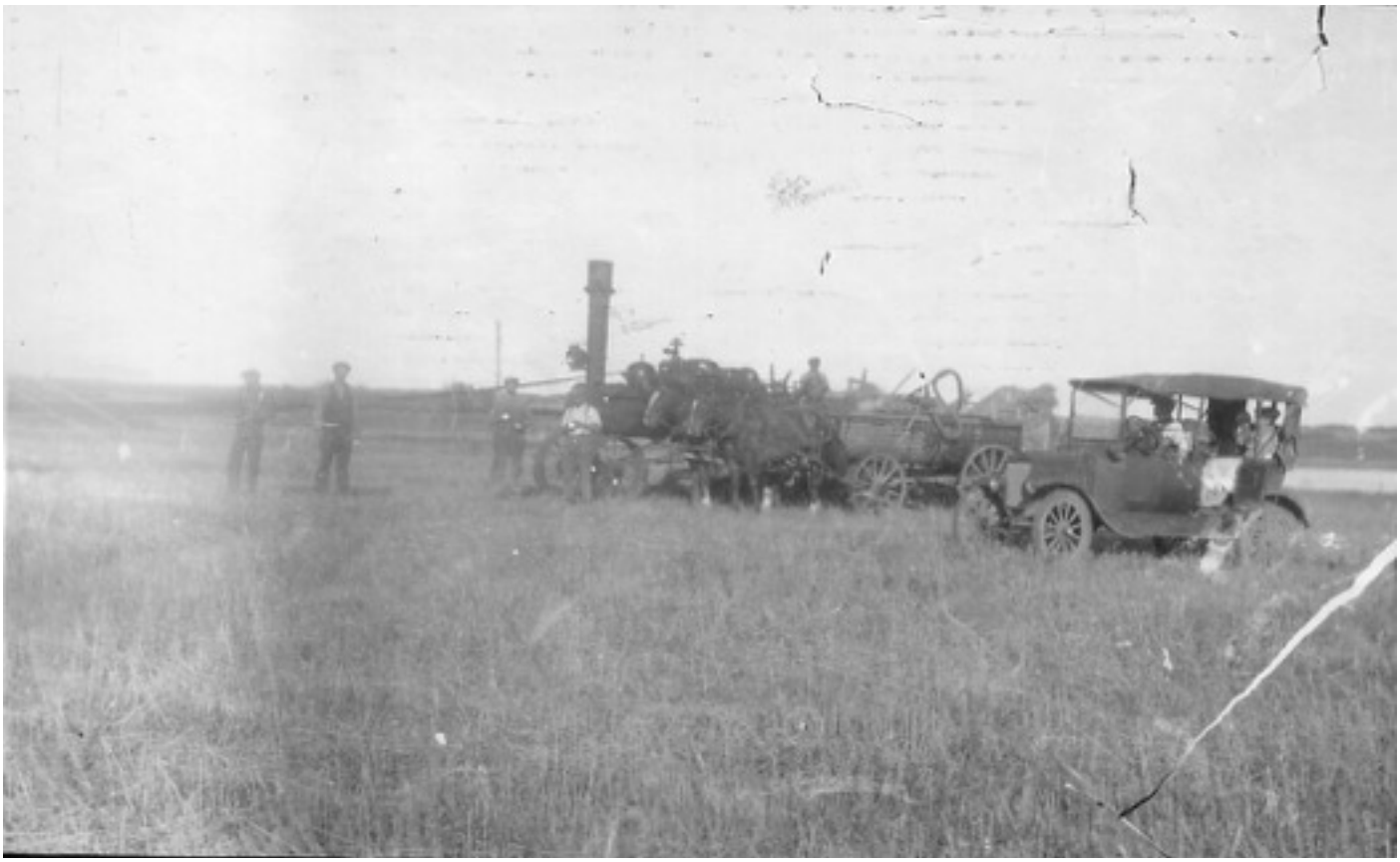
Sam related to Donald one of his recollections of hauling grain. It was his first winter at home after high school; Ed Shierer was the hired-man. "Then, Sam went on to describe the next year when he remained on the farm and how he and Ed Shierer had a lot of barley to haul. It stormed every day. They had King and Fly as one team. The other team was poor, so they split up King and Fly. This one day the snowbanks were so deep they couldn't get up the hill at Reitenbachs. The teams were up to their bellies in snow, and Sam to his waist. They finally got them unhitched, and put King and Fly together to pull the sleighs through the snow and up the hill. It was 3:30 before they reached town that day. Sam was glad to join the navy later that year."

Hauling Water

Sloughs would freeze up, generally by mid-December, and wells could not supply enough water for livestock. This meant hauling water from Heil's lake. A trip would be required every day and it was an awful job on a cold day. Water had to be "pailed" into the tank with a long-handled pail. Baffles would have to be removed from the tank to avoid freezing. As a result, motion of the water in the tank would create momentum on the sleighs and often cause the sleigh to slip off the track and overturn, necessitating a return to the Lake for more water. Bob Walker got fed up with this one March and decided they should melt snow, which they did successfully that spring. Heil's Lake went dry one winter and they had to go to a lake east of Jamiesons. In the late 1930s, PFRA came up with a dugout program that alleviated this part of livestock raising.

Cars

Above: Steve Beasley's first motor car, about 1915, and Sam Acton's 1916 Ford on the left. Below: Dad's 1916 Ford with a threshing outfit.



Dad at the wheel of the Tin Lizzie as he leaves the farm to head to Petawawa. Grandpa, Granny and Aunt Jenny are along for the ride.

Mum beside Grandpa's 1916 Ford, likely as she left Rosewood in 1916, and Dad before he left from leave in 1916.

Margaret, Audrey, Elinor, Clifford, Doris, Janet, Viola, Donald, Pearl and Shirley are standing beside the car. Duncan and Stanley can be seen inside it. The car in the background is likely the 1934-35 Ford.

Sam and Duncan with their calf club calves and with the 1934-35 Ford in the lane. Sam related that he and Duncan often took first and second place in the show. Whoever took first one year had to give the other first pick of calves the next year.

The 1940 Ford appears in many photos, including the one above left of Beth and Wilf on their wedding day, and the one of Cliff and Pat. It was replaced, finally, by the 1949 Pontiac (above right).

Horses

Early Horses. Samuel Acton, Grandpa, bought the first stud, Baron Rosewood, a yearling Clydesdale, from Bill Ellis in the valley in 1911. (Ellis had picked up a couple of mares and a stud from Ontario). He started using him for breeding as a 2 year-old (20 mares). After Dad joined the Army, Grandpa shipped him out to Shaunavon. Then Grandpa bought another from Bill Ismond. He was left in his stall too much and never developed properly.

Baron Rosewood was the first stud on Ten.

The Ellisboro Horse Breeders was formed with a $5.00 grant for use of Government horse. Dad was on this board but it faded away. Dad bought Immigrant, a three year-old red roan in 1933 from W.J.Young at Griswold. John Young was mother's uncle) Youngs shipped him to Neudorf, where Dad and Uncle Alex (Alex McKinnon) met the train. (This was the fall that Uncle Alex came to Lemberg). They put Immigrant out on the road with Bill Luscombe, Harold Perkins and Gus Batke travelling him. He serviced about 100 mares a year, in a three month period. He died from colic. Also had a two year-old blue roan bought at Wapella or Whitewood. He also was a clyde. Sold him to Matt Spendor. Harold Perkins and Uncle Roy (Roy McKinnon) travelled him for the 3-4 years that he was on the farm. He was still on the farm when Immigrant died. The fence at the end of the barn was built for him.

Jess was a foal sired by Baron Rosewood. She was the mother of King and Fly. She ruptured and died when King was born. Pat and Daisy were sired by the Ellisboro Horse Breeders stud. They were a great team but died from "sleeping sickness". Except for an old school pony, they were the only ones Dad lost from this disease.

Duncan Remembers Horses on the Farm

"I will start off with the big stone barn which was built in 1912 to accommodate the horses. It was 46 feet wide by 86 feet long with a hayloft 32 feet in height. This had a hay sling on a track to pull one-half a rack of feed up into the loft at one time. The loft had to be replenished with oat sheaves and hay several times each year to feed the many working horses. There also was a granary in the loft for oats, which were fed with a spout to the feed alley below. The feed alley was in the middle and the manger was on each side. I believe there were 8 stalls on each side, with two box stalls on the end for a stallion, maternity, etc. The floor was planking as this was easier on the horses hooves.

Dad and Grandpa with Kate and nine colts. These horses were probably sired by the Ellisboro Horse Breeders stud.

There usually were 4 six-horse teams working in the summer. They were mostly Clydesdale horses with some lighter driving horses. One that I remember was Sparky. She was a quiet Standard bred, black with a star on her forehead. She was the mother of Ben, another of our memorable horses. She died a few weeks after giving birth to him. He may have been raised by another mare.

Baron Rosewood was one of the stallions used probably about 1912-14. Immigrant's Pride was a strawberry roan stallion purchased from Uncle John Young at Griswold Manitoba. He was my mother's uncle. He had many prize winners for Clydesdales, including the Toronto Royal. Immigrant was from his best line of horses, but his roan colour was a discredit to him in the show-ring as bays with four white feet were the standard for this breed. They all were quiet mannered, very hard-working horses. I remember a team, King and Fly. They would never quit on a load, often breaking the harness or the double-tree.

Dad bought another stallion, probably in 1936. We named him McLeich after the scotsman we bought him from. He was a blue roan, very spirited, a slighter build than Immigrant. Dad sold him to Matt Spenda in 1939. The tractor was taking over from the horses in the late 1930's. We bought a W30 International on rubber in 1937. Dad sold a lot of his horses to pay for it.

Mother would bring lunches to the men in the field. Some days she also brought her camera. That is likely Dad holding Beth, with a hired-man on the stook loader. Pat and Daisy were likely in one of the teams.

Dad's two four-horse binders. More than likely Pat and Daisy are two of the horses in the photo above.

Dad was a very good horseman. He was very proficient in handling them, training them (breaking to work or ride) and also for caring for them; so taught us as youngsters.

We had shetland ponies, which we bought in Manitoba and brought them home in the back seat of our car (a 1928 Chevrolet). I think the seat was taken out to make room for the pony. We had many an episode in breaking them to ride and to pull a home-made cart. They were very quick and could turn sharply and head for the barn, so we had to be alert and learn riding skills in a hurry or else many a spill.

One horse I must give honourable mention to is Ben, son of Sparky. He was a purebred Standard bred, and was a stallion until he was three years old. Harold Perkins travelled him on a circuit with Immigrant for a year, with Ben on the cart and Immigrant led behind. Ben sired two colts from our shetland ponies Topsy and Birdie. The colts were Dick and Don. Harold Perkins lived six miles from our home so he drove home on weekends with Ben on a cart. Harold was an excellent horseman, so he trained Ben to run, and run he could do! He had sort of a hop to his stride, but I think he could have made a racing circuit. He never seemed to tire. Many a time he wanted to pass a team of drivers ahead of him. I recall catching up to George Calcutt with his classy team of drivers on the way into Lemberg. When I got to the highway the road was wider so I pulled alongside. George slapped his team but Ben loved a race and we pulled ahead in nothing flat.

Ben was always easy to handle. He would stand quiet while being hitched,even with children in the cutter but when you flicked the rein and said “get up” he was gone to school. He would stop in front of the barn waiting to be unhitched and then, until it was time to go home. Ben was a bit fast for Richard, who had to drive to school after I went to school in Lemberg and to University. One time Doris, Don, Cliff and the teacher Hilda (Jastram) Ruecker, with Richard at the reins, passed through Uncle Bob’s yard on the way to school. The dog (Toby) started chasing them. This put Ben into overdrive. There were two trails for the cutter. Ben took the wrong one so the cutter was off course and hit a snow bank higher than the cutter trail. This upset children, teacher, books, etc. Ben carried on after the cutter righted itself and stopped in front of the house to be unhitched.

In the springtime the road wasn’t fit for sleighing as there were too many bare spots, so I would ride Ben to the edge of town, take the bridal off, turn him, slap him on the rump and say “go home’. In an hour he would be back at our barn door.

In 1946, Dad remodelled our barn. By this time, horses were not used much, except in the winter. There were no built-up roads for car travel, so the barn was used mostly for cattle. There were only four horse stalls, 20 steel stanchions with a cement manger, and a gutter for the cattle. There were four box stalls for calves and feeder steers. There was a driveway down the middle for easier cleaning with a manure spreader, and cement floors throughout.

In 1962 we started loose housing for the cattle with 10 foot high corral walls, with a shed open to the south to protect them from the wind and snow. Heated watering bowls were also installed. As a result, the barn

Alex Thompson, Sam, Dunc, Lillian, Vera, Beth, Florence Thompson, Ethel Jamieson, Laura Thompson with Topsy.

Sam on Topsy with Laura, Ethel and Florence standing behind; Vera, Beth, Lillian and Alex in front.

wasn't used much, so in 1965 I installed grain-cleaning equipment in the loft and down-stairs, converting the barn to cleaning and bagging registered seed." **Duncan Acton, 2008.**

Topsy

Topsy and Birdie were the foundation of Shetland ponies on the farm. Richard recalls "Topsy foaled a pony called Dick and Birdie foaled another pony, Don. Ben was the father to both." Sam tells the story that he had a problem with falling off the horse when he was learning to ride. He convinced Dad that if he bought him a cowboy outfit the problem would be resolved.

Sam with cowboy hat bought as an incentive to keep him from falling off old Topsy.

Beth on Birdie and Sam on Topsy. Dunc, Doris and Elinor sitting on the ground.

Sparky

"In 1928 I was persuaded to run for councillor in Division III, a position I held for six years. It was quite a drive in the winter when very few cars were running at that time. I made some pretty cold trips with horse and cutter but one stands out more plainly than others. It was in March 1934 that I went to Neudorf with Sparky and Gip on a cutter. Adam Snider who worked for Jamieson, wanted to go along, so that bright, sunny morning we started out for Neudorf. The winter road at that time angled across most sections. There was not a lot of snow. It was a lovely day and I enjoyed the drive but about 4 o'clock in the afternoon the wind got up and by 6 p.m., when our meeting was over, the wind was pretty strong, but we started out for home, Adam and I, but just as we came out of Neudorf the road was pretty icy and as we turned the corner the cutter upset, robes and cushions, everything went out. I was able to hold the team in, although they had been standing in the barn all day. That upset did not help any towards being warm and the wind was blowing a hurricane by then, but after awhile we got straightened out and started for home.

Things were fairly good for awhile, but facing the wind was almost an impossibility so I let the horses have their own way and trusted Sparky to get us there. We came to a place where the snow had been dug out

before and now was filled in with loose snow. Just as we landed there the cutter sank down in loose snow and the double trees broke. I held on to the team and got them stopped and I had Adam hold on to the team while I got the cutter out of the drift. I got warmed up getting the double-trees tied up with the halter shanks, etc. but poor Adam, standing in the snow with just Oxfords and low rubbers, he started to cry and did not let up until we got home. He was that cold he could not help me to unhitch and I tied the double-trees to the dashboard so it took me some time. They had tried to phone Neudorf to find out what was wrong with me but the telephone lines were down due to the storm. It was 12:30 before I got home, five hours after we had left Neudorf."

Sam remembered this incident many years later, mentioning that Gip was a bronco Dad bought in Lemberg and that it was Sparky that Dad depended on to get him home.

"I remember Sparky. She was a quiet Standard bred, black with a star on her forehead, and two or three white feet. She was the mother of Ben, another of our memorable horses. She died a few weeks after giving birth to him. Ben may have been raised by another mare." (from Duncan). However, Sam thought Sparky was the horse with one white foot. In the photos to follow pertaining to Sparky and Ben, it seems reasonable to conclude that Sparky had only one white foot and it is Ben that had two.

Beth (left) and Duncan (right) on Sparky.

Flip

In cart: Janet Watson with Margaret barely visible beside her, Richard Acton, Stanley Acton, Robert Watson and Audrey Acton. Standing by horse:

.

Duncan standing on Flip, Samuel leaning against cart, and Richard, Stanley, Doris and Donald seated in cart.

Ben

"One horse I must give honourable mention to is Ben, son of Sparky. He was a purebred Standard bred, and was a stallion until he was three years old. Harold Perkins travelled him on a circuit with Immigrant for a year, with Ben on the cart and Immigrant led behind. Ben sired two colts from our shetland ponies Topsy and Birdie. The colts were Dick and Don. Harold Perkins lived six miles from our home so he drove home on weekends with Ben on a cart. Harold was an excellent horseman, so he trained Ben to run, and run he could do! He had sort of a hop to his stride, but I think he could have made a racing circuit. He never seemed to tire." (from Duncan).

Sam and Richard on top with Duncan and Donald standing beside Ben.

Duncan (top left), Elinor (top right), Bob Watson (bottom left) and Elsie Watson (bottom right).

King and Fly

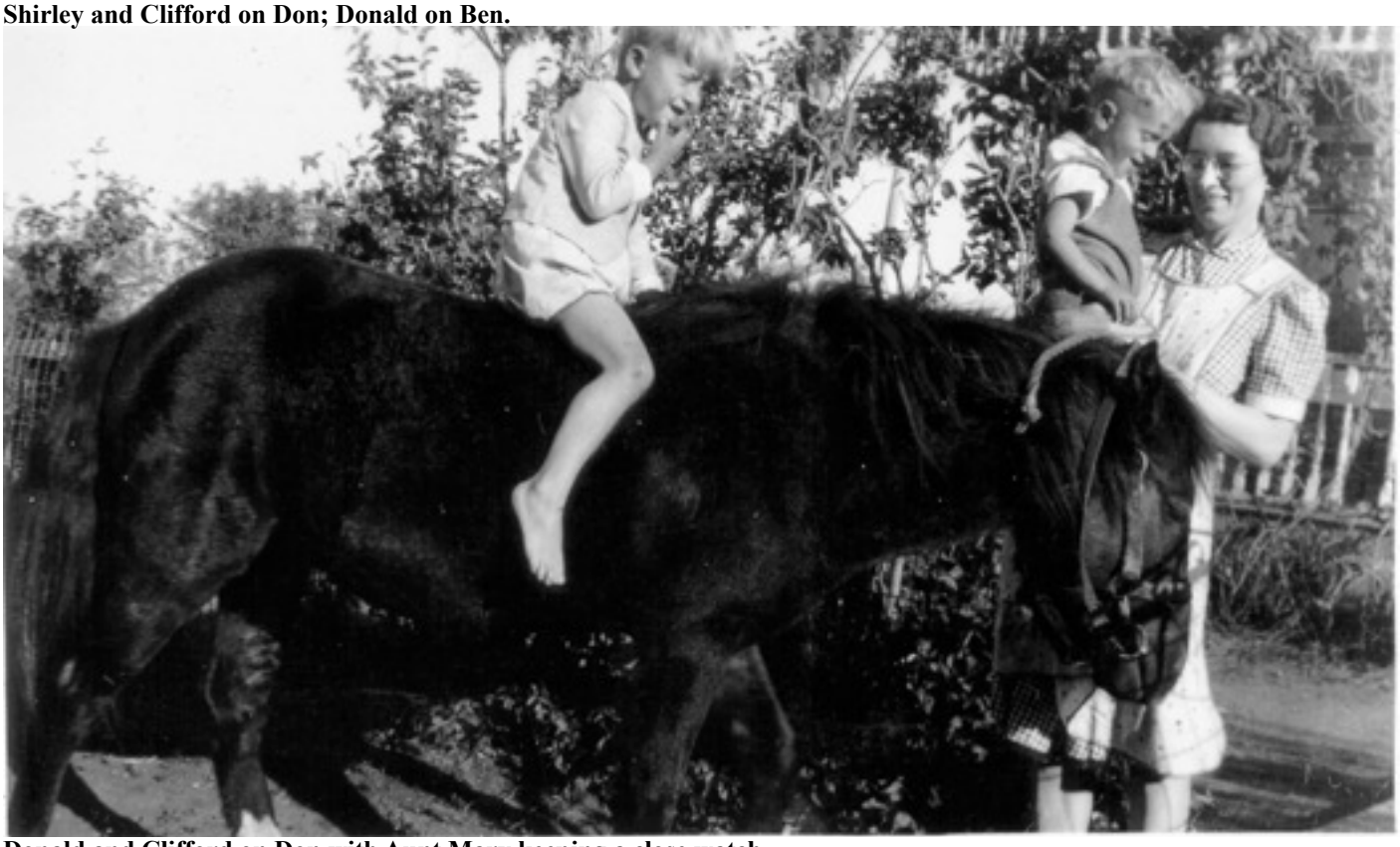
Duncan had fond memories of a team, King and Fly. They would never quit on a load, often breaking the harness or the double- tree. I had to remodel the double- tree by cutting down a steel four- horse evener into a double- tree. I had to ease them into a load by saying “steady, steady”, and keeping a firm rein. They would respond. This way I saved many traces.

King’s mother, Bess, who was also the mother of Fly, died in foaling King. We raised him on cow’s milk, so he was up around the house a lot. He would come into the house if the door wasn’t latched, eating any food. He also ate the skirt off Beth’s new dress, which was hanging on the clothes line. When milking cows, beware, as he could guzzle a pail of milk in nothing flat. We had fun playing tricks on him. In 1937 we had encephalomyelitis of the horse. We lost several of our best horses. They came out with a vaccine to prevent it in 1938, so had to vaccinate the horses for several years. We used to pinch the skin on King’s neck and say “pssst’. He would start dancing and moan.”

Sam standing by King (right) and Fly.

Don

Shirley and Clifford on Don; Donald on Ben.



Donald and Clifford on Don with Aunt Mary keeping a close watch.

Donald and Clifford on Don (above) and Beth with Don (opposite).

PART 2: FAMILIES ON TEN
Granny and Grandpa

Samuel Acton was born in Montreal in1857, the year that his father and mother, Richard and Elizabeth, and siblings William, Sarah, Elizabeth and Arthur emigrated. After several years there, the family completed their journey and landed at Rockingham in what would become Renfrew County, Ontario.

Samuel was baptised in the Anglican faith at Rockingham in 1864. Richard and Elizabeth had two more children, Richard and Alice. Richard died accidentally as a young child. Samuel's mother died during the still-birth of another child, Shenton, in 1864.

Mary Kulas came to be a housekeeper for Richard and family after Elizabeth's death. Richard and Mary married a few years later and had a family of ten children. Richard was well educated in England and supervised the education of his children, especially the older ones. Samuel had the added benefit of a carver-trained uncle, Arthur, from whom he learned many carpentry skills.

Samuel was still living at home at the time of the 1881 Census. It is likely that he met his "cousin" John (Jack) Hartell, who had recently immigrated, at this time. The next few winters were spent in Winnipeg. In the spring of 1883, Samuel and Jack took up their homesteads on section ten.

In the early days of homesteading, Samuel put his carpentry skills to good use, both on and off the farm. He likely built the early houses and barns on the farm, himself. In the

Wedding photo of Samuel Acton and Janet Walker in 1891, top, and Samuel and Janet Acton and family about 1898-99 with Samuel's father, Richard on the left, and with Richard Arthur (Dad), Janet (Granny), May, Nancy, Robert and Samuel (Grandpa) on his left.

off-season he built a creamery on the Perley Farm at Wolseley, worked on construction of buildings at Indian Head and built the first school at Rosewood.

Samuel married Janet Walker in Brandon in 1891. Janet was born at Blackbraes, Muiravonside in County Stirling, Scotland in 1859. Her school chum Elizabeth Wilson married Alex Martin. They immigrated to Canada and took up a homestead next to Samuel Acton. During a visit to her friend, Janet met Samuel Acton.

Samuel and Janet had seven children: Agnes Elizabeth, or Nancy, (1892), Richard Arthur (1894), Robert Walker (1896), Sarah Mae (or May) Hazel (1898), Samuel Percy (1900), Janet Ethel (1901) and Doris Mary (1903). Samuel and Doris contracted diphtheria in the fall of 1904. They never fully recovered, Samuel dying in 1905 and Doris in 1906.

The first Rosewood School was built by Samuel Acton in 1891. Mr. Grant, teacher, and two Sharpes, three Thompsons, Agnes Elizabeth (Nancy) and Richard Arthur Acton (Dad) in front centre, two Beasleys and two Simpsons.

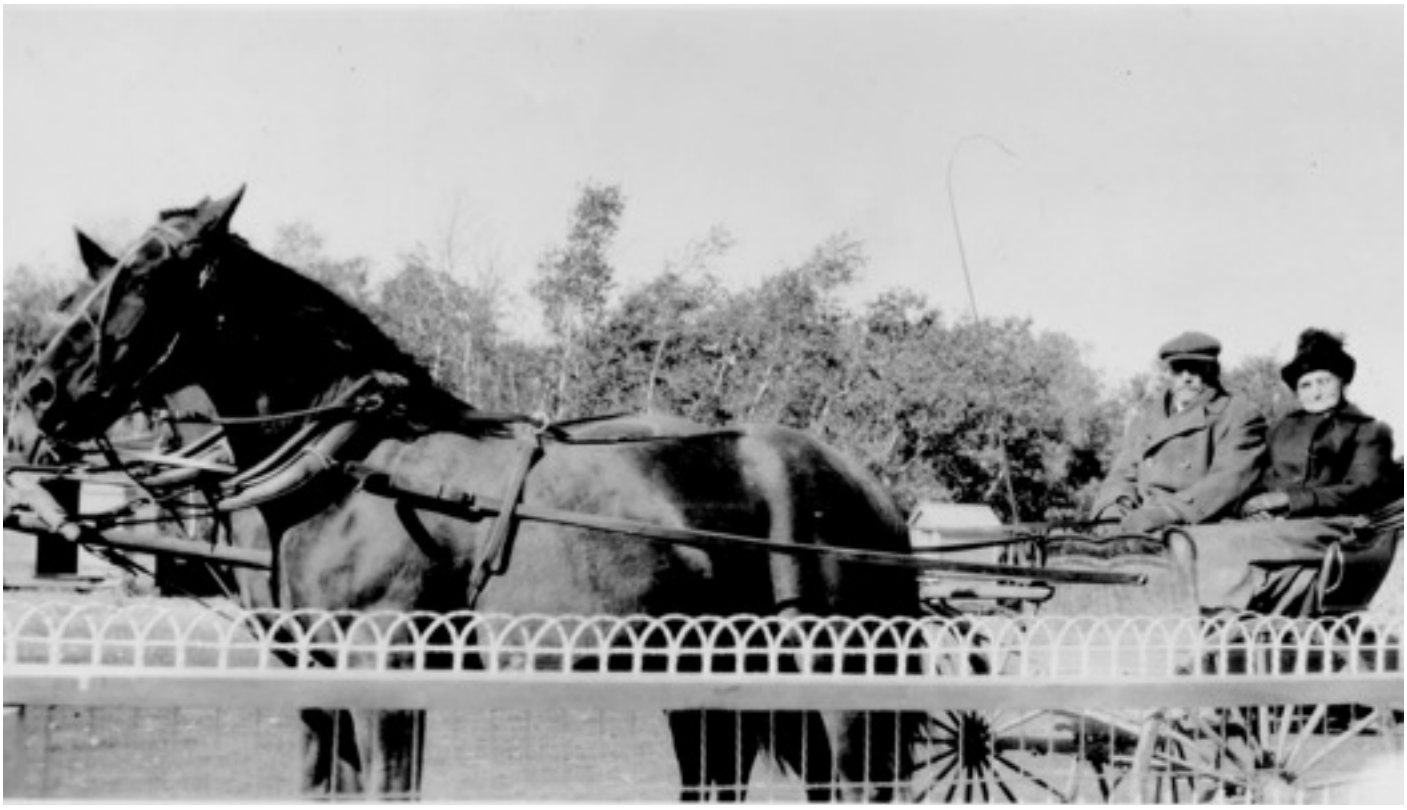
Samuel and Janet Acton at their farm home. Daughters Jennie and May stand on either side of their father (Grandpa) with Annie McKinnon standing on the right-hand side. Mary and Sarah Johnston sit beside Janet (Granny).

Samuel (Grandpa) and Janet (Granny) with Acton and Watson grandchildren. Vera and Beth sit on Granny's knee, Bill Watson on Grandpa's and Doris, Sam, Muriel and Jean Watson sitting on the ground.

Richard Acton, Samuel's father, came to live with them in 1897. It is hard to imagine the crowded living conditions the family experienced in the early years. Nancy and Dad would be born in the two room shack described previously. The 1901 Census tells us that Granny and Grandpa, Samuel's 74 year-old father, six children including baby Samuel, Robert Walker and 17 year-old nephew William Martin all lived in the two room shack with the kitchen lean-to. Things would improve a bit when they put the two bedrooms upstairs in 1904 but by this time there would be Granny and Grandpa, seven children, Grandpa's elderly father, and not to mention people like Bob Walker, William Martin and perhaps others that worked on the farm.

In 1906, when they were still in the old house, there were two hired-men (Robert Walker and Frederick Harris) in addition to Granny and Grandpa and their six surviving children (Samuel had died but Dora was still alive). Samuel's father, Richard, was listed as "Head" at a separate dwelling (perhaps the Hartell house). For whatever reason, William Martin was not enumerated with them.

What a difference after the house was built in 1908. Six bedrooms up and two on the main floor. And an attic that could hold unlimited numbers in the summer, not to mention the balcony on a warm summer night. An examination of some of the Census records tells us that even the new house must have been full to overflowing on many occasions.



Samuel and Janet Acton as they left farm home for a a trip to Lemberg. This photo may have been taken before Grandpa bought his first car.

By 1911 Richard Acton had died, Samuel and Janet and their children Nancy, Richard, Robert and Jennie were still at home. William Martin was there, as were William Watson and Sandy Wilson, both labourers.

Numbers had dwindled slightly by the time of the 1916 census. Soldiers were enumerated in their home districts. Dad and Niel Bundgard were listed at Petawawa at the time of the Census and Robert Wood as a soldier in overseas service. Richard Acton had died and Aunt Nancy was married by this time so all that remained of Grandpa and Granny's family were Robert, May, and Jennie. Charles Huguet (22 years old, born in Russia) was a servant. This is likely the one and same as Carl Huget that lived in Lemberg. Frank Zialkoski and Harry McLauchlin were labourers, William Martin a lodger and Arthur Acton, an uncle, helped fill the house after the soldiers left.

Grandpa would be farming all of section ten after the Hartells left in the late 1890s. A quite a bit of breaking was required on the NW1/4 as Hartell had not done any. It is reasonable to propose that Grandpa had most of the breaking done on Ten by the early 1900s and by 1910 he started looking for more land; perhaps looking ahead to the need for enough land for his two sons. In the next few years he nearly doubled his land base with purchases in sections 11, 13, 3 and 9.

Samuel (Grandpa) and Janet (Granny) spent the winter of 1920-21 in Victoria, near the home of Grandpa's sister Elizabeth (Lil) and her husband Harry Birch (extreme right).

Granny and Grandpa at their Martin St. home in Lemberg. Samuel Acton, a studio print from Pat Acton. His appearance is very similar to that in the Council photograph, below, suggesting a 1920s date.

Lemberg Town Council. Back row: Joe Gay, Karl Miller, Walter King, John Pfiefer. Front row: Samuel Acton, Tom Fletcher, ...Putnam, and John Sauer.

Grandpa and Uncle Bob carried on the farm during the war. It likely was a problem getting adequate help as a letter from Dad to Grandpa when Dad was still in Belgium in the spring of 1919 refers to the desire for Dad to get home to help with the seeding. Dad returned from overseas at the end of June so would be available for harvest that fall. He, Uncle Bob, Aunt Jennie and perhaps Aunt May would likely be present on Ten in the winter of 1919-20.

After Grandpa died, Granny (second from left) and Aunt Jennie (fourth from left) spent a winter in Victoria at the home of Lil (far left) and Harry Birch. Also present are Alice Gardiner (third from left side) and Nancy Watson.

Grandpa turned his farm over to his two sons, Richard and Robert, on 1 April 1920 but a letter from Dad to Mum in September 1920 suggests Granny and Grandpa were still on the farm at that time but were planning on spending the winter in Victoria. This they did, on Oliver Avenue in Oak Bay, a location fairly close to Aunt Lil and Harry Birch on Chaucer St. It is not known when Grandpa bought the house in Lemberg. If he bought it in April 1920, when he turned the farm over to Dad and Uncle Bob, it doesn't seem as though he began to live there at that time.

Samuel Acton served on Lemberg Town Council during his retirement. I am not aware of any other public office that he held. He suffered from stomach cancer and died from liver cancer at the home of his daughter May Watson in 1927. He was 70 years old. Granny and her daughter Jennie continued to live in their Lemberg home until Granny's death in 1948.

Janet Acton (Granny) and her daughter Jennie (Aunt Jennie) in front of their home in Lemberg.

My Grandmothers House

Geraniums and sweet peas grew around the entrance to the brown duplex where

my Grandmother lived. A wrought iron gate, a sidewalk and wire fence separated her entrance from Aunt Mae's. The aroma of fresh bread wafted through the air as you opened the door of the front porch. The second door lead into the hall. Looking up, a stairway led to the bedrooms, to the right a motley assortment of coats, hats, jackets and sweaters hung from hooks on the wall. The box telephone had a prominent place at the end of the hallway. If you turned the crank handle a voice said "Number please". A twisted rope-like cord hanging from the ceiling transmitted power to a light bulb, which dimly lit the hall.

Dad and his mother, Janet (Grannie) Acton.

An arch divided the parlour and dining room. Floral linoleum with a beige base covered the floor except for around the edges where it was varnished. All of the walls had wallpaper of different colours and designs. An ornate walnut table stood in front of the picture window in the parlour. This was the place of honour for the Family Bible and was surrounded by pots of red and pink geraniums. The brown leather Winnebago couch, shiny with age, was covered with colourful afghans and comfy cushions. Granny often sat in a brown, easy chair near a coal and wood heater, Bible in her lap and knitting needles in her hands. There were family pictures on the wall -- an angelic little cousin, Lilian, who died from a ruptured appendix, and Grandpa Sam who died soon after I was born. Above the archway a long narrow picture of African jungle animals in brilliant yellow, brown and grey seemed ready to pounce on me. The dining room table surrounded by leather-bottomed chairs, with Granny's cushioned armchair at the head, was covered with cream-coloured oilcloth. On the sideboard a green china dish with embossed roses held pens and pencils, a golden hen held precious papers in its nest, a man and woman weather vane supposedly foretold the weather. The mantle clock sat on the shelf above and was always set fifteen minutes ahead of time. Near it, all the family mail that came to Drawer B, Lemberg, Sask. was safely stored. A Singer sewing machine sat in the corner next to the window. Above it an embroidered plaque read "You are nearer to God's heart in a garden than anywhere on earth".

How could such a tiny little kitchen produce a continuous supply of cookies, scones and bounteous meals for hungry visitors. The coal and wood stove had a warming oven for left over toast (today we call them croutons) and a storage place for sad irons. The reservoir held the only source of warm water and the oven not only baked food fit for a king but also warmed cold feet. A cupboard held all the dishes, pots and pans with a counter for baking or for the dishpan.

The back-kitchen contained the only sink, with an iron hand pump to draw water from the cistern in the basement. We washed our hands in the basin then let the water drain into a pail below.

Steep, dingy steps led to the basement, the only place for keeping food cool. Shelves were lined with preserves, and vegetables were stored in bins.

The upstairs had three bedrooms. All had iron bedsteads with hard cotton mattresses and a generous supply of handmade quilts and feather pillows. Each room had dressers with mirrors, a commode with chamber pots and a chair. The room I shared when I went to High School also had a wooden table for doing homework.

I never thought of Granny's house as being shabby or inconvenient. All that mattered was the feeling of warmth and love that filled that humble home. Going to Granny's house was like having roses in December.

"My Grandmother's House" was written by Elinor Relf, describing the Lemberg home of Samuel and Janet Acton. Elinor is seen at the front gate of this house in the photo opposite.

Auntie Martin- Auntie Martin, nee Elizabeth Wilson, was born in Falkirk Scotland. Her sister, Jane Wilson, who also married a Martin, was John Willie Stilborn's mother. According to Arthur Stilborn, it was this relationship that she was fondly called by everyone, 'Auntie Martin'.

Auntie Martin and her husband Alex farmed in section 14, where the Calcutts farmed later. It was she that introduced Granny to Grandpa. They remained lifelong friends.

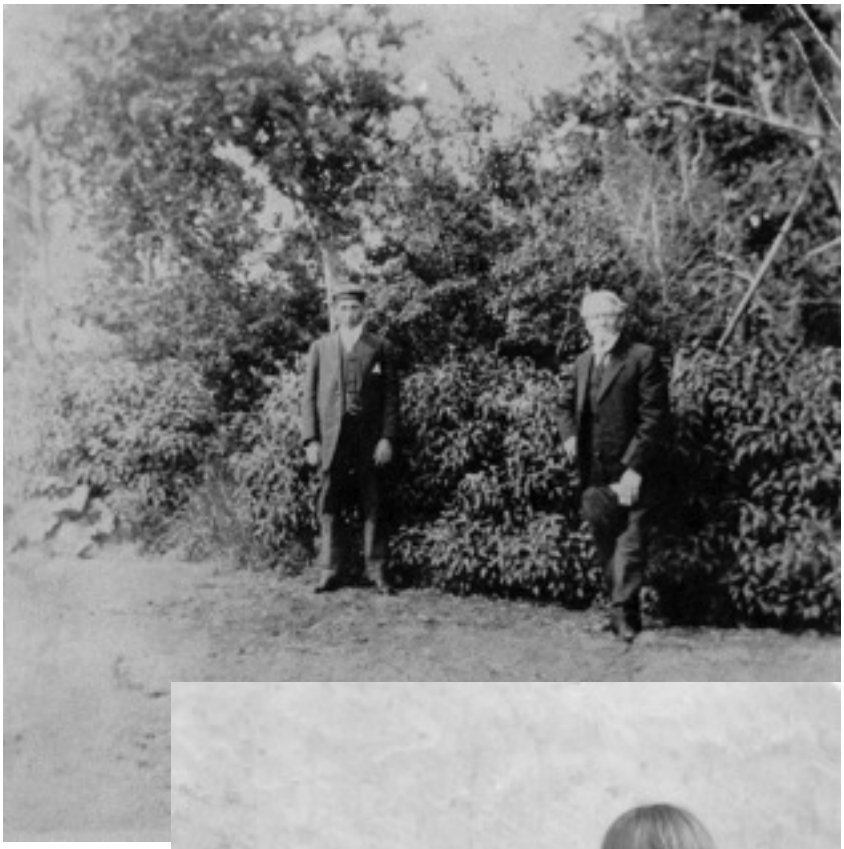
Granny (left) and her lifelong friend Elizabeth Willson (Mrs. Alex Martin or "Auntie Martin"). Audrey, Doris, Aunt Sarah and Donald also can be seen in this photo.

Mum and Dad

Richard Arthur Acton (Dad) was born on his father's homestead on 2 July 1894, the first son and second child of Samuel and Janet Acton. Although his "official" birth certificate indicates a May birth, this appears to be an error as he always claimed his birthday to be in July and this is supported by the 2 July 1894 birth recorded in the 1901 Census. Dad was named after "Uncle Arthur" but it is uncertain whether it was Arthur Acton, Grandpa's brother that disappeared in the Gold Rush, or Arthur Acton, Grandpa's great uncle that often came to the farm.

Dad completed Grade VIII at Rosewood School and with the exception of a short course in gasoline engines at the University of Saskatchewan, he had no further formal education. He became heavily involved in many activities on his father's farm at an early age.

Dad joined the Canadian Army in 1916 and fought in France from August 1917 until the end of the war. His 60th Battery became part of the Allied Occupational Force that ensured the Germans retreated to the Rhine. Following this, he made several trips to relatives in Scotland. The 60th had to return to France and Belgium in 1919 to dispose of equipment, horses, etc. Dad was demobilized 28 June, 1919 with a rank of s/smith (shoe smith).



Top: Richard Arthur Acton (Dad) and his great uncle Arthur Acton who often visited at the Acton farm. This photo was taken shortly before Dad joined up in 1916. Bottom: Richard Arthur (Dad) and his sister Agnes Elizabeth (Nancy) about 1896 or 97.

Annie Bell McKinnon (Mum) was born on the McKinnon farm in the St. David's District north of Oak Lake, Manitoba on 12 August 1892. She was the eldest daughter and second child of Duncan and Elizabeth McKinnon.

Annie Bell McKinnon (Mum) with her sister Eva on her right and cousin Alma on her left. Her Dad, Duncan McKinnon, is sitting in the car.

Mother attended Hagyard School, a rural school near their farm. She completed her Grade VIII there, but could not write the Departmental exam as a goitre was starting. She made the exam the next year, enabling

On the left is Dad, the day he got his uniform. On the right are Dad, Niel Bundgard, May Acton, Sarah Johnston and Annie Bell McKinnon.

her to carry on into High School. Her parents gave her a locket for this accomplishment. As she said many years later "I have kept it to this day. Two granddaughters have already worn it on their wedding day." After staying home for two years while her sister Eva got her Grade VIII, her father drove her to Kenton for Grades IX and X. She then went to Oak Lake for Grades XI and XII but the necessity for a goitre operation, at Rochester, prevented her from completing Grade XII.

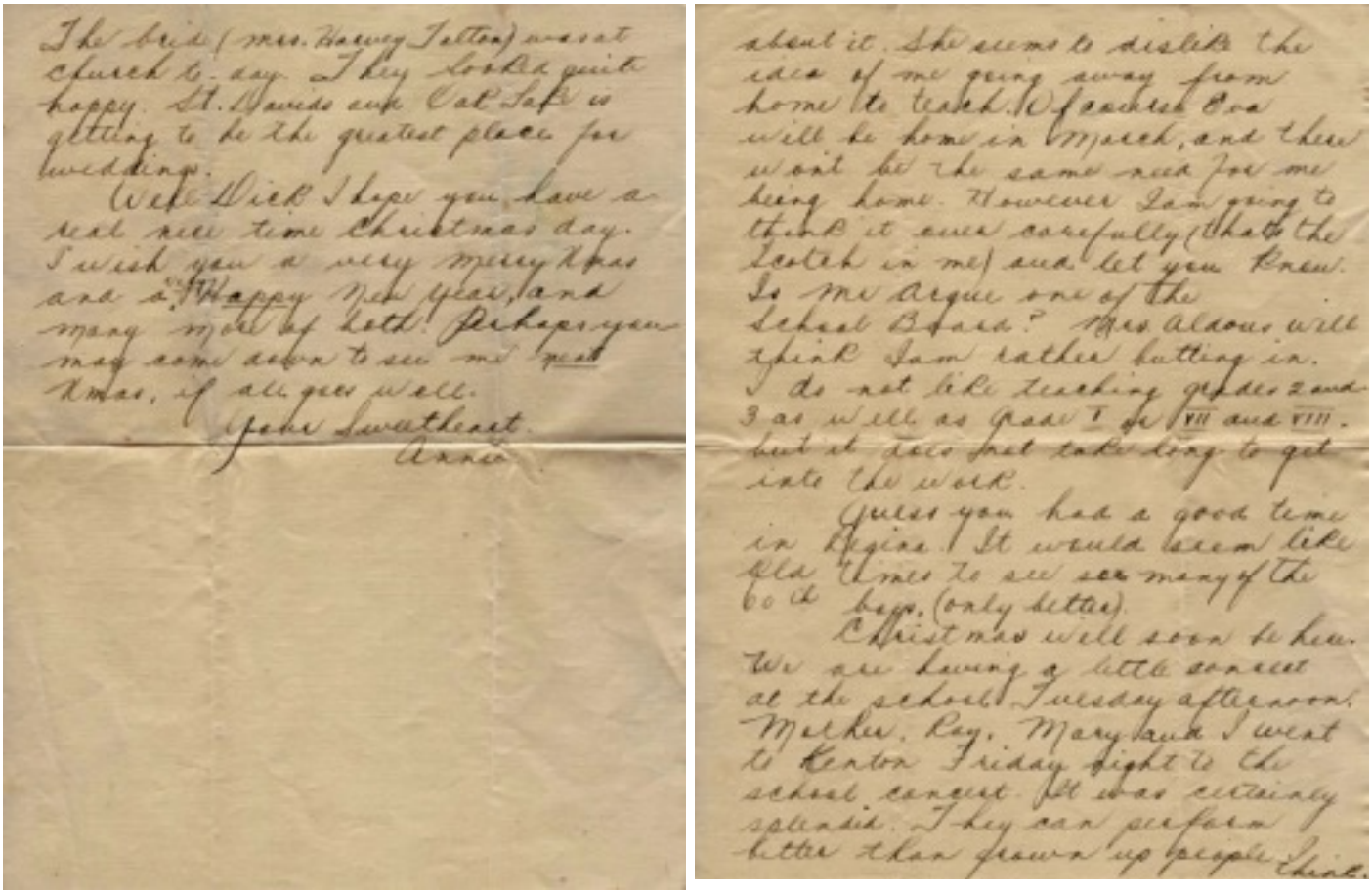
She then obtained a third class certificate at Brandon Normal School, applied for and was granted a permit to teach at Rosewood for two years. This is where she met and began her romance with Dad. As she said, "About this time Dad decided to enlist as the war looked pretty grim. Mae, Bob and I saw him off to Petawawa, Ontario, and I didn't see him for about four years. However, we corresponded all the years".

Mother left Rosewood in June 1916. She went to Brandon Collegiate to complete her Grade XII, which she did, except for Algebra, in the spring of 1917. She then went to Regina Normal School to obtain a first class interim certificate. She was delighted to be accepted to teach the primary room in Grenfell in the fall of 1918 but the Asian flu necessitated frequent school closures so it was discouraging. Then, on 5 October 1918 her father died and Mother, unwillingly, gave in to her mother's wishes to return to help on the farm.

Not long after returning to the farm, Mother was asked to teach at nearby Verity school, which she did for a year. She also taught at Kenton for a six-month period before her marriage.

Dad returned from overseas, to the farm where he was born and raised, in late June 1919. Shortly after his return he made a trip to Oak Lake Manitoba to visit Annie Bell McKinnon, the Rosewood school-teacher that he had not seen for more than three years. She described their reunion as follows: "Now the war was over and Dad didn't get his discharge for almost six months. In fact, I didn't know that he had reached home as a storm had put the telephone out. Nevertheless he got on the train and came down. Called me by phone but Mother said I was away picking saskatoons, car and all, so he had to get a ride out. What was my surprise upon reaching home to hear my mother say "Dick is here", and me in a pair of boys overalls. However, as they were all eating supper, I sneaked upstairs and changed. I found Dad had changed from a boy to a man and it seemed we had to get acquainted all over again."

Several pieces of correspondence between Dad and Mother provide some insight into their lives between the July 1919 reunion described above and their marriage in February 1921. A December 1919 letter on the next page, informs us that an engagement ring has been bought. Also, that a vacancy has arisen in one of the rooms at the Lemberg School. However, Granny McKinnon is reluctant to have Mother teach away from home. Dad and the boys in the 60th celebrated the first of many reunions at this time.



A 3-page letter from Annie McKinnon to Richard Acton in December 1919.

An 8-page letter, dated 22 January 1920, from Mother to Dad, begins on the next page. It tells us that Dad has been down to Oak Lake and Mother is wearing the ring. Dad appears to be having problems with a cold and Aunt Mary thinks he has a "nose"problem. It should be remembered that he spent a few months at Fort San, not with TB but with some other lung problems. It may be speculation but some believe poisonous gas inhaled during the war may have been the instigator.

The letter on this page is written by Dad on September 5, 1920. Dad relates that Aunt Maggie and his Dad and Mother were over to Summerberry to visit relatives. I think Aunt Maggie is likely Frank Everett's wife. He also indicates his parents plan on spending the winter in Victoria and that there has been a surprise party for them. He speaks as though a "Harold" and a "Tom" are courting Aunt May. It is not known who they are.

Oak Lake, Man
Jan. 22. 1920

Dear Dick:-

No mail this week
At last it is to be cold tog
for it. I wish we had
rural mail delivery.
I thought of writing to you
last night, but got
interested in what the
boys call "foolish work"
Is that what you call
it? How is your cold?
Would like to call you
up and find out. You
would likely say that
you don't have a cold.
Are you still Curling?
I suppose the Bonspiel
is on. Is it? You
will find it pretty
cold driving home from
Lemberg.

Two weeks from
to-morrow night since
you went home. It
seems like a long time
I think I shall soon
be used to the feel

of your ring. None of the
girls have seen it yet.
I am writing this at
school - noon hour.
It is rather noisy, being
too cold for the boys to
play outside.

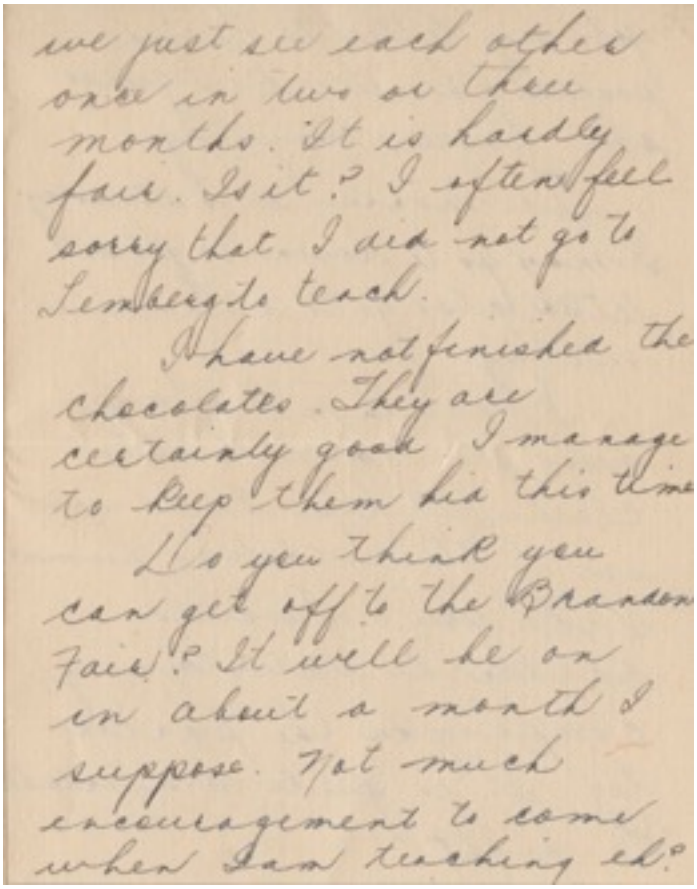
My! but it was cold
this morning. The fire-
man was just getting
the fire on when we
arrived.

How do you all like
the Rosenfeld teacher?
Does she board at your
place?

How is May? Tell her
she owes me a letter
now.

Have you been to any
dances lately? Have a
good time? I hope so.
I haven't been any place
lately. I think Alex is
going to a dance in town
to-night. I may get this
letter posted. You
won't be expecting it,
but a week seems a
long time to wait for a
letter, especially when

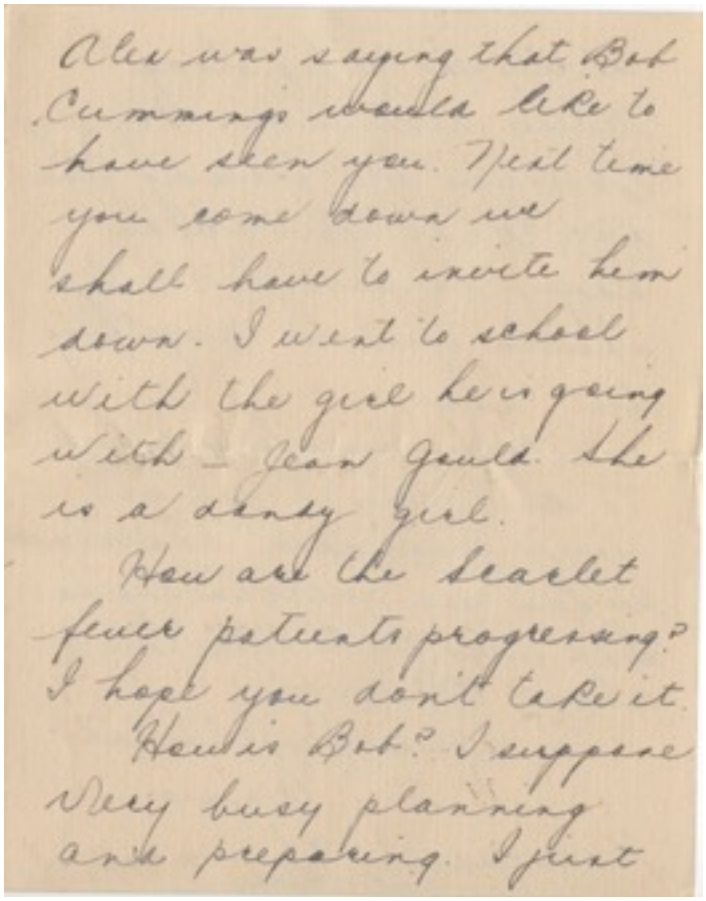
An 8-page letter from Mum to Dad dated 22 January, 1920 on this and the next page.



we just see each other once in two or three months. It is hardly fair. Is it? I often feel sorry that I did not go to Lemberg to teach.

I have not finished the chocolates. They are certainly good. I manage to keep them hid this time.

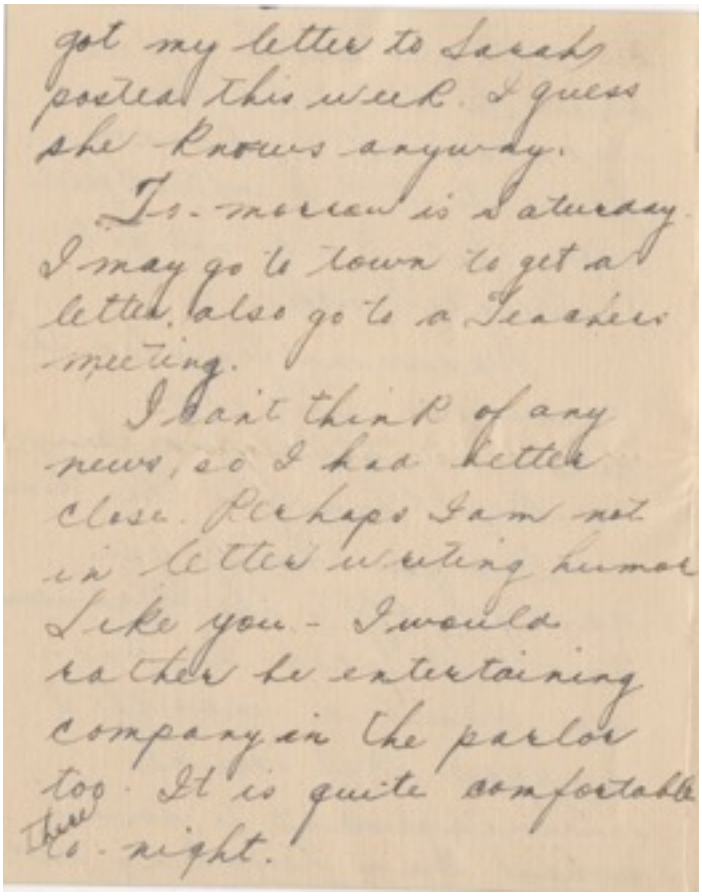
Do you think you can get off to the Brandon Fair? It will be on in about a month I suppose. Not much encouragement to come when I am teaching eh?



Alex was saying that Bob Cummings would like to have seen you. Next time you come down we shall have to invite him down. I went to school with the girl he is going with – Jean Gould. She is a dandy girl.

How are the Scarlet fever patients progressing? I hope you don't take it.

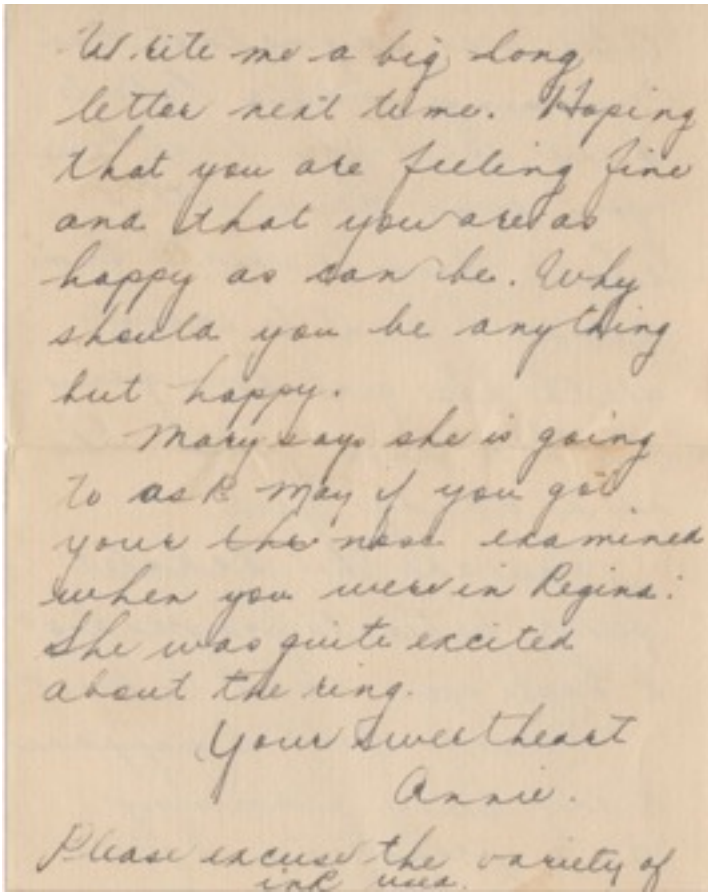
How is Bob? I suppose very busy planning and preparing. I just



got my letter to Sarah posted this week. I guess she knows anyway.

To-morrow is Saturday. I may go to town to get a letter, also go to a Teachers meeting.

I can't think of any news, so I had better close. Perhaps I am not in letter writing humor like you – I would rather be entertaining company in the parlor too. It is quite comfortable here to-night.



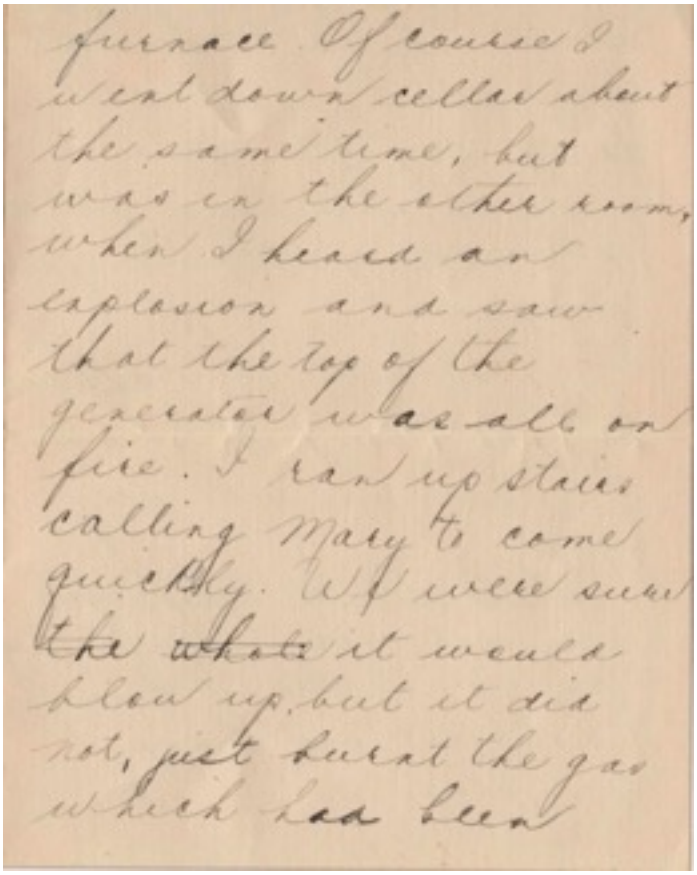
Write me a big long letter next time. Hoping that you are feeling fine and that you are as happy as can be. Why should you be anything but happy.

Mary says she is going to ask May if you got your throat examined when you were in Regina. She was quite excited about the ring.

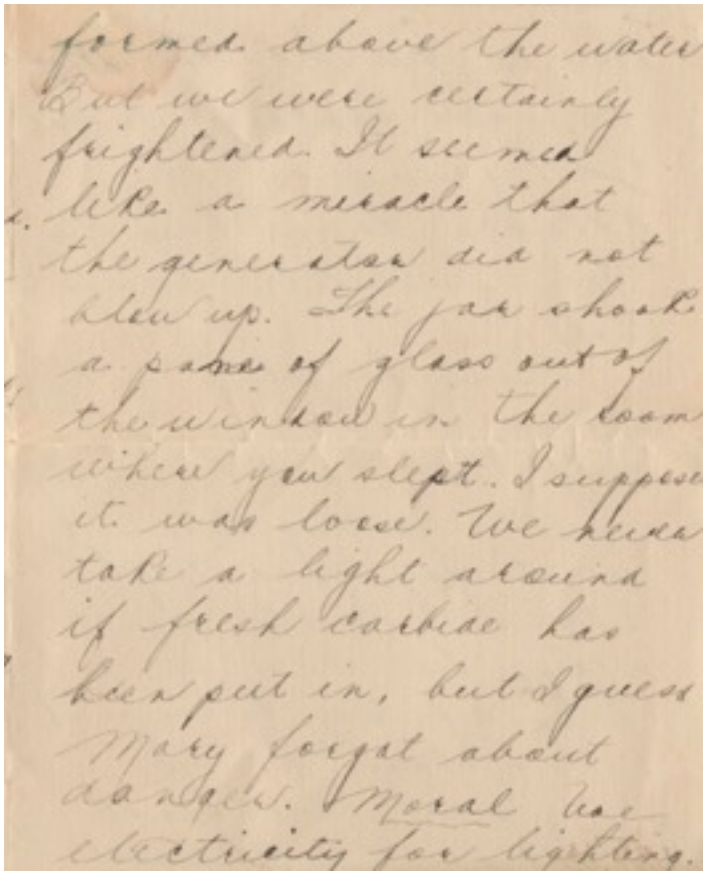
Your Sweetheart
Annie.

Please excuse the variety of ink used.

In the second letter, Dad talks about some girls



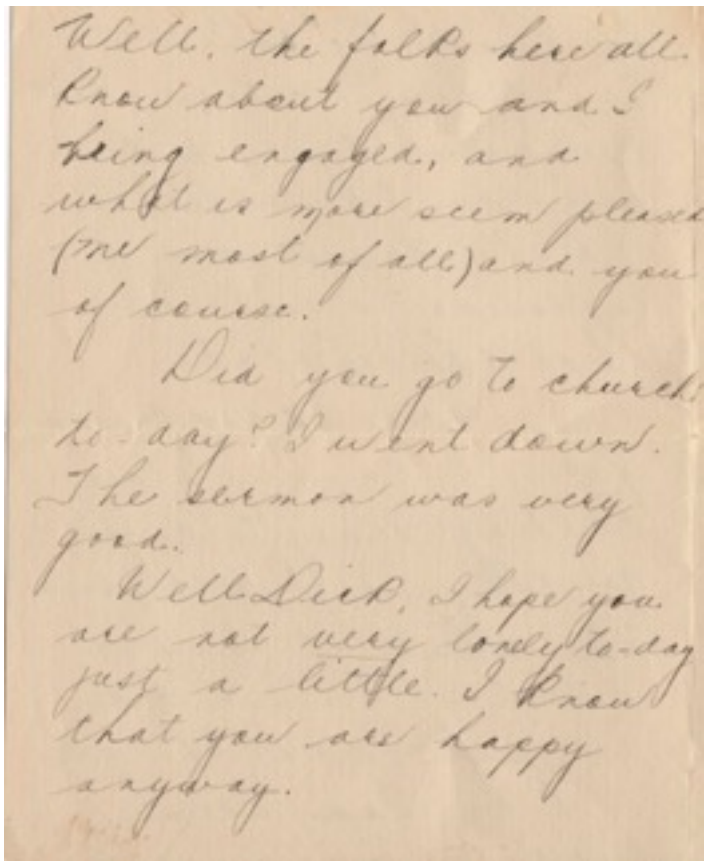
furnace. Of course I went down cellar about the same time, but was in the other room, when I heard an explosion and saw that the top of the generator was all on fire. I ran up stairs calling Mary to come quickly. If were sure the whole it would blow up, but it did not, just burnt the gas which had been formed above the water. But we were certainly frightened. It seemed like a miracle that the generator did not blow up. The jar shook a piece of glass out of the window in the room where you slept. I suppose it was loose. We have to take a light around if fresh carbide has been put in, but I guess Mary forgot about dangers. Moral use electricity for lighting.



Well, the folks here all know about you and I being engaged, and what is more seem pleased (me most of all) and you of course.

Did you go to church to-day? I went down. The sermon was very good.

Well Dick, I hope you are not very lonely to-day just a little. I know that you are happy anyway.

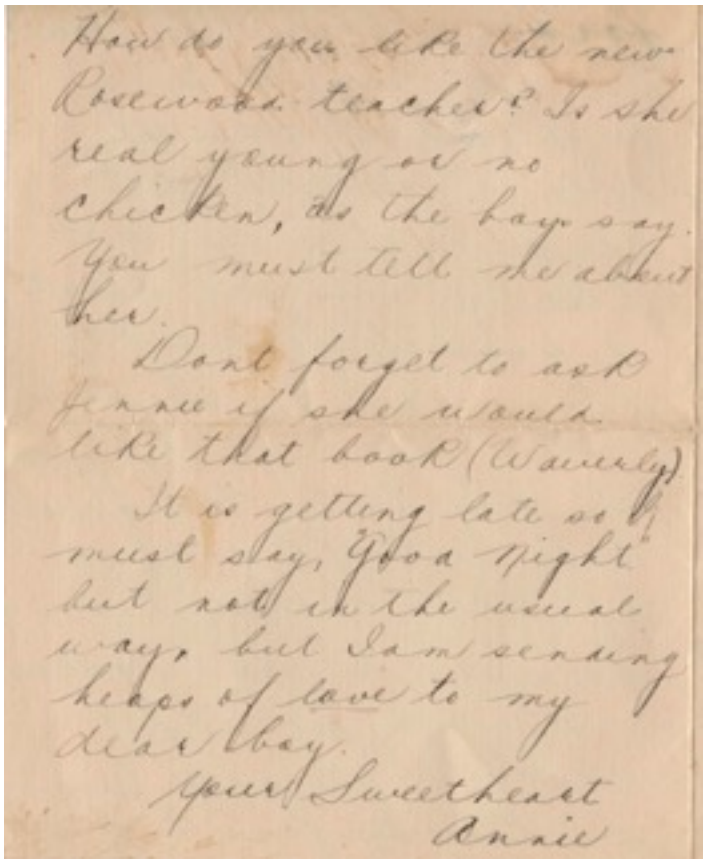


How do you like the new Rosewood teacher? Is she real young or no chicken, as the boys say. You must tell me about her.

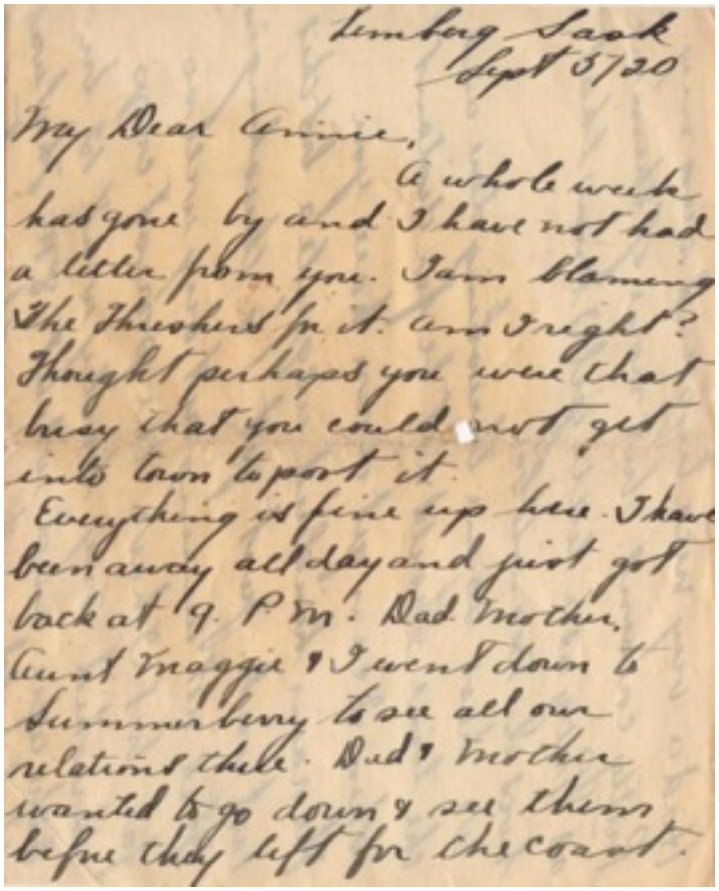
Don't forget to ask Jennie if she would like that book (Waverly).

It is getting late so I must say, Good night but not in the usual way, but I am sending heaps of love to my dear boy.

Your Sweetheart
Annie



This letter appears to be the last four pages of an 8-page letter written to Dad from Mother in February or March of 1920.

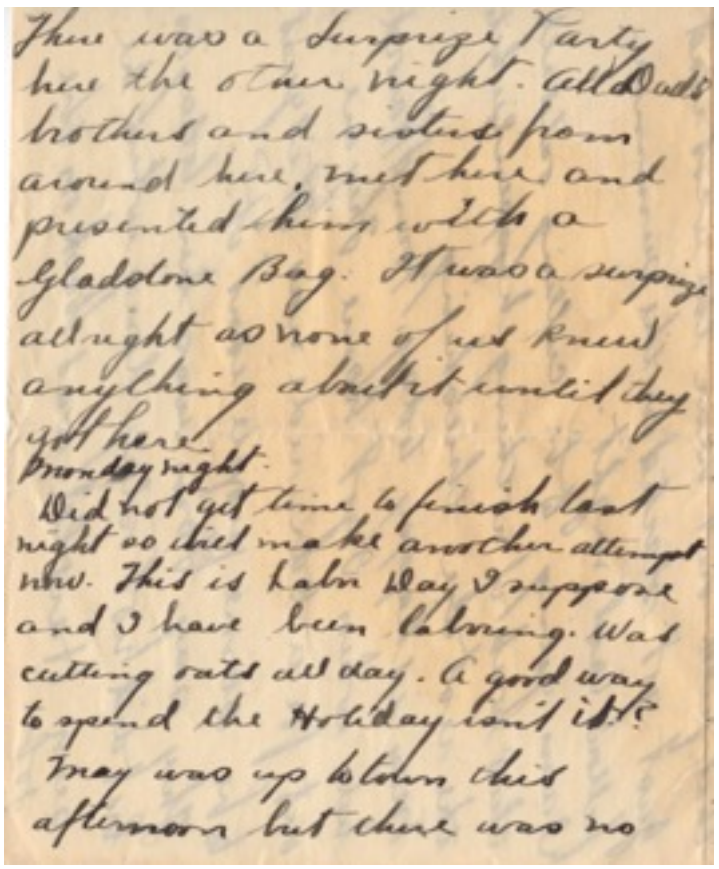


Lemberg Sask
Sept 5/20

My Dear Annie,

A whole week has gone by and I have not had a letter from you. I am blaming the threshers for it. am I right? I thought perhaps you were that busy that you could not get into town to post it.

Everything is fine up here. I have been away all day and just got back at 9 P.M. Dad Mother, Aunt Maggie & I went down to Summerberry to see all our relations there. Dad & Mother wanted to go down & see them before they left for the coast.

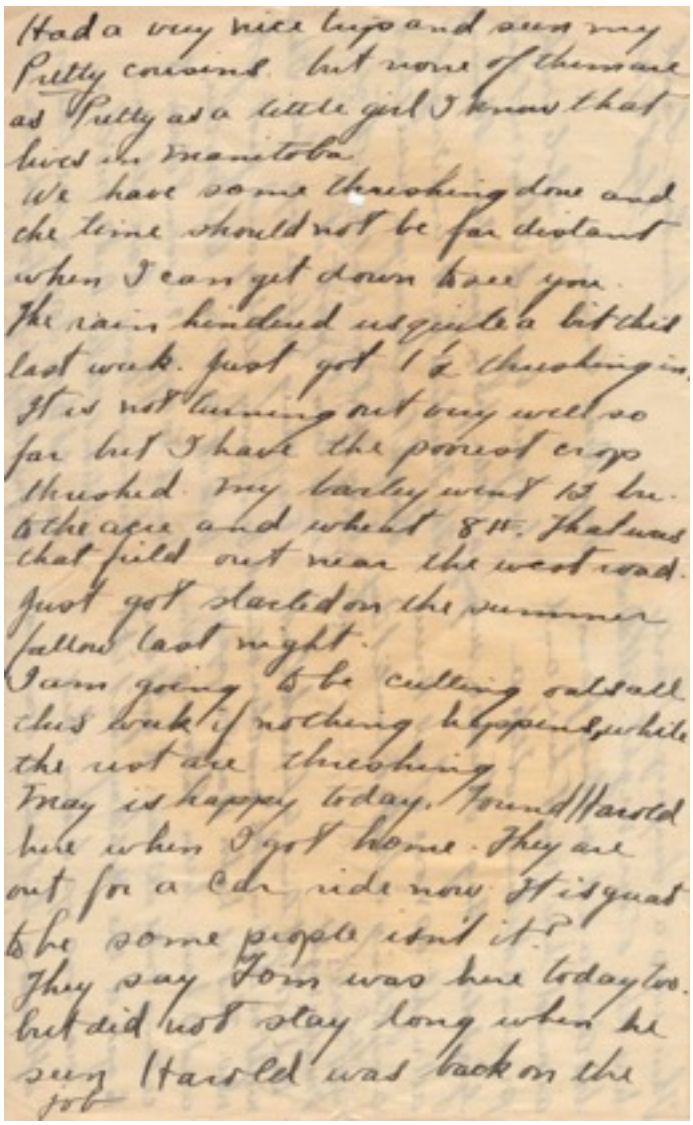


There was a surprise party here the other night. All Dad's brothers and sisters from around here, met here and presented him with a Gladstone Bag. It was a surprise all right as none of us knew anything about it until they got here.

Monday night.

Did not get time to finish last night so shall make another attempt now. This is Labor Day I suppose and I have been laboring. Was cutting oats all day. A good way to spend the Holiday isn't it?

May was up to town this afternoon but there was no



Had a very nice trip and seen my Pretty cousins but none of them are as Pretty as a little girl I know that lives in Manitoba.

We have some threshing done and the time should not be far distant when I can get down here you.

The rain hindered us quite a bit this last week. Just got 1/2 threshing in. It is not turning out very well so far but I have the poorest crop threshed my barley went 13 bu. to the acre and wheat 8 bu. That was that field out near the west road. Just got started on the summer fallow last night.

I am going to be cutting oats all this week if nothing happens while the rest are threshing.

May is happy today. Found Harold here when I got home. They are out for a ride now. It is quiet to be some people isn't it?

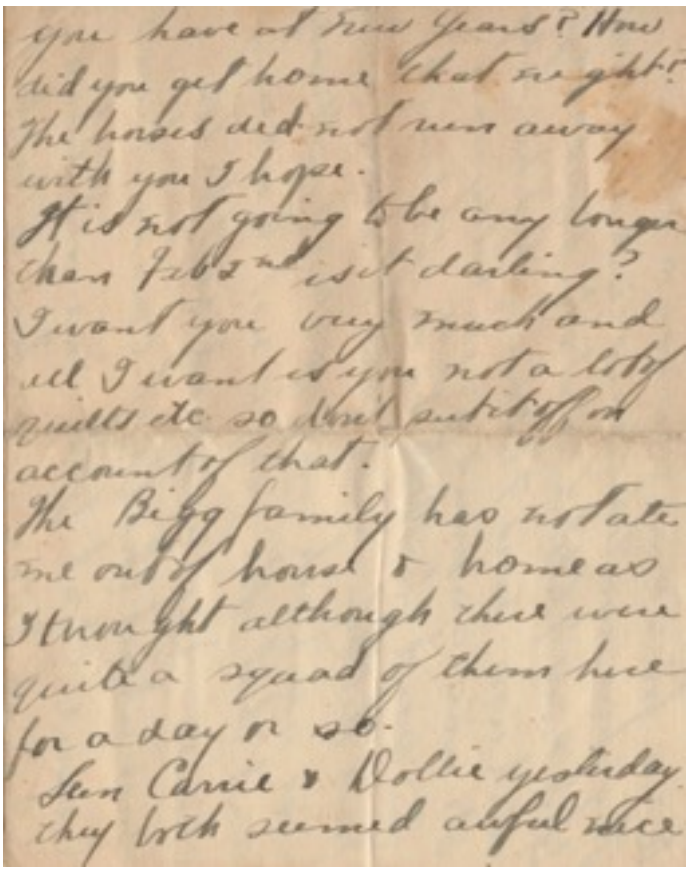
They say Tom was here today too but did not stay long when he seen Harold was back on the job

The letters on this and the next page were written by Dad, the first on 5 September 1920 and the second probably in November or December1920.

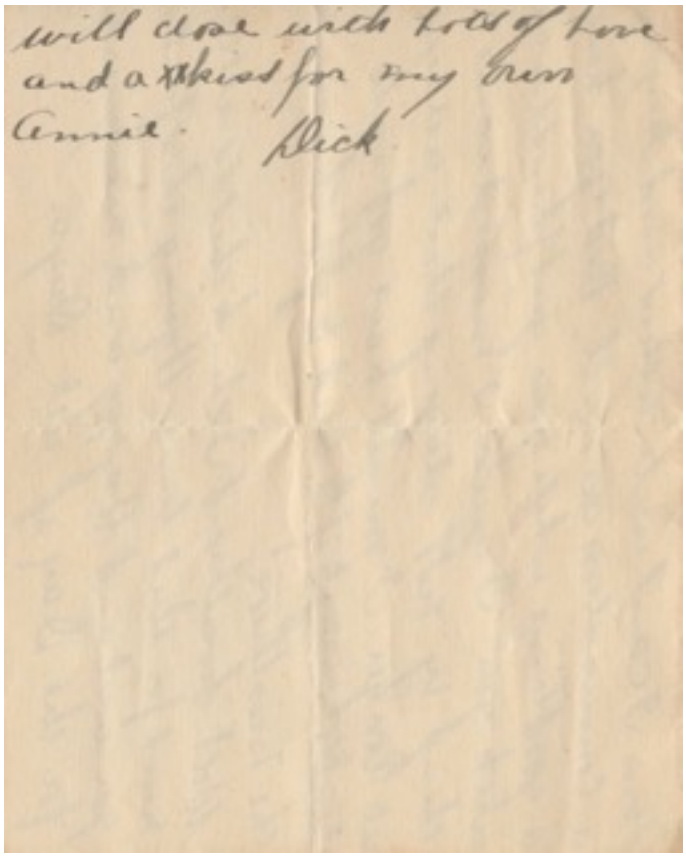
(Dollie and Carrie) watching him curl. Dolly tells Mrs. Fletcher that she hopes Dad's rink wins. Mrs. Fletcher tells her that Dad is spoken for already and that she wouldn't have any chance, to which Dolly replied "Don't be too sure about that".

Mother and Dad were married at the McKinnon Farm, Oak Lake Manitoba on 16 February 1921. After a honeymoon at Brandon, where they bought some furniture, Annie Bell joined Richard Acton on

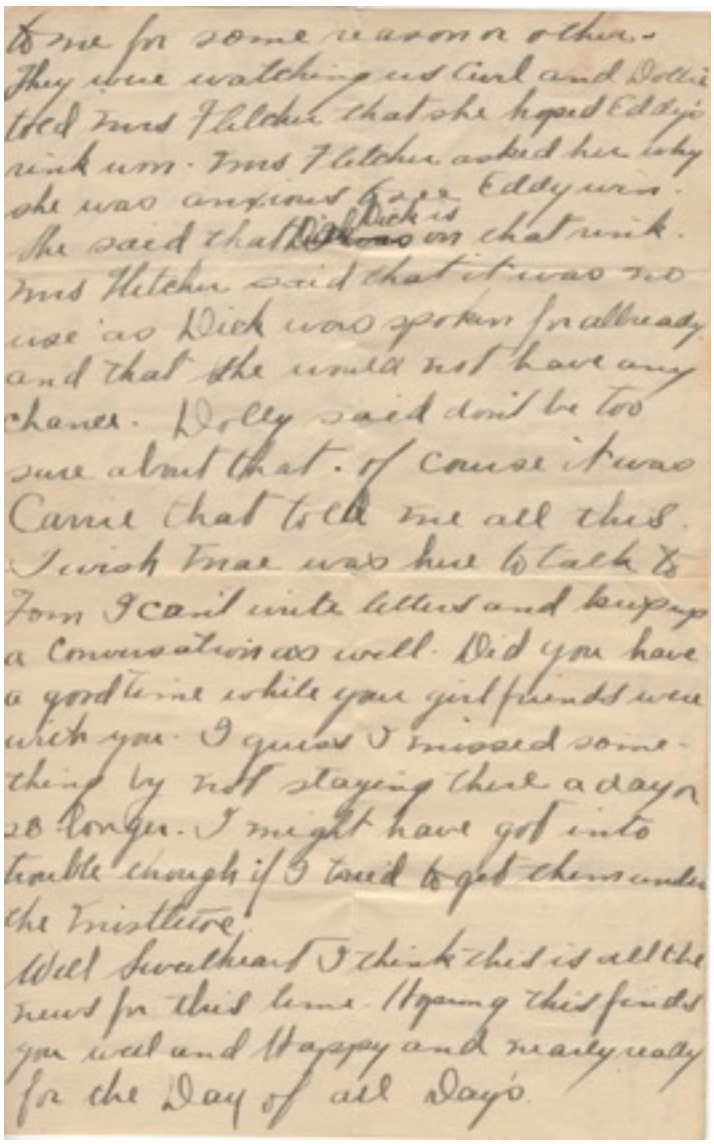
Ten.



you have at New Years? How did you get home that night? The horses did not run away with you I hope.
It is not going to be any longer then Feb 2nd is it darling? I want you very much and all I want is you not a lot of quilts etc so don't put it off on account of that.
The Bigg family has not ate me out of house & home as I thought although there were quite a squad of them here for a day or so.
Saw Carrie & Dollie yesterday they both seemed awful nice



will close with lots of love and a xxkiss for my own
Annie. Dick



to me for some reason or other. They were watching us Carl and Dollie told me Mrs Fletcher that she hoped Eddy'd sink um. Mrs Fletcher asked her why she was anxious for Eddy um. She said that Dick is on that sink. Mrs Fletcher said that it was no use as Dick was spoken for already and that she would not have any chance. Dolly said don't be too sure about that. Of course it was Carrie that told me all this. I wish that was here to talk to for I can't write letters and keep up a conversation as well. Did you have a good time while your girl friends were with you. I guess I missed something by not staying there a day or so longer. I might have got into trouble though if I tried to get them under the mistletoe.
Well sweetheart I think this is all the news for this time. Hoping this finds you well and happy and nearly ready for the Day of all days.

A storm arose the day before their wedding but Dad made it all right. The next morning roads were blocked and many guests could not attend the wedding in the McKinnon home. However, some came, and the

Preacher made it, and the sun shone at 11a.m. for the ceremony. They honeymooned in Winnipeg, bought a dining room and bedroom suite, then returned to the McKinnons where they had a shower and dance. To use Mother's words, "Soon we were on our way to my new home, there to find another shower planned.
It wasn't long before Beth decided to come, December 27, 1921. She was a lovely baby, dark curly hair and very lively. One day I found her on top of the piano, crying. Not so easy coming down. To make a long story short, in sixteen years there were eight

Wedding Bells

At the home of the bride on Wednesday morning, Annie Belle McKinnon was united in marriage to Richard Arthur Acton, of Lemberg, Sask., Rev. A. W. Churchill officiating.

The bride was given away by her brother, Mr. Murray McKinnon. She was charmingly attired in a cream, crepe de chene gown, trimmed with narrow pleating of same material and silver embroidery with veil of tulle. She wore a gold wrist watch, the gift of the groom. After the ceremony the immediate relatives and guests sat down to the wedding dinner.

The happy couple left on the afternoon train for the East.

The bride's going away costume was navy blue embroidered in black, with black velvet hat with facing and feather of blue.

The large number of presents testify to the bride's popularity in St. David's district.—Oak Lake News.

Dad and Mother on their wedding day at Oak Lake, Manitoba in February 1921.

Mum with a bouquet of flowers, perhaps on her way to Rosewood Church on Mother's Day.

children to care for, so it kept the two of us busy but we managed and didn't seem to mind. By the way, I think I was a Catholic in my birth control beliefs. Now, I am not sorry as we are very proud of all of them. Most of our babies were born in the twenties and thirties so there were a lot of made-over dresses and coats. Having a good garden, milk, eggs, we never suffered. Haircuts were a problem as we never went to a barber."

"About the depression years in Saskatchewan. They were terrible for some, especially in southern Saskatchewan. Driving to town in our Ford one day I overtook a couple on a hayrack. Two horses, a cow tied behind and all kinds of household necessities piled in the rack. On their way to Carrot River. Even some of Dad's relatives - Hawkins. How did we fare on our farm? Some days the sun was almost hidden over by a cloud of dust, which crept into every nook and corner. I could write my name on the southwest bedroom wall, where the dust had stuck to the wall. The dividing fence on sec. 3 had blow-dirt piled as high as the fence posts. Farmers put fences on top of the blow dirt. Our land didn't blow as badly as farms west and south of us. Joe Acton's land did not blow. Dad only had one crop failure. He just got his seed back. Bill Watson did not. The wind would rise and cut off the wheat as it grew."

"The continual dust in the sky from further west was depressing but we were so busy trying to make ends meet that we didn't have time to feel sorry for ourselves. Our garden south of the house, surrounded by trees, wasn't too bad. Root vegetables and lots of tomatoes. We used shingles to protect them and they did better with hot and dry climate. I remember putting down fifty one-quart jars of tomato juice one year. We served a lot for company. Then there was butter and eggs, beef and bacon, off the farm. Your Dad went to Hamiota for a grist of flour, once. We also used crushed wheat, crushed at home for porridge, this had to be cooked over night. We never ordered anything from the store that we could do without. Maybe that is why we didn't go on relief."

"As for clothes, Doris wore barely anything but hand-me-down clothes. She was quite pleased because she had so many of them. Then Aunt Mary, nursing in Geneva, sent all her lovely clothes to me, which I made over. One sports day Elinor took part (broad jump), Mr Kennet (banker) said to her "Where did you get that pretty jacket and air force cap from?" "Oh" Elinor said "From New York". Ha! Ha! The poor farmers. But women didn't get new coats and men didn't get new suits. They made the old ones do. I even washed Dad's suit pants so that he would be presentable at a convention. Oh, it is surprising what you can do without when you have to. Beth once complained that she never had a bought dress so I bought her one. She never complained again as she liked Aunt Mary's made-over dresses better."

Dad and Mum on the veranda steps.

Of course, we made our own soap: Gillete's lye and beef and pork scraps. Toilet soap just for the skin. I made a lot of quilts out of scraps of cloth. Dad had two sheep at one time but they got too fat and didn't produce so we made mutton of them. I sent the wool to the mill and had af

lovely blanket made. Haircuts were terrible. A kid never got to a barber (until Uncle Alex came). Oh, we got saskatoons in the valley, pails of them. I put a lot down with rhubarb. We had good rhubarb."

"You may wonder when Mum had some fun. She didn't until the work was done, then I sat down and played the piano; too tired to read."

"Time marches on and at the age of eighteen Beth was off to nurses training but had to fall out for a year because of her health. Then Sam was off to the Navy, Esquimalt, Duncan spent a couple of winters at Agriculture School - Saskatoon. Elinor a teacher but marriage for Doris. At 21 years Richard joined the Air Force, and Don and Cliff attended University, both getting Ph.D.s in Soil Science. My how I disliked seeing the last ones go, but such is life."

"Very soon, in August 1949, we began building a new home in Lemberg. The transfer to town was gradual as we went back every summer. I got to like the town home as the pace was slower and I made new friends. Then came the weddings and the grandchildren, all of which play a big part in our lives. Dad's activities changed from farming to community efforts, being mayor for some time. He was able to carry on for many years but has retired now. I belong to U.C.W., Ladies Auxiliary Legion, and Service Club but do not take an active part."

Mum and Dad at their retirement home in Lemberg.

All Ten Of Us

The south-facing veranda was a favourite spot for many family photographs such as some of the ones on this and the previous page. The top and the bottom left ones on the previous page would have been taken about 1938, the bottom right about 1940, probably before going to Church on a Sunday morning.

Previous page, top, back row: Sam, Beth, Doris, Duncan, Elinor, Mum. Front: Donald, Richard, and Clifford on Dad's knee.

Previous page, bottom left: Elinor, Clifford on Mother's knee, Doris, Beth, and Dad in front of 1934-35 Ford.

Previous page, bottom right: back row: Beth, Sam, Duncan, Doris, Elinor, Mum, Dad. Front: Richard, Donald, Clifford.

This page, top: back row: Sam, Doris, Duncan, Beth, Dad, Mum. Front: Clifford, Elinor, Richard and Donald.

This page, bottom, back row: Mum, Doris, Beth and Dad. Front: Donald and Clifford and dog Pat.

In the top photo on the next page, Mother is holding a bouquet of flowers and Doris has a floral corsage. Elinor remembers it was customary for the women to wear corsages or carry flowers to Church on Mother's Day. The lower photo was taken the same day. There must be a reason for Duncan's pose! Sam was likely in the Navy but where was Richard?

Above. Standing: Doris, Duncan, Beth, Mum, Dad. Seated: Clifford, Elinor, Donald and dog, Pat.

Opposite. Standing: Doris, Elinor, Duncan and Beth. Sitting Clifford, Donald and dog, Pat.

The photo above was taken in the late 1950s or early 1960s at Mum and Dad's house in Lemberg. The five boys at the back are (left to right): Donald, Clifford, Duncan, Richard and Samuel. Beth is seated beside her Mother and Elinor and Doris on their Father's left.

Beth Remembers

My life began two days after Christmas at the Acton homestead, nine and a half miles south of the town of Lemberg, Saskatchewan. The stone house built in 1908 had seven bedrooms, a living room and a dining room with a tin-embossed ceiling, a large family kitchen, a bathroom with flush toilet and bathtub, also a summer kitchen and a porch, and a verandah on the south side of the house. There was a Delco light plant and running water, although there was a hand pump for washing hands in the kitchen. There was a beautiful, hand-carved post at the base of the hall stairs and a stained-glass window in the living room. Dad and Mum bought a lovely oak bedroom suite on their honeymoon, consisting of a brass bed, dresser and stand, also an oak dining room suite and a secretarial desk. There was a player piano in the parlour, probably the one Dad mentioned buying (Acton McKinnon Heritage). Dad had a comfortable chair beside the radiator in the dining room. There was a leather Winnipeg couch, with no back, which was very comfortable. They decided to wait until the family got older before buying a Chesterfield. It never happened while I was at home.

Granny and Grandpa left the house and moved into Lemberg when Mum and Dad wed. They spent a lot of time visiting or staying for a few days -- along with Aunt Jenny. She never married and always lived with her parents. Grandpa Acton died in his late sixties from cancer of the stomach, but Granny lived to her ninetieth year.

My cousin Vera, Uncle Bob and Aunt Sarah's daughter, was born on December 24, three days before me. We were the first-born for both brothers who lived one quarter mile apart, so there was always competition between Vera and me. Vera and I started school on the same day, shared a room at Granny's while taking Grade XI and Grade XII. We both chose nursing as careers but Vera was not accepted due to a heart murmur. She went to Fergus, Ontario after taking a business course and got married in 1946. I went to North Vancouver after graduating in 1946, so we missed our close relationship.

Beth with Mother, top, and with Dad, below.

Researching "Acton McKinnon Heritage" and "Rosewood at the Centre", I found many interesting stories. Mother's description of events was very good and brought to mind similar events

during my childhood. Teacher's salaries were at a high of $1200.00 a year in 1923, dropping to $750.00 a year in 1931 and a low of $500.00 per year when Lillian Barber MacKenzie taught in 1938, during the depression.

An incident I'm not proud of came about because someone told me a cat had nine lives. I was around six years old. Sam, Dunc and I were playing in a field near the house. Nearby was a well with water unfit for drinking, so it had been abandoned. A cat appeared on the scene and we proceeded to throw the cat down the well. It would catch the cribbing and climb up again. I don't know how many times we threw the cat back in. Fortunately, both cat and children survived. The well was promptly filled in. To this day, I have a mental block about cats. Yet, when I visit people with cats I am the one the cat gravitates toward.

Albert Allen, Alex Thompson, Evelyn Ring, Jim Obleman and Vera Acton were in my class, and it was one of the larger

In the photo above, Beth is sitting in her rocking chair near the steps to the veranda. Notice that she is holding a cat. Was it, perhaps, the one that got tested for nine lives?

Cousin Vera Acton was born the day before Christmas in 1921. Beth was born three days later. In the photo above they are sitting on their Grandmother's knee.

classes. I believe we were the first class to take Grades IX and X at Rosewood. Albert, Vera and I continued our grades XI and XII at Lemberg. It was a challenge for the teachers, having so many classes, often 35 pupils and ten grades. Dorethy Bradley and Jean Boyce had no previous experience teaching. There was a very small library with few reference books. A travelling library contained mostly fiction (Zane Grey). It was not a children's library. A weekly paper, 'The Western Producer', 'The Family Herald' and 'The Free Press Prairie Farmer' didn't provide much in the way of current events, mostly farming and homemaking.

Mother and Dad are on the steps to the veranda with Beth, Sam and Duncan.

We had a radio but reception was poor, a lot of static, especially if the Delco engine was running to charge the batteries. I remember Dad coming into the house at 10 a.m. to hear grain and livestock prices, which fluctuated until the Wheat Board stabilized things somewhat. It was like playing the stock market. Dad's ulcers could have been

Duncan, Beth and Sam carrying bouquets of flowers from Mothers flower garden.

caused by the stress. ‘Amos and Andy’, ‘Fibber McGee and Molly’, and ‘Lux Radio Theatre’ were favourite shows, also ‘The Happy Gang (Knock, knock, who’s there -- its The Happy Gang, Well come on in’) and ‘Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy’.

Reading or doing homework was also a challenge with thirteen pupils in the house. It was usually done in the living room or on the large kitchen table as the bedrooms were much too cold. During the coldest weather we sat huddled around the kitchen stove or sitting on the oven door. Hot-water registers in each room provided some heat but insulation was unheard of. Snow sometimes blew in under the doors and the windows had so much frost you couldn’t see out of them.

When we went to town in the cold weather in the cutter or sleigh box, we heated a brick and put it in a tin-lined container for a foot warmer. Hot water was put in a crock, called a ‘pig’ to heat a bed. Most men had buffalo coats, women muskrat coats. They were needed for the severe winters. Ten miles in a cutter, with wind and snow, was a cold trip.

We just lived a mile from Rosewood school. We often walked. Cutting across Uncle Bob’s field, when it wasn’t in crop, made it a little shorter. I rode a shetland pony, called Topsy, who would go when she wanted to. Often Dad would go as far as Uncle Bob’s, about one quarter mile, as Topsy and Birdie needed persuasion to go farther. Sam and Lillian, who were two years younger than Vera and me, would often follow us with switches to keep the ponies going, then walk home.

In the winter Dad made a sleigh with wooden runners, and with a wooden trunk or box attached. Topsy’s harness had traces, which were attached to the whippletree. We’d put our school bags and lunch in the trunk and when we’d get going jump on the sleigh. However, Topsy often backed up instead of going forward, so someone would have to lead her for awhile until we got going.

Grade 6, 1933-34: Dorethy Bradley (teacher) with, standing: Alex Thompson and Albert Allen. Kneeling: Beth Acton, Vera Acton and Evelyn Ring. Photo courtesy of Dorethy Boyce (nee Bradley) and Jean Acton (nee Boyce).

I learned to milk cows when I was about seven or eight. I often milked two or three of them before going to school. During harvest time I would go to the pasture, on the shetland, for the milk cows. Women milked, fed calves, separated milk, gathered eggs then fed thirteen to twenty people. There would be ten to fifteen men for a huge noon meal in the big farm kitchen, then lunch taken to the field at 4 p.m. All the bread was homemade. There were no deep-freezes so that you could prepare ahead.

During these years there was always a baby, a two year-old, four year-old, six year-old, eight year-old, ten year-old, twelve year-old and me. A total of eight children. We had a maid, two hired-men, eight children, Mum and Dad for every meal. Walkers, from Rainy River Ontario, came for most of the summer as Uncle Bob Walker worked for the C.N.R., so they had free passes. When Bob junior finished high school he lived at our place, Uncle Bob's, or with his aunt in Wolseley. He spent four or five years with us before joining the army when the war broke out. Uncle Roy also was at our place for several years. Later he and Uncle Alex started a trucking business.

When I was about eleven or twelve years old my job after school was to bake a cake and bath the baby. There were five of us going to school at that time so it took a cake per day for supper and lunches. Saturday, I baked all morning as we didn't bake on Sunday.

I'll never forget an incident that happened in 1936 when Clifford was born in Lemberg. He was the only baby not born on the farm. I was in charge and it was a big responsibility as the hired-girl, Rosey, was not too bright. We had a wood stove and mother always watched the amount of wood used to regulate the oven temperature when baking. On this particular Saturday my baking was in the oven when Rosey fed too much wood into the stove to get dinner ready. As a result, the cake cooked too fast. The top was baked but it was raw in the centre. After taking it out of the oven it began to fall in the centre. Between worrying about Mum and the baby, and having my cake flop, I cried. My brothers teased me for years saying "Beth cried because Rosey burned her cake". I was fifteen then.

Rosewood School. The original frame school built by Grandpa was replaced by the brick one shown above in 1920.

With a large family everyone was expected to help. I remember a few days before Donald was born, when I was thirteen. Aunt Sarah had invited Sam, Dunc and me to go with them to Heil's Lake for a swim. There was a raft and we all got on it. It drifted out

and none of us could swim. Aunt Sarah was on shore and she couldn't swim, either. And she was only about five foot one. I remember trying to touch the bottom and was unable to do so. Anyway, no one drowned. I doubt if my parents ever knew. When we got home a ball game was in progress in Uncle Bob's pasture, near our gate. I loved ball, and the crowd, but Dad sent me home to help get the children to bed. Aunt Mary arrived a day or two later, and Donald was born.

Another incident that I haven't forgotten was a fire in the manure pile near the barn. It was a really windy day, which fanned the flames. We were all carrying water and ditching to prevent it from spreading to the barns. I happened to go to the house and found the stove pipes were on fire. They were red hot. The pipes came from the back of the stove in the northwest corner of the kitchen, across to the middle bedroom upstairs, through the ceiling to the attic, where the chimney was. That wouldn't be allowed today, but it helped to heat the house. I notified someone, and the fire was extinguished in the pipes and they eventually got the manure pile under control.

I forget what year it was, but it was harvest time and there wasn't a truck available for hauling cattle, and the men were all busy harvesting. A freight car loading cattle came into Lemberg, so Vera, Sam and I on shetland ponies herded several cattle the ten miles into Lemberg. There wasn't much traffic, but not all of the fields were fenced, so it was considered a real accomplishment. We left the ponies at Neely's overnight, stayed at Granny's and rode home the next day. Often when going for the cows there was a bull in the pasture. They were never to be trusted. I'd have nightmares having a bull chasing me and I'd roll under a fence with him at my heels.

One of Sam's experiences is quite memorable. He had been to visit Mum's relatives Uncle Howard and Uncle Murray near Oak Lake, Manitoba. Uncle Howard had silver foxes, which he raised and sold. Sam was out getting the cows one day when he saw what he thought was a silver fox, and gave chase. It wasn't a fox, but a skunk. And he got hit! When he got home he sure caused a commotion, and the smell lingered in the house for days.

Entertainment consisted of whist, skating on the dugouts, softball games, hockey games, sports days, dances at Rosewood and Ellisboro schools and at Lemberg, and also picnics. Saturday nights in Lemberg were looked forward to. It was a real social event for the farmers to take the hired help to town on Saturday night. The stores stayed open until 9 p.m. Many a romance started there by walking the streets and going to Kee Moon's for a banana split.

About 1935, Bridge was becoming popular, whist and Five Hundred had been played a lot. Uncle Bob and Dad both had hired-men and Vera and I would play Bridge with them. Calcutts would invite the young people in the neighbourhood for a turkey supper and Bridge. Evelyn loved to cook and entertain. To this day, even though I may go for a year without playing Bridge, I find that I am relaxed and play reasonably well.

Vera and I stayed at Granny's while taking Grade XI and XII, but in October, when taking Grade XI, I developed scarlet fever. Doris was spending the weekend at Uncle Bob's so she wasn't quarantined, but the rest of us were in complete isolation for four weeks. When that time was over, Doris developed scarlet fever. It was just before Christmas and we were quarantined for another month. It was a tough break for me as I had very little help from the teacher when taking Grades IX and X at Rosewood. Then just getting started in High School at Lemberg, missing six weeks of school, in addition to being quite ill. Then I developed a goiter. It was quite large, requiring me to take iodine drops in water. I was also taking Latin as an extra subject. It required more work than any other subject. Anyway, I was able to pass my Grades XI and XII. Once again there was a disadvantage as the principal, Albert Heil, had stomach cancer. He taught Grades IX, X, XI, and XII and was also principal of the Elementary School. My educational standards were sadly lacking. This proved true when I went in to training for many doctors joined the Armed Forces and older, overworked doctors gave us minimal lectures.

It was in 1939 when the war broke out that Dad got his first tractor. It cost $800.00, I believe. So many young men joined the forces. If they didn't volunteer they were conscripted. There wasn't manpower available to use horses (feeding, putting up feed, harnessing, and limited hours the horses could work) so mechanism was necessary. When I left home in 1941, Sam had joined the Navy and Duncan was only fifteen. Jack Ernie may have been the hired-man, but only older men were available and they knew very little about operating machinery.

After I finished Grade XII, I was accepted at the Regina General Hospital for a three year registered Nurses Training course. Not long after I started, one of my classmates told me my Dad had been admitted, with a gastric hemorrhage, to the ward she worked on that night. I was a nervous wreck waiting for our classes to be over so I could get more details. I was ready to

Bob Walker (left) worked on Ten during the 1930s. Beth may beDonald while Doris, Elinor, Richard, Sam and Aunt Eva look on.

return home and help Mum, who had six children, a large farm, animals, and little help available for spring seeding. It was war time and there were no able-bodied men around.

While in training I came down with pleurisy with effusion. I spent seven months in the T.B. Sanatorium at Fort San, then a year at home. I returned to the Regina General in 1946 to finish my training but did not graduate with my original classmates.

I remember one Saturday night when I was home recuperating and before returning to finish my training. The men were harvesting at Sam's place across the valley. The only vehicle that could get us to town was an army truck. Donald was about eleven and Clifford nine. They knew more about operating this truck than I did. We located the second gas tank,

Beth on Sparky.

Beth and Pat.

the one that allowed us to drive off the farm, and had a trial run. This was the one the shetlands would take, over to Uncle Bob's around their house, and back out to the road without stopping. Hilda Jastram, Elinor, Doris, the boys and I all got to Lemberg, but I wasn't anxious to drive home at night.

When staying at Granny Acton's while going to High School, I remember Aunty Martin visiting Granny for about a week every fall. She was a classmate of Granny's in Scotland. Vera and I would be studying upstairs and a register (for heat) would carry the conversation up to us. They re-hashed their many hardships and life experiences during their eighty-year friendship. Aunty Martin helped

at the United Church Camp at Lumsden for years. She was a wonderful person. Aunty Martin's nephew, John Willie Stilborn, farmed at Pheasant Forks. His son Ernest became very interested in me. Granny, Aunty Martin and a few other family members would have liked the families to become related, but it was not to be. Ernie started visiting me in Regina when I returned to the Regina General in 1945 to finish the ten months of my training. He came to my graduation. When I finished training I stayed at home for several months while Mum had a trip to Victoria and I studied for my R.N. examinations. Ernie would visit me at the farm. Don and Cliff enjoyed seeing him as he made himself useful helping with the chores.

"Fort San", the TB Sanatorium on the north shore of Echo Lake was home to Dad for a month or so after WW1 and for Beth, for seven months in the 1940s.

I was invited to nurse at Balcarres Hospital, and started after New Year's in 1947. Ernie came to visit me one weekend. There was such a fall of snow that there wasn't a train through Balcarres for ten days and Ernest couldn't return home. He kept the furnaces at the hospital stocked for the nurses, and

There were beautiful grounds at the San as can be seen in the photos. The locale of the photo

Top left: Beth, Donald, Clifford and Richard; top right Beth, Doris, Donald and Clifford; bottom: Elinor and Duncan stand by the towering spruce trees that graced the grounds at Fort San.

shovelled snow around the hospital and hotel. However, there was no curling, movies or other forms of entertainment. In those days dating was much different, not like what was acceptable in 1960. Anyway, I decided after ten days that I was bored and wasn't interested in a lifetime commitment to him. A few months later my application to V.O.N. was accepted, a position in North Vancouver was offered, and I accepted. The roads were so bad that Ernie rode about 25 miles on horseback to the farm before I left. I didn't offer him any encouragement but he came to North Vancouver the next winter and tried again. I was not interested in becoming a prairie farmer's housewife. Ernie never married and still lives in Lemberg.

Beth picking corn with brother Clifford. This likely was during her convalescent period in 1945.

Just a little about nursing in Balcarres in 1947. The hospital was really a large house, about three bedrooms, a dining room and kitchen on the ground floor. On the second floor there was a large three-bed ward, nursery and an operation/ delivery room. One nurse on duty was expected to keep two furnaces going, often a maternity case, four or five medical patients, and usually three babies in the nursery. Sometimes you were so busy upstairs with a maternity case you didn't get to the furnace. Without kindling you would use paper and cardboard to get the fire started. It got mighty cold at times. Autoclaving was done with a pressure cooker on the kitchen stove, which also was a wood-burner. Imagine trying to keep the pressure adjusted for the right temperature. This was my first job as an R.N. There were some terrible cases. I remember one psyche patient that needed restraints. Penicillin was just introduced. It had to be injected every few hours. It was later improved so that twice-a-day injections were adequate. I happened to be the R.N. on duty when my cousin Vera came into the hospital in labor one night in February. To this day, I think her labor pains hurt me as much as they hurt her. Dennis was a big baby and arrived after about six hours of labor. I believe I phoned the Nurses residence and asked for help.

When Dad took me to catch my train to Vancouver, I did not know that never again Saskatchewan would be my home. The ten miles into Lemberg, in what was known as the Bennett Buggy, was terrible as there were huge snow banks and then bare ground. I arrived in Vancouver on March 31st. Cherry trees were blooming on Taylor Way in West Vancouver. What a sight, after experiencing the worst winter in recent history in Saskatchewan.

Angel of Mercy

I remember Beth as being the one taking charge of so many things to help Mother. She tried to keep us in line, (must have been quite a job with seven younger brothers and sisters). Beth loved to bake and her cakes and pies were quite a treat probably because they didn't last very long in a household of ten. I do remember

one that she made, particularly, baking in a cook-stove was not quite as easy as it is today. Any way she got the stove fired up, (this was in the summertime too) and the cake was in the oven with instructions to Rosie Janiskewich to take it out when it was baked. Well Rosie took it out alright and even iced it, but it was still quite unbaked at that point and Beth said a few not-so-sweet nothings and left so what did Rosie do but put it back in the oven.

You could get several versions of the army truck story, but I will give you mine. It was Saturday night, September 1946. I think Dad and the boys were combining at Sam's and all the vehicles were gone except the old army truck. AND WE HAD TO GO TO TOWN. We always went to town on Saturday night! Well Richard said he knew how to drive it so he took Beth for a driving lesson down the lane and around Uncle Bob's house. (Isn't that the same route the school ponies took?) So after Beth had her lesson we all piled into the army truck, all set for town. Beth was behind the wheel, Mother in the passenger seat, if there was one, and Richard somewhere in between giving instructions or shifting gears, I'm not sure which because the rest of us were in the back, myself, Elinor, Hilde, Don and Cliff. We made it to town but found other ways to come home.

Beth in front of the Virginia Creeper, probably while she was on home leave after discharge from the San.

So now to some serious stuff. Beth seemed to find a way to be where she was needed. In 1948 when she was nursing in Vancouver and I was in the General Hospital practically cut in half after kidney, appendix and gall bladder surgery, she was an angel of mercy. Ethel Reid had been spending nights with me after the surgery, we couldn't afford a special nurse in those days before medicare and health insurance. After a few days and I wasn't doing so well, Beth came from B.C. She would fix special trays to get me to eat (the last thing I wanted was food) but the pay-off came when she proceeded to give me an enema, with poor results, but she wouldn't give up. She figured if I could sit up on the damn bedpan it might work and about then I could have killed her. Sitting up with 38 stitches from my backbone to my belly button and upwards and tubes coming out in all directions was not my idea of a fun thing to do but she got me up on that damn throne and nursed me for a week until I began to improve. I probably never thanked her properly for all the loving care, so THANKS BETH you truly have been an angel of mercy many times and for that we all owe you, in one way or another. **Doris Raunest, March, 2001.**

My Brother Sam

Dad returned from an Auction sale with a big smile on his face. It was the Dirty Thirties and money was only spent on necessities so there were squeals of excitement when he took a three-wheel tricycle out of the car. It was our first tricycle, meant for a six year-old or younger and we didn't care that it was second-hand. Sam was probably about thirteen but he was the first one to hop on the trike, with a big grin on his face. We laughed and taunted him as his knees reached his chin and he could barely make the wheels turn. He had had his first and last ride on a tricycle and he relinquished it with a satisfied smirk.

Uncle Murray and Uncle Howard McKinnon lived at Oak Lake, Manitoba and when Sam visited them with Mother he was very interested in Uncle Howard's project of raising silver foxes. Visions of making lots more money than trapping weasels and muskrats had him on the alert. One day as he was riding the Shetland to bring in the cows he spied what he thought was a silver fox. He took off on a gallop with visions of $100 for a fox. He jumped off the pony and hit the startled critter, only to be sprayed with an extremely obnoxious smell. Too late he realized it was a skunk and he would not be welcome at home. His clothes were left on the balcony to air, but we all suffered the pungent smell for weeks. Perhaps it was then that he decided to light the furnace at Rosewood school. For the enticing sum of $25.00 per year, he rose early on freezing winter mornings and skied three quarters of a mile to the school, often in blizzard conditions, arriving with tingling fingers and toes. With paper and matches he coaxed the logs of wood to burn but it was many hours later

Vera, Sam and Beth on Sam's third birthday.

Beth is holding Elinor, Duncan is playing with a doll. Sam is on the right.

before the school was warm. With his hard-earned cash, he bought a CCM bicycle. A few years later the bicycle came in handy for courting Greta Campbell who lived four or five miles down the road.

Duncan, Beth and Sam

I don't know why Sam was designated the Family Barber. The devilish gleam in his eyes when he picked up the clippers was reason for me to declare I didn't need a haircut. Doris

ended up with sideburns and Richard with a Mohawk cut, long before it became fashionable. Short hair was practical for the boys in the Thirties because of the dust and shortage of water so Sam had a great time zigzagging over his younger brothers' heads, leaving them as bald as the top of Dad's head. The clippers pulled their hair and often there would be howls of frustrations but Sam would laugh and warn them of what they would look like with half a haircut. We were all relieved when Uncle Alex became the barber in Lemberg.

Sam escaped having Scarlet Fever when Beth and all the family were quarantined for one month, then for another month when Doris contracted it. However, one winter he spent several weeks on a bed in the parlour when he was diagnosed with Nephritis, a disease of the kidneys.

Every summer for years the Walker cousins from Rainy River, Ontario would arrive. Uncle Bob, their father, was Dad's cousin and worked for the C.N.R. so they could travel for free. I'm sure they thought Uncle Dick had a big house and eight kids so a few more wouldn't make any difference. It was expecting a lot of our mother but she never complained. Ken and Fred were the same age as Sam and Duncan, worldly-wise city boys, and they introduced them to vices like smoking and who knows what else at an early age. Tired of rolling leaves around a cigarette paper, they decided they needed some money to buy tobacco.

"We're having a rodeo," Ken excitedly exclaimed. "One cent each for an event you've never seen before," he chanted. We were bored. We needed something more exciting than weeding the garden or picking potato

Elinor is sitting on Granny's knee, Duncan is looking at Elinor. Beth is on left and Sam is holding a huge sunflower on the right.

bugs, but we had no money. I don't know who came up with the idea, but it was Doris that we hoisted up the pole beside the clock to steal pennies from the little wooden box, the missionary box, for the poor starving children in Africa. Down to the barn we went and the boys took the loot with eager hands. We waited expectantly on the rails of the pig- pen fence for the rodeo to begin. Out came the boys riding on the backs of bucking, squealing pigs. The show was over in less than a minute as they slid off the slippery pigs into the mire. We were furious and demanded our money back. They made a hasty exit, laughing hilariously. Dejectedly, we slunk back to the house with guilty consciences, realizing that crime does not pay and hoping Mother wouldn't find out.

Grades 3 and 4, 1933-34. Those registered in January 1934 included: Alfred Kilback, Otto Herndier, Alex Betker, Sam Acton, Duncan Acton, Albert Kilback and Gladys Allen. Photo courtesy Dorethy Boyce (nee Bradley) and Jean Acton (nee Boyce).

For years our farm was the recreation centre. In the summer several times a week all the young people in the district streamed through our yard and had rousing games of softball in the pasture. Before the game started Sam and Duncan would use a shovel to get rid of the cow pies. The districts surrounding Rosewood (Carr Hill, Maple Green and High Bluff) had ball teams and they formed a league. The winners would play against teams from Lemberg, Neudorf, Killaly or Grayson. Sunday night ball games drew many spectators. Sam was known as the Home Run Hitter. When his bat connected with a low ball it disappeared way down to the end of the pasture.

Sam on Topsy, on their way to get the cows. Sam had a penchant for falling off. He promised his Dad that if he were to buy him a cowboy hat the problem would be resolved.

In the winter Dad hauled an empty

Uncle Bob and Aunt Lil Walker would often come for a visit. In the photo above, two of their sons, Jack and Ken join with Alex Thompson (upper left), Beth, Sam, Duncan, Elinor and Doris for some fun.

Samuel Acton birthday party. Back row: SamActon, Douglas Regelous, Florence Allen, Violet Allen, Beth Acton, Helen Watson, and Margaret Regelous. Front: Doris Acton, Stanley Acton, Audrey Acton, Elinor Acton, Albert Allen and an unidentified person, perhaps Allan Churchman. Probably early to mid-1930's.

grain bin to near the dugout, and nailed planks to the wall to sit on. A barrel was used as a heater, with a hole cut in it for logs of wood. It provided a cozy place to warm hands and toes. The young people in the district had fun skating and the boys had hockey games. Sam was a good skater and hockey player and whizzed around at top speed. On one occasion he was brought home unconscious from tripping on rough ice and hitting his head. It was several hours before he regained consciousness. In those days you didn't see a doctor and luckily, the only ill effects he had was a bad headache for a few days.

Sam took his Grade Eleven at Lemberg High School and boarded with Granny and Aunt Jennie. When the results of the Provincial Examinations arrived Sam's Physics mark was only 48%. For a small sum students could ask for a re-read, but they refused to give Sam two more marks. Sam's reaction was, " Guess it was a bad idea to write at the bottom of the exam " Maybe I'm not good at Physics but I bet I could beat you at a game of pool."

Sam was a handsome young man with brown, wavy hair, about 5'8'' and in great physical shape so he had lots of girlfriends. In High School one of his girlfriends was Agnes Hildebrandt. Doris tells a story of a

Bloodstone ring he gave Agnes. When he broke up with Agnes, Sam asked Doris to see if she could get the ring back, which she was able to do. Apparently an admirer of our Grandfather, Samuel, had given the ring to him and had it engraved with the initials S.A. Grandpa didn't return her affections, but kept the ring. When Grandpa died Dad inherited it and gave it to Sam because it bore his initials. It now belongs to another S.A. (Sheila Acton.)

Sam with his prize-winning calf.

World War 2 broke out in 1939 and Sam joined the Royal Canadian Navy before he turned nineteen. While in the Navy, stationed in Regina, Sam developed the Red Measles, ran a high temperature and the infection settled in his ears. Beth was in Nurses Training at the Regina General Hospital and went to see Sam at the Naval Barracks. She found him in bed, delirious, and insisted that they admit him into the hospital. There they diagnosed him with having a mastoid and drilled a hole behind his ear to drain off the infection. They packed the hole with antiseptic gauze and each day pulled the dressing out and repacked it, which was a painful procedure. He was sent home for several weeks, on sick leave, and Mother once again nursed him back to health.

Rosewood Hockey Team. Top: A Simpson ?, Alex Thompson, Nelson Dunn, Samuel Acton, William Allen, Albert Allen. Lower: Tom Acton, Tony Kohoniuk, Richard W. Acton, John Watson, Sydney Allen, Duncan Acton. Front: George Calcutt.

Sailors had two wool uniforms, one white and one navy blue, with accordion-pleated bell-bottom trousers. Often he asked me to press them. Every pleat had to line up perfectly, each one the same dimension, until the

Sam served in the Canadian Navy during World War II. In these photos he is home on leave. Mother took many photos on these occasions, perhaps concerned that this will be the last time all ten of us will be together.

pleats were neatly stacked. Then placing an iron over a wet cloth, you pressed hard on the pleats. Girls swooned when they saw Sam in his white uniform, a slim, trim good-looking guy. Sam was stationed on a minesweeper that patrolled the West Coast of Canada. Understandingly, he could never be persuaded to go on an Alaskan Cruise.

After the War, Sam bought Uncle Harry Birch's farm at Wolseley. He liked the peace and quiet of his bachelor house and when things got too hectic, especially at night with four teenage siblings coming in at different hours, dogs barking and vehicles leaving, Sam would storm out grumbling, "Damn dogs", jump in his car and head for Wolseley. When Bill and I married, Sam spent a lot of time at our home, seven miles away, always welcome at our table. It makes me smile when I remember how he stuck his gum on the underside of our new chrome and arborite table. If he was out late he knew where his bed was.

Sam was an interesting baby sitter. On one occasion, when Rick was about fifteen months old, we asked Sam to babysit. Rick woke up and Sam couldn't get him to sleep. When we arrived home Rick was still awake, happy as can be, standing in his crib, rattling the rails. Sam said, "I gave him some beer, thinking it would put him to sleep, but it didn't work." Another night he was babysitting Beverley and Lynn and amused them with the story of the Three Bears. He said, "Three bears lived in a house in the woods. There was Father Bear, Mother Bear and Baby Bear and Mother Bear was expecting another little baby bear." Quite indignant the girls protested, "No, Uncle Sam that's not right. We know that story." Reiterating the experience, he said, "I just wanted to make the story more interesting for them but they weren't buying it."

One winter Sam went to Scotland with his friend Adam Aered. It was a cold, stormy night when they returned to Regina but they decided to leave for Balcarres where Adam lived. There were six-foot banks of snow on either side of # 10 Highway and normally there would be enough room for cars to pass. However, the snowstorm had filled in the road. Sam could see a car approaching and pulled so hard on the steering wheel to pull out of the way, that he bent the steering wheel. They hit head on. When the ambulance finally arrived they thought Sam was dead and covered him with a sheet. But, according to Sam's report, he wiggled his toe and they realized he was alive. They took him to Balcarres Hospital where he was hospitalized and in traction for several months with a broken pelvis and broken leg. Sam was a handsome bachelor and had a farm, so he got lots of attention from the nurses. After his recovery he often went to see the Balcarres nurses and he met a pretty little nurse, Ann Caulfield, who had arrived from Ireland on an Exchange Program. Not long after Sam brought her to visit us on the farm at Wolseley. She was shy and quiet but a sincere, lovely lady. As a thank you gift for the weekend visit, she knitted sweaters for Rick and Linda, the first of many she knitted over the years.

We were delighted when Sam announced he and Ann were getting married on May 2nd 1956, but I said, "Sam, we have to clean up your house before you bring Ann home from your honeymoon." Sam was neat and clean, but it was a bachelor's house. I scrubbed floors, washed walls and windows, painted over the stained wallpaper in the living room and planted a garden. It was a sound, well-built house and it wasn't long before they renovated, decorated, bought furniture and had a beautiful home.

Ann had a lot of adjusting to do as she learned Canadian ways, which were so different from her life in Ireland. Sam had scars on his arm from upsetting a pot of boiling water over his arm when he was little. He was a tease and told her the scars were caused by a fight he had with the Indians when they tried to scalp him and he put his arms up to protect himself and that they quite often travelled down the Ellisboro Road and to hide if they came to the door! Accustomed to walking in Ireland, when she mentioned she was going to walk to town he told her the neighbours would either think she was crazy or that he was an abusive husband and wouldn't let her drive the car. Ann worked hard at home and as a nurse. She continued to nurse in Balcarres Hospital and then in the Wolseley Geriatric Centre.

Three beautiful little girls were born to Sam and Ann and they were dearly loved, though Ann was much stricter with them than Sam. This was probably due to her convent schooling from the time she was three years of age. Sam's standards for them were high and he was proud of their achievements, but he was not

judgmental. Catherine Anne was born on September 24, 1957, Sheila Marie on March 12, 1959 and Jacqueline Patricia, on October 18, 1961. When Sheila was around fourteen months old, Ann got word that her Mother had died. She took Sheila with her, left Cathy with me and rushed home to Ireland. She was heartbroken that they had the funeral before she got there and that she hadn't seen her Mother before she died. Cathy was a happy, sunny-natured three year-old, with her Dad's chuckle and there wasn't a whimper from her, even though it was her first time away from home. She was especially intrigued with Rick's tree house and he carefully helped her climb the ladder and have cookies in his hideaway.

Through the years our family shared many Sunday dinners, picnics, birthdays and Christmas celebrations. Rick, Linda and Jo-Anne loved their cousins dearly and there was no rivalry amongst them. One Sunday morning Ann phoned and said, "Can you come and get the girls. Something is wrong with Sam and I have to take him to the hospital." When we arrived Ann had Sam by the arm, ready to take him to the car. As they were walking through the kitchen I saw Sam look at himself in the mirror and he could see that one side of his face, near his mouth was pulled down. At the age of forty-six he had suffered a stroke and was in a coma for three weeks. The day before he had carried a heavy motor up a ladder, and put it on a stand to auger grain out of the bin. It was presumed that raising it above his head caused too much pressure on his brain. Miraculously, he regained full mobility and continued farming.

All three of Sam and Ann's children got married and were living in Regina so in 1990 they rented their farm to the Edgar brothers, bought a house on Cunning Crescent and moved to Regina. (Incidentally, we had sold our farm and moved to Chilliwack several months before). They were proud grandparents to Brady, Rebecca, Riley, Annie, Samuel, MacKenzie and Josie and cherished their time with them.

In 1993, at the age of 70, Sam had extensive surgery for Colon Cancer but made a remarkable recovery, due to his determination and courage. Unfortunately, Sam and Ann were not able to enjoy their retirement as they had anticipated because Ann developed Alzheimer's and finally had to move to a Care Home. She died on October 14, 2001. Sam continued to live on his own, in his home, in Regina, with the help of his family. He attended the Presbyterian Church and enjoyed going to the Casino and to Starbucks. In 2011 he saw a doctor about some lumps on his arm and was diagnosed with Lymphoma. He accepted this affliction with the same optimism and courage as he had with other challenges in his life. Life would go on as usual. His home was his castle. There would be no Care Home or hospital stay for him. I phoned him often and always it was the same response. Just a minute. I'll turn the television off. I'm doing okay and eating pretty good but the chemo makes me feel nauseated. Jackie brings me meals and Sheila and Josie bring me shakes. Cathy has been transferred to Regina and it is sure nice when she is here. She cooks good meals. Jackie takes me to my appointments but I still drive to Starbucks at Safeway. The girls sit and talk to me. He never complained. I miss those phone calls.

At his last appointment with the Oncologist Sam was told the cancer had spread and that he just had a few weeks to live. He was still reluctant to go into the hospital, but said he would go for a few days. We were shocked and saddened when in a little more than a week, June 19th, he was gone.

On June 25, 2013, we gathered at the Wolseley Funeral Home to say goodbye. The skies opened up with a cascade of rain, mixing with our tears. All of Sam's children and grandchildren were there. His four brothers and two sisters attending, as well as Beth, who wasn't well enough to travel, knew that our family would never be the same. The first link of the chain had been broken. The funeral cavalcade drove slowly down the rain soaked road past Sam's farm to the family cemetery at Ellisboro. The rain slowed to a trickle and the lightning flashed as we laid him to rest in the beautiful Qu'Appelle Valley. Sam was a good man. He will live on in our hearts. **Elinor Relf, July 2014.**

Duncan's Memories of His Early Life on Ten

I recall times when I was four or five years-old. I would be in the old blacksmith shop (which was a part of the original home built by my grandfather). Dad and his hired helper would be fixing machinery or repairing harness in readiness for field work. I had my Dad fix a seat on the harrow cart. It was a two-wheeled cart with four-feet high wheels trailing behind about six sections of harrows. I sat on the seat between his legs, so spent a few days on the seat. My favourite horse, old Barney was ahead of me, whenever we gave the horses a rest, I had to go and pet old Barney. We must have had some kindred affection as I remember giving him some oat- sheaf from the feed alley. He would reach his head over the manger for the sheaf, and I would pet him. He was the only one of over twenty horses on the farm that I cared for in those days.

Mother and Duncan.

When I was six or seven years old, my job was filling the wood box for the kitchen stove and for the furnace down the basement. This was a box about 2 by 3 feet for the kitchen and double that size for the furnace, so there were many armfuls every afternoon. It was my duty until Richard was old enough.

In summer time I was responsible for bringing the cows home and milking. I would ride behind Sam, on Topsy, to get the cows. If some wouldn't come out of the bushes, I would have to fetch them out. One time when we were going out, Sam spotted an animal he thought was a silver

fox (he had been to Uncle Howard's in Manitoba, who raised silver foxes). He got an old fence picket and tried to kill it. It turned out to be a skunk. I had to ride behind him to get the cows. We had to bury his clothes, and needed several baths. We all learned at an early age that we had to help with the family chores and had a responsibility.

I was probably nine or ten years old when I would light the fire in the Church stove. I would go about one hour early to get it warmed up. I did that for about two or three years when Mr. Jamieson sent a 3 or 4 pound box of chocolates home with Mom to thank me for my work. I treated everyone to a few each, then hid the rest. I really treasured them. Mr. Jamieson was Chairman of the Co-op Store, and worked there every Saturday. He was a very kindly, jolly man.

Another chore was to light the fire in the school furnace. Sam did it for 2 or 3 years then went to school in Lemberg. So, then, it was my turn. Richard wasn't old enough to drive the rest of the children to school in winter, so, often, I would milk one cow, get on a shetland pony, ride to school, get the furnace going good, ride home, have breakfast and get Ben hitched to the cutter to take us four kids to school. Then, keep on firing the furnace. We got paid $25.00 a year for this.

Top: Duncan. Bottom: Duncan with doll, Sam and Elinor.

Sam and I liked trapping fur animals, some weasels in the winter and muskrats in early spring. One year they were fairly plentiful, so

we trapped or shot about fifty. I remember buying our first CCM bicycle with the money we earned that year. Sam, however, remembers buying the bicycle with money earned lighting fires at the school.

We had many good times on the farm. Mother and Dad encouraged us to take part in sports and play games. We had many hand-me-down skates and softballs. Dad changed some gates and fences so people could drive out to a good ball diamond. There would be two or three games a week against different teams in the area. Before the war, there was a softball league of about six teams. After the war, Rosewood had a hardball team in a league with Lemberg, Abernethy, Neudorf, Killaly and Grayson.

Our first hockey rink was on a slough near the Rosewood School. This was about 1937 or 1938. The men in the area sawed 3 by 3 foot blocks of ice, and placed them all around to keep the puck out of the snow. At noon hour, all of us would be out playing hockey. In 1946, the community got together and built an open- air rink at Joe Devine's. We built a 14 by 20ft clubhouse, had a 110-volt gas generator, and 6ft board walls all around. With electric lights over the ice surface we were able to play hockey at night. In 1948, we were in a league with Lemberg, Abernethy, Neudorf, Killaly and Grayson. We lost to Grayson in the final playoff.

Rosewood class of 1933-34 (all grades), taken in January 1934. Students registered in January 1934, ages in brackets, were: Elinor Acton (6), Elwood Armbruster (6), Walter Ring (6), Gertude Kilback (7), Gordon Kilback (7), Duncan Acton (8), Gladys Allen (9), Albert Kilback (10), Sam Acton (10), Alex Betker (10), Otto Herndier (10), Alfred Kilback (12), Beth Acton (12), Vera Acton (12), Albert Allen (12), Evelyn Ring (13), Alex Thompson (13), Ernie Kilback (15), Helen Kilback (13), Otto Betker (14) and Elinor Betker (16). Photo courtesy of Dorethy Boyce (nee Bradley) and Jean Acton (nee Boyce).

In 1950, there were fewer players in each town to make a team. Rosewood joined with Lemberg, got Ken Mohr from Neudorf, Mickey Michalski from Grayson, Alex and John Lypka from Abernethy and played bigger towns in

Rosewood class of 1940-41. Back row: Gladys Allen, Lloyd Devine, Duncan Acton, Arthur Gollinger, Rienholdt Hahn, Elwood Armbruster, Elmer Ruecker, Alfred Ruecker, Walter Betker, Richard Acton and Lawrence Devine. Second row from back: Billy Ruecker, Stanley Acton, Corrine Armbruster, Kenneth Armbruster, Lorraine Gollinger and Edna Ruecker. Kneeling: Audrey Acton, Ella Ruecker, Lillian Herndier, Joyce Devine, Doris Acton, Elinor Acton, Shirley Acton, Luella Devine and Dorothea Ruecker. Sitting front: Orval Armbruster, Mervin Gollinger, unidentified boy, Donald Acton and Leroy Wendel. The 'unidentified boy' may be Donald or Ronald Callendar, although this seems unlikely as this family only attended Rosewood for three days in 1940-41, and if the photo was taken on one of those days it seems unlikely the other three Callendar children would not be present. Photo courtesy Duncan Acton.

tournaments. We entered the Intermediate B play downs. We beat Wolseley, then Balcarres and Melville. Then we played Moosomin for the South-east Saskatchewan Championship. We played our first game in Melville, as we had so many fans we needed a bigger rink. We won by one goal in Melville, but lost the total-goals series by one goal when we went to Moosomin.

Skating rink.

We went to a lot of sports days in towns near us, to play baseball. We won several

times. I recall us beating the Sioux Indians from Fort Qu'Appelle, and, in another year, the Mainline All Stars. We laugh about that game. We were tied with our last bat. Lloyd Devine was on first base, Sam Acton came to bat with two men out. Sam slammed one over the fielder's head and went to sit down. We had a hard time to get him to go to first base before they got the ball back. Otherwise, it would have been three out and Lloyd's run would not have counted.

Rosewood Ball Team, 1942. Front: Lorne Bishop, Albert Allen, Sam Acton, Henry Stoll, Alex Betker and Bob Churchman. Behind: Duncan Acton, Ervin Kaduhr and an unidentified player.

We had expanded our land base in the late forties through the purchase of one half-section on Section 3, and I had rented the south-half of NE9 from Aunt Jennie. In 1945, Uncle Bob was renting the north- half of NE9, and pasturing the south half. Granny Acton asked me to break up the pasture land, as Aunt Jennie needed more income. I broke about 25 acres of sod in 1947. There was a devil of a lot of stones to pry out of the sod before it could be broken. My first crop was in 1948. I had Steve Osiowy come with his bulldozer to push the bush. It took a few years and a lot of hard work to clear it.

Duncan and Elinor. At one point in time, Elinor was as tall, nearly as tall or taller than Duncan, depending upon who was telling the story, of course. Looks like it was finally settled in Duncan's favour!

Dad gave me the income from SW3 as wages for seven years, starting in 1948, then gave me the title. I was able

to buy a 12-foot CCIL discer and a 12-foot IHC cultivator and Dad's 1935 Ford car. He bought a Pontiac car about 1949.

In 1954, I rented all of section 10 from Dad. It was a disaster as there was a lot of rain, rust was devastating, with wheat yields of only six or seven bushels per acre. It was slow getting the crop off due to rains. Finally, on Nov. 4, Stan and George Calcutt came in for one day to help me finish combining. Milly and I were married November 6 of that year. We went on our honeymoon to the USA stopping at Glendive, Dickinson and Bismark. We enjoyed the sights in the Black Hills, then went north to Grand Forks and Winnipeg for Richard's wings graduation.

Beginning in 1937, seeding was done with a 6-foot Cockshutt One-way with a seeder attachment, pulled by the McCormick Deering W30. This was replaced by an 8-foot Minneapolis One-way with seeder attachment, pulled by Minneapolis U in 1946. About 1960 I bought a deep-tillage cultivator and a new Minneapolis 5-star diesel tractor. The One-ways were replaced by a John Deere drill in 1952. This was

Duncan in his Rosewood Ranger hockey outfit (top). The Lemberg Rangers Hockey Team of the late 1940's and early 1950's had a core of players from the former Rosewood Rangers. The team included, in the back row, from L/R: Henry Stoll, Albert Stoll, Curly Gruber, Jack Martin, John Heil, Duncan Acton, Stan Acton and Bill Page. Front row: George Stoll, Len Pfiefer, Larry Engle, Pastor Krempien, Archie Haggard, Mel Armstrong, Jim Haggard and Alfred Ruecker.

used until 1965 when I bought an 1850 Cockshutt tractor, with my first cab, and a 15 foot disker with a seeding attachment. There was a small amount of fertilizer used (30-40 pounds of 11-48-0, during the 1940s, used mostly on summer fallow crops. It was purchased in 80 pound bags. In the 1970s we started broadcasting nitrogen, and sowing stubble crops. Later on, we banded nitrogen in the fall, sowing the crop with 27 foot John Deere disker pulled by 7020 John Deere 4-wheel drive tractor. In 1982 we went to a 36 foot John Deere disker.

Elinor

As I reflect on Elinor as a part of our lives on Ten I have many happy thoughts. She was always cheerful, even in the face of the challenges she faced helping Mother with her household duties after Beth left home in 1946. There were two incidents that involved me where her happy demeanour was challenged.

The first one was a trip into town in the ’46 Ford truck. The roads were wet and slippery but I was ploughing on undeterred. It had become fashionable at the time to have a knob on the steering wheel. We were cruising along, avoiding one ditch and then the other; all the time with me steering with one hand on the knob. Before long, Elinor sternly suggested to me that it would be better if I used two hands. I offered the notion that you could steer with only the one hand but she never supported it.

Doris and Elinor (right) on the veranda steps.

The second incident had her patience with her two young brothers really tested. It was just before Beth’s wedding. Elinor and Mother had just washed down the entire house. A Saturday came along, which meant a bath for everyone before we went into town. Providing hot water for the baths was a challenge as there was not a central hot water heater in the house. What we had was the “outside kitchen”, the part of the house on the north side that was the original kitchen. In it was a three burner coal-oil stove. A big copper tub was placed on top and filled with about 10 gallons of water. There was one problem with this system: after some period of burning incomplete combustion would occur and the burner would discharge an oily soot. Elinor and Mother needed to leave so they charged Clifford and me with watching the stove to make sure that this didn’t happen. Well, it was Saturday, with an exciting night in town coming up and Clifford and I felt we needed a little sleep. Some time later, Elinor and Mother returned from wherever they were to find the entire house full of this oily smoke. This meant that Elinor

and Mother had to start washing down the entire house all over again. Fortunately, Elinor is blessed with Mother's unending patience and forgiveness so Clifford and I were not punished, as we should have been. I suppose our punishment has been spread over many years with Elinor' reminder of the incident.

Grade I, 1933-34. Back row: Gordon Kilback, Gertrude Kilback, and Elwood Armbruster. Front row: Elinor Acton and Walter Ring. Photo courtesy Dorethy Boyce (nee Bradley) and Jean Acton (nee Boyce).

Elinor left Ten to take teachers training at the Moose Jaw Normal School. Many years later she took courses in creative writing. She has produced many items over the years. Here are a few that relate to life on Ten.

Mothballs, hired girls and hired men.

I can remember one incident when Bob Walker came home on leave. I had my tonsils removed a few days before he got home and could still smell and taste chloroform. Bob came down from the attic wearing a grey wool suit that had been in the trunk in mothballs and stopped at my door and said, " Can you smell mothballs? " I told him "No." When he came home from church he was quite miffed because everyone could smell mothballs.

Grade 1, 1933-34: Dorethy Bradley (teacher) with back row (L/R): Walter Ring, Gordon Kilback and Elwood Armbruster. Front row: Gertrude Kilback and Elinor Acton. Photo courtesy Dorethy Boyce (nee Bradley) and Jean Acton (nee Boyce).

Elinor is standing by the honeysuckle bush along the lane in the photo above left and is with good old Pat by the southwest post in the garden above right, where she appears to have convinced Pat to look at the camera.

Elinor is taking a rest from skating on the outdoor rink.

1941-42 or 1942-43. Elwood Armbruster and Elinor Acton were classmates at Rosewood School. Photo courtesy Elinor Relf (nee Acton).

Sophie Jarotski was a nice looking, well-built girl with carrot red hair. She was a good worker, had a cheerful disposition and I can still picture her washing the kitchen floor with both Donald and Clifford riding on her back.

Rosie Janiskavich was not too bright, but she was cheerful. I remember Doris sneaked into her room and saw that she was knitting something for Doris's doll for Christmas. When Doris found that the orange in her brown paper bag we got at the Christmas concert was rotten, we teased her and said Santa knew she had been snooping. Sam told the story of running into her in a store in Regina after she had left our place. She said, " Sammy, you grow beeg." She was pregnant and he replied," You grow beeg too, Rosie."

I remember Val Zorn. He showed me pictures of two little girls whom he said were his daughters.

I also remember standing with my mouth open as Jack Ernie squeezed himself into the high chair and the rungs on the side of the chair bent beneath his short, fat body. One winter he had scabies and Dad had to bath him with a disinfectant soap every week and mother had to boil all his clothes, sheets etc. What a miserable job that would be.

Bored, Mischievous, or Bad

I wonder which one of these adjectives went through Doris Watson's head the afternoon she was left in charge of her Acton cousins. She probably thought we were brats, compared to her siblings, who had little time to play. Mother and Dad had gone to town and we had strict orders to stay out of the house because Doris was doing the Saturday cleaning. Dad had hired her to work for the summer so she would have some money for her trip to Winnipeg to start Nurses' Training.

Vi and Pearl had persuaded their parents to let them come to the farm. Audrey and Stanley had come across the road to play so there were ten of us, but we had run out of things to do. In truth we had run out of things our parents had told us not to do. We had crawled up and down the pig pen roof, pushing and shoving each other playfully, mindful of Dad's words, "Stay off the pig-pen roof. You are ripping all the shingles off!" But now we were bored. What could we do?

I don't know who came up with the idea that we should bug stern-faced Doris. How could we do it?? We were supposed to stay out of the house. What if we went through the house and didn't stay inside? We wouldn't be disobeying Mother. A plan was hatched. We would sneak up to the house, listen to see where she was, and then quietly steal in the front door. Doris was washing the kitchen floor as we stealthily crept up the

stairs, undetected till someone stumbled and giggled. No time to waste, we sped to the bathroom, climbed on the sturdy claw foot bathtub, hoisted each other onto the window ledge and crawled out the window onto the V shaped roof of the back kitchen. Doris came stomping up the stairs, furious with us and said, "Get back up here. Just wait till your parents get home." One by one we crawled up the roof and through the window. Pearl and Vi were really scared. They wore leather soled shoes, whereas the rest of us had running shoes. They would take a step up the steep roof and slip back down. They were never getting down off the roof on their own. Dunc was the hero. He pushed and pulled and finally got both girls to the window and back to safety. Doris went back to her work – probably with a migraine. I wonder if she thought the summer on the Acton farm was the worst job she ever had.

Another brother.

Many years later Donald had another birthday. Elinor sent this greeting. **"**Hi Donald: Tried to phone but couldn't get through. Time and years go by so quickly. Can still remember going into the kitchen on June 16, 1934 and seeing the brown plaid blanket in front of the west window near the stove and thinking," Mother is baking bread today." Then I heard a squawk and there you were!"

Sam and Elinor in front of the duplex that housed Granny, Grandpa and Aunt Jenny early on. Aunt Mae and her family lived in the north side, which can be seen

Sundays on the Farm

Preparation for Sunday started on Saturday. We had Sunday clothes; pretty dresses for the girls, for the boys and Dad, dress pants with suit jackets and cotton shirts that needed to be ironed. No mud on the shoes, they had to be shining. Everyone wore their best attire to church and Mother was proud of her brood. Very often the bachelors in the district would be asked for Sunday dinner after church. That would mean killing a rooster, having pies baked and potatoes peeled. John Watson, Tom Barton and Dave Mercer were three that I remember. I thought Tom was from the backwoods because he sat on a chair backwards with his arms on the back. You would think that our energetic mother had enough to do with feeding the ten of us, but there was always room for one more at the table. Uncle Alex, Aunt Annie, Vi and Pearl were frequent Sunday visitors, driving in their 3 ton truck for an afternoon visit and staying for supper.

Mr. Hughes held services at the Rosewood United church whenever the weather was suitable, and if there was church we all attended, no exception. Granny Acton was always punctual (in fact her clock was always

set 15 minutes ahead of time) and Dad had inherited his mother's habit. He urged us on with, "Hurry up we'll be late." We never were! We were always 15 minutes early, which was 15 more minutes to squirm. How many carved their initials on the Acton pew, willing the time to speed by? Often we feigned a cough, if we didn't have one, knowing Mr. Jamieson would pass a peppermint down the line to the suffering child. Mother and Aunt Sarah played the pump organ until Beth and Doris were able to take their turn. Mr. Hughes wasn't too sure about Doris playing as she got the hymns swinging and kids tapping their toes.

Sunday afternoon the dust flew as many Rosewood young people sped through our yard to play ball in the cow pasture. Granny, the matriarch of the family, was a staunch Presbyterian and would be aghast at anyone playing cards on Sunday, but saw nothing wrong with throwing a ball around in your back yard. "We know where they are and what they are doing." In the winter, our dugout was used as the skating rink for hockey games or just skating. A bin, with planks along the side for sitting on and a cut off barrel for burning wood, was a cozy place to warm our fingers and toes.

The boys got older and often had excuses to get out of going to church, or were out of sight when the car left the yard. One Sunday afternoon the Game Warden knocked on the door. He informed Dad, "It is against the law to hunt on Sunday and I saw your sons shooting ducks this morning. When they saw me they took off and I couldn't catch them, but I'm writing out a ticket. "With a straight face Dad replied, "You must be mistaken. My sons are in church every Sunday morning. It couldn't have been them." He had no proof so strode off with a scowl on his face while the boys who had been listening, howled with laughter.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy was the culture of that era. A woman would be the talk of the district if she dared put her wash on the line on Sundays. It was a day of rest and farmers would never do any work on the land on Sunday. Horses needed a rest and hired hands had the day to go home to visit their families. All stores were closed. It was a day for reading, visiting or going to the lake. Sunday was a day we looked forward to. It was a day to recharge our batteries and face the week ahead with a smile on our face and a song in our hearts. I have so many precious memories of Sundays on the farm.

A 'Rural Sunday' was organised annually by the Rosewood United Church. It featured guest speakers, sometimes of some note, such as Tommy Douglas before he became Premier, good fellowship, and a really good lunch, much to the delight of children and satisfaction of bachelors in the neighbourhood. Mr. Hughes spoke on this occasion.

Our Sister Beth

Beth, and she always was Beth to us although she felt Betty sounded better with her married name, was the oldest of eight children in the Richard Acton, Annie Belle McKinnon family. She was born two days after Christmas, 1921 on the Acton Farm south of Lemberg, Saskatchewan and four days after her cousin Vera who became her life-long friend. Her birth certificate gives the location; Section 10, Township 19, Range 9, west of the 2nd Meridian which was the legal location of that family farm. Her mother described her as a lovely baby with dark, curly hair. Beth led the way for the rest of her siblings by attending Rosewood, a small, one room school with 30 or more students attending grades one to ten. She later completed grades eleven and twelve at Lemberg High school where she and her cousin Vera stayed with our Grandmother.

These were difficult times to be growing up in Saskatchewan during the "dirty thirties. We were better off than many but a succession of poor crops due to drought and insect damage left little money for other than the bare necessities. Beth and many of her generation continued their thrifty habits in later life as the oldest of an ever growing family; Beth described her duties after school as to bake a cake or bath the baby. It was a large household with the family of ten plus a maid and two or more hired men so it took many hands to keep them all fed. Beth was always our big sister and she played that role well, always ready with a few words of

advice. She often would say "come on you kids! Which would perhaps lead us to a family picture taking or some times on an outing to Lake Katepwa. One time before she continued her nurses training, she decided to take all us kids for a weekend at the lake. She planned and organized all the food, bedding and an old tent to shelter us and used a communal kitchen to prepare our meals. We had a great time! Another time, Dad, Sam and Duncan were combining at Sam's farm near Wolseley and had taken all the vehicles with them except a war surplus Army Truck which Sam had recently bought. Beth decided that we should take the army truck and all go to town. There was a problem, it was difficult to change gears on that truck as it required double clutching to shift. I (Richard) knew how to drive it but at 15 was not old enough to have a licence. The problem was solved by Beth driving and I shifting gears so off we went with the rest of the kids riding in the back.

After graduating from High School, Beth was accepted at the Regina General Hospital for a three year Registered Nurses training. In about her second year she came down with red measles so was placed in an isolation ward that also happened to have a TB patient! Beth eventually succumbed to that disease and spent seven months in a sanatorium and then a year recuperating at home. She returned to complete her training in 1946. After graduating and writing her RN exams, Beth accepted a Nurses position in the Balcarres Hospital. While working there, her cousin Vera came to the hospital in labour with her first child. Beth said that her labour pains hurt her as much as her own did in later years

During the stay at home, Beth was courted by two young farmers including Ernest Stilborn, a well to do farmer with close family connections. He visited her often while in Balcarres and one time was caught in the blizzard of 47 when all roads and even railways were closed. Ernest stayed around the hospital for ten days so Beth got to know him better and decided that he was a rather boring person giving her second thoughts about their relationship. In March of that year, she applied for and was accepted in the Victorian Order of Nurses with a position in North Vancouver. She returned home shortly before moving to Vancouver and Ernest road on a horse the 18 miles over the snow-clogged roads from his farm north of Lemberg to see her and even visited her a year later in Vancouver but to no avail, it was all over. Ernest never did marry.
Beth must have been highly thought of in the VON because she told me years later that they offered her a fully paid university education. Now I am sure that was not done very often at that time and it could have eventually led to a high position in that organization but it would have meant forgoing marriage and a family so Beth declined that offer.

On one of our visits to her at Dove Hill house we asked her how she met Wilf. She said that one winter in North Vancouver there was lots of snow and the roads were very icy so she ran off the road (more than once!) With her VON car. Wilf worked at a local garage and was sent out each time to pull her out. With that they struck up a relationship and let’s face it, Wilf was far from boring! In Early summer on the next year Beth told the family that she was getting married and she wanted the wedding to take place on the family farm. The wedding was held on 12 August 1949. Wilf and his brother Roy drove out in Wilf's old Studebaker while Beth came out earlier by train. Wilf could have been apprehensive about meeting Beth's five brothers but he handled it well by arriving with a two four of beer. The happy couple spent their wedding night at Lake Katepwa then began their drive back to Vancouver a few days later.

Doris

Dedicating "Ten On Ten" to Mother is a wonderful tribute to her. She was the heart and soul of our family, with the patience of a saint and a heart of gold. Her dedication to family was evident in all she did-- her brothers Alex and Roy making their homes in Lemberg, her sisters Eva and Mary coming to help whenever they were needed, her nieces and nephews who loved to spend time at the farm, and to us, her children to follow her example.

Elinor taught at Red Fox Valley School, south of Sintaluta. The people she boarded with had a litter of Cocker Spaniel pups.Who can resist having a Cocker Spaniel pup? Elinor couldn't! Here we see her, Molly, with Cliff and with Elinor. Unfortunately, Molly only lived a year or so, succumbing to gopher poison. Gracie had to come along to ensure the pup was going to a good home. I also think she had heard how good looking Clifford was but I don't think Cliff was quite ready for this kind of attention.

One of her passions was her love of music which she passed on to her children and grandchildren. She sang when she worked in the kitchen and sat down to the piano when she wanted a break. She bought the first piano from Mrs. Arbuckle who operated the Lemberg Hotel. It was a big upright, built in 1905 and stood for years in the parlour on the farm. She encouraged each of us to take music lessons, piano, violin or band.

Doris (left) and Elinor on the veranda steps.

We had sing-songs in the parlour for entertainment, often with Vi and Pearl who had lovely voices. Many times I accompanied them on the piano, also Sam with the violin doing his rendition of ‘Red Sails In the Sunset’ and ‘The Minuet In G’. Who can forget Donald and Clifford's 'attempts' to play the trumpet. Kevin managed the clarinet well a generation later; playing the ‘Last Post’ on one occasion at a Lemberg Remembrance Day Service. Both his grandpas were very proud.

Mother gave the piano to me (Doris) in 1947 when I married and I

Girls of 1941-42 or 1942-43. Back row: Ella Ruecker, Elinor Acton, Audrey Acton and Lillian Herndier. Second row: Luella Devine, Corrine Armbruster, Joyce Devine, Doris Acton and Lorraine Gollinger. Front row: Edna Ruecker, Dorothy Ruecker, Marlene Betker and Shirley Acton. Photo courtesy Elinor Relf (nee Acton).

took it with me wherever I went. I did manage to pass Grade 2 theory and grade 8 piano by that time. I started playing the organ at the Rosewood Church when I was 12, taking over from Mother who had replaced Beth and Vera when they left. When Rev. Hughes retired from the Lemberg parish, Mother bought his piano which sat in the dining room. She took it to their house in Lemberg but later got a new smaller one, which she played to the end of her days. She didn't need music and even with failing eyesight she continued to sit down at her piano. I have some of her original sheet music, which is tattered and torn. Her favourites were 'There's a Long Long Trail a Winding', 'That Old Fashioned Mother Of Mine', 'Beyond The Sunset' and 'Somebody Bigger Than You and I'.

1941-42 or 1942-43: Doris Acton, Audrey Acton, Lorraine Gollinger, Lloyd Devine, Arthur Gollinger and Walter Betker. Photo courtesy Elinor Relf (nee Acton).

After Mum and Dad moved to Lemberg, Betty Lou recounts the trips across the valley with mother to visit Sam's and Elinor's families. They would sing 'Down in the Valley' while driving through the valley. Later when we bought Mother and Dad their first stereo, mother had 33 LPs of Perry Como, Pat Boone and Mahalia Jackson.

The old piano followed us to our home in Lemberg in 1954 and soon Beverley and Lynn were taking lessons. Weekly lessons were 25 cents in those days. Beverley went on to study music at the University of Saskatchewan (Regina campus), as it was then. She made a career of teaching. She produced many musicals at her school, taught piano lessons after school, played the organ (a family theme) at numerous churches and was a soloist at many weddings and special occasions. Lyle Gustin, a musician, well known to the wider Saskatoon community, was an adjudicator at the Melville Music Festival. After hearing Beverley sing, he commented, "such a mighty voice coming from such a little person." That old piano went from Lemberg to Swift Current, to Manitoba with Beverley's son, and back to Swift Current again. Nothing like the old, tall uprights.

Betty Lou did take some piano lessons, after complaining to Grandpa Acton that everyone but her got to take lessons. He paid for them for a while, at $1.00 a week then. Not sure if Mrs. Calver gave up on her or just left town. Bev and Lynn followed Mrs. Calver for lessons, first to Balcarres, then Wolseley. Beverley taught a few students in Lemberg after school. Doris had a fight on her hands, as the youngest was "not going to

Doris is with our family dog, Pat.

listen" to the older sister. Mother offered Betty Lou her piano, after she married and settled in Saskatoon, but Betty Lou simply couldn't take it from her 86 year-old Grandmother, because, even tho' seldom, she still played it. Betty Lou has done extremely well with her music considering the few lessons and is very involved with music at St. Martin's in Saskatoon. Mother would be so proud of her grandchildren and great grandchildren, who have made their mark in the music world. Beverley, Betty Lou, Cheryl and Linda (harp), and Kerry, Michael, Alexa, and others.

As for Dad, he did love to sing. We woke up to 'K-K-K-Katie' or 'Where Is My Darling Daughter Tonite', (this one heard on the morning after Len & Doris' wedding, witnessed by her 3 daughters who had been abandoned to Grandpa's house!) His other favourites: 'Its A Long Way To Tipperary', or the words made up with his war comrades, 'It's a Long Way to Tickle Mary'. Amazing in the midst of war that there would be singing.

How fortunate we were to grow up on Ten and to be given so many opportunities and to pass them on to our children. Mother's love of music will live on.

Doris and Elinor with brothers Richard and Donald.

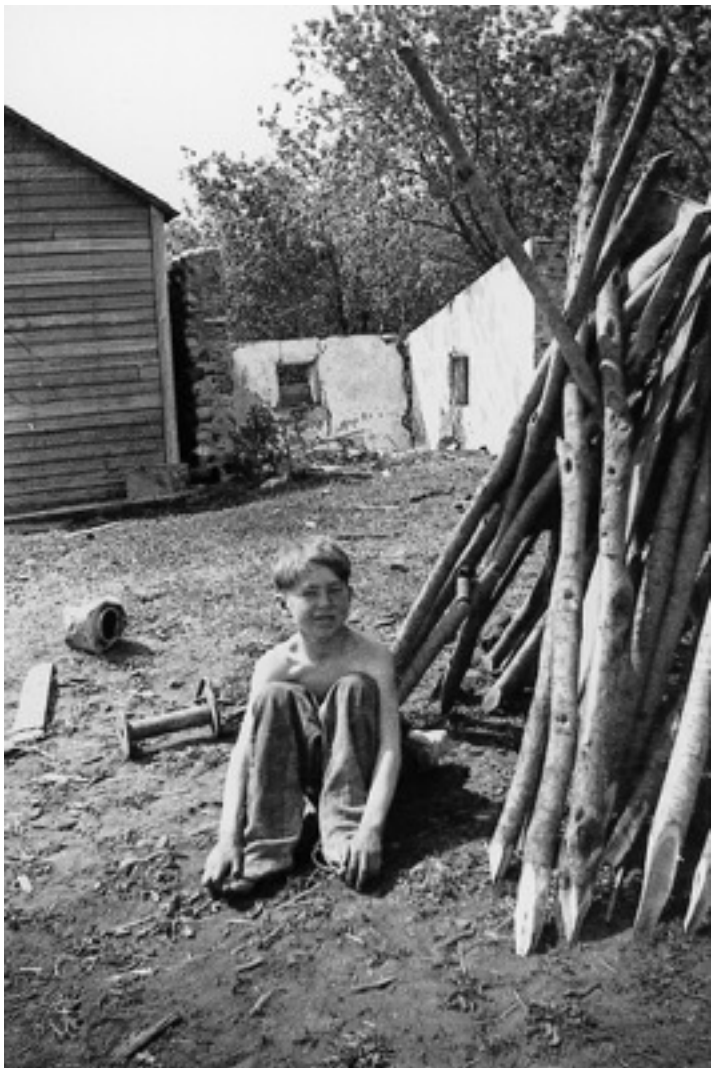
Richard

Starting with the Walker boys, Ken and Fred. They often spent their summers with us. You have probably heard this one many times about the time they were herding cows on the road allowance with Sam and Dunc when the cream-truck driver came by. They all waved to him as he went by but he apparently ignored them

as he continued on to Uncle Bob's. They didn't think much of this so when he came back along the road a few minutes later, they grabbed some cow-pies which happened to be dry on the bottom but wet on top after recent rains and threw them at the driver! The driver stopped and roared after them. Three of the boys slipped through the barbed wire fence and escaped but poor Fred got stuck so was caught. The driver said where do you live, I want to talk to your parents. Fred said Rainy River. I'm not sure how it ended, perhaps the driver cuffed him a few times and left.

Bob worked for Dad several years before the war. He seemed to get along well with Dad. He also told me about hauling water from Heil's Lake in the winter. He had to haul a load each day to keep the livestock watered no matter what kind of weather. If the temperature was warmer than minus 20^0 F he could fill the tank with a pump but if the temperature was colder, the pump would freeze and he would have to resort with a bucket wired on to a pitch fork to dip the water and fill the tank. All that for 50 cents a day.

Alex Thompson and Bill Allen both joined the army in WWII. Bill served in the North Africa campaign but was invalided out of the army after contacting Rheumatic Fever. He was the first to return home and was considered a war hero. Alex was wounded in Normandy and returned home around the war's end. The two of them had a great time partying for a year or so afterwards. Russell Obleman was a sad case. To start he



At one time Richard had his own private residence, a teepee made of fence pickets.

Richard and Donald, trying to fit into the wagon.

didn't have the advantage of a good family situation, he had a bad stutter, he could have been dyslexic or had some other problem as he never rose higher than grade four in school. When he was 15 or 16, he had an altercation with Mrs. Obleman who told him she was not his mother, she was his grandmother. At that point he left to join the army and was shipped overseas. On the way to action, when they discovered his age, he was sent home. He later joined the army again and served in the Korean war.

One period we must cover is WWII as those five years where a big part of our younger years. Some of my reminiscences are; I remember one day in the late fall of about 1937, standing beside the steam engine during threshing. There was a late, cold-October wind blowing so Dad was standing on the lee side, beside the big wheel of the streamer. He and another man were talking and Dad was voicing his strong concern about this guy Hitler. He said he will get us in another war! Of course it did happen and Dad followed it closely all the way through. Whenever the news came on, every hour, Dad would say shhhh and listen to it. I remember the day France fell. It was on a Sunday, I believe, because there was some connection with church but there was a general sense of foreboding. That must have been a traumatic event for Dad, he had stood nose to nose with the Germans for four years and finally see them defeated but to see them sweep across France in a matter of weeks! Britain really did have its back to the wall and we were there beside them. We were afraid we would lose! We followed the air war in the battle of Britain which gave us numbers of aircraft shot

Understandably, Mother was not impressed with the behaviour of her two youngest sons on this day at Fort San, so made a special picture of Richard from it. Fortunately, she never threw the negative away so the source has been determined.

down each day and, finally, giving us a small feeling of relief when it was over but then came the blitz! Dad and Mr. Henry were on like minds. Mr. Henry gave Dad a picture of Winston Churchill which he hung in the parlour. They much preferred Churchill to our MacKenzie King who was playing his political cards very carefully regarding conscription. Wartime restrictions didn't affect us too much but all the young men disappeared. Young women also left to get jobs to replace them. There was rationing. Sugar was scarce and decent chocolate bars disappeared. Sam would bring some home when on leave with the Navy as apparently all the good chocolate bars went to the Armed forces. Dad told me many rears later that as a veteran he was appointed to watch the ethnic communities in our area. At one point in the early war, an RCMP Sergeant came to see Dad. He said "give me the names of all the Nazis around here". Dad said "there are no more here. There were some who listened to Hitler's speeches before the war but they have all since changed their minds." That saved a bit of a

The boys always had a calf for the Calf Club. Here, Richard is showing off one he hopes will be a prize-winner.

1941-42: Shirley Acton, Luella Devine, Edna Ruecker, Lorraine Gollinger, Joyce Devine, Corrine Armbruster, Doris Acton, Lillian Herndier, Ella Ruecker, Audrey Acton, Elinor Acton, Rienholdt Hahn, Elwood Armbruster, Alfred Ruecker, Arthur Gollinger, Elmer Ruecker, Lloyd Devine, Walter Betker, Stanley Acton, Lawrence Devine, Leroy Wendel, Bill Ruecker, Richard Acton, Kenneth Armbruster, Donald Acton, Mervin Gollinger, Orval Armbruster and Harvey Devine. Photo

witch- hunt. The war finally came to an end. I recall one morning in May 1945. We were having our breakfast when the morning news came on. The announcer said "What a beautiful morning!" Dad said, "it's not so beautiful, its darned cold". Seconds later the announcer said, "the war in Europe is over".

We had many other hired-men and girls working for us. Dunc could tell us about the hired-men during the thirties while Elinor and Doris may recall some stories about the girls. There is one story that sticks in my memory. It happened when I was about two or three. I was sitting on the hired-girls lap in the back yard in a summer evening watching two hired-men fighting, really duking it out, probably for her charms. One got the better of the other who jumped over the fence and ran down the lane. I don't know what happened next, I was probably put in bed.

Some of the hired-men I remember are Tony Kohoniuk. He helped plant the row of fir trees before he left to join the army in 1939. Another was Val Zorn who came along in the winter of 1941? He was an American, from his stories had lived in LA, probably in hiding as he left in the spring telling us that we would not hear from him again as he was going to work on the Burma Road. Dad said not likely, as the Japanese had taken Burma by then. I don't know if he was much of a worker, I don't think he was given a team of horses to haul grain but at that time a hired- man was hard to find. There was also "Snorky" Yatsura? who would sit in his room all evening playing his guitar and singing cowboy songs loudly and out of key. Ed Shierer also was with us for a couple of years. There was also Jack Ernie, that dirty English farm-labourer who used to hog the chair by the radio during hockey games.

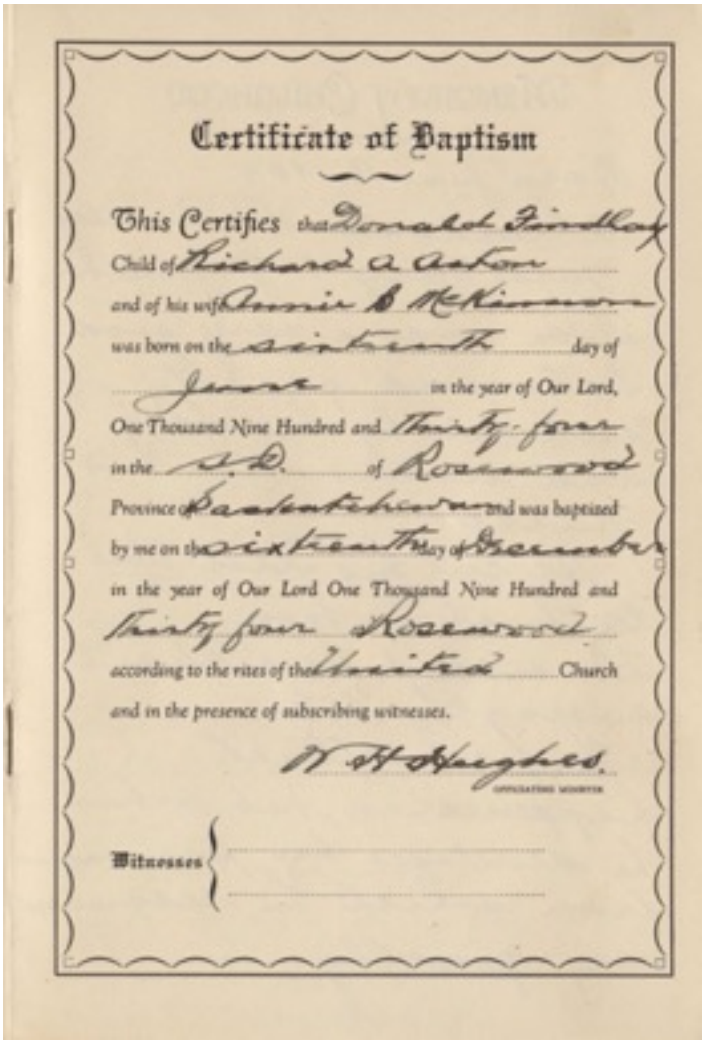
Elinor and Richard

Hi Richard: My recollections of Mother in the Regina General are a little different. I don't think Beth was home. As I remember Doris went into Regina in the ambulance with Mother. Sam went to visit her and was so concerned that he phoned Uncle Alex. Uncle Alex went to the hospital and he and Sam watched as she twitched and jerked. They got the nurse to phone Dr. Mohr but he had been drinking and didn't want to come. Uncle Alex was furious and phoned Hal Spooner. Hal got on the phone and gave Dr. Mohr a real blast. He told him he would report him, so Dr. Mohr went to the hospital immediately. As soon as he saw Mother he said, " I've made a big mistake. I thought she was an old lady with Parkinson's but it's her electrolytes". He started her on an I.V. and the next morning when Sam went in to see her he didn't know

whether she would be alive, but she was sitting up, eating breakfast. I came to see her that afternoon and she was greatly improved. A few months later they celebrated their 50th anniversary and Beth and the family were home for the celebration. Ask Doris and she would be able to verify. Also, we have to remember that Doris and her girls were the ones who saw to Dad's needs daily as she was so close, took him to his appointments, cooked meals did his laundry etc. We all appreciated Beth being able to stay and nurse Dad at the end and it took the load off Doris. Love, Elinor.

Donald

Mother has provided us with her impressions of her fourth son. Not like the others, I would guess. To add to her Memoirs of Childhood, my earliest recollection is my first day of school and how proud I was to be Duncan's younger brother. There is a photo on page 113 that shows me in Grade I and Duncan in Grade X,

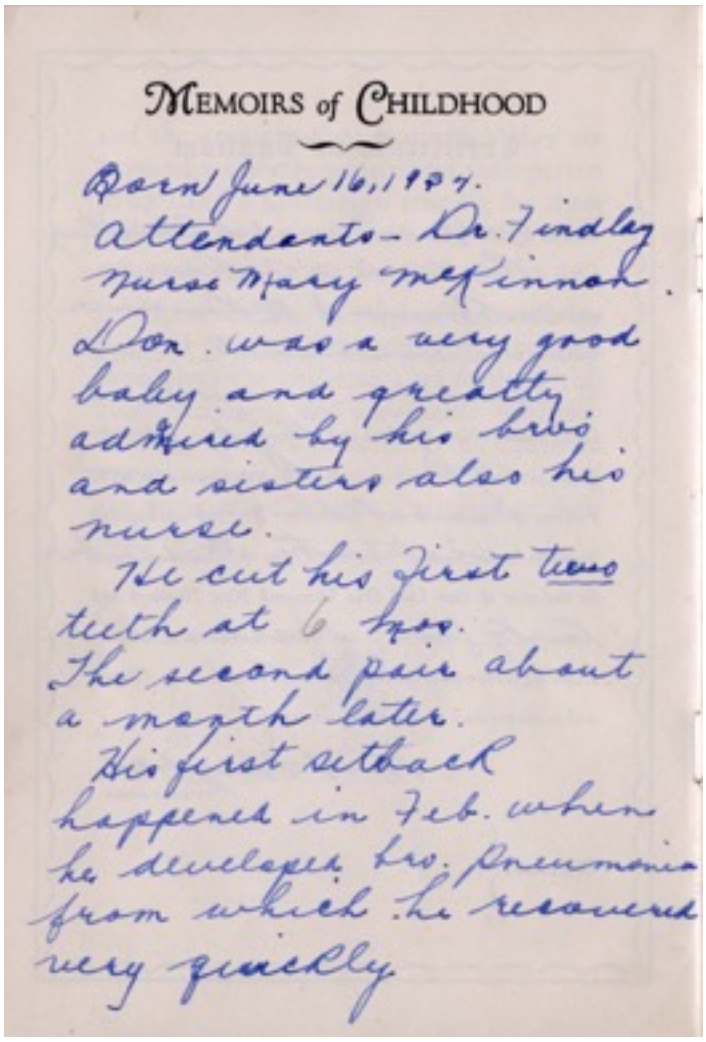


Certificate of Baptism

This Certifies that Donald Findlay
Child of Richard A Aston
and of his wife Annie B McKinnon
was born on the sixteenth day of
June in the year of Our Lord,
One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty-four
in the A.D. of Rosemont
Province of Saskatchewan and was baptized
by me on the sixteenth day of December
in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and
Thirty four Rosemont
according to the rites of the United Church
and in the presence of subscribing witnesses.

W A Hughes
OFFICIATING MINISTER

Witnesses



MEMOIRS of CHILDHOOD

Born June 16, 1934.
attendants - Dr. Findlay
nurse Mary McKinnon.
Don. was a very good
baby and greatly
admired by his bro's
and sisters also his
nurse.
He cut his first two
teeth at 6 mos.
The second pair about
a month later.
His first setback
happened in Feb. when
he developed bro. pneumonia
from which he recovered
very quickly

Dec. 7/52 Don has been a going concern for 16 yrs. With the exception of 1951. He developed pneumonia Dec 1/51 while attending Luther College, was quite sick but managed to get home for Xmas. During the Winter he had two relapses, making it necessary to take Gr XII in two years.

During the 16 yrs Donald was a good student, rarely late or absent. His determination increased with the years as well as a quick tongue which had to be curbed many times.

Like his Dad, he loved sport. The many marks on the old hall testify to the amount of hockey played there on stormy days. Every spare moment in Summer was spent with a ball & bat or a shetland pony and cart going at a dangerous pace without mishap.

Grooming calves for Calf Fair kept him out of mischief a great deal of time but the rewards were satisfactory.

Mar 18/53 How time flies.

Donalds health improved. He got half of XII with little exertion. Also took quite an keen interest in tractor farming and base ball. Oct. found him back at school part time as our harvest merged into Winter season Nov. Again sport claims a large part of his time. He being goal keeper and peewee coach. Regularly at 12.15 Henry calls to play the games over & arrange new ones. The 64 dollar question is

Shall he go to University which Dad will finance or go farming. Time will tell

MEMOIRS of CHILDHOOD

Apr. 18/37. Don will soon be three. He walked at 12 mos and talked at 2 yrs. Had nice curls which came off at 2 yrs. during one of the hottest spells I have known in July. So hot that I used to wring towels out of cold water and hang in baby Cliffords room to cool the air. Don was always a sturdy, determined little fellow but quite affectionate. Has a very hearty laugh and like most healthy boys loves to play and get into mischief

with Elinor, Doris and Richard somewhere in between.

Another school memory goes back a long way, as well. There were separate cloakrooms for the boys and girls. In inclement weather we ate our lunch sitting on the cloakroom floor. I don't recall whether I was the only one plugged up with a sinus infection but I do remember Lloyd Devine "loosing it" when I made a desperate attempt to clear out all the junk.

Rubber ice in the spring of the year, fox and goose after a fresh snowfall in spring or fall, duck on the rock were games we played before school, recess and noon hour. I remember the Christmas Concert in the photo to follow. We ceased academic studies about December 1 and worked tirelessly on this concert. It was well done except we had too many scenes and not enough actors so the concert went on for about three hours. I think The Board had a message for the teacher!

Christmas Concert 1947. Back row: Edna Ruecker, Luella Devine, Dorothea Ruecker and Shirley Acton (barely visible behind Harvey Devine). Centre row: Mary Ann Konowal, Lillian Ruecker and Harvey Devine. Front row: Colin Schienbein, Clifford Acton, Malcolm Schienbein, Mervin Gollinger, Rita Gollinger and Donald Acton. Kneeling: Murray Calcutt and Mabel Konowal. Photo courtesy Hilde Ruecker (nee Jastram).

Rosewood boys 1946-47. Mervin Gollinger, Leroy Wendel (partially hidden), Donald Acton, Lawrence Devine (partially hidden), Stanley Acton, Clifford Acton, Richard Acton and Harvey Devine. Photo courtesy Hilde Ruecker (nee Jastram).

1947-1948. Morning Opening- Saluting the Flag. Dorothea Ruecker, Shirley Acton, Edna Ruecker, Luella Devine, Murray Calcutt, Harvey Devine, Mervin Gollinger, Clifford Acton and Donald Acton. Missing from photo were Mary Ann and Mabel Konowal, Lillian Ruecker, Rita Gollinger, and Colin and Malcolm Schienbein. Photo courtesy Hilde Ruecker (nee Jastram).

In any event, I completed Grade VIII at Rosewood. After

Granny's death in 1948, a house with more conveniences was purchased in Lemberg for Aunt Jennie. Dad and Mum moved into it for the winter of 1948-1949. I attended Rosewood in the fall and again the next spring.

Dad and Mum moved into their new house in Lemberg in 1949. The plan was for Cliff and I to drive into school at Lemberg until Mum and Dad moved in after

Getting to school in 1947-49. Most families that lived greater than a mile from school travelled by horse and cart in summer and horse and cutter in winter. Those closer would walk. Some would come on horseback, or on bicycle in the summer. Photo courtesy Hilde Ruecker (nee Jastram).

Don on Don. I am not certain who came first nor whether one of us was named after the other but we were great pals. Although he presented many challenges, I always seemed to be able to handle him. I agree with Cliff as he described his experiences rounding the big cedar post at the east gate (I do recall a gate at the end of the lane but cannot recall it being closed). I can remember more than one scrape on my left leg as we rounded that corner and headed for home.

Duncan mentioned how Ben, who sired Don, could have starred on a racing circuit. Don was a pretty good runner, too, and came close to being able to show it before an audience. I think Dad thought we should have some pony races at the Lemberg Sports Day. Don and I came up and stayed at Granny's. Alas! The races never materialized and Don and I, with joy in our hearts, headed south, where all we had to out-pace was old Tiny and a few milk cows.

harvest, so, Dad bought a 1928, or older, Chev for us to drive. I was the driver, so had to sit behind the wheel, adjusting the spark as Cliff cranked to get it started. I also remember giving a ride to Shirley and Luella Devine mostly because Cliff and I, probably mostly me, wanted to get to school in time for a bit of football before the bell rang. The girls would rather have had more time for breakfast or getting their hair curled. After a few months Dad figured the old Chevie had "had it" so bought a half-ton Fargo truck.

Many have talked about Lemberg on Saturday night. When I try to understand why it was such a big thing, as all we did was have a bottle of pop, maybe an ice cream cone or chocolate bar, or when we were a bit older a banana split, and walk the streets, it is important to realize none of these things were part of our daily lives on the farm. The Saturday night Beth describes with Sam's Army truck is a vivid memory. One other one also sticks out. It may have been harvest time with the threat of a late departure for town. But Mr. Ficken

had been parging the house all day and would be returning to Lemberg in the evening. We could hitch a ride with him and get there much sooner, we thought. However, he was a bit later than expected getting the job finished. We finally hit the road in his Model A, or whatever. Before we got too far along it was clear it was going to be a long trip as Mr. Ficken drove only 10-15mph all the way, except where we hit 22 highway and he sped through the 15mph speed zone at Weissenberg school at 20mph.

Mother was 'spot on' when she mentioned my enthusiasm for sports. The earliest game I remember, however, was a huge disappointment for me. I must have been in Grade VII or VIII and we were playing softball against Ernscliff, I think it was. I was pitching and Margaret Watson blasted a home run nearly every time she came to bat. I also remember the time Joyce McKinnon was staying at our place during an interruption in her training at Grey Nuns for smoking. Joyce liked to play ball, as well, but wasn't quite as enthusiastic as I was, especially when I was pressing her to finish her dinner so that we could get out and play.

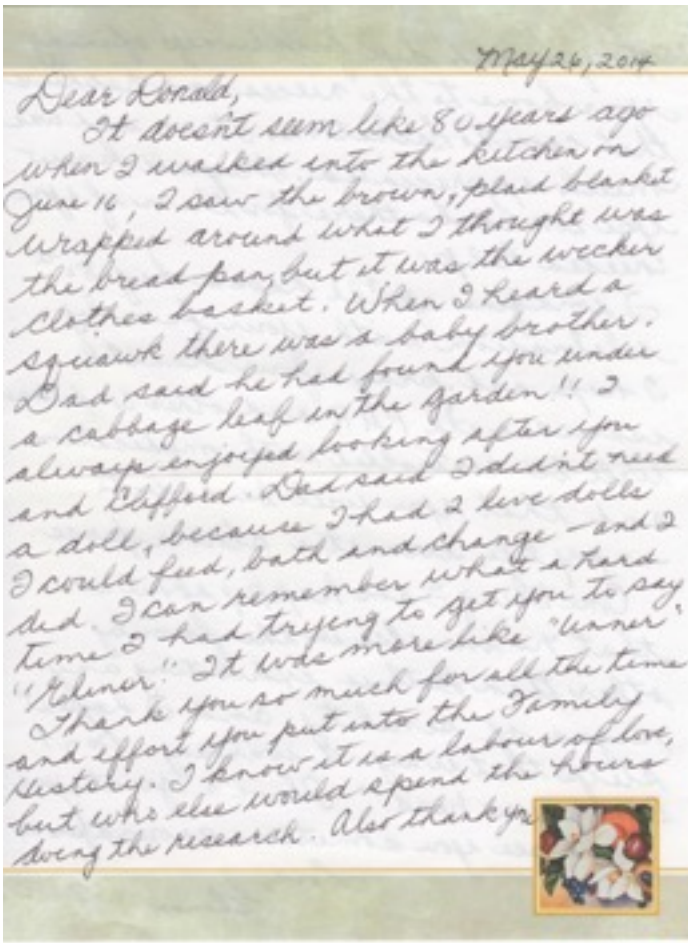
Cousins Ron and Wayne McKinnon often came for visits. They loved the farm. I can remember getting Wayne up on the roof of the old cow barn. I believe I also tried to get them to follow me up the ladder that extended from the loft floor to the huge beam that supported the track for the hay-sling. This beam was a few feet below the rafters so you could 'shimy' along it, the objective being to get to the centre ventilator, climb into it and view the whole countryside.

Much has been said and photos presented of calf-club calves. They were Shorthorns. I believe Dad purchased bulls, in particular from Bonnors, until the late 1940s when he bought several and later a cow with a heifer calf at foot from Matt Langmuir from near Eyebrow. I was given the cow, Cliff the calf. The cow had a male calf, which never survived, and continued to have male calves for a number of years. I got a bit of money when my calves went to market. Cliff's heifer had nothing but females. His bank account wasn't as great as mine but he had a pretty good herd by the time he went to University.

Many, many cousins came to the farm for a day trip, sometimes longer but the reverse was a rarity. I do remember my one holiday at Aunt Mary's at Griswold.

Once again it was Saturday night but this time Griswold. The War had just ended and chocolate bars were again appearing on store shelves. I think I bought 8 or 10 Casey Jones bars that night. Most adults thought they were terrible but not me. Uncle Jim Stewart made a statement about Granny Acton that I have never forgotten. I was at Uncle Jim's side at the Brandon Fair. He got chatting with someone he knew. This fellow enquired who I was. Uncle Jim explained and in so doing said that his 87 year-old Grandmother followed grain prices on the Winnipeg and Chicago Exchanges and could quote them all on any given day,

Dad mentioned that Grandpa had the children roguing wild oats. This practice returned in our generation as yellow mustard became a problem. It seemed to be worse on clay than other soils. I remember one hot and sticky July morning when four or five of us were down on section 3. My allergies seemed to get the worst of me by noon so was given the afternoon off. I think by the end of the day Dad realised we were fighting a loosing battle. Besides, there was word that a miracle chemical, 2-4 D had been developed and it could kill mustard without harming the wheat.


May 26, 2014

Dear Donald,

It doesn't seem like 80 years ago when I walked into the kitchen on June 16, I saw the brown, plaid blanket wrapped around what I thought was the bread pan, but it was the wicker clothes basket. When I heard a squawk there was a baby brother. Dad said he had found you under a cabbage leaf in the garden!! I always enjoyed looking after you and Clifford. Dad said I didn't need a doll, because I had 2 live dolls I could feed, bath and change — and I did. I can remember what a hard time I had trying to get you to say "Elinor". It was more like "Lanor". Thank you so much for all the time and effort you put into the Family history. I know it is a labour of love, but who else would spend the hours doing the research. Also thank yo

Mother and Dad presented Elinor with yet another "live doll" (Clifford) a few years after me (Donald). Here she is with the last of her "live dolls".

Clifford

Growing Up On 10

Growing up on 10 with all the experiences, opportunities and challenges associated with it undoubtedly served as a great training ground for life. One learned quite early that you had responsibilities and it was important to get along with everyone. I recall mother often saying "thank goodness you kids grew up on a farm."

With my many siblings, parents and usually a hired- man and girl, there always seemed to be a shortage of chairs, consequently in my early years I often ended up on Dad's knee at mealtime and after. I often heard it said that I had longer eyelashes than the rest of the family because they got singed when Dad lit his pipe.

Born just three years before the outbreak of WW2, a lot of my early life, as well as for the rest of the family, was influenced by the war. Listening to the radio news at 6 P.M. each day was a must, and everyone was silent as the BBC brought staticky news from the front. A spirit of national pride existed with everyone encouraged to save and contribute to the war effort. People got by with the necessities of life with few if any luxuries. Sugar was rationed, as was gasoline, rubber tires and scrap steel were re-cycled. I can remember how we proudly wore our airforce and navy uniforms on special occasions. When the end of the war was imminent, as school kids, we were taught how to march carrying wooden rifles, and paraded in town at the celebration of the WW2 victory.

The school and church were the centre of community life in those days. Rosewood, a one-room school with grades 1-8 had about 15-20 students when I started. Marlene Betker and I were the only ones in our grade 1 class. Doris, Richard and Don also were there at that time, so we travelled to school by one-horse cart in the summer or cutter in the winter. Sometimes Don would ride the Shetland pony Don to school, but Richard being the stronger had to drive the horse and keep it from running away. For a short time Hilda Jastram our teacher boarded at our place, and on one occasion when Ben the horse, with Richard straining on the reins, took a corner a little too fast and Hilda, Richard and I, with lunch pails and books flying in all directions, ended up in the snow bank. I expect that Ben was trying his best to catch up to the Ruecker or Devine horse ahead of him – he didn't like being behind anyone. Occasionally I rode Don (the horse) to school which was an exciting and often terrifying experience as he had only one speed, as fast as he could go. He would cut the corner at the end of the lane so close to the gate post that you would have to lift your leg to prevent it from hitting the post which invariably meant falling off the other side. If you survived that eventuality, he would circle Uncle Bob's house at full speed usually with Toby their dog nipping at his heals. You didn't have to steer him, even if you could as he had the bit firmly between his teeth, he knew the way to school and he would stop abruptly at the school barn door. There is one thing you can say about it- you got to school feeling energized. During the summer holidays there were times when I got on his back to get the cows, if he got control it was the same routine, down the lane, circle Uncle Bob's house, on to school and stop at the barn door. Then you had a chance to get control and take him where you wanted to go in the first place.

School was an exciting place for a kid growing up in those days. You could say there was a lot more freedom with fewer restrictions on what students did compared to the way school-time is managed today. Recess- and

lunch-time were spent playing ball, kick-the-can, soccer or even “drowning out gophers”. The latter, as abhorrent as it seems today, involved pouring pails of water down one hole and hitting the poor critter with a club when, dripping wet, he came out the other. In those days there was a bounty (2 cents) paid for gopher tails so the motivation was really a monetary one. In the spring with snow melting and sloughs brimming with water, running over “rubber-ice” was a favourite pastime. There was a good-sized slough near the school which always tempted someone to cross before school started in the morning. Often we didn’t make it without getting soaked, so the first hour or so at school was sometimes spent sitting over the hot-air register at the front of the class until we were dry. At one time, on days when it was too cold to go outside, boys engaged in a war in the basement using sling-shots. Like most wars, things escalated with our weapons getting more powerful each week until the teacher finally intervened for our safety, and that fun ended.

The school picnic celebrated the end of the school year. The whole family would attend and there would be a ball game, races and prizes for the kids and lots to eat. A favourite was home-made ice cream. Being the end of June, French Weed was in abundance in the fields and it seemed that some families often had their ice cream tainted with this odorous weed. Warnings would quickly spread among the kids to avoid so and so’s ice cream.

The school Christmas Concert was a very important opportunity for the kids to develop their theatrical and artistic talents, if they had any. No matter, you had to take part. Poems, songs, plays were practiced endlessly and on about December 1 the stage was set up. This was a big thing as it usually meant that virtually all “school work” ceased in order to get ready for the concert. On one occasion in my early years at school, I have vivid recollection of the teacher deciding that I would ride a tricycle across the stage with Marlene Betker on the back hanging on to me while the chorus sang "A “Bicycle Built For Two”. I objected very strongly to the idea, however Mother and Dad calmed me down enough that it happened, to my dismay. The concert was followed with a visit from Santa Claus who brought a bag with a Christmas orange and a few nuts for each student. Once, it happened to be a major revelation in my early life as I realized that Santa was wearing Dad’s buffalo- skin coat. The wheels started to turn and that was the end of that myth.

Throughout the year the school was the centre for other community social events. They were called “Box Socials” where women of the neighbourhood would bake and bring fancy cakes, pies, cookies, etc. and men would bid on them with the proceeds going to cover some school expenses for the year. On some occasions there was a fish pond for the kids where we would take turns holding a stick with a hook on a string over a curtain and an accomplice would place a little prize on the hook. The evening would end with a dance with the young kids often falling asleep in coats piled on desks at the side of the room. After one such event, Don and I were sent back to the school the next day, as something may have been forgotten, and to our delight we found an unopened box of chocolates. We quietly brought it home not telling anyone as that would mean having to share our find. Maybe Don’s or my conscience got the better of us as Mother found out what we had done, decided that the chocolates rightfully belonged to John Watson, and suggested we buy a replacement box for John out of our meagre allowance - a little early-life lesson.

Clifford on veranda of Acton Farm home about 1939-40, clad in wool hand-knit suit.

Clifford in yard with chickens. About 1940.

Winter was an exhilarating and often trying time on the farm. Being prepared for the blast of cold and snow was important for comfort as well as survival. Trees were cut down, stacked in the yard to be sawn and split for firewood. In later years, coal was brought in from Estevan by Uncle Alex's truck to be used as fuel. Blocks of ice at least 18 inches thick were cut from the dugout, hauled into the yard with horses and piled into the ice-well. Sawdust was placed on top of the ice to slow melting during the summer. A 100-pound box of frozen Whitefish from Lake Winnipeg often was acquired and stored on the north side of the house to provide a valuable source of protein and vitamin C during the winter. Apparently this was not completely adequate as a vitamin

source as a spoonful of cod-liver oil was a regular occurrence in the winter.

During one particularly cold spell I was with Dad in the dining room after supper one night when a loud bang came from the basement. He suggested that I see what it was and when I opened the door to the basement I was met by a wall of steam. I thought it was smoke so I yelled that the house was on fire. The fire in the furnace was so hot that the boiler cracked and water flooded into the fire-box of the furnace. This was a major problem as the only other source of heat for the house was the kitchen stove. It must have taken a week or more to repair the furnace, and in the meantime the whole family virtually lived and slept overnight in the kitchen to stay warm.

Many aspects of life in the winter were enjoyable. What is winter without hockey and listening to Hockey Night in Canada with Foster Hewitt every Saturday night, while huddled around the radio, was a must. I'm sure that Don and I had aspirations of being the next Syl Apps or Turk Broda, so a skating rink was needed. Water wasn't plentiful so we carried pails filled with drain water from the washing machine into the yard to make a little patch of ice. A goal net was made of chicken wire, pucks were sawed-off blocks of wood and goalie pads were made

Rosewood Hockey Team 2, 1947-48. Clifford Acton, Murray Calcutt, Harvey Devine and Donald Acton. Photo courtesy Hilde Ruecker (nee Jastram).

from cardboard. Occasionally we had hockey sticks, but if not, a tree branch with a crook in it would suffice. One day Rich, Don and I were playing hockey on the slough by the dugout when the puck inadvertently went onto the ice of the dugout. Don and I thought the game was now over as we were warned never to go on the dugout ice. However, Richard being the dare-devil, calmly skated onto the dugout to retrieve the errant puck – game on. After the war ended an out-door community rink was built at Devines, complete with boards and even lights run off a diesel generator. A grain bin was used as a waiting room where you could put on your skates and warm up. Rosewood had it's own men's hockey team in those days with Duncan and Sam being stalwarts.

Wildlife was a source of income for us with pelts from muskrat, rabbits, fox and weasels used for fur clothing, and in the spring their fur was at its best after the long winter. Dunc and Sam had established trap lines which covered several miles, leg traps in muskrat houses and snares for rabbits and weasels. I was sometimes convinced to check the traps and bring home the catch. The animals were skinned, put on a stretcher and hung to dry in the basement before being sent off for a few dollars for each pelt. It was great fun walking over the hard frozen snow on a sunny day in the spring to check each trap.

Winter seemed to last forever. During the earlier months of winter a snow-plough on a farm truck was used to clear roads, however, the snow banks often became too high and horses with sleigh or cutter was the only option for travel from the farm. Trails snaked along through farm fields, seldom following the road. The trip to town, a distance of 10 miles, would take over an hour so it didn't happen very often. Warm bricks were placed on the floor of the sleigh to help keep your feet warm. The horses seemed to know the route so if the cold or snow got bad the driver could huddle down in the protection of the sleigh and give the horses their head to find their way home. Apparently this happened to Dad, returning from a Council meeting in Neudorf, he encountered a blizzard and the horses found their way home.

Summer was much easier and a very busy time. There were a variety of chores that had to be done daily. Cows were milked morning and night, animals (horses, pigs, chickens and cattle) had to be fed and the barn cleaned out. Getting the chores done was a priority every morning and I can still hear Dad saying "A good farmer has the chores done before breakfast." When I was young I had the everyday job of filling the wood box, bringing a pail of drinking water to the house and helping with other chores.

After milking, the cream was separated from the milk with the "separator" in the basement. Any excess cream after household needs was stored in a cream can and kept cool in the ice well during the summer. When full, the can of cream was taken into the railway station in Lemberg, shipped by train to the creamery in Melville to be made into butter, and the empty can subsequently returned to the station. A cream cheque would arrive some time later payable to the name of the owner on the cream can. For a period of time Don was the recipient of the cream cheque as payment for his work. On one occasion during transport of a full can of cream into town, the can tipped over and spilled on the backseat of Dunc's car. In spite of rigorous cleaning, as strongly suggested by Dunc, I wondered if there was a subtle sour cream odour in his car for the rest of it's days.

1948-49 Rosewood Class. Back row: Dorothea Ruecker, Shirley Acton, Malcolm Schienbein, Luella Devine, Mervin Gollinger and Edna Ruecker. Front row: Colin Schienbein, Harvey Devine, Donald Acton, Clifford Acton, Murray Calcutt, Rita Gollinger and Mary Ann Konowal. Lillian Ruecker and Mabel Honowal were missing from picture. Photo courtesy Hilde Ruecker (nee Jastram).

My allowance came from selling excess eggs, so daily gathering was necessary. In the fall, a new flock of pullets were allowed to roam at will so when they started laying, eggs could be found anywhere and egg gathering became a treasure hunt. When the weather turned colder, the errant flock was captured at dusk from their perch in trees, etc. and put into the chicken house. Roosters were culled out and ended up on the dinner table or in 2 quart sealer jars stored in the basement for a future meal. There was one dark moment during my egg-business days when nephew Bill, probably about 4

Dad had a small flock of sheep in the 1940s. Cliff is holding a lamb in one photo.

years old at the time, decided that my eggs rightfully belonged in a jug of milk, after seeing it being done for calves at Bill and Elinor's dairy farm. I wasn't pleased so when I had responsibility for his supper that night, cold mashed potatoes and not much more was all he got.

Ball, bat and glove were often in hand during long, summer days. Nearly every Sunday, after church was over, our pasture became a ball diamond with dozens of neighbours arriving for an afternoon of fun. Adults and kids all took part. Rosewood eventually had it's own men's baseball team with Sam and Dunc playing on it. Don had aspirations of being the next Sandy Koufax of Brooklyn Dodgers fame. He had a blistering fastball and loved refining his curveball, with me being the catcher up against the garage door. We didn't own a catcher's mitt so I usually ended up with a numb left hand after a workout. Eventually we ended up playing for a Lemberg team in a local league and participated in many tournaments earning money to support some of the team costs.

Going to the Ellisboro picnic on July 1 was a family tradition. All of the family, Aunts, Uncles and cousins would be there, and it was an occasion for the extended family photo often numbering 20-30 or more. There were races and other activities for the kids and a wonderful assortment of food at the food booth. Local men's baseball teams played in a tournament and one year the Rosewood team was short of a player so I was recruited although I was probably not more than 12 at the time. The final game pitted Rosewood against Poplar Grove, Sam's team. In the final inning we were leading by 1 or 2 runs with Sam at bat for Poplar Grove. He was an excellent hitter and he got ahold of one of Albert Allen's pitches and sent it deep into left field, where I happened to be playing. I took off on the run after the ball, jumping over gopher holes, etc. and managed to snag the ball for the final out. As a young kid that must have been my finest moment. Sam was ever gracious and congratulated me on my catch even though it deprived him of a home run.

Being the eldest boy, Sam was appointed the family barber as we couldn't afford paying for haircuts for 5 boys. Hand operated clippers were used in those days and over the years they became rather dull, consequently as much hair was pulled out as cut off. There often were shrieks of complaint from us and he would chuckle in his good humoured way and say that we must have moved and had to sit still. After he joined the navy the home barber shop ceased to exist and we went into town for Uncle Alex to do the job in his shop using electric clippers.

Only the main roads had gravel and side roads around the farm often became badly rutted from driving on them after a rain. It was the responsibility of local farmers to grade these dirt roads to remove the ruts. On one such occasion Richard was driving Sam's new John Deere tractor, Sam was operating the grader, with me sitting on the grader seat. At the Calcutt corner the grader hit a stone in the road causing it to jump and throwing me off the seat to the ground under the wheel of the grader. The wheel ran over my chest, and when we came to a stop I'm sure that Sam thought I had been killed as I lay on the ground with my wind knocked out. Fortunately, much of the weight of the grader was on the blade so I wasn't badly hurt, however Sam quickly unhooked the grader and hurried home as fast as his tractor would go. He must have been much relieved when I quickly recovered.

Another scary incident occurred involving Dunc with our first combine which had a power take off drive. One day he was standing beside the running combine making an adjustment when the power take-off caught the edge of his overhauls. In a flash he was left standing there in his underwear. Fortunately, the overhauls had seen many years of service and were easily torn so he escaped unhurt although a little embarrassed.

Following the war, Saturday night was a very big night in town. There were movies in the theatre, and all the stores were open and busy. It was almost a must that we got off the farm for that night out. Once, our chances didn't look good as Sam, Dunc and Dad were combining at Sam's, and they had all the vehicles except the WW2 army truck. Beth was home at the time, and with persistent nagging and coaxing from the rest of us, she agreed to drive the truck into town. It was a difficult truck to drive as it was right hand drive, and one had to double clutch to change gears. It was decided that wouldn't be a problem as Rich would sit in the middle and shift gears if Beth would steer. Finally, the logistics were sorted out and with all the kids in the back wildly cheering, off we went. Beth always went out of her way to see to the needs and wishes of her siblings. Bless her soul.

Harvest time meant long hours in the field. For many years the grain was cut with a horse-drawn binder and stooked in the field to dry. Dad liked to have a lunch in the field on a hot afternoon in the sun, and I was often asked to take a lunch for him to the field. On one occasion, I was probably 6-8 years old, I couldn't find him in the field, and after waiting what I thought was an appropriate length of time I decided I might as well eat the lunch. No sooner had I finished the delicious sandwiches, cookies and tea and Dad came over the hill on the binder. Sheepishly, I told him that I couldn't find him and I was sorry that I had eaten all of the lunch. To his credit, I don't recall being admonished, and I guiltily trudged home with the empty containers.

One of my darkest moments on the farm occurred just prior to Elinor's wedding. Mother and Elinor had spent many hours washing the walls and ceilings in the house in preparation for the big day. Not long after the cleaning was finished, I was instructed one day to heat water on the kerosene stove so that everyone could have a bath at the end of the day. I came in from outside, got the water on, lit the stove and decided to sit and rest a moment before turning down the wick on the stove. As I was hot and tired, the moment was longer than planned, as I fell asleep in the soft chair to be awakened choking some-time later with the house full of smoke from the stove. Those clean walls and ceilings were now black with soot, as was my face. Panicky, with fear of dire repercussions from my bride-to-be sister and mother, I decided I better get cleaning before they got home, naively thinking that the damage could be washed away with a few swipes of a cloth. My feeble efforts likely made a bad situation worse, and to this day I recall the heart-wrenching shriek from Elinor as she stepped inside the door. I loved my sisters and mother, but I doubt that feeling was mutual on that particular day. Needless to say, I spent several days thereafter washing walls and ceilings with nary a word of complaint.

Dogs were very much a part of life on the farm. Some were useful in helping direct the cattle where you wanted them to go, and they helped to keep the coyotes away. A landmark was even named after one, the lough northeast of the house was named Rinty's slough where I believe he was found dead or was buried. Pat, a black and white collie, was a good watch-dog. One day Billie Sharpe came to visit and as Dad and I

came out of the house to greet him Pat was quietly watching him from the caragana bush. For some reason Billie picked me up and before he could utter a word of hello, Pat had him by the ankle. He was very protective of his kids.

Clifford and Pat.

Mac, also a Collie, came to us as he needed a new home when Uncle Jim and Aunt Nancy left their farm and moved to Victoria. Both Pat and Mac were terrified of thunder as well as gun shots, and when they heard either one they would often break through the screen door to get into the house and hide behind the stove.

Clifford and Mac, a Scotch collie we got from Uncle Jim and Aunt Nancy when they left the farm. Poor Mac, he must have been shot at before we got him as any loud sound be it gunshot, thunder or whatever really frightened him. His only solace was under the door of the kitchen stove. He would even break the screen in the screen door to get there.

A strange thing happened one day though with Mac. I was home by

Mum and Clifford in corn at Acton Farm, about 1942.

myself, and being in the fall I decided I would hunt some ducks. Normally, when Mac saw a gun he would head for the house terrified. Not that day. He came with me out into the field very worried, but he wouldn't leave. He must have thought this young kid with a gun needed help and he was there for that reason.

Molly came when we still had Mac. Elinor was teaching at Grenfell at the time and she must have mentioned that the home where she was boarding had some pups. She thought that I could get one although Gracie Boustead, a daughter of the family where she boarded who was a year or two older than I, wanted to spend a weekend at the farm and would bring the pup. What a dilemma. I finally agreed to the condition and to my chagrin spent several days trying to evade Gracie. But I got Molly, a black part-Cocker Spaniel.

Horses were used very often in the farm operation even after tractors arrived. King and Fly were great work-horses, both raised on the farm and remained there for about 30 years. They were a gentle, clever team and would pull, virtually until they dropped, if asked to do so. I recall several occasions when they were needed to pull a stuck tractor or car out of the mud. In earlier days they were used to haul grain many miles to the elevator and do a lot of other heavy pulling. I spent many days picking stones, fencing, cutting and bringing in hay with them. They were clever and responded to voice commands which made your work easier. King, who was hand raised after his mother died shortly after he was born, had a better understanding of the English language than any horse I have known. Although this was before my time, it was said he would walk into the house uninvited if the door was left open, as if he was part of the family. Apparently, he also was

known to have eaten the girl's silk stockings which had been put on the clothes line to dry. He was truly a character.

After completing Grade 7 at Rosewood school, I moved on to school in Lemberg. Mother and Dad had built a new house in town at that time so I was able to live there for most of the year, but drove back and forth from the farm when possible. Dad bought an old Model T Ford car for Don and I to drive, and in it I had my first driving experience on the road. Before long it broke down, and he then bought a new 1950 Fargo pick-up truck which was a major upgrade. Believing that the farm was best for young boys, holidays from school were spent on the farm to help with the chores or sometimes being the cook.

I spent the last years on 10 after my first and second years at University. I was the hired man and practically spent the entire day on the tractor. That was a time before herbicides were used to control weeds, and about ½ of the land was kept in fallow every year. The belief at that time was that a good farmer kept the summer fallow black, i.e no weeds. Each field would be cultivated 5-6 times each summer, so when you got over all the fields once, it was time to start again. If it was too wet to do the summer fallow, there were always stones to pick. Fortunately for me, Dunc finally came to the realization that after I had taken a Geology course at University, I wasn't any good at picking stones as I would to do a mineralogical assessment of each stone and postulate how it got there before throwing it onto the wagon.

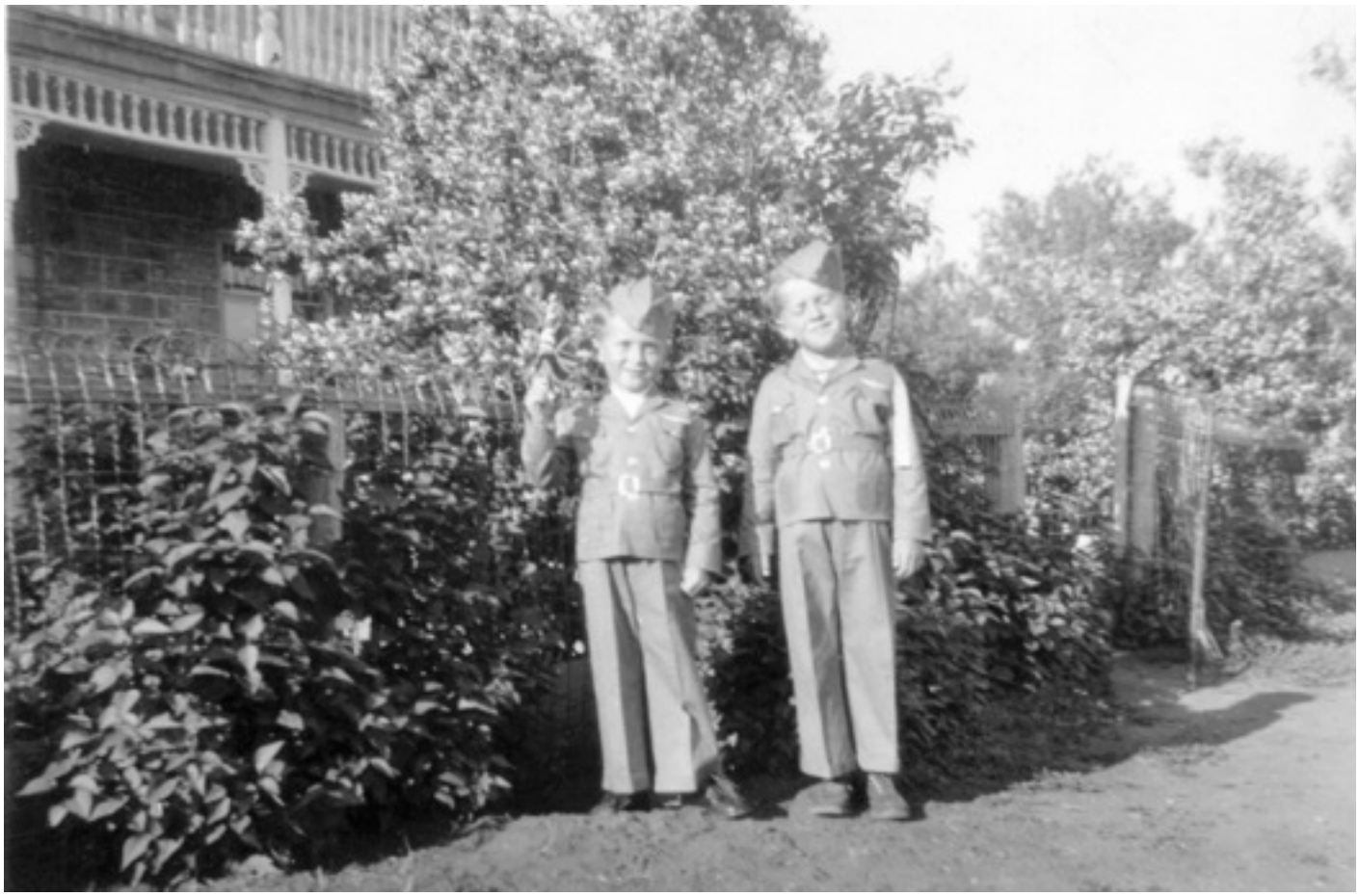
This was a memorable period of my life, full of challenges and rewards; filled with hope, some fear and few regrets. Being part of a large family on ten was a great experience and the farm a wonderful place to grow up. That time undoubtedly shaped my life in the years that followed. I tried to recall the events as I remembered them, however, it is possible that a waning memory could have distorted some things. Thanks to Don for the idea of each of us documenting those years of our lives and for bringing it all together. **Clifford Acton, January 2015.**

Donald and Clifford

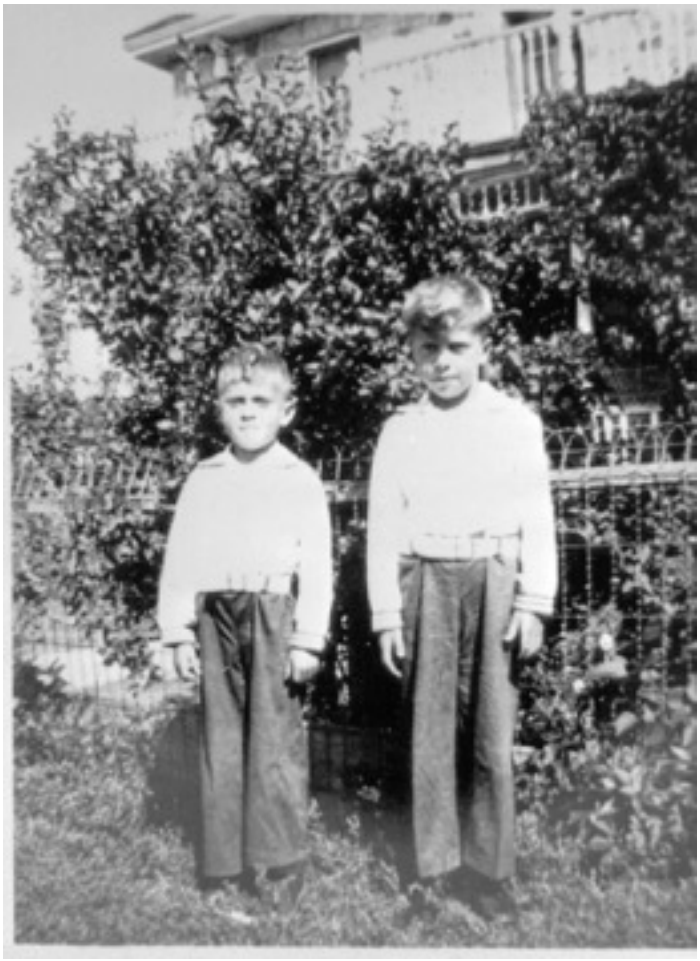
Aunt Mary came to the farm nearly every summer. Mother took quite a few photos of Beth, Sam and Duncan when she visited in the late 1920s. There was a break in the “dirty thirties”, so none of Aunt Mary with Elinor, Doris and Richard. She started up again in the 1940s. The one opposite is one of several.

Not only were there horses and cows, pigs and sheep, dogs and cats, turkeys and chickens, their were bantam chickens as seen in the photo below with Clifford and Donald.

Clifford and Donald with new jackets and pants, above, and new hats, below.



Clifford and Donald are wearing their Air Force uniforms in top photo and their Navy one, below. They also appear with the family bicycle, below.



Five Brothers: Sam, Duncan, Richard, Donald and Clifford

Sam remembered this day many years later. “It was after a hockey game”, he said. Maybe following a hard over-night frost in April that froze a nearby slough.

Clifford, Donald, Richard, Duncan and Samuel (and Pat), on Ten, about 1944.

This photo was taken during the War, probably 1942-44.

The Three Sisters

Two photos of Beth, Elinor and Doris, above, and one of Elinor and Beth decked out in their new winter coats (opposite).

Acton and Watson Cousins

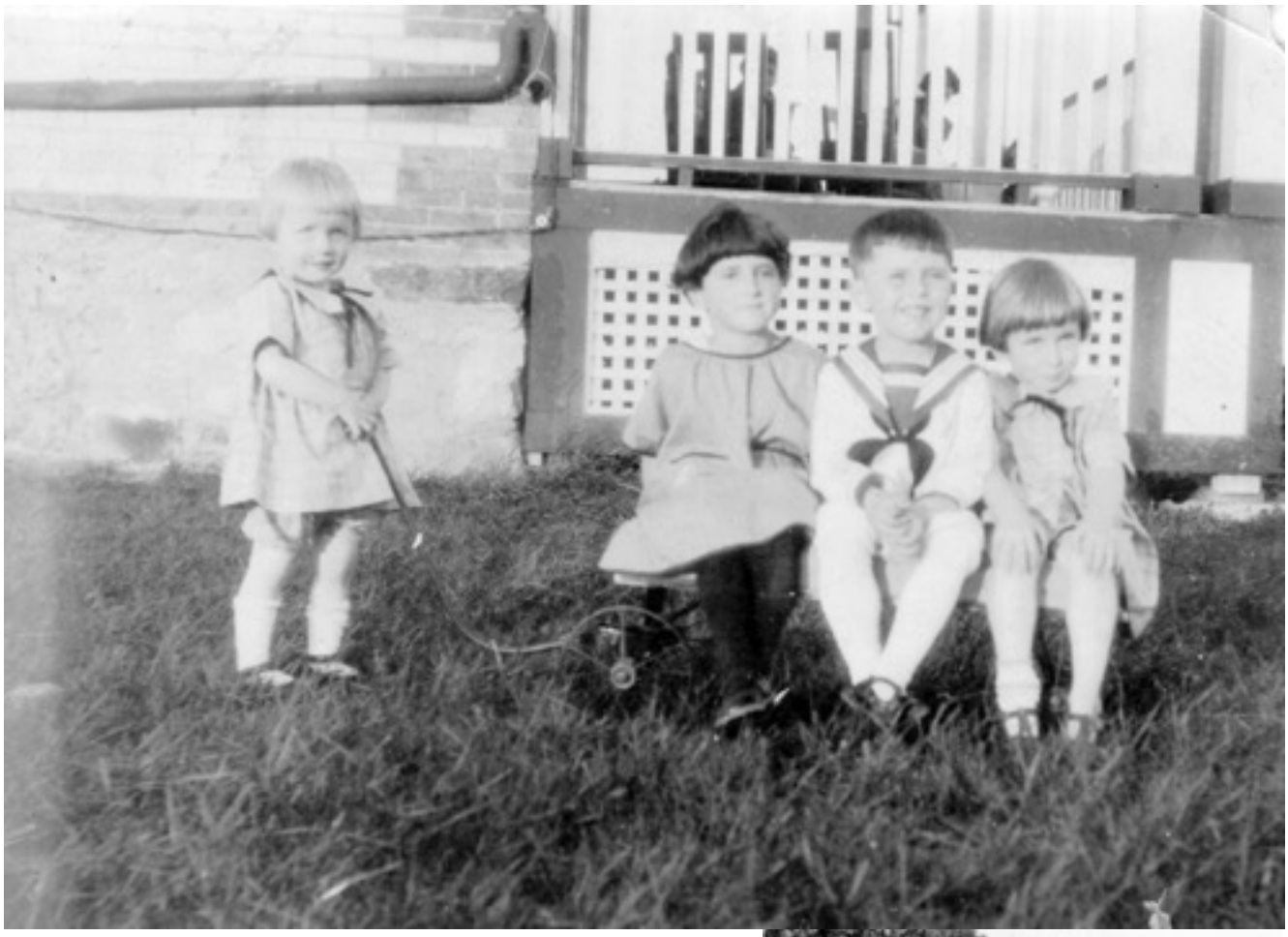
Granny and Grandpa with Acton and Watson grandchildren. Vera and Beth sit on Granny's knee, Bill Watson on Grandpa's and Doris, Sam, Muriel and Jean Watson sitting on the ground.

Audrey, Doris and Janet with Granny at Granny's house in Lemberg, about 1946 or 1947.

Vera Acton is on the left with Jean Acton, Muriel Watson and Beth.

Back row: Janet Watson, Beth, Margaret Watson and Doris. Front: Shirley Acton, Elinor and Audrey Acton.

Acton Cousins



Beth and her cousins Vera and Lillian are having a party with Howard King, above. Doris, Elinor and Audrey Acton, opposite.

Cousins building a snowman on Ten. In the top photo, Lillian Barber, Vera and Doris are standing. Audrey, Richard and Elinor are sitting in front. In the bottom photo: Doris, Elinor, Clifford, Donald, and Shirley.

McKinnon Cousins

Aunt Eva and Uncle Roy McKinnon with newborn son Ronald at the steps to the veranda, left, and Ronald, above, a few years later by the corner post of the fence on Ten.

Clifford and Ronald McKinnon resting on the bumper of the 1940 Ford. Doris and Donald can be seen getting inside. The 3-ton truck Dad bought from Uncle Roy can be seen to the side.

Viola McKinnon and her friend Neil Smith on 'Ten'. Also present are Richard, Elinor, Doris, Donald, Clifford and Wayne McKinnon.

Elinor and Doris with Uncle Murray and Aunt Jessie McKinnon's daughters Myrtle, Joyce and Irene, and Uncle Howard and Aunt Gertie's son, Tommy.

Joyce, Myrtle and Irene McKinnon.

Uncle Murray and Aunt Jessie had two sons, Lorne and Bruce McKinnon.

Stewart Cousins

Aunt Mary McKinnon and James Stewart did not marry until 1942. They had only one child, Robert. Here he is enjoying his time on Ten with Elinor and Clifford.

Dad's Aunts, Uncles and Cousins

Grandpa had brothers and sisters from his father's first and second marriages. Below are sisters Sarah (Tom Martin), Elizabeth (Harry Birch) and Alice (James Trumble and John Gardiner) from Richard Acton, our Great grandfather's marriage to Elizabeth Shenton.

Sarah, above left, likely never visited on Ten but her son Billie lived there for a number of years. Lil (above right) and her husband Harold Birch were married on Ten. Alice, right, and Tom Gardiner farmed on section 13 for a short time before moving to Swift Current. Alice's granddaughter Verna Lane and great granddaughter Eileen Merkley made outstanding contributions to Acton history and provided me with a number of photographs for this book.

There were ten children from Richard's marriage to Mary Kulas. Some stayed in Ontario but most came west, at least for a short time, farming in the Rosewood, Summerberry (later Carrot River and Whitefox) and Glenavon districts.

Richard Acton in a family portrait that includes his daughter Mary and her husband Joe Hawkins and their children Clara and Percy. The lad on the left may be Richard and Mary's youngest son, Joseph Acton. Ross Hawkins holds an identical photo and has provided positive identification for Richard and the Hawkins' but could not identify the lad on the left. From original studio photo held by Sam Watson, given to me by Pat Acton. Joe and Mary, or "Polly" as she was usually called, farmed in the Summerberry District. Polly had some challenges with mental health and spent extended periods at an institution at Weyburn.

Agnes was the first child in the marriage of Richard and Mary. She married Robert Eady. They ran a hotel at Fort Coulonge on the Quebec border and later a blacksmith shop near Perth. He was drowned in a fishing accident on Lake Erie. Agnes' granddaughter Norma Cutbill, has provided valuable information to Donald Acton, including the postcard of the house in 1909 and the photo above and opposite (Robert and Agnes about 1921). There is no record of Agnes nor any of her descendants ever visiting relatives at Rosewood.

John Acton was the first son from the marriage of Richard and Mary Acton. There is no record of "Jack" ever visiting relatives at Rosewood but their son Bill worked for Uncle Joe in the mid-to-late teens. Bill was a generous contributor to Acton family history and provided the photo above.

Top right: William and Esther Hawkins and daughters.
Top left: Ruby, Sidney, Emily and Joe Hawkins.

Emily, Ruby, Marjorie and Della Hawkins were daughters of Bill and Esther Hawkins. Ruby married Everd Cooper. They were close friends of Beth and Wilf. Beth also kept in touch with Marjorie and Della who also lived in Victoria.

Margaret Acton married Frank Everett, a railroader. Although they lived in Montreal, Frank spent most of his time as an engineer in Western Canada. He would often come to Rosewood and Ten in duck hunting season.

Richard Henry Acton and George Calcutt. Richard Henry married James Devine's sister Mary (Molly). After a short stay in a small house at the Devine's, Richard moved back east. His son Leonard worked for several relatives in the Rosewood District, including Dad in the winter of 1920. He moved back east and within a few years he accidentally drowned.

Rose Acton and George Calcutt wedding in about 1906 or 1907. Rose and George came to the Rosewood District about 1912, purchasing the Martin Farm on Section 14.

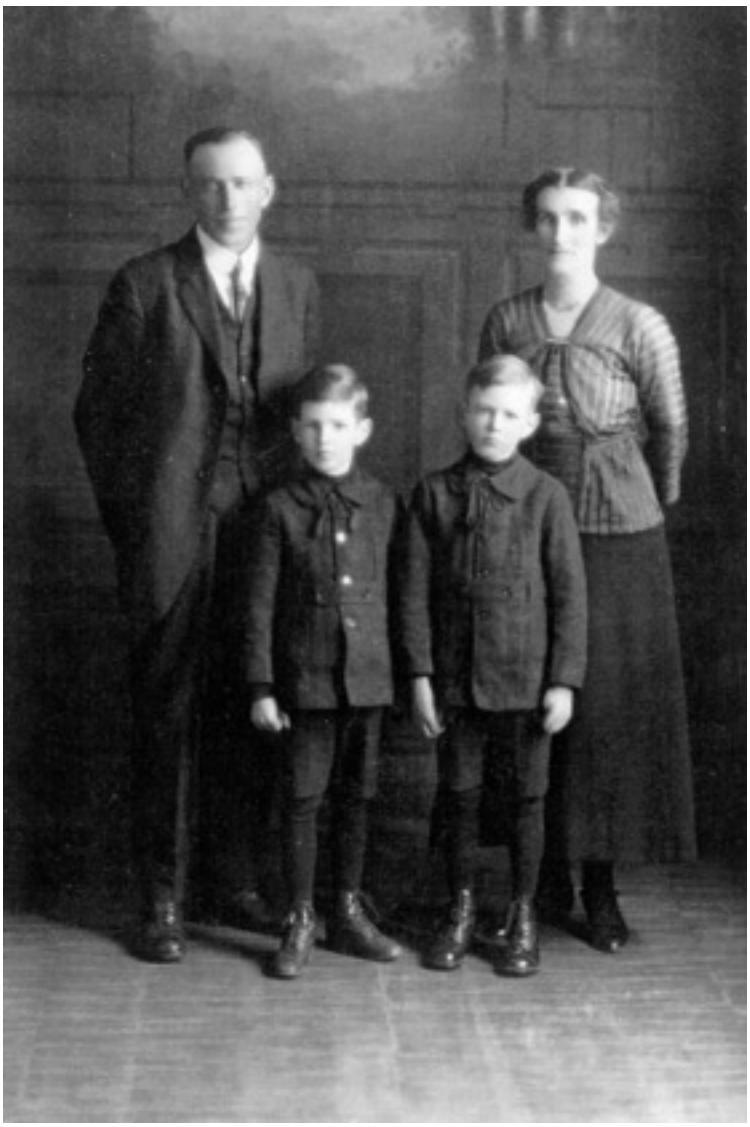
Annie Charlotte, photo opposite, married James Devine. They settled on the SW1/4 section 15. Annie's mother came to live with her in her later years. Annie's son Joseph succeeded Annie on the Devine farm. Harold ran the store at Ellisboro before moving to Regina.

The photo below shows James Devine family June 1917. James and Annie Charlotte Devine with their children Joseph, Harold, Florence and Janet.

Joseph was the youngest child of Richard and Mary. I think Dad called him "Joe" but he was "Uncle Joe" to us. Unlike many of his brothers and sisters he was not married when he came west. He took up the land in Section 13 belonging to an old bachelor, Sandy Wilson. It was a challenge but with Grandpa's help in providing a better house and the eventual departure of "Sandy" Uncle Joe made it. Joe married Helen Watson, an older sister to the Watson boys Jim, Bill and Alex that married Acton girls.

Uncle Joe and Aunt Nelly had two sons Dick and Tom. Both Dick and his cousin Richard William Watson were born during the war; named after Dad and their uncle William Watson.

Dick bought land down near the Qu'Appelle Valley. Tom took over the home farm of his parents.



Richard William Watson
and
Richard William Acton

Richard William Watson was born 5 October 1916 the eldest son of James and Agnes Elizabeth (Nancy) Watson. Richard William Acton was born a few weeks later, on 31 October 1916, the eldest son of Joseph and Helen (Nelly) Acton. Likely, they were named after their uncles Richard Arthur Acton (right) and William Muir Watson (left) who were serving with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in World War One.

Some of Our Aunts and Uncles

Top: Aunt Nancy and Uncle Jim Watson. Bottom left: Aunt Mae and her first husband Alex Watson. Bottom right: Uncle Bob and Aunt Sarah Acton.

Uncle Roy, Beth, Uncle Alex, Mum, Aunt Mary, Uncle Jim, Aunt Annie, and Dad.

Uncle Alex and Aunt Annie McKinnon.

Picnics

Before the War

We had a "Family Picnic" nearly every summer. Some were at our home with others at Uncle Bob's and Aunt Nancy's. In addition to our immediate family, the "family" would include: Granny, Aunt Jennie, and sometimes Auntie Martin; Uncle Joe and Aunt Nellie and their sons Tom and Dick; Uncle Bob and Aunt Sarah and Vera, Audrey, Stanley and Shirley; Aunt May and Uncle Bill and Janet, Margaret and Bob, Uncle Jim and Aunt Nancy and Bill, Jean, Muriel, Sam and Nan (Doris, their eldest had left home before many of these picnics occurred). Uncle Alex and Aunt Annie and Viola and Pearl would also appear on occasion as would Aunt Lil and Uncle Bob Walker, the Sharpes, John Watson and any hired-men that may be around.

Family picnic at Acton Farm about 1938. Standing (L/R): Robert Acton, James Watson, William Watson, Samuel Watson, ?? , Duncan Acton??, Joe Acton, Alex McKinnon, Richard Arthur Acton. Seated Top: Janet Elizabeth (Beth) Acton, Muriel Watson ?, Vera Acton. Seated Second Row: May Watson, Jenny Acton, Donald Acton sitting on Agnes (Nancy) Watson's knee, Janet Acton (Granny), Shirley Acton, Janet Watson??, Annie Bell Acton with Clifford Acton on her knee. Seated Lower: Margaret Watson, Pearl McKinnon, Viola McKinnon, Audrey Acton, ??, ??, Doris Acton. Sitting on sidewalk: Stanley Acton, Richard Keith Acton and Bob Watson. Standing at ground level: Nellie Acton and Annie McKinnon. Missing from photo is Elinor Acton as she was busy hugging Flip. But that's a story that only Elinor can tell!! Acton Farm 1937 or 1938.

Acton-Watson family picnic. Standing: Joe Acton, Bob Watson, Sam Watson, William Muir Watson holding baby bottle,Jeff Parker, Robert Walker, Duncan Acton, Thomas Watson Acton, Billy Sharp, Robert Walker (Jr.), Mrs. Alex (Annie) McKinnon, William Richard Watson, Alex McKinnon, James Muir Watson. Sitting (L/R) Janet (Walker) Acton, Janet Acton, Richard Keith Acton, Doris Acton, Janet Watson, Edith (Allen) Parker, Richard Arthur Acton holding Clifford Acton, Audrey Acton, Priscilla (Baker) Sharpe, Annie Acton holding Donald Acton, Nan Watson, Doris Watson, Viola McKinnon, Mrs. Robert (Sarah) Acton, Robert Acton holding Shirley Acton, Vera Acton, John Watson, Elinor Acton, Muriel Watson, Mrs. James (Agnes Elizabeth (Nancy))Watson, Janet Elizabeth (Beth) Acton, Mrs. Joe ((Helen (Nellie)) Acton and Mary Johnston (sister to Sarah Acton). Acton Farm, 1937 or 1938.

Acton- Watson family picnic. Standing: Lil Walker, Janet Acton, Jenny Acton, Doris Watson, May Watson, and Sarah Acton. Sitting: Nancy Watson, Nellie Acton, Muriel Watson, Beth Acton, Vera Acton, Edith Allen and Shirley Acton.

Picnic at Katepwa Lake about 1938. Standing: William Watson, Robert Walker and John Watson. Sitting: Alex McKinnon, Robert Walker (Jr.), Richard A.Acton with Clifford Acton, Bill Sharp and Joe Acton.

During the War

Acton-Watson family picnic. Standing: Unidentified male, Richard William Watson, Robert Acton, Bert Sharp, Joe Acton, Janet Acton, William Muir Watson, Annie Acton, Richard Arthur Acton, Jean Watson, Nancy Watson, Janet Acton, James Watson, Sarah Acton. Front: unidentified boy looking away from camera, Robert Watson, Stanley Acton, Richard Acton, Nan Watson, Shirley Acton, Donald Acton, Margaret Watson, Elinor Acton, Janet Watson, Beth Acton, Doris Acton, John Watson, Audrey Acton, Duncan Acton.

Acton-Watson family picnic in the 1940's with Dad, Uncle Bob, Aunt Jennie, Aunt May and Aunt Nancy.

Acton-Watson family picnic. Sitting on grass: unidentified person, Beth Acton, unidentified male with unidentified child, unidentified female, unidentified male, Jim Watson, Robert Acton, unidentified male. Sitting on and standing at table: unidentified female, unidentified female, Nancy Watson, unidentified female, Sarah Acton.

Acton-Watson family picnic with Qu'Appelle Valley in background. Back row: Clifford Acton, Robert Watson, Janet Elizabeth (Beth) Acton, unidentified female. Richard K. Acton, Donald Acton, Duncan Acton, Stanley Acton. Sitting: Doris Acton, unidentified female, unidentified female, Janet Watson ?, Annie Acton, Audrey Acton, Richard A. Acton, Janet (Jenny) Acton, Nancy Watson, May Watson, James Watson, unidentified female, Robert Acton, William M. Watson. unidentified female.

Acton-Watson family picnic at the Robert Acton Farm home in 1944. Standing: Stanley Acton, Richard K.Acton, Elinor Acton, Nellie Acton, Joe Acton, Jim Watson, Robert Acton, Annie Acton, Nancy Watson, Margaret Watson, Bob Watson, Beth Acton, Jennie Acton, Richard A. Acton, Duncan Acton, May Watson, John Watson, and William Watson. Sitting/ kneeling: Janet Acton, Audrey Acton, Doris Acton, Donald Acton, Mrs. John (Auntie) Martin, Sarah Acton, Shirley Acton and Clifford Acton. There are no servicemen in this photo.

Acton- Watson family picnic. Standing: Bert Sharp, Robert Acton, May Watson, Jim Watson, Beth Acton, Nancy Watson, Richard A.Acton, Sarah Acton, Joe Acton, Nellie Acton, William M. Watson and David Watson, Annie Acton, Jenny Acton, Elinor Acton, and Kay Bonnor. Kneeling or sitting: Tom Acton, Duncan Acton, William A.Watson, Stanley Acton, Hugh Robinson (Ontario harvester), Doris Acton, Samuel Acton, Clifford Acton, Janet Watson, Robert Watson, Donald Acton, Janet (Walker)

Joan Watson with daughter Karen. Joseph Acton, Robert Walker Sr., William M. Watson, Richard Arthur Acton, Richard William Acton.

After the War

Acton-Watson Family reunion. (L-R): Jean Watson, Janet Watson, Sam Acton, Beth Acton, Tom Acton, Doris Acton, Audrey Acton, Duncan Acton, Elinor Acton, Hugh Robinson, Tom Acton, Kay Bonnor and R .William Watson. There is a print indicating an Aug. 1944 date but I question this as Tom Acton, Sam Acton, and Bill Watson, have returned from service, so most likely 1945 or 1946.

Weddings on Ten

Elizabeth Acton and Harold Birch Wedding

Elizabeth (Lil) Acton and Harry Birch wedding at the Samuel Acton Farm in 1897. Samuel Acton is sitting with his son Richard Arthur. Janet Acton is sitting behind and to his left, appears to be holding a young child (Robert). Agnes Elizabeth (Nancy), who was five, was standing in second row. Gentleman in back row, third from left (above) or sitting on Grandpa's right (opposite) is likely Richard Acton our Great grandfather.

The photo on the previous page shows guests at the wedding of Lil and Harry Birch in 1897. It was performed by Rector Beal and witnessed by E. Wilcox and Louisa Beasley. It is uncertain whether they were married in the little Anglican church located in NW2-19-9-2, at the Rosewood School, or at the home of Lillian's brother Samuel Acton. Mrs. A. Campbell in 'Man! Man! Just Look At That Land' provides some history of the formation of this church that is worth repeating.

"Anglican Services were held in this district by Reverend Gregory. The first services were held in the different homes and the congregations numbered from twelve to twenty. St. Chad's church was built in the Rosewood district in 1899 and was dedicated by Bishop Grisdale on August 17, 1899. … The plot included a churchyard which was large enough to be used as a future cemetery and which was consecrated at the same time as the church.

In 1887 Bishop Anson had visited the Anglican congregation, which at that time was holding services in the school house. The Bishop was somewhat disappointed because of the small congregation. Mr. Sharpe, one of the faithful Anglicans, explained that the people were very busy haying, but if he were to return some other time and on a Sunday, there would be a larger congregation. Some time later the Bishop was able to come back and the school house was filled. Mr. Sharpe had brought their piano, and his daughter Carrie played for the occasion. The bishop remarked that it was one of the heartiest services that he had attended to in the west."

Trevor Powell, Archivist for the Anglican Diocese of Qu'Appelle, has confirmed the consecration date but raises the possibility that the church could have been built several years earlier. He has also indicated the congregation in 1897 was called the St.Rhadagunde Anglican Church. Mrs. Campbell called it St. Chad's church, perhaps representing a name change on consecration.

There were 45 adults present at the wedding. Other possibilities to those mentioned above, include: William and Helen Beasley and their children, Alex and Elizabeth Martin, Sandy Wilson, George and Fanny Simpson, William Greenland, William and Jane Thomson and William and Martha Sharpe. John and Carrie Hartell were living at Hyde at this time, so they may have been present. The gentleman fourth from the left in the back row is likely the Rector.

Agnes Elizabeth Acton and James Muir Watson Wedding

Jim Watson and Nancy (Agnes) Acton wedding, with Tom Watson and May Acton as attendants and with Samuel and Janet Acton, parents of the bride and Tom and Jane Watson, parents of the groom. At the Acton Farm home in 1914.

Jim was the second-eldest child in the Tom and Jane Watson family. They were stranded on the platform of the Wolseley station on their arrival from Ayrshire Scotland in 1910, as their proposed employer was anticipating a single person rather than a large family. To their good fortune G.P. Campbell had an empty house on his original homestead. Jim worked as a hired man on neighbourhood farms prior to his marriage. He and Nancy then obtained a farm in the Qu'Appelle Valley a few miles west of Ellisboro. It was largely a dairy operation featuring some Ayrshire cows, as I recall. Shortly after the war ended, Jim and Nancy retired to an acreage at Saanich, near Victoria, B.C.

Janet Elizabeth Acton and Wilfred Raymond Heath Wedding.

In forty nine Wilf proposed to Beth on bended knee'
Out here in Vancouver by the sea.

Beth answered yes and then she said, Home in
Saskatchewan is where we'll wed.

The old stone house on section ten,
Can see a gathering once again.

It saw great parties in the past,
Now it can host a wedding, at last.

She said I must go back to arrange the day,
And Wilf you follow and don't delay.

Wilf said no way would he forsake her,
But come right along in his old Studebaker.

When Beth arrived home they swung into action,
To make the house shine to their satisfaction.

Meanwhile back at the farm.

Mother took the news with great delight,
She thought, now my oldest has seen the light.

Now, if my boys would find some nice girls to go with,
Then surely my cup would over floweth.

But they were farmers, as you know,
So they still had some wild oats to sew.

They also planned the food for the post wedding lunch,
While Dad had ideas to jazz up the punch.

He said a fruit punch would be good but we aughta,
Make it even better with these two bottles of vodka.

Wilf soon arrived with brother Roy at his side,
And fell into the arms of his waiting bride.

We could see why he was thought of as such a dear,
when under each arm he carried a case of beer.

The weather was hot but the beer in the icehouse kept cold,
So out there in the evenings many stories were told.

Wilf impressed the boys as you could see on their faces,
When he regaled them with stories about far away places.

The wedding day dawned very hot and clear,
Friends and family arrived from far and near.

The big moment came with everyone assembled,
Wilf was smiling up front but his knees really trembled.

On the piano Doris played here comes the bride,
And down the stairs came Beth with Dad at her side.

Then came Bridesmaid Elinor and Flower Girl Heather,
Who followed behind as the couple came together.

Mr. Hughes began the service and he didn't falter,
As he said here we are standing before this alter.

At this Beth murmured, someone thought that she said,
I wonder if I can alter Wilf-red.

Meanwhile, back at the wedding.

The I do's were said and finally Wilf kissed his blushing Bride,
Then the couple marched out while confetti flew from every side.

Then came the reception, remember that punch?
Well, mother thought about it and had a hunch.

Too much strong drink would be risky she thought,
So instead of the two bottles that Dad had bought.

She carefully measured out just one half a cup,
But we kids thought it very strong so we drank it all up.

Just the thought of that booze made us feel very mellow,
Not knowing that most of it was safe under her pillow.

When the newlyweds took their leave the sun shone no more,
There was thunder and lightning and the rain started to pour.

The rain fell in torrents and it started to flood,
Soon that dusty old road became a sea of mud.

So they soon were stuck and as Wilf stepped out of his coup,
He realized prairie gumbo was not another soup.

He got out to push and got mud on his nice shoes,
And when again underway they had more very bad news.

The generator quit so they were without any light,
And they had a long drive before the end of the night.

They finally found their way to Page's Garage, Wilf looked like a newlywed with his soggy corsage.

So Bill made a quick repair and they were again underway,
Off to Lake Katepwa where they called it a day.

Roy's Roost was the name of the honeymoon suite,
Loaned by her uncle who kept it discrete.

What happened that evening, we had no reports,
But when seen next day they were in very good sorts.

So that's how this marriage, which we celebrate today,
Began with hess than a smooth start, but it was here to stay.

Perhaps the secret of a good marriage, whether Wilf knew it or not,
If you give lots of loving, you can get away with a lot.

A toast to Beth and Wilf by Richard Acton on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary, July 2009.

Special Times and Special People on Ten

The Beasleys and Sharpes visit with Granny and Grandpa

William and Christine (Tina) Beasley, left, Mrs. William (Priscilla) Sharp in long white dress with son Lawson beside her. Steve Beasley beside car and holding a baby, with his wife Beatrice next to him. Arthur Allen and Dick Hart in uniform.

The Jamiesons and Annie McKinnon visit Granny and Grandpa

Samuel Acton and Jamieson families on Veranda of Acton Farm home. Includes Robert Acton, Jenny Acton, Janet Acton, Annie Belle Acton, Herbert and Mrs. Jamieson and their children Keith, Ethel and Lueta.

"Mr. Jameson was a great old guy. He always had peppermints to give to the kids. Cheerful old Alex Thompson, we could hear him from the school, constantly whistling as he stooked his crops. **Richard.**

Alex and Chuck Watt

Alex Watt, a battery mate to Richard Acton (Dad) lived in Regina. He was a widower or a single parent with son, Chuck. Alex came to the farm for a few days nearly every summer, bringing with him his scotch poodle. Alex loved to sing, his specialty was old English and Scottish ballads, so a concert in the evening with Mother or Doris on the piano was not unusual. When Chuck grew a bit older he also would come. He was a character, as shown in the photo below beside the ice house.

The Martins

Mrs. John (Ettie) Martin, John Martin, and Mrs. Elizabeth ('Auntie') Martin, probably at 'Aunty Martin's' cottage near Ellisboro. This information was provided by Arthur Stilborn.

A Visit from the Blacks.

Granny Acton had a sister Mary that married Robert Black. Their sons William and Robert immigrated to Canada in the early 1900s. After several years working in the mines they homesteaded 7 miles south of Oyen Alberta in 1909. A year later William returned to Scotland in failing health. He encouraged another brother, John, to move out to his homestead in 1913. John married Mrs. Jean Kenny, a widow. Her son, Glenn, took over the farm when John and Jean retired to Victoria. (I met John and Jean while visiting in Victoria and had some correspondence with Jean. I can't really say that the lady in the photo looks like the lady that I met, but if it isn't the Black's, I don't know who else it might be. The boy on the left is likely Duncan but it could be Jean's son Glen. Others are Elinor, Sam and Beth Acton. About 1930, at the Acton Farm.

Grading the Lane

Grading the lane. Samuel Acton and an unidentified girl on the McCormick Deering W-30 tractor. Robert Walker Sr. operating grader. Clifford and Donald Acton and their dog also on grader. As Donald Acton recalls, it was on this or a similar occasion when the grader struck a stone. The jolt caused Clifford to fall off. One of the grader wheels ran over him, but fortunately, this wheel was riding high, above the ground, and it didn't hurt him. It sure scared everyone though.

The Beekeeper and Bee Stings

It has been mentioned elsewhere in this book that we had cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, sheep, chickens and turkeys. We also had bees! Dad would have three or four hives every year. A sunny exposure on the south side of the aspen bluff just west of the shop was a favoured site. Someone in the neighbourhood had an extractor. The frames laden with honey were placed into the extractor and spun. Honey would drop to the bottom of the extractor to be drained off.

There were several years when the bees seemed more agitated than usual. You could hardly walk out of the house without encountering one. And, just like wild bees, if you tried to get rid of them they would get even more agitated and they would sting. I can recall incidents when Richard's and Mother's eyes were nearly closed from the swelling.

The Fifth Generation on Ten

Beverley represented the start of the fifth generation of Actons on Ten. She followed Richard Acton, Samuel Acton, Richard Arthur Acton and Doris (Acton) Switzer. In the photo opposite she is siting on her great grandmother's (Janet Acton) knee. Her mother Doris Switzer and grandmother Annie Acton stand behind them. In the photo below: L/R: Elinor Acton, Richard Arthur Acton, Duncan Acton, Donald Acton, Janet Elizabeth Acton, Ivan Switzer, Doris (Acton) Switzer, Annie Belle Acton, Richard Keith Acton, Clifford Acton, Janet (Walker) Acton and Beverley Switzer.