

ARROWDALE REVISITED

A factual year to year account of the beginning, in 1905, of my parents taking up farming in Manitoba.

Also the history of myself and family written in longhand in December 1982 and January 1983 entirely by me.

A special thank you to my wife Marjorie for her loyalty and understanding for forty five years.

Allan M. Armitage

Dedicated to the memory of-

Catherine Muirhead Armitage 1882-1967

Herbert D. Armitage 1879-1957

Their son

Charles A. Armitage 1906-1978

Original typing courtesy of Eleanor O'callaghan

I was born February 21, 1912, to **Herbert and Catherine Armitage** I was born on this farm and have lived here all my life. I am the third son, my brothers **Charles** and **William**, and my sister **Mary** being older than me.

I would like to go back now and give some further details of my parent's previous history. My father, **Herbert DeWinton Armitage**, was born at Newmarket, Ontario, in 1879. He was a descendant of United Empire Loyalist stock, many of whom settled in that area after the American Revolution. His father, **Charlie Armitage**, was a part time farmer and also a butcher. His mother was **Mary Douglas**, and she was born in Osprey Township, Grey County, Ontario. They were married in 1876 and apparently continued to live in Newmarket for some time. They later moved to Toronto where they were to live until their deaths. Grandpa worked for Lever Brothers, a soap manufacturer, and proudly wore a gold watch he had received for 50 years of service. I had the honor to attend their 60th wedding anniversary in 1956. **Dad** grew up in the Toronto area as a machinist and, at one time worked for C.C.M. the bicycle manufacturer.

My mother, **Catherine Muirhead** was also born in Osprey Township in 1882, very close to where my Dad's mother was born. *****1**(*Her mother, **Jane Muirhead**, married a cousin Allan Muirhead. I am named after him, Allan Muir.*) The Muirheads were Scots and the great grandmother spoke mostly Gaelic, and Mother knew some of the language. *****1** (*Catherine's father died not long after their marriage, and Catherine was the only child of the marriage.*) Sometime later, Jane married George Scutt. Of this union there were six children, the third being Pickering, who is a half-brother to my mother, Catherine Muirhead. Mother grew up and went to school around McIntyre and Badjeros, two small communities that had been cleared of the hardwood forests not many years before. As a young woman, she went to Toronto to work for an uncle and it was while working here that she met my father, Herbert.

In the year **1900**, Dad came west on a harvest excursion. He came to Virden where he came in contact with farmers who were looking for men to help with the harvest. It happened he was picked up by **Fred Reeves**, and so came to a farm that is now in the community pasture, just across the road from **Jim Maxfield's**. After harvest, he returned to Toronto, but the west had got in his blood and he returned for the next couple of years.

In **1903** he spent the winter looking after **Jimmy Crump's** stock, and learned all he could about farming from these men who were very good farmers. This was known as the Two Creeks district and had been settled about 1862 by a group of English tenant farmers who were brought out to farm the way it was done in England. As soon as they saw that they could get all the land they needed on their own, they abandoned the scheme and each took his own homestead. The names of some of them were **Reeves, Crumps, Webster, Maxfields, Coles** and **Morton**.

Dad worked for **Jim Crump** and I think it was probably he who was instrumental in locating the 3/4 of land in the Assiniboine valley. Dad bought this in 1905. He had previously farmed some rented land probably belonging to **William Elliott**. As I go over some of these old papers, I can't help but admire the spirit of a man who came from Toronto, with no money and no farming background, and started farming the virgin prairie.

*****1** *This is incorrect.. Catherine Muirhead was born Catherine Caruthers at McIntyre, Osprey Twnshp, Grey County, Ontario on January 2, 1882 to Jane Muirhead and Robert James Caruthers according to the Archives of Ontario Registry of Births 1869-1909 Reg.# 009167)*

On March 6, 1905, an agreement was made between Walker Willis Moody of Winnipeg, vendor, and Herbert Armitage, farmer, whereby he agreed to pay \$2,400.00 of lawful money of Canada for the east 1/2 and N.W. 1/4 of Section 10, Township 13, Range 26, payable in grain by delivery from the thresher of one half of each year's crop grown on said land, till all the money secured by this agreement are satisfied. Interest on the unpaid balance was 5% per annum. His contract also called for him to break at least 50 acres in the current year and twenty five per year thereafter, until all arable land was under cultivation, and furthermore, he will sow only clean seed, properly bluestoned and will keep the land free from all noxious weeds.

The land was situated on the north slope of the Assiniboine valley, with quite a bit of the N.E. 1/4 being side hill, partly covered with scrub oak and chokecherry, saskatoon and other shrubbery. **The Arrow River Creek** ran through it and emptied into the Assiniboine on the S.E. 1/4. There was quite a bit of bush along the river, and the creek was a great attraction, as it afforded a ready supply of water for any livestock operations. The river flats to the south and west were a good source of wild hay, and a source of a good supply of ducks and prairie chicken, which I am sure Dad considered as he remained an avid hunter and fisherman all his life. There was a nice slope of open ground where the building site was finally chosen. The one drawback, which eventually showed up was a shortage of water other than the creek.

This land had been bought by speculators previously, and had passed through several hands before Dad came into possession of it. There were a few acres broken on it but it was mostly prairie. He purchased a team of horses from **William Kyle** of Two Creeks. He was an American and a grandfather of **Frank and Harold Kyle**, who imported horses from the U.S.A. Their names were Jack and Pet. I remember a horse descended from the mare by the name of Uncle. He was a big, white Percheron. And I remember as a nine year old, hauling my first load of wheat to Miniota with him and his mate, Lady. But I am getting ahead of myself.

Dad built a shack on the property that spring and presumably also a stable, he proceeded to break the land using a walking plow. According to **Mother**, he broke and back set 125 acres. (See Bridging the years). On September 6, 1905 **Catherine Muirhead** arrived from Toronto and they were married that evening, by **Rev. William Hodnett** in the living room over the old **Hodnett store**. That winter, **Dad** wintered about twenty head of cattle for **Sam Hunter**, an implement dealer in Miniota. For payment, he received a Hereford heifer, which later produced a calf, and that was the start of a herd of cattle that is still in the family in 1982. When my parents set up housekeeping in 1905, they lived in a one roomed shack. It was located straight north of where the barn now stands, and the site can be identified by a row of stones that marked the south wall or the foundation. I think another room must have been added shortly after. From their front window, they could look out, over the whole valley as the trees along the creek were very small at this time. I recall **Mother** telling of standing at the back door of the house and seeing the saw logs being driven down the river to Brandon. The stable was situated in the area just west of where the yard pole now stands, and a granary was situated between the house and the stable.

This part of the country had been settled long before my parents came. Their nearest

neighbors were **the Luther Currie family** who lived 1/2 mile west. Further west up the valley were **the Robinsons, Warrens and Bissetts**. Mr. and Mrs. Robinson were very good neighbors. They had no family of their own, but adopted a daughter, **named Edna Spencer**.

They had in their employ a Barnardo boy by the name **or Ed Fisher**. Later, they got another one by the name of **Alec McKean**. **Ed. Fisher** was with the Robinsons until Mrs. Robinson retired in 1936, when he returned to England and died shortly after.

Alex McKean joined the army in 1915 and served with distinction until 1918, when he returned. He made his home around Miniota until his passing in 1978.

The Warrens were a large family, who lived on the farm part time and the rest of the time in Miniota. He became Secretary Treasurer of the Municipality. Further west were **the Bissetts** who had homesteaded their land in 1882. A niece of theirs **married Charlie Goodwin**, who was living on the farm when I was a boy. On top of the hill were **the Gerrands and Elleringtons** and further north, **the Andrews, Boyces, Craigs and Lelonds**, and to the east were the **Mitchells**. South, across the valley were the **Crumps and Reeves**. These farms are now in the community pasture.

The **Maxfields, Coles and Willocks** farmed the land now farmed by **Luther Currie** had homesteaded his farm in 1882, and in 1896 had built a fine, big, stone house on it and a few years later a barn. **Mr. Currie** operated a lime kiln, and burned all his own lime as well as selling some to others. His first wife died, leaving no family, and in **1898** he married **Henrietta Robinson**, one of a large family residing in the Crandall district. Of this marriage, there were five children, **Eva, Brodie, Roy, Ruby and Les**. This family was to be our closest neighbors and friends. **Roy** is the only one still living in **1982**. **Mrs. Currie** was a great friend of my mother and I am sure must have been a great support to her, a new bride a long way from home.

Nick Robinson, a brother of **Mrs. Currie**, and his wife **Zelphia**, who lived where **Ivan** now lives, were close neighbors. **Chris Ellerington**, better known as **Kit**, and his wife **Harriet**, came from England about **1900** and started farming. They had two sons, **Chris jr.** born in **1902**, and **Charlie**, born in **1904**, **Annie** in **1908**, and **Ruth**, a late arrival, in **1925**. They were close neighbors and, as of **1982**, **Charlie and Ruth** are the only ones still living.

David Gerrand, a Scotsman, had come from Scotland via Ontario, and homesteaded in **1882**. He built the stone house at the top of the Currie hill, claimed by the family to be the first stone house built in this area. He was married twice, and his second wife was a sister to his first wife. There were five children in the first family, and four in the second, namely **Ernie, Arthur, Alice, Edith and Tommy; Aletha, Dorothy, Dave and Janet**. The last to leave the district was **Arthur**, who had remained on the farm. He and his family moved to Birtle in **1922**, and finally to Vancouver Island. In **1982** they had a reunion at Miniota and three of the second family were able to attend. The **Copelands** were an Irish couple who had homesteaded on what is now known as the **Gardham** farm, at the top of the Copeland hill. They had a son, **William**, who was about the same age as Dad, and they were very good friends.

I can remember as a small boy, when they used to spend days hunting deer in the hunting season. At that time deer were very scarce and I do not ever recall seeing one alive

until I was 12 years old. **Bill** also owned a sawing and crushing outfit, and I recall him sawing all our wood. **Bill Copeland** had a cousin, **Bill Aylward**, who had come from Ireland to live with them. He later married the Copeland's daughter, **Beatrice**. The **Copelands** were a typical Irish family and very hospitable. The old gentleman **Tommy** was a great story teller, who was not bothered by stretching the truth to make a good story better. These people were always good friends of the family, and remained so until their passing in the mid 20's. Their oldest friends were the **Crumps, Reeves and Maxfields**. I can remember as a child visiting with these people on Sundays. **Jim Crump** had lost his wife, and about **1915** remarried and moved to the valley, where he built a home at the foot of the **Crump hill**. They had bad luck here, losing many horses with **swamp fever** and being flooded by the river. In **1924** they moved to Oakner and in **1927** moved to California.

The **Fred Reeves** family were not really neighbors, but very good friends. Their family were about the same age as ours. There were four children but **Ted and Susan** passed away when quite young, leaving **John and Henry**. John married **Ida Webster** in the mid-thirties, and **Fred and his wife** moved to Miniota, where they lived until the time of their deaths. The **William Maxfield** family lived where the **Les Bunns** now live.

Mrs. Maxfield was a sister of **Jim Crump**, and the **Crumps, Maxfields and Reeves** were all members of the party brought out by the **Rankin estate**. As a young man, **William** took out his homestead and started farming. He was a man of many talents, being a farmer, stockman and a steam operator, who used to run a steamer every fall. He even started out for the Yukon at the time of the gold rush, but never made it. Their family of five were **Ella, Charlie, Jim, Alice and Mary**. **Jim and Alice** were the only ones who remained in the area. **Mrs. Maxfield** was an invalid for many years, and **Alice married Jim Morton** in the late twenties. She took her mother with her and looked after her until the mother's death.

Jim married in **1929** and moved across the road, and started his own farm, which today is owned by **Ted Morton**, a nephew of his. **William** continued to farm with the help of hired men. He used to phone Dad quite regularly to keep up with the news and weather, and would become quite upset when the news or forecast was not to his liking. He later acquired a radio of his own. He had a great command of the English language, and used to intersperse his stories with a few cuss words, which anyone who knew him did not find offensive. In **1939** he sold out and moved to Two Creeks, where he became Mayor - an honorary appointment. In his last years, he moved to Virden, where he died in **1961**. In my later years we became good friends and carried on a correspondence.

The village of **Miniota** had come into being with the arrival of the **railway in 1900**. By **1905** it was a thriving community, serving a large area, as the Two Creeks and Beulah rail lines were not operational until much later. **Hodnett, Forsyth and Ross** had stores. There was a doctor, and he had the drugstore. There were two blacksmiths and with the coming of motor cars, two garages owned by **Charlie Watts** and **Dorward Brothers**. There were two hotels, a Massey, Cockshutt, John Deere and International Harvester machine agencies. There was a

large hardware store that was built and operated by **David Gerrand**, later called Manitoba Hardware, and today is the Co-op. There were four elevators, a post office and a daily train, which made a daily trip to Brandon. There were three churches, Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican. There was no school in the village until **1908**, when a new, four room school was built. This was a consolidation of several small schools.

Another family who were not neighbors at this time, but who were involved in our community for many years were the **Cusack family**. The parents lived in Miniota and there was a large family of three girls and five boys. **Edith** taught school at Glenlochar and later married **Ken Duncan** of Austin, Manitoba. It was she who bought the land I will refer to as the **Duncan quarter**. She had bought this land for her brother **Jim** and it was he who broke it and farmed it until the floods of the early twenties. It was not farmed again until **Ken Duncan** came from Austin in **1950** and broke it and farmed it until **1935** when I rented it. **Jim** had two brothers, **Henry and Bill**. The three brothers lived in a shack on the Duncan quarter and worked out from there. **Henry**, better known as **Hank**, was quite well known as a thresherman and steam engine operator. He had lost half of one foot when he got it in the open gears of his tractor. He was a colorful character, and inclined to be fond of any form of alcohol, a habit that got him into some trouble when he undertook to distill his own. His stories, when under the influence, were entertaining, but sometimes far out. **Bill** was a part time helper to **Hank** and used to cut posts and trap along the river. He covered a lot of territory, and did us a service several times by finding some of our cattle stuck in the river.

Jim did various jobs around town, with his team of horses Ladysmith and Darcy. He gravelled roads, and in the winter used to sell ice in town. He married **Mrs. Currie** about 1915. She had been a widow since **Luther Currie** died in **1908**. The **Cusack boys** were famous as hockey players in the early days. They all died in the late forties and are buried in the Arrow River cemetery. My reason for giving the history of some of these neighbors is to give an insight into the community into which they had moved.

In **1906** Dad sowed his **first crop** on his own land. I do not know how he managed it, but I suppose he must have had to exchange work or borrow implements from neighbors. In June of that year, their first son was born. He was named **Charles**, after his paternal grandfather. **Dr. Chalmers** and **Grandma Mitchell, Ken Mitchell's** great grandmother, were in attendance. He was apparently a rather delicate baby, but with good care he soon became stronger. I think Dad's parents may have come from Toronto that year also. I wish I had written this history when my mother was still living, as Mother had a good memory and could remember many amusing happenings. Dad, on the other hand, was not one to talk a lot, not unlike some of the present day Armitages.

As the threshing had to wait until a thresher came, the grain had to be stacked. Dad had apparently learned the art from **Jim Crump**, who made the nicest stacks I ever saw. The **Mitchells and Cusacks** were custom threshers and it was probably one of them who threshed Dad's first crop. Mother used to speak of threshing time as being a very busy time. She would have **Beatty Copeland** to help and, what with the small house, the babies and the huge appetites, I am sure that would be an understatement. **1907** would be a repeat of 1906. I do not know where they used to accommodate their company, or the hired men. In October of that year my sister **Mary** was born, and named after her paternal grandmother. I think perhaps

Dad's sister, **May** may have been there. There was a steady visitation of relatives every fall from Ontario, as you could travel for a cent a mile on the harvest excursion. I know several aunts and uncles who availed themselves of this opportunity to visit, however none of them stayed permanently.

Roads improved, and in **1908** the first telephones were installed. This must have been a great benefit to the people, and I know that Mother was greatly relieved to be able to call for help in an emergency. Apparently at this time there were **peddlers**, who carried their packs on their backs and sold small wares. There were also quite a few **Indians** travelling between the **Birdtail** and **Griswald** reserves. Progress was steady, crops were good, and the virgin land was rich and clean, and everything you made was yours. There was no income tax and very low property taxes. By **1912** the farm was all paid for, and a good bunch of horses and cattle accumulated.

In **1910** another son, **William** was born. He was named after an uncle on Dad's side of the family, who later struck it rich when he sold some property he owned in Toronto, and on which **Maple Leaf Gardens** now stands. In **1912** it was decided a new barn was needed. I would have thought a new house would have been more appropriate. But while I was there I was not consulted, as I was only born on February 21 of that year.

The barn was built by **George Beggs**, an Englishman who did a lot of building at the time. **George Aspinwall**, who was killed in World War I, was a helper. **Jack Cottingham** did the cement work. It was a 50'x60' structure, with a large loft. There was a drive way on the north side, which gave easy access to it. One side was reserved for straw, which was blown in by the threshing machine. The other side was used for hay. There were also chop bins which fed the chop to the lower floor. There were seven double horse stalls, plus a box stall and six double cow stalls. Along the north side was a space sixteen feet wide, running the full length of the building. This area was used for loose housing, which worked very well. All this was in the days when it was considered criminal to leave stock outside.

Mother used to speak of how many men she used to feed. I think there were about six extra men that summer, plus four children under six years of age, all to be fed and cared for in a house not much bigger than most people's living room. I am sure Mother would also be picking wild fruit, as she considered that a form of recreation. She also preserved all kinds of tame fruits, and it was not unusual to have 400 quarts in the cellar.

About now, **Charles** and **Mary** were approaching school age. **Glenlochar school** was 2 1/2 miles from the farm. The school district had been formed in 1906, just after Dad took possession of his farm.

I do not think **Charlie** started to school until he was seven, and then he and **Mary** started together. I am not sure how they got to school. I know some of the time they got a ride with **Brodie and Roy Currie**, and when they were a little older, they drove themselves. In summer, sometimes they walked. I do not imagine attendance was 100%. In the summer of **1913**, it was decided to take the whole family to Ontario to visit the numerous relatives on both sides of the family. They went by train to Thunder Bay, and then by boat to Toronto. I do not know how long they were away, but I do know they stopped over in Winnipeg on the way, and visited

Uncle Doug and Aunt Ethel. Uncle **Doug** was Dad's older brother, who had moved to Winnipeg about the same time as Dad came west. Aunt **Ethel** was his wife, and they had three sons, **Evan, John and Les**. I do not know who was in charge of the farm while they were away, but over the years they had some very capable hired men. I know these men only by name. **Harry Sippats, Joe Crump, Joe Capp, Ernie Bowles, Henry Fairfax and Hugh Hamilton**, were some of them. Crops were good and progress steady. Two neighbors, **Nick Robinson** and **Archie Bissett** had acquired a second hand threshing outfit, and assumed the threshing duties. Apparently it was not in very good mechanical condition and was prone to breaking down, thus forcing the farm wives to feed the crew for an extra day or two, a not inconsiderable task considering there might be fifteen or twenty men involved.

I think it was about 1913 or 1914 that Dad became very ill with inflammatory rheumatism. He spent some time in a Winnipeg hospital, but after a long convalescence, made a good recovery. Mother, with the help of **Harry Sippats**, kept the farm going until he recovered and Mother gave Harry high praise for his devotion to duty. He later joined up and they lost track of him. My Dad finally tracked him down in Winnipeg in 1955 where he had lived for years.

In 1914 **Kenneth** was born and that fall **World War I** broke out. This was the end of the life style that had been enjoyed for many years. All the young men of the district, many of them immigrants from the British Isles, rushed to join up to fight for the Motherland. Sad to say, an awful lot of them never returned and their names are engraved in granite in the war memorial in Miniota.

1915 is the year that every one remembers. That was the year Western Canada had a record crop, and what with the war, there was a great demand for food, and prices were good. In harvest time that year a big cyclone hit the area, and blew down or blew away a lot of the stooked crop. It also blew down the railway bridge over the **Minnewasta Creek**. This was a timber structure 1/4 mile long and 120 feet high. A freight train, not realizing the bridge was down, ran into the ravine, killing two crew members and several hundred cattle. Also, that same fall, a **disastrous fire** burned out most of the main street in **Miniota**. It burned out everything from where the bank now stands to the old hotel. This was built up again as quickly as possible, and remains much the same today.

That winter, Mother and Dad decided to spend Christmas with Mother's family, who by this time had moved from Ontario to **Council Bluffs, Iowa**. **Grandma Scutt** was a widow, with a family of four girls and two boys. The oldest boy was **Pickering**, who came back with us when we returned the following spring. My memories of this trip are vague, but I do remember celebrating my fourth birthday there, I also recall getting into some trouble for chopping some holes in. Grandma's wash tub with a hatchet I had somehow got my hands on. On February 24, word came through that our **house in Manitoba had burned**, with nothing being saved. The farm had been left in charge of the hired man, whose name was **Carl Hubbard**. He apparently was away when it happened. This was a severe loss as they lost everything but what they had taken with them. The house was not such a loss, as it was only three rooms and they had

intended to build a new house anyway. The result was we stayed another couple of weeks, while **George Biggs** built a new shack, 14'X28' and on March 17 we arrived home. It was a late spring and the house was crowded, and cold. Shortly after we arrived home, **Willie** developed inflammatory rheumatism and, in spite of all efforts, passed away. He was six years old. I mentioned previously that **Pick Scutt** had come back with us. He was to become one of the family, and was to remain with us until 1924. I think I should clear up his unusual given name. His mother's maiden name was **Pickering**, hence his given name Pickering or as he is better known as Pick.

After the rather disastrous winter and spring, things got back to normal. Plans were made for the new house and work got under way right after seeding. It was to be a two storey structure, with a full basement and full plumbing, heated by a furnace. **George Biggs** was hired to do the building and **Jack Outram** was to do the cement work. I do not know how many men were involved, but I remember the little house would be quite crowded at meal time. I recall going with Dad to Miniota to haul the material. I can recall going in with a hay rack and we came home with a whole rack full of lath, Harvest was worked in somehow, and I think that was the year that **black rust** made its appearance, and the crop was the poorest in many years. After harvest, the big push was to get the house habitable before winter.

Men started digging the septic tank, which was 12 feet below ground, and a drain from it was dug for about 300 feet to an old well. It was also 7 feet deep. No back hoe in those days. Just pick and shovel, as it was all shale. It has stood the test of time however, as it is still in good working order in 1982. After **George Biggs** finished his work, a neighbor **Jack Cottingham** came in to plaster it and build the chimney. He was an excellent workman who had learned his trade in England. After that, a finishing carpenter by the name of **Harry Hobson** took over and built the cupboards and put all the finish around the doors and windows. When it was finished, there were five bedrooms, a kitchen, a dining room, a parlor and a bathroom. We moved in on December 1, **1916**, and mother is quoted from "Bridging the Years", as saying "It seemed like heaven after our temporary quarters"

The first winter in the new house was very pleasant. I remember when the weather got real cold, it sounded like there was a war going on. It was caused by the nails in the new lumber, we were told. Of course we did not have nearly enough furniture, but before spring Dad went shopping at **Eatons in Winnipeg**, and came home with a fumed oak dining room suite with six chairs, a round table and a buffet, plus a couch that folded into a bed. This fully furnished the dining room. The parlor would have to wait. He also bought three bedroom suites. This was a great deal of money to spend in those days, but as wheat was selling for \$2 a bushel it was not unrealistic.

That spring, for some obscure reason, Dad decided to rent the farm to his brother, **Doug Armitage** from Winnipeg. It was to be on a share basis. They arrived in the spring and took up residence in the shack that Mother and Dad had so recently vacated. They had three boys.

Evan was the same age as **Charles**, and **John** about a year older than me. They both went to school, but I did not. That summer Dad bought a 490 Chev. car from **Dorward Bros**. This was a real thrill to us kids as Dad took to going to town every day. However, the novelty wore off after a few flat tires and a few major repairs made. When cold weather came it was put up on blocks until spring. In May, my sister **Margaret**, was born. At this time Dad had to take out a mortgage to stay afloat. It was with **Manitoba farm Loans**, and I think was for about \$2,500.00 to be repaid in twenty years with interest at 4%. Of course everybody else was doing the same thing, and with wheat hitting \$3 a bushel prospects looked good. Sorry to say it did not turn out that way, and it was 1942 before the debt was completely paid off.

The year **1917** was dry and the crop just average. **John and Anthony Rudd from Crandall** came through with a large gas threshing outfit and threshed the crop, which was all stacked. That fall an old stable in the yard was torn down and some of the material used to build a combination pig pen and hen house, which in 1962 we moved and converted into a swather shed. They also built a garage for the new car, which is still in use today as a work shop. The carpenter who did the building was a man from Crandall by the name of **Sanderson**. I can remember **Bill Aylward** also who helped him. I can remember some years later when Dad switched to the Model T. He drove into the garage and, thinking he was pushing in the clutch, hit the end of the garage. A crate of eggs sitting on the back seat ended up mostly scrambled.

The share crop arrangement did not give either one very much income, so the agreement was terminated, not without recriminations. **Doug** moved across the river to a farm owned by **Jim Crump**. He remained there for a couple of years and then moved back to Winnipeg.

Dad resumed farming with **Pick** as hired man, but in the spring of **1918** Pick joined the army and went to Winnipeg to train. Dad was left without any help. Somehow he received a man from Winnipeg who had never been on a farm before. As a further complication, he was Jewish, and would not eat salted pork that was a staple food of that time. He and Dad parted company after a week. Dad was then able to get **Bob Clark** an old acquaintance from the Two Creeks district. I remember him giving me a dollar one day for some favor I had done for him. I also remember when we were planting potatoes that spring with a walking plow. We had finished and **Bob** put his hand in his pocket to check the time. His lovely gold watch was missing and has never turned up to this day. I think about it every time I go over that small piece of ground.

That summer **Ernie Martin** came to work. He had been in the army and overseas, but was discharged for medical reasons. He had worked around this district prior to joining the army. That summer the family all came down with **diphtheria** It was not diagnosed for a day or two and, by the time they were able to get the antitoxin from Winnipeg, it was too late. The sad result was that **Margaret**, who was only one year old, and **Kenneth** who was four, died just one day apart. As the family were all under strict **quarantine**, my parents were not even allowed to attend the funeral. In fact, I do not think there was a funeral. I can remember this quite well. I also had it, but I guess I got the serum soon enough, because I soon recovered. We were under quarantine for, I think, six weeks and then **Dr. Chalmers** came down and sprinkled

the whole interior of the house with **formalin**. During the period of our sickness and quarantine our good neighbor, **Nick Robinson**, used to do all our shopping and bring the mail. Our neighbors were all very helpful at this trying time. I do not know how my parents took it so bravely as, in a period of two years, they had lost three children. I was six years old and that fall I started to school with **Charlie** and **Mary**. My first teacher was **Sadie Lynch**, an elderly spinster.. I did not take to school at that time and I think, because I was now the baby of the family, was allowed to stay home for another year. I do not think the crop was very good that year, but anyway it was all stacked. My Dad was an excellent stack builder, having learned how from **Jim Crump**, who was the best stacker in this part of the country. Stacking at that time was a status symbol.

That fall World War I was winding down, and on **November 11 the Armistice was signed**. That event coincided with the arrival of **Wib Shier** and his threshing outfit to do the stack threshing. That evening a great celebration was held in Miniota. I remember there was a huge bonfire in the park where sometime during the evening the **Kaiser** was burned in effigy. There were no trees in the park at that time. **Pick** returned to the farm and he and I became good companions and this relationship has endured to the present day. With the end of the war, things got back to normal, but the old order was gone for good. Prices had skyrocketed during the war, but afterwards farm prices dropped drastically. The government had **initiated Income Tax as a temporary measure**. Unfortunately it is still with us in 1982. I see in a reference diary I have, that a Model T Ford sold for \$700.00, and 100 pounds of flour for \$5.40.

The end of the war and the return of the men from overseas brought with it an outbreak of what was called the **Spanish Flu**. This outbreak is supposed to have killed more people than the Great War. It arrived in our district in the spring of **1919** and soon half the population was down with it. There were several deaths in Miniota but our district escaped without casualties. I remember our whole family was sick at once, and once again our good neighbor, **Nick Robinson** came to our rescue, looking after the stock and bringing groceries, not only for us but the **Curries** as well. Amazingly, he never took it and he attributed it to the fact that he used to take regular doses of **Watkins Liniment**.

That summer I started to school for the second time. I am not sure who my first teacher was, but I think it was **Ethel Miller**. This opened up a whole new world for me, as I had been isolated from children my own age. I guess at that time there were about 25 pupils, ranging in age from six to fifteen years old. There were **Curries, Ruby and Les; Gerrands, Dave, Dorothy and Janet; Elleringtons, Charlie and Annie; Tom Lelond's, Wes, Vernon and Lyall; Ab Lelond's, Homer, Ted and Lily; Andrews, Connie, Nellie and Alice; Craig's, Ella, Katie and Lewis; Boyce's, Mack, Jean, Bessie and Vera; Sutherland, May and Jean; as well as Charlie, Mary and me**.

That fall **Glenlochar** became part of the Municipal School System. This certainly solved the transportation problem, and must have increased regular attendance. I was in the age group of **Jean and Bessie Boyce, Vern Lelond and Nellie Andrew**, and we stayed together until graduation, from Grade 8 in 1925. Church and Sunday School were also started in the school about then, and our family was in regular attendance.

Dad, at this time, did not do much land work. He liked gardening, but I think his greatest love was hunting, especially ducks. As a six year old, I was taken along in the buggy to hold the

horse or the two spaniel retrievers. I spent what seemed like hours waiting in the buggy while he would wait for the ducks to fly over. Needless to say, he bagged his share. In the spring he would have a net in the creek, and would keep the whole district supplied with fresh fish. At this time this whole area was a game preserve for deer, so he was unable to shoot any. However, when the restrictions were lifted about 1950, he was once again active. He also did a bit of trapping, wolves and muskrats.

Mother was an ideal helpmate, a very patient, even tempered person, who was never out of humor, even when Dad was often late for meals. Her philosophy was that "things could always be worse". I think she went through more adversity than most women. The loss of her three children was a severe shock. I think she purposely set out to rectify the situation, as just a year after the loss of **Margaret** and **Kenneth** her little daughter, **Fay** was born. I remember the day quite well. We had been sent over to spend the day with **Aunt Ethel and Uncle Doug** at **Two Creeks**. About six o'clock that evening a big wind storm came up, blowing over granaries and blowing down the **Ellerington's** wind mill. I was quite surprised when we came home the next day to find a little sister. **Fay** was seven years younger than me, and thirteen years younger than **Mary**. Fay was always like Mother and now, at 60, still is. But Mother could work circles around her.

As a young boy growing up on the farm, I suppose my life was fairly typical. We grew up with horses and learned to ride and drive them at an early age. There were always cows to be herded or brought home for milking. I do not know how I escaped, but I must confess to never having milked a cow in my life. There were other farm chores which I very much disliked. One of these was turning the cream separator and the grind stone, which I had to turn quite often, as Dad had an obsession for sharp axes and butcher knives. Another necessity I hated was getting my hair cut as Dad used to cut all ours. He seemed to enjoy cutting hair and after we became big enough to go to **Bill Yarwood**, practised on the grandchildren.

In **1919** a change was made in harvesting the crop. All the farmers in the valley pooled their equipment and help and threshed the crop right out of the stook. This eliminated the stacking process. **Bob Turnbull** from Two Creeks brought his outfit and threshed the whole valley. I always was interested in threshing as I think most boys are, and I could hardly wait to become a part of it. I liked school and never had any problems. **Vern Lelond** was my best friend and we used to go back and forth to spend the night together. We remained good friends until his passing in 1967. Things went on much the same about this time. Everybody would go to town on **Saturday night** to do their shopping for a whole week. In this way I got to know a lot of town kids my own age, as we used to play games in the park. Stores would stay open until midnight and if we had any money, we could buy a cone for 5c ea., licorice plugs or pipes for 1c each. You could also buy fire crackers from the drug store, or go into the Chinaman's, **Charlie Yee Gee**, who sold all kinds of goodies as well as cigarettes, which could be purchased for 5c if you were daring enough. He also had a **player piano** which someone would be playing. **Bill Yarwood** ran the pool room and barber shop. It was always busy on Saturday night, and was out of bounds for anyone under, I think sixteen unless accompanied by an adult. The livery barn

run by **George Grant**, had some attraction perhaps because it was beside **Hodnett's** store, which was also a very busy place on Saturday night. Miniota at that time had hitching posts for horses and in summer these were in regular use. We did not get to town in winter. Well, maybe once at Christmas time.

In **1920** Father became interested in buying a threshing machine. **Jim Crump, Dave Gerrand** and **Bill Warren** had all bought tractors and were willing to go in with Dad to thresh their crops. Dad finally made the decision and bought a **Robert Bell separator** with a 24 inch cylinder. I should add here that at this time there was a trend away from the big outfits. In fact, I guess it was the beginning of Women's Lib, as the women had got tired of feeding the huge gangs of men. **Jim Crump** had bought a **George White tractor** that spring, so he and Dad commenced to thresh. Neither had much mechanical ability, but they managed somehow to thresh their own and also Currie's with **Pick, Brod and Roy and Crump's man** making up the crew. I spent all my spare time around the outfit and was allowed to keep the grain in the wagon box or granary from running over. I had made it. That winter **Pick** went to Iowa to see his mother and family. I cannot remember anyone taking his place, but Dad hired **Joe Johnston** and **Mike Kowal** of Two Creeks to cut a year's supply of firewood.

In **1921** Charles had passed Grade 8 and had to go to Miniota for high school. He used to catch the van at **Robinson's**. **Edna Spencer**, their teen aged adopted daughter was attending also. It was a long trip and when winter came he boarded in town with the **Reg Olivers** and helped him some in the printing office, I believe. One winter he boarded with the **Dart family**, who lived where **Howard Richardsons** now live. I think he attended for two or three years. He will be remembered by his generation for playing the part of **Scrooge** in a play put on at the Christmas concert one year. When **Mary** passed out of **Glenlochar**, she did not go on to high school but stayed home and helped Mother.

In the fall of **1920** the **Curries** had a sale and moved to Miniota. This was so **Ruby and Les** could go to high school, and to make it more convenient for **Brod**, who had a part time job with the telephones. **Mrs. Currie** had earlier married **Jim Cusack**, but the marriage had not worked out. The Currie farm was rented to **Jim Still Sr.** and they moved in that fall. They came from the **Isabella** area and the family consisted of the parents, a son **Jim**, and a teen age daughter **Ena**. They became a part of **Glenlochar** community and proved to be very good neighbors.

Dad had always had quite a good herd of cattle. They were mostly Herefords. I spent many hours chasing or herding these cattle and, as our fences were not the best, it was not unusual for them to get into the crop. That summer Dad decided to cut down on the size of the herd. Some 20 head were driven to the C.N. at Miniota where they were loaded. Dad accompanied them and took me with him. While I had been in **Winnipeg** when I was much younger, I did not remember much about it. This time I was really impressed by the big stores and all the merchandise on display. We also spent a day at the **stock yards**, where the cattle were sold. I do not think they brought a very good price and Dad was disappointed with the returns.

In **1921** crops were just fair. When harvest time came a young fellow by the name of **Henry Willock**, who worked some with **Percy Watts**, made Dad an offer to run the threshing outfit for \$10 per day. Dad thought that a good idea, but his partner **Jim Crump**, who owned the engine, did not. Dad then approached **Arthur Gerrand** who had a **Minneapolis tractor** a few years old. This worked fine for about a week and they were busy threshing, when a man came along and took the magneto off. Apparently the payments were behind on the tractor. This put Dad into a bit of a bind, which was finally solved when he went out and bought a tractor of his own. This was a **Titan. 10-20, made by International Harvester**. That fall he managed to get a bit of custom threshing to help out. **Henry Willock** left to work on the railway and eventually became a very wealthy man.

The **Assiniboine River** had always been a part of our life. We used to fish in it, and occasionally had to pull cattle out of the mud along its banks. Swimming in it was out of the question, as it was supposed to have under currents. All our family were good swimmers, as we all learned at an early age by swimming in the **Arrow River creek**. In the mid-twenties we started to swim in the river, and in the thirties spent many happy hours swimming in its waters. In **1922** for the first time in my memory it over flowed its banks. This would be in April. **Nick Robinson** had a stack of hay that was surrounded by water, but **Brodie and Roy Currie** came along and, with the help of neighbors, salvaged it all down to the water line. The water in some places was up to the floor of the rack. This flood went down eventually and that summer there was an excellent crop of hay on this land.

Our crop that year was pretty small, as quite a bit of our farm was under water that spring. That fall we went up to **Arrow River** to thresh for **Jack Tennant**. This was part of the tractor deal, as Dad had bought the tractor from him. While working there I became friends with **Ivan, Everett and Ida Tennant**, and I renewed my friendship with Ida and Ivan at Arrow River this past summer. That fall we had **Dave Gerrand**, then of Winnipeg, helping. That fall I started hauling grain from the machine to the **elevators**. Of course I missed a few weeks of school which I did not mind, but my teacher took a dim view of it. That fall I was the only pupil from south of the school. A deal was made whereby I would drive myself. I rode horseback until freeze up and then I was asked to pick up the teacher, **Isabel Matheson**, at **Elleringtons**. I did this all winter and it was one of the coldest and stormiest on record. It was during one of these cold spells that my brother, **Keith**, was born. **Mrs. Nick Robinson** and **Dr. Chalmers** officiated.

That fall **Aylwards; Bill and Hilda**, built a small house on top of the hill. We made a toboggan slide on the hill, and that winter we had a lot of fun tobogganing with them.

When I started hauling grain to town, I found it entailed much more than hauling grain. You were expected to bring home barrels of fuel and oil, mail and groceries, as well as perhaps a bit of lumber or repairs from the blacksmith. I think this period of time was somewhat similar to today, as many of the businesses had signs reading "All repairs and merchandise "strictly cash". I guess Dad must have had a better credit rating or they felt sorry for me, as I was only refused once. I had gone to **Sam Birch**, the **Imperial Oil agent**, to get a barrel of kerosene. After he loaded it, he asked where the money was and, of course, no provision had been made for paying for it. So he rolled it off again. I was quite embarrassed, as I was only ten at the time. When I arrived home without the fuel, I wasn't very popular either. That is how at an early age I became acquainted with all the business men in town. I must say I was always well

treated by them all.

At the hardware was **Joe Horner**, whom everyone remembers. **George Cornish** was the lumber man, a kindly man who was hard of hearing, and the grand-father of **Barry**, our present principal. **William Hodnett** had the **dry goods and grocery store**, with his wife and clerk **Bill Watts** as assistants. **Jim Forsyth**, father of **Don**, with **Clare Cornish** and **Roy Currie**, (nick-named Lightning for his quickness), who worked there for a short time. The **Spencer Butcher shop** with sawdust on the floor and several carcasses of beef on the rack. **Percy Watts' garage** and numerous employees. **Tom Conway**, the harness maker, deaf as a post. **Bill Hurlin**, another harnessmaker, and Massey agent, **Bobby Hawthorne**, a short powerful man with a broken nose he was said to have acquired as a fighter. He was one of two blacksmiths and the one I preferred to deal with. The other blacksmith had his shop right beside where **Lorraine Barrett** lives now. His name was **Bob Thompson**. He was a very profane man, who usually started any conversation with "Damn it to hell", repeated twice. In the old **Wiens garage** were two Scotchmen by the name of **Dorward**. They were good machinists but knew little of the mechanics trade. It was from them Dad bought his first car. The grain buyer I always hauled to was **Morgan Johnston**, who was agent for **Maple Leaf Milling Company**. When I hauled to **Arrow River**, it was to **Jack Tennant or Russell Lynch**.

Also at this time there were a lot of young people in the district. **Social evenings** were held in the school, mostly church related. House parties were common on weekends. Our house was very suitable as the two front rooms gave ample space for two sets of square dancers. Music was all gratis and it was surprising how much was available. All the **Lelonds** were musical and **Bill Copeland** was an excellent fiddler. **Jack Desmond** was an efficient floor manager and caller.

The spring of **1923** was late and the snow deep, consequently when it came there was a heavy runoff. The **Arrow River** was in flood for about a week and washed out the approaches to our little bridge, and I missed school for a day or two. While repairing it, I fell into the creek on the upstream side, which was running very high and fast. I was able to swim and, as I came out from under the bridge. **Bill Aylward** grabbed me and was able to hold on until I think it was **Pick** who helped him to pull me out. Perhaps if he hadn't got his hand on me I wouldn't be here writing this down sixty years later. **Bill** moved to **Nova Scotia** in 1934 and he and I corresponded until he passed away in 1979 at the age of 87. Speaking of falling into the river reminds me of a story told by an old friend of mine who, when he had been drinking, used to stretch the truth a bit. He said one time he was walking on the ice of the river, and all at once it broke and he fell in. Someone asked "Weren't you scared?" He said "No". He knew there was open water downstream so he just swam down to it, under the ice. His name was **Hank Cusack**.

Due to the heavy run off, we had a very high flood on the river. Dad had a row boat and I spent some time with him boating on the flood waters. He **was trapping muskrats and beaver**, which were quite plentiful. I was somewhat nervous at times, but we never came close to having an accident.

Again that summer there was a good crop of hay, but the cultivated land was not able to be sown. Every slough and pot hole in the country was full that year and there was water fowl

in great abundance, and mosquitoes. That June, **Charlie** completed his schooling and from then on became unpaid hired help. I was getting along well in school and, that fall, was to see the arrival of the best teacher I ever had. She was about 21, good looking, red headed and musical.

She taught us good citizenship, manners, as well as singing and sportsmanship. We kids loved her and she stayed for two years, at which time I finished Grade 8. Her name was **Georgina Swanton**. That year we had two new families come to our district. The **Gerrand** farms became vacant and the land was rented. **Ralph Carrington** moved into the stone house with his wife and children, **Leonard, Jack and Irene**. They only stayed for three years and then moved to Alberta. Jack called on me in 1981. I hadn't seen him for sixty years. At that time Ralph was still living.

There was another set of buildings up on the section. **William Lelond and his wife, Hazel** and children, **Gordon, Murray, Dorothy, and Ken** moved in. That fall **Winnie Crump, Leonard Carrington** and **Gordon Lelond** came of school age. A school van had to be started again, so I did not have to drive myself any more. As usual, that fall, I was kept out of school for harvest. We threshed for **Carringtons** that year and again I hauled grain to the elevators. One of the hazards of hauling with wagons was having the steel tires working off the rims. It was common practice to carry a stone for the purpose of hammering them back on. I had become quite proficient in driving horses, and as I was now 11 years old, considered myself a veteran. I was very fond of horses and always treated them with respect and consideration.

One of the fringe benefits of hauling grain was having some spending money, which I used to spend on chocolate bars or caramels. One of the disadvantages was being late for meals and having to go wake up **Sam Birch** to get him to load a barrel of oil or kerosene to fuel the tractor. There was no such thing as delivery of fuel in those days.

Life went on as usual that winter, the **social activities** centred around the school and church Sunday school. A **Christmas concert** was taken for granted and I think Glenlochar's concerts were as good as most. Concert night was a highlight of the winter. Santa always arrived with presents for every child.

In the spring of **1924**, **Pick** who had been part of the family for eight years left to go to **Saskatchewan**, where he worked for a cousin that summer. **Charlie** became the hired man and I guess Dad must have also done some land work. I did some harrowing and discing on Saturdays. That spring **Jim Crump**, who had been a good friend of Dad for so many years, moved to **Oakner** with his wife and daughter. Harvest was late in 1924. We worked with **William Lelond** that fall and I missed a lot of school, not getting back until Halloween.

Snow came about then and the remainder of the crop was threshed in the snow. We had a field of **flax** that year, the first time for the farm. **Pick** came home for Christmas, and I think stayed till spring. The next spring he went to work for **Dave Gow**, who lived where **Larry Walker** now farms.

That spring **Fay, Mabel Boyce, Murray Lelond** and **Russell Lelond** were the beginners' class at school. As I wrote my Grade 8 exams that June, **Fay** and I only went to school together for 3 months. Thanks to the efforts of our teacher, **Miss Swanton**, we all passed with very good marks. **Miss Swanton** left that June and went to **Roseisle** to teach, She later married a teacher and they taught in Winnipeg for many years. I had the privilege of meeting her a couple of times in the thirties. As far as I know she is still living.

That fall we just threshed our own crop and we had **George Mellor** as a hired man. We

were through in good time, but again, I was late getting back to school, this time to Miniota. I had to meet the van at **Charlie Goodwin's** which was three miles from home. I then had to ride another six miles in a van, which was not to my liking. Shortly after Christmas I was allowed to quit for good, and I too became unpaid hired help.

In the fall of **1925** the **Currie** family moved back to the farm.

Stills moved to a farm in the **Arrow River** district, and **Carringtons** left the district altogether. **Charlie** trapped muskrats that fall and spent the proceeds to buy a second hand **Westinghouse radio** with two tubes and which you could only hear with head phones. This was the **golden age of radio** and was the best thing to hit the country since the telephone. That fall we lost 6 horses with **swamp fever**. Radios were becoming fairly common and it became quite a contest to see who could bring in the most stations and the most distant stations. This old radio was to serve us for many years. Winter that year failed to appear and we had what you would call a green Christmas. The rest of the winter was mild and we never did have enough snow for sleighs. I joined in doing chores and also learned to use an axe, as there was always wood or posts to be cut. Another chore we engaged in was the sawing of wood, using a tractor for a power source. Crushing grain and hauling hay from the stacks also helped to occupy our time.

That spring we had a wedding in our corner, when **Chris Ellerington and Ena Still** were married. They left the district to reside in the **Blaris** area. Also that **spring Pick and Charlie Ellerington** formed a partnership and took over the farm vacated by **Dave Gow** when he moved to **Beulah**. **Jim Still** had married **Bessie Conrad** a year earlier and had moved to the **Arrow River** community.

The spring of **1926** was early and one of the jobs I helped with that spring was hauling bridge material for the new bridge over the creek, and also some material for fixing the **Mitchell bridge**. The bridge work was done by **George Cole** and **Jack Reid**. **Charles** and I put the crop in that spring and we had it all done in good time. That summer **Grandma and Grandpa Armitage** came from **Toronto**, and stayed for a month. It was their second and final visit to Manitoba. The crop came in early and they were able to see some threshing before they left for home. While harvest started early, it did not stay that way very long. It started to rain and finally about the middle of September it snowed 6 inches. The grain all grew in the **stooks**, and it was late October before we finally finished. The grain all graded rejected on account of sprouts and this was after it had been cleaned. There was quite a bit of **social life** in the district, sleigh riding on the hills and tobogganing as well as house parties. As I was so much younger than most of the young people, I was quite often left out of these activities. We were too far from town to curl or skate, consequently we had to devise our own recreation. By this time everyone had cars which we used extensively in the summer, but very few in winter. The glassed in cars were all the style, and were certainly a big improvement over the old touring cars. Unfortunately we were still using the **Model T touring**. I started driving it when I was twelve years old, and used to be sent to town for repairs etc. I never had a drivers licence

until I was twenty.

About this time Dad became interested in the **shipping of livestock**. I think he just started it on his own., without the backing of any organization. At first he shipped from the **C.N.**, but as you never knew when the car would be picked up, he started shipping **C.P.R.** from **Miniota**. He used to average about a car a week. A bit later he started picking up at **Arrow River** and finally at **Crandall**. It was a mean occupation, especially in the winter when every Tuesday, shipping day, seemed to be the coldest day of the week. His charges were reasonable. I do not think he ever made more than \$10 on a load, and sometimes nothing. He seemed to enjoy it and carried it on until 1945.

That winter was average, and on April 5th **Ivan** was born. He was the baby of the family and Mother was 45 at the time. He was a big, healthy baby and weighed 12 pounds at birth. **Dr. Chalmers** and **Mrs. Conover** officiated, and **Mrs. Conover** stayed until Mother was on her feet again. **Mary** was also at home as she was 20 years old at this time. **Dad, Pick and I** went to **Oakner** that spring to attend the auction sale for **Jim Crump**. We bought quite a bit of stuff, including a John Deere gang plow, a rack and three horses. The plow was an exact model of the one I had in the Arrow River and Crandall parades in 1982. That spring the river flooded again. This was the last flood we had until 1936. **1927** was a wet year especially in the spring. The crops that fall were late and we did not get started to thresh until late September. We worked with **Billy Lelond** that fall, and that year I had my own stock team. I was 15 at the time. We finished up on Halloween night and then went up to **Charlie Andrews** to thresh stacks, and then on to **George Mellor's** for more stack threshing. By this time, there was lots of snow and the weather had turned cold.

Shortly after this **Charlie** became sick and we called **Dr. Chalmers**, who diagnosed it as **appendicitis**. They put a bed in the sleigh box and took him to the hospital in **Miniota**. **Mary Beard**, later Mrs. **Alex McKean**, was the nurse. The doctor had to come from Virden to operate and, as **Dr. Clingan** was away, **Dr. Ross** did the operation. When they operated they found the appendix had ruptured and that his condition was critical. It was a trying time for all of us and it was a week or ten days before he was out of danger. He spent over two months in the hospital and was not able to do any work until spring. The **hospital** at that time was in the house now owned by Mr. and **Mrs. Bill Barrett**.

We were always very good friends with the **Currie family**, and we worked and socialized with them all the time. By this time **Les** had left the farm to work in the hardware in town. **Brod** still worked part time for the telephones, and **Roy** looked after the farm, and in **1928** took on the **Warren farm**. They had bought a **Fordson tractor** and used it on the land. After **Charlie** had his operation, the neighbors were very helpful and helped Pick and me haul a carload of barley to **Rea**, a siding on the C.N. close to **Russell Howard's**. The grain had to be all shovelled into the car. By this time I had become quite proficient in the use of a manure and pitch fork, a scoop shovel, and a grain scoop, and once you acquire these skills you never lose them. I spent quite a bit of time that winter hauling grain to Arrow River, Miniota and Rea. It was a pleasant job on a nice day, as the sleigh would be pulled with very little effort by the horses. I must say I was pleased to see the trucks take over about 1929.

The **late twenties** were fairly prosperous. Crops were good and prices stable. We derived quite a bit of pleasure from sleigh riding on the Currie hill or tobogganing on the big hill west of the Currie buildings. I can recall several people getting hurt or having clothing torn,

from running off the track and into scrub or barbed wire fences.

New cars were becoming fairly plentiful. I remember the **Curries** getting a second hand **Essex** and **Chas. Ellerington** a new **28 Chev. sedan**. We had to wait until 1929 to get a **27 Chev. sedan**. In a hard winter cars were laid up and we depended on the horses to get around. After a long spell of cold or stormy weather, it was not unusual for people to run short of supplies. There were several **key ingredients** you could not do without, Such as coal oil, yeast cakes, flour and tobacco, which, were considered indispensable. Tea was also a must. As I didn't smoke, the shortage of tobacco didn't bother me or Dad, but **Charlie** and the Currie **brothers** were confirmed smokers, and I have seen them resort to sacking tea as a last resort. **Dad** had smoked when younger, a pipe I think. After he gave up smoking, he began chewing tobacco, and always carried a plug with him. In later years he again took to smoking a pipe or cigars. I didn't start smoking until after I was married. I tell **Marjorie** she was the cause of it. I smoked fairly heavy for ten years and stopped and started a few times, finally giving it up for good when I was about sixty, **Charles**, on the other hand, could never kick the habit and remained a smoker until his death in 1978. Today there is no danger of running out of necessities as there are at least three vehicles in town each day.

The **spring of 1928** was average, I remember the creek started running in March. Due to **Chas.** having his operation, he couldn't do any heavy lifting. At that time, the seed grain was all handled in two bushel bags. I therefore inherited the job of driving the seeder. After a shaky start, I got along fine and did all the seeding from that day forward. Dad that spring had got four bushels of **Reward wheat**, a new breed which was a week earlier maturing than **Marquis**. 1928 was a good year and the crops were excellent. That summer we attended **Brandon Fair**. It was a real thrill for a farm boy, as at that time they had a great display of farm machinery of all kinds. What impressed me most was the line up of threshing machines. The first combines were also on display, some of them huge. The first power take-off binders were also on display. The Midway was also spectacular with all kinds of rides, and I was thrilled when riding the ferris wheel to feel the bottom drop out of my stomach. The grandstand show was spectacular also, with high class acts following one another, and there was always a world class, brass band in attendance. I do not suppose this would impress a present day teenager, but it certainly left an impression on me.

I think this time span, from **1925 to 1929** was one of the most prosperous and progressive times that the country had ever known. Cars were everywhere and farmers were buying tractors by the train load. That fall **Curries** bought a Case, and **Elleringtons and Tom Lelond** each bought, a **15-30 McCormick Deering**, said to be the Cadillac of tractors at the time and which I credit with being the forerunner of the present day tractors.

That fall just at the beginning of harvest Dad brought home a boy about my age to help with the harvest. He was from Brandon and his name was **Lyle Webb**. We had a lot of fun together that fall as we just harvested our own crop. That fall **Bill Mossop Sr.** built a new granary on the land on top of the hill, which we had started working the year before. After fall work, we had to haul the grain to the elevator. We changed work with **Curries**, thus making it more interesting. We hauled some to **Arrow River** and had **Hazen Chalmers** haul two loads

from the machine with **Cecil Wythe's** one ton '27 Chev. truck. I believe this was the first grain to be delivered to Arrow River by truck. Just before Christmas in 1928 **Pick** and I took the train from **Viriden** to spend Christmas with his mother in Iowa. We arrived just a day before and had a green Christmas as the weather was beautiful. We spent an enjoyable six weeks with **Grandma and my aunts** and arrived home about the middle of February. We then had to get used to working again and our first job was hauling wood out of the Arrow River ravine. Wood was always plentiful in our area, but farmers were reluctant to cut the wood on their own land. There was a lot of **C.P.R., school land, Hudson Bay, and University land** around. It was commonly referred to as Section 37 and it was considered fair game to cut wood on it. This went on until wood became a drug on the market. When I was growing up it was an everyday occurrence to fill the wood box and one of the first chores both boys and girls learned to do. Each winter most farmers would get out a pile of green wood and in the spring would saw it up for use the following winter. The banks of the Arrow River ravine were all covered with oak and poplar, and over the years many hundreds of loads of wood were taken out.

That spring we bought a used car from **Percy Watts**. It was a **27 Chev. sedan**. It was in good condition and over the next 8 years gave good service and much pleasure in a very depressed time. In contrast to '28, **1929** was a very dry year, a forerunner of what was to come. Our crop was fair and we managed to increase our Reward wheat to something like 1,400 bushels. That fall my Dad and I bought a team of horses at a sale at Oakner. They were a general purpose team and I became very fond of them. I was greatly saddened when one of them died a few years later. It was in 1929 that the economy started going down hill, but it did not really strike here until 1930.

The winter of 29-30 was about average. We had the usual house parties and as by now we no longer held church at Glenloch we became a part of the **Young People's group** in town. That winter I learned to dance, an activity I had previously shunned. I am not sorry I learned, as over the years I have derived much pleasure from the pastime. I am not sure all my partners can say the same. In **1930** I attended my first New Year's dance, and from then until the present I do not think I have missed more than five or six. I was eighteen when the era known as the **Dirty Thirties** began. I have no regrets of having lived through them, and have an awful lot of respect for the parents of many families who had the responsibility of feeding and clothing their families through this trying period. In 1929 **Chas. Ellerington** bought the **Gerrand farm**. **Billy Lelonds** then moved to the **Craig farm**, recently vacated by the Craig family. **Chris and Ena** and daughter Lillian moved back from Blaris to the Gerrand stone house. From then on, **Chas and I, Brod and Roy Currie and Charlie and Chris Ellerington** worked together at a lot of jobs like wood sawing, building or graveling. 1930 was a pretty good year for the crops, as in this area we had a fair amount of rain. That **summer Roy Currie** and I decided we would go to Swan River to visit **Les**, who had moved there the year before. We left early on a Sunday morning and made it **to** Roblin by noon, crossing through the Shell Valley on a narrow dirt road. From there, we angled north west to Kamsack and from there to Madge Lake, where we spent the night. Next morning we went out to Benito and arrived at Swan River about noon. We stayed until the following Saturday, when we came to Dauphin, Clear Lake and home. It is quite a

contrast to drive that same route today. We enjoyed our trip very much.

That fall the harvest was completed early, no more hauling grain with horses. There were at least five truckers anxious to haul any time. The crops were pretty good, but the price was away down. That fall, **Roy, Pick, Charles and Homer Lelond** went up north to **Mafeking** to cut and cord pulp wood. They had to build a log cabin and presumably stay all winter. They built the cabin, but when they started to cut pulp wood found they couldn't make it pay. They pulled out and came home and were mighty glad to get back to Mother's cooking. In the meantime, I had been going to dances every Friday night accompanied by **Bob Doole**, who was working for **Chris Ellerington**.

1931 came and it was a mild winter, with no snow and the cars ran all winter. **Chris and Ena** had another daughter, **Dorothy**. Spring came early and the summer was dry and hot. The crops were poor and weedy and feed was scarce. That summer **Chas.** and I started breaking up some additional land. That year we broke some 10 acres in the S.E. field using the **Titan** and a 20 inch breaking plow. We would carry on this program for many years. That summer we started playing **soft ball** at the school once or twice a week. This was a pattern that took shape in the thirties, when it became necessary to provide for your own entertainment. Over the years we had run the school van part time as a source of income. Now, the rules were changed, and everyone had a turn and the returns were applied on taxes or telephone arrears. Many **telephones** were disconnected because people could not afford the \$20 per year charges. That fall, **Chas.** decided he would go to Toronto to visit the grandparents and other relatives. That fall also we were to lose our good neighbor, **Nick Robinson**, who died suddenly of a stroke. I attended his funeral along with all our family. It was the first funeral I had ever attended. **Chas.** arrived home in the spring after having spent the winter in Ontario. I had **Vern Lelond** helping me part time and we had got out some 30 loads of wood in his absence.

1932 was a good crop in our immediate area and our crop turned out very well. Unfortunately further west, across the river the crop was almost a total failure. These farmers that year hauled straw for bales to get their stock through the winter. **The social life** of the community went on as usual. We had taken to going to the dances up town, as at that time many travelling orchestras were on the road trying to make a living. There were a great many young people about my age around the district, as it was impossible to obtain work of any kind. Also, closer to home, bridge had become popular and Pick, Chris, Roy and I spent many evenings together playing it. We also had a bridge club, which embraced the entire **Glenlochar district**.

1932 was the year that grain prices bottomed out, with #1 wheat being only worth 30 cents/bushel, and oats and barley as low as 5 to 10 cents/ bushel. '53 was not much better. I have a record of a carload of stock Dad, shipped. Fat steers sold' for 3 1/2 cents/ pound; a bull brought 1 1/4 c & market hogs \$8.00 a head. From this would be deducted 50c to \$1.00 for freight and selling commission. Dad used to go to Winnipeg quite often with stock. He was well known around the stock yards and was on a first name basis with many of the Jewish store keepers on Main Street, where he used to buy work clothes at good prices for the family. That's

all we had. **Les Horner** helped with harvest. It didn't last long, as the crop was just fair. However, we were lucky here, as we never had a complete failure. From 1931 we had seen a lot of farmers coming from southern Manitoba looking for a place where they could feed their livestock.

In **1933** a younger generation was taking over from my age group, whose ranks had been depleted by the departure of many girls to the city. As **Fay** was in this group, I became involved, as she was a fun loving girl, and I was her means of transportation. These friends were the **Chapman girls, Wilma, Irena and Joyce; McPhersons, Doris, Evelyn and Marie; Cunninghams, Betty, Janet, Mary and Ina; Ruth Gibbon; Mavis Hanlin; Edith Lelond; Kitty Goodwin, Alice Andrew,** and probably a few I have failed to mention. **The boys, Fred, Les, and Len; Jack and Francis Walker; Spaldings, Ed and Bill; Spencers, Albert and Lloyd.** were **Horners; Les, Stan, Lloyd and Doug; Barretts, Bill, Wilf and Bud; Bryants** There were many more but this is a partial listing. Of course, every few years a new generation would come along. Many of these left when the war broke out. But over the years many of them have remained good friends. When I started going to dances in 1930 the music would be supplied by **the Evans orchestra** or **the Arrow River Gloom Chasers.**

As **the depression** deepened, many travelling orchestras took to calling at Miniota, as it had one of the better halls. A few years later Beulah and Shamrock had halls. I never did attend a dance at Shamrock. I did attend a lot of dances at Arrow River and Two Creeks, where the music would be supplied by **the Kyle orchestra and George Cole** would be running the floor. The dances, in many instances, at Miniota would be combined with a whist drive, and these were family gatherings, which many of my age group and younger will remember. The music would be supplied by local musicians, who at that time were quite numerous.

Men were expected to pay a small admittance and ladies would bring lunch. **Chas, Fred and Len Bryant, Stan and Lloyd Horner, Wilf and Art Hill; Fred and Dennis Bowles; Jack Cook, Jack Dickie,** and some I have probably left out, were regular contributors in various combinations. **Jack Desmond** was a very good square dance caller, as well as a floor manager. In later years **Harvey Gibbings** assumed this roll. I can remember some of these dances lasting till four in the morning and, other than a break for lunch around midnight, there were no 20 minute breaks out of every hour. In wartime, Arrow River became very popular with dances, where they had a draw for War Savings stamps. When our family were small, family dances had died out and the only family entertainment was sponsored by the 4-H clubs. I recall **Ken and Bill** reluctantly taking part in some square dances.

In the fifties and sixties, we became the middle age group, and we had some very good times attending dances, mostly at Miniota, but occasionally at Nichol's barn, Arrow River, Beulah or Isabella. We would generally have a house party before the dance to get into the proper spirit. The sports days were always social occasions. They were held annually and, over the years, have raised considerable funds. It was a bit of an endurance contest to take part in sports all day and then take in the dance at night. The trend at this time was to take the family camping

for a week at Silver Beach or Clear Lake. We did this a few times, but as the kids got older, they would not be interested in going with the old people any more,

The social life of the seventies was also changed. Social drinking became respectable and the drinking of alcohol came from outside in the car to the inside of the hall. I think the first cabarets I attended were in the waiting room of the new rink. At the time, the bathroom facilities at the hall were pretty primitive, so a licence for a cabaret would not be granted. This was remedied when a new kitchen was added, including two modern washrooms. The orchestras changed also. The saxophones and wind instruments fell into disrepute and the age of the highly amplified guitars and organ music became the "in" thing. Orchestras that you could hire for \$100 in the sixties, suddenly raised their prices to \$500.00, and for New Year's the price doubled.

Curling also changed. No longer were felt boots and overshoes and overalls and jumbo sweaters acceptable. The old rink which was a few degrees colder inside than the temperature outside, would no longer be tolerated, even though the ice in the rink was probably better than today, and would last to April. One thing still remains the same. A drink of whiskey to steady the nerves is still considered acceptable, but today the mickey would be stored in an equipment bag instead of outside in a snow bank. In spite of all the refinements, the game is still the thing. I would like to think I had contributed to the modernization of the old curling rink, since I made my first efforts in that direction in 1944.

In the spring of **1933 Chas. Ellerington** built a new home across the road from his Dad's place, and that July 1st married **Florence Brown of Isabella**. Florence had taught at Glenlochar from 1928 until June 30, 1931. That summer we had a baseball team and we used to play against teams from Two Creeks and Miniota. I never played much baseball, but was very fond of softball, or fast ball as it is called today. As the summers in the thirties were warm, we did a lot of swimming in the river. In threshing time we would gather after a day's work and compare our day's work, and tell a few lies around a nice bonfire. It had two things in its favor; it was close by and cheap, two things that were essential in the thirties.

That September **Fay** started to school at Miniota. She boarded at **Arnott Chapman's**, who lived where **Floyd Sheane** now lives. **Keith and Ivan** were both in Glenlochar. Our social life was about as usual. I went to quite a few dances, some of them at **Nichol's barn**, which was a popular place because they always hired good orchestras. I didn't have a steady girlfriend, and I don't think many boys did as it was customary for the men to pay and the ladies were expected to bring lunch. That fall I earned a few dollars by cutting wood for **Vern Andrew** at .50c a load. Vern had moved onto the farm where **Wayne Poppel** now lives. In fact, his Dad owned it. **Vern** became a good friend and in 1954 married **Irene Henderson** of Miniota. They lived on this farm till 1941. They had two children, **Joyce** and **Bob**. who both live in Virden.

That same fall Dad was instrumental in getting **Frank and Nell Turner** settled on the former **Jack Cottingham** farm, now owned by **Ivan**. They were an English couple, not long out from England. A few years later **Nell** left, and sometime later **Frank** remarried. He remained on the farm till he died in 1961.

We had quite a lot of pigs in the winter of **1934**, and also fattened some steers. In February that year we shipped them and Dad went to Winnipeg with them. He came home with a **Philco console radio**. It was a big machine and had a lovely tone, and was capable of bringing in all the American stations. At that time we listened mostly to American stations, with the exception of **Hockey Night in Canada with Foster Hewitt**.

The spring of 34 was early and dry. After the crop came up we had a couple of very heavy frosts which blackened everything. On July 1st a very severe hail storm cut a swath about five miles wide, mostly to the north of us. While we missed most of the hail, our crop was a disaster. It was the worst crop I can remember in my 52 years of farming. Feed was scarce, but fortunately the hailed out area revived enough to make hay. That fall **Brod** and I made a trip to Swan River with **Alex Stewart**, a trucker. He was hauling stock up there to be wintered, and hauling feed grain back. They had a good crop in the Swan Valley. That fall, also we gravelled the **Currie hill**, all proceeds being applied to tax arrears. I guess you could say it was cream cheques that kept people going through these bad years.

A **Creamery** had been opened in Miniota in 1930 and all through the Thirties and Forties did a roaring business. It employed 4 or 5 people as well as several truck drivers. It was one of the main sources of income for farmers who, at that time, were milking quite a few cows. The cream arrived by both truck and train. The **winter of '34 and '35** was not too severe, and spring came fairly early. In contrast to the year before, the rains came fairly frequently, and by July 1 we had, I think, the nicest standing crop I had ever seen. It started to rain and I think on the first of July it rained about 5 or 6 inches. There was also a bad wind storm, which blew down buildings in the Reeder area and **on Reg Bryant's, Billy Lelond's, Jack Collier's and Joe Bonner's farms**. It seems to me now that it rained nearly every day, but I guess that would be an exaggeration. Anyway, it rained so much that it was impossible to work on the land all through July. And then the **mosquitoes** came. They were so bad that they drove the stock right into the barns. The ground was so wet that in some places green moss grew on it. Our beautiful crop turned a dirty grey color, and a lot of the wheat had to be burned. Again we were fortunate as 1/2 our wheat was **Reward wheat**. It was early enough to be fairly well filled when the rust came. We only got about 20 bushels to the acre from it, but it was good enough for seed and that is what it was all sold for. The oats and barley fared a little better, so at least we had feed. That summer also, the school board decided they would close **Glenlochar school** and transport the kids to Arrow River or Miniota.

Dad and Mr. Ellerington decided to fight the decision. They refused to send the children to school, and when the board prosecuted them, they hired **Clarence Warren** and opened the school on their own. In the meantime, they had an election and defeated one of the trustees and Dad ran against **Ed Sinclair** of Arrow River. The vote was a tie and **Jack Tennant**, the returning officer, voted against Dad. By February the board finally gave in. There was no more talk of closing the school until we ran out of pupils in 1942.

After a big rain just before harvest, **Wes Coles and Mick Lelond**, who were working for us, decided we would go to Winnipeg for the weekend. We caught the C.P.R. at Arrow River and got to Brandon. This was the first time either **Wes or Mick** had been in a city. That evening

we got into a empty box car and arrived in Winnipeg early Sunday morning. That day I went to see some friends and we were to meet that evening. However, they failed to keep the appointment and, as a consequence, had to spend the night out. We finally got together Monday morning and **caught a train** to Portage where we transferred to the C.N.. We arrived home at midnight, riding the coal tender of the passenger from Rivers. We have talked of it since, and had a few good laughs over the adventure. That was my only trip on the freight. That fall I ran the threshing outfit.

Later that year we went to an auction sale near Beulah, where we bought a team of horses. On the way home with them, one took sick and died. Of course it was the best one, a lovely four year old black Percheron mare, which we had paid around \$100 for. We also had a veterinary bill to pay. That is when I first learned the meaning of the saying, "Like paying for a dead horse." That fall **Chas.** took off for Toronto for the winter. The winter came early, and by Christmas there was lots of snow. As the winter advanced it got colder, and the snow deeper. At New Years **Chas. and Florence Ellerington** had a son **Tom**. About the end of January I got a bad case of the flu and **Mick Lelond** came down to help with the chores,

That February was the coldest ever recorded, the temperature averaging -32° Celsius. I was never so pleased to see spring come as that year, although it was the end of April before it did come. We had an awful lot of snow, and the creek that spring flooded all over the place. The river also flooded. The weather warmed up fast, and by the fifth of May we were able to sow the field east of the barn to Reward wheat. That summer was just as hot as the winter had been cold. In mid-July the temperature went up to 112° Fahrenheit, and stayed there for three days. As we had had a very dry summer, it should have dried up the crop completely. That same week I went to Clear Lake with a carload of boys, **Vern Lelond, Les Horner, Wes Lelond, Jim Kirton and Wilf Lelond**. We spent a week there and had a very good time.

When we arrived home the barn field was ready to cut with the binder. We had it all cut, threshed, and the grain in the elevator by the end of July. I think this is a **record** that will stand for a long time, as the wheat we grow now is later maturing. We also had the south east field sown to wheat and as it had all been flooded in the spring. It was a good crop. The other crops that year were all very poor. I had taken over the **Duncan quarter** in 1955 and had summer fallowed it. Due to the spring flood, I was only able to sow 15 acres of flax on it. It was a failure and that was my first venture into farming. We were all through harvest by August 15. There was one bright spot on the horizon. **That year, wheat reached \$1.00 per bushel.**

About the middle of September, **Pick** and I took off for Ontario. After spending about a week in Winnipeg with my cousins, we were able to get passage with car loads of cattle being shipped to Toronto. We spent an enjoyable three days travelling in a **colonist car**, feeding ourselves and sleeping on the hard seats. We spent most of one day in White River, where the stock were off loaded for feed and water. We arrived in Toronto Sunday p.m., and went to **58 Annette Street in west Toronto**, where my grandparents lived; also **Aunt Mae and her husband, John Dron**. We just stayed there a few days. In the interval, we had gone down town and **bought a 1926 Chrysler car for \$40.00**. It was not a bad old car, and we immediately set off for **Badjeros, Ontario**, a small community about 75 miles north west of Toronto. This was the place where **Pick** had been born, and which he had left when he was 14 years old. It was also Mother's home. We had all kinds of relatives there, and they were all very hospitable and

friendly.

We tried to get a job picking apples to replenish our badly depleted finances, but work of any kind was impossible to find. I made many friends while there and corresponded with a nice girl for a while after returning home. We spent a month there and slept in many different homes. **Pick** was right at home and renewed many old acquaintances although he had been away for 25 years. I was introduced as **Kate's son**, as that is the name my mother was known as when growing up 40 years previously. At the end of October we headed back to Toronto, where we would stay for another two or three weeks, awaiting a loan from home.

While in Toronto, we did a bit of sightseeing, took in a performance at **the Royal Winter Fair**, and attended my **grand parents' sixtieth wedding anniversary**. We visited some more of my relations who lived in and around Toronto.

We then left for home, bringing with us a young chap from Minitonas by the name of **Glen Lea**. We spent our first night at London, staying with some relations. Saturday morning we left there and crossed into the U.S. at Windsor. The U.S. authorities were somewhat reluctant to let us in, as we were not overly supplied with money. However, they relented and we spent that night in South Bend. **Our car** was not running too well and was using a quart of oil per 100 miles. If we drove over 25 miles per hour, it set up a vibration that threatened to shake the old car apart. That day we by passed Chicago and spent the night just out of Lacrosse, Wisconsin. There we had a breakdown, which fortunately was right beside a small garage and a large wrecking yard. After losing a half day, we were able to get going again, and spent the night just south, of Minneapolis. The weather was getting cold and when we took off next morning we decided our next stop would be Winnipeg, which it was, but 26 hours later. We laid over for a day and the following day took off for home. We got as far as Carberry, where we burned out a connecting rod. We made an even swap for a 1926 Star, and continued on to Brandon, where Glen left us. We arrived home in time for breakfast, and I must say were glad to have the experience behind us. I have never figured out who got the best on the car swap, as the car we got was no prize. As I look back on the trip now, I am reminded of the Joads in "**The Grapes of Wrath**". We had had a memorable holiday and were quite ready to go back to work.

We found the family all well when we arrived home. **Fay** was still attending school in Miniota but, as **Chapmans** had left Miniota, she was boarding with **Mr. and Mrs. Fred Reeves**, who were very good friends of Mother and Dad. In our absence **Mrs. Nick Robinson** had sold out and retired to town to live. The farm was rented to **Tom Conover** and his wife and two sons, **Wes and Melvin**. **Ed Fisher** who had been a **Barnardo boy**, and who had worked for the **Robinsons** for over thirty years, returned to England. I wasn't long getting back into the social life of the area, as I think I attended a dance at Two Creeks that weekend. In our absence, the **Curries, Elleringtons and Chas.** had gravelled the Glenloch road, and again the money earned was applied to taxes.

Brodie had spent that summer working for his uncle at Hamiota, leaving **Roy** all alone to carry on the farming at home. At Christmas we had very little snow, but we had a heavy fall between Christmas and New Years.

At New Years we had a change of teachers. The new teacher replacing **Alice Peel** was **Marjorie Bardwell** whose parents were living at Isabella. Marjorie had been teaching near McCauley for the previous three years. While I knew her older sister, **Florence**, I had never met

Marjorie. After socializing at bridge parties and sleigh riding on the Currie hill, we developed a liking for each other, and by spring started going out together. That spring I put pressure on Dad for a new seed drill, as the old shoe drill was at least as old as I was. The outcome was a **new 20 run Oliver drill**, purchased from **Peter McPherson**, a good friend of the family and a horse shoe player friend of Dad. They spent many hours at the game in the thirties. The drill cost \$255.00 f.o.b. Miniota, and was the first new implement on the farm since 1928.

37 was dry and warm. In fact, **1937** was the worst year production wise that Western Canada has ever had. Our crop was poor, with the exception of the summer fallow crop. The only thing that saved the situation was the price which I think was about \$1.40 per bushel. That fall we purchased a **six foot Case one way disc**. from **Percy Watts**. We retired the gang plows we had used for so many years. That fall also we had an outbreak of sleeping sickness in our horses. While we did not lose any, it left them impaired. That fall my good **friend Roy Currie, married Mabel Boyce**. I helped him to move the back kitchen off the stone house to a location 1/2 mile west. There they set up housekeeping, and lived until the house burned in 1941.

Marjorie and I had continued going together and I had got to know all her family quite well. On November 1st that year we became engaged. That fall Dad had gone to Ontario to visit his parents. He came home with a **36 Chev. car**, which we needed very badly, as the body on the old 27 was in danger of falling apart. Things were picking up by then and the year of **1937** saw many new cars sold, and on account of the sleeping sickness in horses, many new tractors were sold. That New Years I went up to **Bardwells**. It was a long drive with a team and cutter, and when I arrived there I do not think I was ever so cold in my life. New Years day we went up to Isabella to Marjorie's sister, **Mrs. Austin Warren**, where we spent a very enjoyable day. On the following day we came home and had a good trip, as the weather had moderated.

The winter passed, but in the middle of February we had a very heavy fall of snow. It snowed about 18 inches, but it was very calm and it lay all over in a great, white blanket. Strange to say it never did blow, and stayed that way until it melted in March. That spring, I rented the **Warren farm** from **Manitoba Farm Loans**, a Manitoba government agency that owned a lot of farm land it had acquired by foreclosure. There was 110 acres of cultivated land. I summer fallowed 60 acres of it and 50 acres on **Duncan's 1/4**. In June that year we bought an **18-36 Hart Parr tractor** for \$500.00. It was not a very dependable tractor, and I think it shortened my life by a year or two. It could only be steered from a standing position, and required a strong quick arm to keep it on track. However, it accomplished the work and I ended up with 90 acres of good summer fallow that fall. The remainder of my crop was fair, as the wheat that year was rusted. That fall I rented a **Red River Special 32 inch separator** from **Elleringtons** and threshed the whole district. The crop that year was good if you had sown **Thatcher or Renown wheat**. We had some Renown and **Elleringtons** had **Thatcher**, but unfortunately most were still growing **Reward or Ceres** which rusted and cut the yield by half. We got started threshing in good time and as it was a dry fall we were through by September 15. I threshed for **Billy Lelond, Pick, Bill Walker, Boyces**, some for **Elleringtons**, all of our own crop, **Roy Curries, Conovers, Frank Turner and Charlie Goodwin**. We had **Wes Coles** and his brother **Gordon and Jack Moore**. All excellent men. I think we were paying them \$2.00 a day. While doing fall work that year I had a major breakdown, when a connecting rod broke and pretty near demolished the motor on the Hart Parr.

As we had already set our wedding date, I had to get the house ready for occupancy. We

had decided to live with **Uncle Pick** for a start and, as he had batched there for quite a few years, the house needed a bit of renovating. I was helped in these efforts by **Pick, Roy and Chris. We were married on October 22, 1958 at Marjorie's home. Rev. Bowman** presided and **Chas.** was best man and **Merle** was bridesmaid. It was not a large wedding and the only guests I invited were **Mrs. Currie and Ruby, Mr. and Mrs. Ellerington and Pick.** We left that same day on our honeymoon and after staying over night in Brandon, went to Winnipeg for a week. We visited but didn't stay with **Uncle Doug and Aunt Ethel.** We did some shopping for the house. We bought a new bedroom suite, a used dining room suite of six chairs, a buffet and a round table, all of solid oak. It cost \$25.00. Also bought some floor covering and a Toronto couch. We arrived home a week later. We took this trip in the family car, a 56 Chev. By the time we got home, our furniture had all arrived, and after staying at home for a few days, we moved in and set up housekeeping. I can't forget how strange it seemed when I went into **Forsythe's store** to buy groceries and had to pay for them myself. That fall **Kathleen Staples** had come from **Angusville** to teach school at **Glenlochar.** She stayed there until Christmas, and then went to Miniota. She was replaced by Mrs. **Bill Hall,** the former **Bessie Bonner.**

The **Curries** had tough times in the thirties. In 1958 **Brod** had gone to Swan River to work for his brother **Les.** He continued to work the home quarter himself, while **Roy** worked the west quarter plus the quarter in the flats. That fall **Mrs. Currie, Eva, and Ruby** moved to **Brandon.** Their timing was good, as when war broke out they did a good business. **Brodie** came and stayed with them and worked around Brandon until coming back to Miniota in 1942. We were sorry to see them go, as they had been close neighbors for many years. However, **Roy and Mabel** continued to farm and, in 1941 when their house burned, they took up residence in the stone house. In 1938 they had a daughter, **Glenyce** the first Currie born for many years.

That winter we put in a very lazy time. We had quite a few visitors, one of them was **Mick Lelond,** whose parents lived just a mile away. That spring **Pick** and I curled in the Miniota bonspiel. Also that winter we took part in a big winter carnival that was staged to raise money for a proposed new skating rink. We had entered **Fay** as a queen candidate, and she was the ultimate winner, by quite a wide margin. When spring came that year, we put in the crop with horses. In the meantime, I had repaired the **Hart Parr** and used it for cultivating and harrowing. That was the year that **King George and Queen Elizabeth** visited Canada. We went to Elkhorn to see them. About 2,000 other people did also. We also went to Melville, where we had a better look. As we had no car, I did quite a bit of walking back and forth between the valley and **Pick's.**

That summer we played quite a bit of soft ball and **Glenlochar** took part in several tournaments. That fall we just threshed in the valley with **Conovers, Turners and Goodwins.** My crop turned out very well, but by the time I gave away 1/3 of it, it left me with less than I had anticipated. **Marjorie** enjoyed her stay with **Pick,** and even grew a garden, and did some preserving. That fall she had a visit from her girl friend, **Bertha Hill** and they fed the threshers when they came to thresh. That September I started to dig the basement for my proposed house. I was pretty inexperienced at building, so hired **Bill Mossop Sr.** to do the work. **Wes Coles** helped me dig the cellar. **Chris and Charlie Ellerington and Pick and Chas.** helped run the cement and by December 1st we were able to move in. It was only a two room 16'x24' house, but it was warm and comfortable, and we were able to heat it with the cook stove. I

was pleased to get back close to my work, and **Mother** was pleased to have **Marjorie** for company. A few weeks earlier, war had broken out in Europe, and some of my friends were already in uniform. Marjorie's brother **Bill, Mick Lelond, Wilf Lelond, Bob Doole** and a couple of **Shurvells** were in Brandon. That fall also I had gone to an auction sale, where I bought a **1927 Chev. one ton truck** for \$86.00. I consider this the best investment I ever made in my life. It was in pretty good shape, and had good tires. I found it invaluable that fall while building my house, and I used it till after the war.

In December of **39** Marge's sister, **Merle**, married **Wes Shurvell** of Isabella. **Wes** was buying grain at **Waskada** and, after their marriage, they moved to a farm nearby. This left **Mr. and Mrs. Bardwell** alone on the farm. Their other daughter, **Florence, and her husband, Austin Warren**, lived at Isabella with their two daughters, **Joyce, 5,** and **Lorraine**, just a baby. After a year at Waskada, **Wes and Merle** moved to **Alameda, Saskatchewan**, where their son **Ron** was born in August 41. It was from there that **Wes** joined the Air Force in 1942. **Merle** then came home and spent the winter in Winnipeg where **Wes** was training as wireless air gunner. She returned to Isabella in the spring. **Marjorie and Merle** were always close, and over the years the four of us have remained very good friends. The winter of **39 and 40** was a mild one and that winter we had new neighbors on **the Copeland farm**, as **Cliff Lelond and his wife Helen** had moved there. They were interesting company, and **Cliff** was a born impersonator, who could do all the local characters.

1937 was the last dry year and from then we never suffered from lack of moisture. In the spring of **1940** we bought the S.W. 1/4 of 9, better known as the **Bissett** quarter, and **Chas.** bought the N.E. 1/4 of 9, better known as **Stewart's**. There was a lot of hay land on this half, and that summer we broke up about 50 acres with the **Hart Parr**, which was a good breaking engine. That summer I bought a new **Cockshutt 12 foot cultivator**. That fall we pulled a binder with the truck, as we had to use the tractor on the summer fallow and the other binder we pulled with horses. We threshed the valley again that fall and had **Keith and Cliff Lelond** to help. The crop was pretty good again and things were looking up. That fall **Betty** was born to **Florence and Charlie Ellerington**.

Spring came early in **1941**. Keith joined the Air Force that spring but was not called up until August. At this time we decided we would buy a new tractor. After shopping around, we finally settled on an **Oliver 80**. This tractor gave good service over many years, and its remains are still in evidence at **Ivan's** from that day forward we did not use horses on the land. It was fortunate we bought when we did, as shortly after that all farm machinery, cars, trucks and tractors could only be purchased with a permit. That spring also we had new neighbors on the **Copeland farm**. **Cliff and Helen Lelond** left for **Oxbow, Saskatchewan**, her home town, and the **Frank Gardham** family moved in. **Harry and Ethel** were the only children at home and were both grown up. They became good neighbors, and remained there until **Harry** was married about 1951. **Harry** remained there after his marriage and continued to live there until the mid sixties.

That fall we started to thresh with a small crew, as by this time all the able men were in the services. **Keith** was still home awaiting his call up, and we had **Mel Conover, Frank Turner** who was sick that fall, and **Charlie Goodwin** who at the time was in his sixties, and **George Mellor**. That was the worst threshing of my life, as I ran the outfit, pitched sheaves, and various

other duties. **Ivan**, who was 14 at the time, trucked grain with my old truck. It was late that fall when we finished, and I resolved that there would be different arrangements another year. After fall work, **Chas.** took off for Toronto where he obtained work for the winter. He arrived home at the end of March. A big snow storm arrived at the same time, and he had trouble getting home as we had about 18 inches of new snow blown into huge drifts.

In the fall of **1941** **Fay** was married to **Jim King** of Winnipeg.

Jim had been a pupil of **Florence Ellerington** when she taught school near Winnipeg some years before, and that is how he happened, to come to Miniota. They had been going together for a couple of years and **Jim** by this time was in the army. Also that year **Charles** was taking an interest in the school teacher that followed **Marjorie** at **Glenlochar**. Her name was **Kathleen Staples**. She taught at Miniota until June of 1941 and that fall went to **Miami, Manitoba**, to teach for a year.

During the war there was a great deal of moving around, as wives tried to live near to where their husbands would be serving at the time. In **1941** **Mary**, who had been working in Winnipeg prior to the war, married **George Dodds** of **Brookdale**, who was serving in the Air Force as a mechanic. They moved to **Trenton** where they lived for a year or two. From **1941** till the end of the war we had airplanes overhead night and day, as we were in proximity to **Virden, Rivers, Brandon and Souris airfields**. On several occasions, they scared some of our residents by flying at near ground level. I was quite thrilled in 1945 when some 50 **Lancaster bombers** flew over on their way to air fields in Alberta. Today, in 1983, we are sometimes awakened at night by the sound of American planes from the air base at Minot breaking the sound barrier.

All during the war years it was my job to go to Arrow River nearly every Tuesday morning to mark and load the livestock. Hogs were the main item as at that time there was a great demand for bacon to be shipped to England, and the farmers had given a very positive response. As we were on fast time all year at that time, I would have to be on the road before daylight. Social life went on about as usual, but there was a great lack of young men, as nearly all of them were overseas. About this time consumer goods became scarce and **ration books** for sugar, butter, jams and honey, tires and gasoline were introduced. Also, the selling of gasoline was restricted, so that it could not be sold after 6 p.m., and not at all on Sundays. As farm cars and trucks were termed essential, some extra coupons were made available. Tires had to be obtained by first getting a permit, and unless you drove a school van or some other service deemed essential, your chances of getting any were poor.

1942 was a good growing year, and we had an excellent crop. Unfortunately a lot of the crop lodged, making it more difficult to harvest. That June we took delivery of a new **International No. 22. 8 foot combine**. **Herb Gardiner** the local trucker, hauled it from Brandon on a 2-ton truck with the front wheels barely touching the ground. After getting it home, we spent quite a while setting it up. We had no swather, but did get **Elleringtons** to swath some of the barley. This was **Wisconsin 38 barley** and was just new in Canada. Ours that year on summer fallow ran 75 bushels to the acre, an unheard of yield up to that time. Due to a lack of pupils, **Glenlochar school** closed in June.

The wheat was lodged very badly. These combines were designed to just thresh the heads. Consequently when we had to cut it at ground level, the extra straw made it very slow going. Some of the wheat that year went 50 bushels per acre. When we finished at home we

went up to Isabella and combined 60 acres for **Marjorie's dad**. It was also lodged badly, and as the days were short, it took us a week to do it. Just before harvest that year. Dad and I had gone to Winnipeg to deal off the '36 Chev. It was in poor shape and the tires were worn out. We took **Keith and Alex McPherson** and, I believe **Fay**. **Alex** had stayed at Miniota to finish his schooling and his dad and family were already living in Winnipeg. We finally made a deal and came home with a **'38 one ton International**. It was not a very good truck and was a poor starter in the winter time. At that time it was impossible to buy a new truck or even a good second hand one.

In the spring of **1942 Conovers** moved from the **Robinson** farm to a farm in the Two Creeks area. I rented the farm which just consisted of the S.E. 1/4 of 17 and only had about 65 acres broken. The land was bad with thistles and wild oats, but the buildings were sound but run down. I only sowed a few acres of crop and summer followed the rest. That fall **the west bridge** over the river collapsed, when **Jean McKinnon** was crossing in her car. As a consequence, the **Mitchell bridge** was permanently closed, and we dismantled it in 1946. We found this very inconvenient, as we had land on both sides of the river.

After harvest, which we didn't finish till late October, we had another event to attend. On October 24th, **Charles married Kathleen Staples** of Angusville at her parents home there. It was a quiet wedding with just the immediate family in attendance. It was ten below that morning and some people were still harvesting. While on their honeymoon in Winnipeg **Charles** joined the Air Force and, after a while in Brandon, was posted to Ontario for further training. **Kae** accompanied him.

The winter of **42 - 43** was a long, cold winter and, by spring, the snow was deep. That winter I had **Ivan** at home to help with the chores, as he had finished school the previous June. It was a repeat of other winters, getting out wood, chores and taking stock to market. That same fall **Charles** had brought home a **1928 Chev. car** and presented it to **Ivan**, who made good use of it. We were to depend on it for transportation along with the two old trucks for the next two years.

By this time all grains were on a **quota** basis for delivery. That spring I sublet the west field on **Warrens** to **Roy Currie**, as we had our hands full already. **Ivan** proved to be a very reliable man, who liked the tractor work, and soon learned to operate all the farm machines. That summer I bought the **Robinson** farm from **Wawanesa Insurance** for \$1,500.00 cash. That fall I had **Jim Carnegie** to help with the harvest. The crop was good and we were able to dispose of a lot of it. That fall, **Charles** by this time was back at Rivers, where he was with the service police. He used to get home quite often. **Kae**, in the meantime, had stayed in Ontario, where she had a job. **Fay** was living and working in Winnipeg, as **Jim** was overseas. **Mary** was living in the Maritimes where her husband, **George Dodds** was a mechanic in the Air Force. In **1942** their first son was born at Belleville, Ontario. He was named **Jack**. **Keith** was in **North Africa** with the Air Force. **Pick** had the **Jimmy Walker** family living with him. They didn't work for him but lived there and **Jim** worked out at various jobs. **Roy and Mabel Currie** were then living in the stone house, as their house had burned in 1941. **Roy** and I worked together quite a bit, and I always enjoyed working with him. **Brodie** had by this time taken up residence in Miniota. In the spring of **43** he took over the **B.A. Oil and Massey Harris** from **Bill Barrett** who

had joined the Air Force in the fall of '42.

In the fall of **1943 Roy and Mabel** moved up the hill and bought the quarter **that Vern Andrew** had lived on. The stone house was left empty till it was occupied by the **Bleloch** family in the spring of 1945. The winter of **'43 and '44** was a mild winter with very little snow. **Ivan** and I hauled a lot of wood with my old Chev. truck. That winter also **Dad** bought 3/4 of land down the valley, known as the **Elliott** place. He bought it for taxes, so it didn't cost much. There was no land broken on it. I recall helping **Chas. Bryant** dig a cellar in January that winter. The spring that year was average and the crop was again good. That spring, many farmers were surprised to find that they were forced to file an **Income tax return**. That March I bought a **1938 Dodge car**. It was in real nice shape and I paid \$900.00 for it. Due to the fact that many farmers had sold two crops in 1943, they found themselves in a fairly high tax bracket, and **taxable** for the first time in their lives. I was one of them, as I think it cost me about \$600.00, part of which was compulsory savings, and refundable after the war. Dad was in a higher bracket and, I think, it cost him over \$2,000.00. That fall the Income Tax department sent an **assessor** around and he took thousands of dollars from farmers who didn't realize they were taxable. This started the decline in milking cows and raising hogs, as farmers considered it unfair that they should be taxed for all the over time they were putting in. In the fall of **1944** we had quite a herd of cattle, and had about 25 head that we would normally fatten in the barn. **Ivan** had gone to Ontario after harvest, so I was on my own again. I fenced in an area up the creek that at that time was thickly covered with willows, saskatoon and chokecherry along with a sprinkling of maple, oak and black poplar. I dug in the posts and strung a ten strand page wire fence around it. As there was already a well there, it was ready for use. I put in a granary and fixed it as a self-feeder, and a rack for hay and put 27 head of various sizes of steers and heifers in. I bought a few truck loads of baled hay from **Scarth** which **Jimmy walker** hauled for me. I put a building over the well and a pump and pump jack and an engine to power it. It all worked out very well and, with quite a few improvements, is still operational today. I think the top steers at that time sold for about 12c per pound. That fall **Keith** returned from overseas having completed a tour or duty.

Also, **Wes Shurvell** arrived home after being shot down over France on June 30, 1944. **Keith** went back again in '45 and remained there till the war ended.

Again in **44 and 45** we had a nice winter and the cars were used all that winter. I had become interested in the curling which had been all called off due to the war. **Pick, Marge, Chris** and I formed a rink and we were in business. We had no luck in starting a family of our own so had made an application for **adoption**. In March of **1945** Marge went to Winnipeg and brought home a son. She was accompanied home by **Charles**, who by this time was stationed in Winnipeg. We named the baby **William Herbert** after the two paternal grandparents. He was about three months old. That winter **Dad** also took sick and was hospitalised in Winnipeg for quite a while. In his absence I assumed the shipping duties.

Spring came early but April was a cool, wet month. **The war** was winding down and on May 7 was officially over. This was a time of much happiness and a celebration was held in the hall. Our district had escaped fairly lightly, but **Lyle Lelond** was killed in action just a couple of

weeks before the **Armistice**. That spring the **Blelloch** family had come to live in the stone house and work for **Brod**. While living there, their three sons **Bob, Dave and John** returned from overseas. They also had two daughters, **Sara and Nell**, and another son **Tom**. All that summer the men were returning from overseas. **Keith** was home before **V-J day** and was able to help with the harvest. Marge's brother **Bill** arrived home on V-J day and she and her family were in Winnipeg to meet him. He had been away 5 1/2 years. That fall we bought the **Warren** farm. There was no celebration in Miniota on V-J day, but there was a great feeling of thankfulness as several Miniota boys were **prisoners of the Japanese** after being taken prisoner at **Hong Kong**. One of these was **Don McPherson**, a good friend of our family. A social evening was held later that year when Don and some of his buddies were honored.

That fall we realized we would have to enlarge our house. I had been stock piling some building materials and cement, which were very scarce. The fact that **Marjorie** was pregnant added to the seriousness of the situation. The weather turned wet about September 15. By the time it dried up we had dug a cellar, run the cement and had the roof on. That was one of the longest wet spells I can ever remember, as it lasted a month. **Pick** was helping me that fall as his farm had been sold. He and I did all the building ourselves. Winter came early and it was a long, cold one. We were short of feed, so had to spend a lot of time hauling straw and hay with horses. We shipped the cattle from the feed lot in February, in order to conserve the feed. That winter I spent a lot of time finishing the inside of the addition, and by spring it was ready for occupancy. It consisted of a bedroom, a kitchen and a bathroom with a stairway to the attic. That summer I put in a pressure system, a septic tank and a modern bathroom. On March 12 that year our daughter, **Linda** was born. **Dr. Chalmers** was our doctor and had the **hospital** in his house. When I had to take **Marjorie** to the hospital in the middle of the night, we used the car, but the road was through fields for much of the way. On our way home ten days later, most of the snow had gone, but we still had to go through the fields.

By the spring of **1946** the men were all home from the war and the village took on a new look. **Lindlay Hodnett** had taken over his Dad's business. **Johnson Bros., Clarence and Earl**, had come from North Battleford and bought **Cecil Wythe's garage**. **Bill and Bud Barrett** had bought **Bill Hurlin's** dry goods, shoe store and harness repair shop. **Harold and Don Forsythe** took over from their father, who by this time was in failing health. **Albert and Lloyd Spencer** took on the butcher shop, and **Fred Bryant** the Miniota Cafe and hotel, a business that has changed hands many times. **Ed Spalding** returned to work with his father in the Municipal office, and **Les Horner** to work in the Co-op. **Bill Woods** and **Chuck Watts** came home to work for **Percy Watts**. **Lucyk Brothers** had bought **Hawthorne's** blacksmith shop. **Bill Shewchuk** had built a new building beside **Hodnett's** store and had the International agency, later selling to **Tom Andrushuk**. It was a good outlook for the village, and over the next few years many improvements were made to enhance the quality of life in the community. **Community centre** came into being, and over the years, has been the driving force for further improvements. Of the many businesses that had their beginning in 1946, only the **Co-op, Barrett's** and **Forsyth's** remain. Due to the opening of several new businesses we still have a viable community in 1983.

That spring the river flooded again. It was not a high flood, but it filled up all the sloughs

in the valley. **Chas. Ellerington** hired a bulldozer to dig a ditch from a slough to the river, thus beginning a drainage system that today drains the entire basin.

Chas. received his discharge from the Air Force that spring. He and **Kae** and their small daughter, **Elinor**, 1 year old, moved to the big house on the farm. **Mother and Dad** moved to Miniota, where they purchased the **Jim Warren** house. They went to Ontario that summer while I supervised extensive renovations to the Warren house. It was ready for occupancy when they returned. **Jim Warren** built a small house on the lot next door, where he continued to live until he had to go to a home in Minnedosa.

As there were now four of us, sons who all wanted to farm, we had to come to some kind of a working agreement. We arranged a kind of **gentleman's agreement** to divide the proceeds from farming income equally between the four of us and Dad. We followed this agreement until **Dad died in 1957**. **Chas. and Kae** undertook to renovate the house and started by putting insulbrick siding on the outside. **Pick, Keith** and I applied it that October. That fall **Pick** and I helped **Roy Currie** to build a new house on his farm. By this time I had become quite proficient at carpentering. The crop that year was excellent and that year we were able to buy a **PTO 12 foot swather** from **Nels Lockhart**. This was something we needed since buying the combine. That was also the year the **George Dodds** family moved to **Birtle** with their children **Jack and Margaret**.

The winter of **46-'47** was fairly cold, with a lot of snow. That winter we spent quite a bit of time trying to keep the roads open for cars. We had limited success. We used a home-made, pull type **V plow**, and made the roads through the fields, where necessary. We could make a road as far as **Hanlins** but from there we were beat. That spring **Pick** and I curled in the bonspiel but had to drive with horses. That spring the river was high, but did not flood. We got the crop in but were late finishing seeding. We badly needed another tractor, but due to the priority of returning veterans, none were available. We had just nicely finished seeding, when a big rain came and flooded the river. This was about June 20. It was a high flood and stayed up for two weeks. As it had come up very fast, some horses were isolated in **Gerrand's bend**. **Frank Turner's** sheep were trapped in his yard, surrounded by deep water. We spent all day rescuing these animals. The horses had to swim about 3/4 of a mile to reach dry land, and the sheep were taken in motor boats to higher ground. The summer flood was considered unusual, but it left a desolate scene behind, as it killed all the crops and even the hay. We lost a lot of crop which, that year, were very good with favourable prices. However, we proceeded to ready the land for next year. That year we threshed most of our crop in order to get the straw for feed. In August we were able to buy a **one ton Fargo truck** from **Percy Watts**. I think the price was about \$1,800.00.

That fall I was also in charge of putting a basement under Dad's house in town. When the basement was completed, he had a new, forced air furnace installed. I then put in a septic tank and field, and dug a new well. I installed a pressure system, a softener and a modern bathroom. I also did about the same thing for **Charlie Ellerington**. That fall **Charlie Ellerington** bought a snow machine known as a **bombardier**, a track machine that rode over the snow instead of

through it. He couldn't have got it at a better time, as that year was a very stormy winter, with very deep snow. Spring didn't come till the end of April and again we had a very high flood. May was wet and cool and we didn't get on the land till May 20. We did manage to sow some of the flood land in mid June, but it didn't yield very well. In mid June, **Ivan** was married to **Irene Hooper** of Birtle. After their marriage, they took up residence on the **Robinson farm**, recently vacated by the **Blelloch** family. The **Blelloch** family moved to Birtle where some of them still reside.

When the Blelloch family moved out of the Currie stone house in **1947**, **Brodie** began renovating it, a process that went on until he died. In the late forties, **Ruby Currie** married **Willard potter** and Mrs. **Currie** came from Brandon to live with **Brodie**. They would live in the stone house all summer and rent a house in town in the winter. In **1957** **Brodie** developed a heart condition. He then fixed up living quarters in the back of his shop, where he lived for twenty years. They would move to the stone house in hot weather, as it was fully furnished at all times. I was a good friend of **Mrs. Currie**, and I learned a great deal of early day history from her.

That summer we were introduced to the chemical control of weeds. We bought a sprayer and, with the use of **2-4-D** were able to control most of the broad leaf weeds in our crops. It was particularly effective in the control of yellow mustard, which at that time was probably our worst weed. Today, chemicals are used to control many weeds and, although expensive, are effective.

On **October 1, 1948**, our son **Kenneth** was born. This was to be the youngest member of our family. **Chas. and Kae** had a daughter that same August. Her name was **Elizabeth**, better known as Beth. That fall **Chris and Ena** moved to Miniota. **Wes McKenzie and family** moved to the stone house. Here I must apologize to **Kae and Ann**, as I have omitted **Anne's** birth, which took place in August of 1947. We now had six kids under four years of age on the farm. They grew up as one family more or less, and have many happy memories of their childhood. **Ken** is the only one still on the farm. After **Ken's** birth, **Marjorie** was in poor health for a while, and we spent some time in Winnipeg with **Wes and Merle**. That fall also we had a girl from Badjeros, Ontario, visit us. Her name was **Kathleen Armour**, and was a relation of Mother's. **Marjorie** recovered quickly and, by Christmas, was back to normal. The winter was about normal. That February I was invited to go to Flin Flon with **Clarence Johnson, Harold Forsyth and Chris**, to curl in the bonspiel. This was quite an undertaking at that time. We had to go as far as Cranberry Portage by car. We had to go via Crandall, Pope, Hamiota, Shoal Lake, Birtle and then on 83 to Swan River, where we stopped to visit **Les Currie**. As we could not get rooms there, we went on to Birch River. After spending the night, we went on to The Pas, where we had dinner. The roads were little travelled here with only a track through. We made it to Cranberry Portage in time to catch an ore train hauling ore to the smelter at Flin Flon. We arrived there and were billeted in an old hall along with some other rinks. We didn't do too well curling, but had a good time. We left on March 1st and made it to Dauphin that evening, and home the next day. I arrived home with a bad case of flu, and spent the next few days in bed. **Pick** had stayed with **Marge** and the kids in my absence. That spring we were finally able to buy a new **International WD6 tractor**.

In the spring of **1949**, **Keith** decided he would build a house. The site chosen was not on

our property, so he had to buy a small acreage from **Willard potter**, who had bought the S.W. of 15 a few years previously. As we had no flooding that year, we were able to sow all our land that had been flooded for the two years previously. After seeding, we started to dig the cellar, using the tractor and a **fresno scraper**. We got the basement run and the roof on and shingled before harvest and then had to cease operations while we caught up on other operations. That summer we had some crop sprayed with an airplane, as **Brod** and **Chas. Ellerington** had brought him in to do some work for them. That fall also, Manitoba Hydro started setting poles for the **installation of Hydro** in all rural farms. In late July, the whole district was saddened by the sudden passing of **Dr. Chalmers** after 50 years of service to the community. It is ironic that in 1982 when the well paid doctors are in dispute with the government over fees, that **Dr. Chalmers** who had never refused a call in fifty years, was in poor financial circumstances.

But I have digressed. Our crop that year was good and as we had quite a few acres to take off, we bought another second hand combine. It was an **International 31 R.D.**, about ten years old. We did a bit of custom work for **Roy Currie** and were through in good time. While **Ivan and Chas.** did the fall work, **Keith** and I continued at finishing the house. On October 22, **Keith** married **Muriel Boyd** of Winnipeg. The wedding was in Winnipeg and **Mother and Dad** and **Marge and Kae** attended. I stayed home and with **Sarah Blleloch's** assistance, looked after the kids. One week later I went in with the truck and, on Nov. 2, a very windy day, moved them home. The house was not quite ready, and as I used to work on it, **Muriel** would follow me around with a broom and dustpan.

Meanwhile the houses had been all wired and, on December 10, **Maurice Curry** came and hooked up the Hydro. It was snowing heavily at the time. I think I got a bigger thrill out of that than any-thing that has happened since. We had a big fall of snow at that time and winter set in in earnest. Just at Christmas that year we got word that **Aunt Ethel** had died in **New Zealand**. **She and Uncle Doug** had moved there a few years previously to live with their son **John**. On the last day of the year our good neighbor, **Mr.Kit Ellerington** passed away. We enjoyed that winter, and having the hydro just made it that much more enjoyable. No more stumbling around the barn with a smoky lantern or getting the gas motor going on the pressure system or the washing machine. By this time I was doing quite a bit of curling, and I remember curling at Crandall with **Pick, Chas. Ellerington** and **Keith**.

The spring of **1950** was late here. Early in May we had a big snow storm that knocked out the hydro and telephones. That was one of the few times we have ever been without power, and as it came so soon after we got the power, most people still had their wood stoves. That was the year of the **Winnipeg flood** and we had **Ron Shurvell** here for a while, as they had to leave their home in St. Boniface. We didn't get on the land till about May 20. That spring I traded my 1938 Dodge on a new **1950 Chev. sedan**, and **Chas** bought a **1959 Chev.** That Summer, **Chas** started running the school van to Miniota. **Elinor** and **Bill** started that year and he also picked up **Glenyce Currie, Betty and Tom Ellerington** and **Larry and Cliff Walker**. He was to run a van for many years, but a few years later the route was changed and he ran up the valley. On July 1 that year **Arlene** was born, a first daughter for **Ivan and Irene**.

As we had been depending on the neighbors for straw for bedding, we thought we

would buy a pick up baler and bale straw as well as hay. We purchased a **45 International** and to say we got along well with it would be stretching the truth. The first day we tried it, I think the humidity was 100%, and the bales came out like plugs of chewing tobacco. That night we had one of the biggest rains in memory. The river rose 10 feet over night, forcing us to bring in a cat to plug the drainage ditches. It also put highway 83, north of town, under a foot of water. It washed a ditch at **Archie Gichrist's** farm 100 yards wide, as well as washing out every bridge in the south west corner of the municipality. Our recently baled hay was a total loss. Fortunately there was only a few bales, as one knotter would not tie and replacements were not obtainable, we had a very unsatisfactory season with it. The following year the company put a new knotter on it and we learned you should not bale when it is tough. We used it for ten years. That summer we did a lot of work on **Ivan's** barn, putting a cement floor in the whole barn. Due to the extremely wet season, the crop was just fair and it continued wet through harvest till October 31. That fall **Lillian Ellerington** and **Les Horner** were married and **Chris, Chas. Armitage, Clarence Johnson** and **Harold Forsyth** went to Oshawa and brought home a new car for **Chris**. In August that year **Donald Keith** was born, a first son for **Keith and Muriel**.

The winter of **50-51** was cold and we had a lot of blizzards. That fall, **oil was discovered** around Virden, which created a boom. By spring the snow was deep and the drifts frozen hard. **Ivan and Irene** were in a bad location, as at that time the valley road had no grade. I recall trying to break a road with a tractor and snow plow from the stone house to his place and having to give it up. March 18 was **Chris and Ena's** wedding anniversary and **Chas Ellerington** was councillor at the time, so had the municipal plow open the **Glenlochar** road. We used it that night and the next day a blizzard came and blocked it solid. We had to use the fields from then till spring. That spring **Chas Ellerington** had the **Currie hill** widened and a new grade built from **Keith's** to the stone house. He also built a mile from his place north, thus improving our roads for the first time in many years. After seeding we started renovating **Ivan and Irene's** house. We took down the old kitchen and dug a cellar where it had been. We built a new addition 14'x26' with one large room, a bathroom and a cellar way to the basement. Full plumbing was also installed. We had a very wet fall again and just finished harvest before the snow came. After freeze up I finished up **Ivan's** house and built the cupboards which are still used today.

That fall **Elleringtons** sold the old home farm to **John Wiens**, who moved from a farm at Kemnay with his wife **Jean** and a small daughter, **Patsy**, now Mrs. **Mac Lelond**. **Mrs. Ellerington Sr.** and **Ann** had taken up residence in Miniota. Winter came early that year and there was a lot of snow. About that time I traded my 1950 Chev. for a **'51 model** of the same make, dealing with **Johnson Bros.** in town. Just before New Year's that year **Keith and Muriel** had another son, **James Edward**. Winter was slightly different now than it had been previously. I don't mean the weather, but the chores. As we were now burning coal, we didn't have to get out wood and the bales had eliminated the handling of loose straw and hay. We were keeping quite a few hogs at this time and were running the school van. I was doing quite a bit of curling, taking in bonspiels at Crandall, Two Creeks and Miniota.

In the spring of **1952** we traded the W.D.6 on an **Oliver 88 tractor**. This tractor gave good service and was used for the next ten years. That summer **the Manitoba Telephone System** took over the old telephone system and installed a whole new system, including **dial**

telephones. These were not entirely satisfactory as there were too many subscribers on each line. When you were in town and wanted to call home, you couldn't get through if someone was using the line, whereas with the old system, central could cut in on local calls. It is now improved and at present no more than four are on one line.

We had a real good crop in **1952** and we were able to fill all our granaries. We used **Ivan's** barn for storage and had some 7,000 bushels stored there. We also used the **Warren house.** That fall we built a new granary in the home yard. It is known as the aluminum granary, due to it being aluminum on the outside. That fall we straight combined the wheat on the **Warren farm** and, as far as I know, have never straight combined since. We were going out quite a bit at this time with a lot of people of our own age group. There were **Bill Barretts, Harvey Gibbings, Earl and Clarence Johnson, Les Horners, Roy McCaws, Mindy Goodmansons, Jack Walkers, Wes Robinsons, Bill Mossops, as well as the four Armitages** and some I have forgotten.

Also in January of **1952** there was an outbreak of **foot and mouth disease** in Saskatchewan, and as we had been getting over 30c per pound in the fall of '51, the price we received for a car load in the spring was only 20c. We had lost over \$2,000.00.

In April **Dorothy Ellerington** married **Clarence,** better known as **Coke, Argue** of Oak River. I think everyone who attended their shower at **Chas. and Kae's** will remember the roads being knee deep in mud and having to go by Miniota to get home. **Coke and Dot** settled in Oak River, but **Coke** worked part time for **Chris and Charlie.** In **1953** they moved to **the Gerrand stone house,** recently vacated by **Wes McKenzies.** We have been the best of neighbors ever since. That year the **old elevators** in town were torn down and a new one built. **Tom Long** was the grain buyer and **Bill Rowan** the helper. The following year **Bill** became the buyer. Unfortunately **Bill** was accidentally killed and **Roy McCaw** became the grain buyer. He was accompanied by his wife **Vera and children Doreen and Daryll.** At this time the elevator was owned by the Lake of the Woods Milling Company, the makers of the famous Five Roses Flour. At this time also the kids were getting involved in church and school activities in town. We were fortunate in having **Mother and Dad** living in town, as the kids could always go to **Grandma's,** where they were always assured of a warm welcome.

That fall **Marge** and I went to Winnipeg, and **Merle's** little girl **Sandra** died of Leukemia. She was only six years old. That fall we put a nice bunch of cattle in the feed lot and turned them off before spring. That spring we decided we had to do something to upgrade the valley road, as **Rick** was to start school that fall the school van would have to go up the valley.

We made a deal with our councillor **Jim Morton,** whereby he would rent us the municipal cats, two TD 18's at half price, which worked out to \$10. an hour for both. We started just west of **Ivan's** and worked as far as **Drapers,** a distance of one and a half miles. It was very stoney and we had three or four men on the grade rolling off the stones and when we finished we had a solid row of stones along the south side. I think it took us about eight days. **Jim Walker and Tony Clark** were the operators. **Tony Clark** was accidentally killed in 1957, while building **Assiniboia Downs** in Winnipeg. **Jimmy Walker** died in 1980.

I think we have had very good service from our investment as it has provided us with trouble free, year round service for thirty years. I think it cost us about \$700.00 and was all paid for by **Armitages, Curries and Elleringtons.**

That spring we were waiting on wild oats to germinate and had just got started to work

them up about the 24th of May. The weather then turned wet and we didn't get finished seeding until about June 16. While going to town that evening we stopped the car about where **Tom Ellerington's** house is now, to watch a peculiar cloud formation in the west. I don't think any of us realized that we were watching a very strong **tornado** in the distance. However we headed for home and must have passed through the **Ellerington** ravine just minutes before it hit there. We drove home where we could see the air up the ravine full of debris of all kinds, and our power off. I suspected something drastic had happened, but was unprepared for what I saw as I drove to the top of the **Currie hill**.

The old barn or stable and granary in the stone house yard had vanished and, as I looked over the hill, I could see that the houses were all O.K. but both barns were almost totally destroyed, with the road blocked with splintered and broken lumber. The hydro line was pulled down and a dead cow was across the road from where she should have been, probably picked up by the **tornado**. The amazing part of it was the 500 turkeys in the **Weins'** yard were untouched while the loft was taken off the barn not 100 feet away. The tornado had started out near Saskatchewan and cut a swath not more than a hundred yards wide. As it crossed the valley, it picked up large quantities of water and pulled large trees out by the roots. We spent all the next day helping clean up debris and move grain that had been stored in the wrecked buildings. **Coke and Dot** were very surprised when they looked out at the devastation as they had neither seen nor heard it coming.

Our early crop that year was good but our late sown crop, mostly oats, was badly rusted and turned out poorly. That summer we built the **Bissett** granary. I also went with **John Weins** in search of lumber to rebuild his barn. We located some good poplar lumber at Benito and he got enough for the job at \$40.00 per thousand. That fall **Keith** and I spent quite a bit of time rebuilding the barn that still stands on the now **Danny Argue** farm. That **December Chas. and Kae** had a new baby. It was supposed to have been a boy but turned out to be a girl, **Carol**. By now the older kids were into Cubs or C.G.I.T. or some related organization. We were curling regularly, as our roads were now open year around. That winter I went with **Chris, Bill Barrett and Bill Strachan** to Minot, North Dakota. There was also a rink from Arrow River, **Joe Bonner, Ken Mitchell, Bill Wallace and Jim Carnegie**. As we were all staying in the same motel, we had a very enjoyable week. We were able to reach the prizes with our foursome, something no other rink from here has ever been able to achieve. I was skip.

That spring we again hired the municipal equipment to complete the valley road, from **Curries'** corner to west of **Ivan's**. We picked a new route from **Ivan's** to **Bissett's granary**, which was slightly shorter and easier to build. The spring of '54 was fairly wet and about June 1 we had a big rain over the entire watershed of the Assiniboine. With the memory of the 1947 summer flood still fresh on our minds, we thought it expedient to start **diking** the low spots along the river. We hired **Don Dearle**, an operator from Birtle with a **D 19 Allis Chalmers cat** to do the work. This was a big machine and could push up a mile of dike in a day. We finally ended up diking from south of our place to **Drapers' bridge**, a distance of five miles. The river rose slowly but steadily. We hired two more cats and raised it again, but on June 26 a sudden two foot rise and in 24 hours the entire basin was filled with water.

We had that spring secured four bushels of **Selkirk wheat**, a new rust resistant wheat just released that year. We had sown it near **Warren bend** and luckily the dike protected most

of it and we were able to harvest some 100 bushels. That year the other wheat, mainly **Thatcher and Lee**, were badly rusted and yielded very poorly. We didn't have much crop to take off that fall, but after harvest repaired the breaks in the dike in hopes of a better year next year. We had also made a trip to Regina, **Chas. Ellerington, Brod and I**, where we met with **Mr. L. B. Thompson of P.F.R.A.**. He showed an interest in our project and that fall sent a survey crew to make a full evaluation of the project. There were four men in the crew and we were to become to know them very well over the next few years.

The winter of **54-55** was a good winter and we didn't have a lot of snow. However as every slough was full of water from the year before, we had quite a heavy runoff In March, **Shirley** was born to **Keith and Muriel**. Early in April the river topped the dikes again. This turned out to be a record breaking flood for several reasons. It was one of the highest and remained over the banks for ten weeks. As we had so much hay and pasture land flooded, we were forced to go further from home to find hay for baling. That year we were able to get some around Two Creeks. Our crop what we had was good, and the **Selkirk** wheat turned out to be good wheat and we grew it for the next ten years. By now there were seven kids in the van from here.

That fall **P.R.F.A.** sent in the survey crew again and they also brought in two small cats. One of the operators was **Ralph Nash**, who has lived around Miniota ever since. That fall they put culverts with traps on **Turners, Roy Curries and Ellerington's** drainage ditches and built up grades over each one. As the flood had stayed up for so long that year, we had been unable to prepare any of the land for crop. That year I was rink chairman for **Community Centre** and the board decided to raise money to put a new roof on the curling rink. I think the committee were **Les Horner, Bill Mossop, Roy McCaw, Betty Howard, Myrtle Currie and Oswald Blaich**. That fall we put on a bingo, playing 20 games. We had a real good crowd and cleared over \$600.00, a tidy sum at that time. The following spring we had another one equally successful. In March, 1956 we had an entry of 64 rinks in our bonspiel and we curled seven draws a day for two full weeks. This was on three sheets of ice.

In late **1954** we decided it was a good time to bring our water problem to a conclusion. Water had never been obtainable in the home yard. Over the years we had hauled drinking water from the **Currie** stone house where a spring supplied an unending supply of excellent water. In 1930 we dug a well near where Keith's house now stands, which gave us a good supply of good drinking water, we had a stock well further up the creek where we had a good source of water for livestock. When I built my house I dug a well in the basement and got some water but it was only good in wet years. When **Keith** built his house he got a good well in his basement.

In 1941 I had been instrumental in installing a **new cistern** in the big house, making it part underground and four feet above. The old cistern that had been built when the house was built had never been satisfactory. Chas. used to catch the water from the roof and, in winter, had to haul water to fill it. Dad, over the years, had always dreamed of **pipng in water** from **Copeland's spring**, 1/2 mile distant, and on top of the hill. He had even dug a couple of wells on top of the hill, both dry, and got prices for pipe, etc. The plans were dropped for several reasons, one being the labor involved in digging in pipe and the other the cost of steel pipe.

I selected a site close to where the spring drops over the hill. It didn't look too promising at first, but after we got through a layer of big stones, we got into gravel and obtained a good

supply of water at 12 feet. As there was a rise in the ground between there and the top of the hill the water had to be siphoned. We started out with 3/4 inch pipe and after getting it over the hill, about 1,200 feet, we reduced it to 1/2 inch. I must state here that plastic pipe had just come on the market and without its use ours and thousands of others that have been installed since then would not have been practical. We got it started by priming with a sprayer pump and once it was started it provided its own suction, as the drop was about 500 feet. We just ran it over the top of the ground that fall, and it worked well till the weather turned cold and it froze.

As times were tough for us in **1955** we dug some of it in by hand and on the level we were able to plow a furrow with the breaking plow and get it down a foot or so. That summer **Chas.** spent many hours using a narrow blade shovel and buried much of it to a depth of two feet. In the next 15 years I think it only froze up about three times, and that was because it lacked snow cover. In 1972 we hired **Al Hirst** with his back hoe and buried it below the frost line. We put in a size larger pipe and it has certainly solved our water problem. **Dad** was very pleased to see his vision finally fulfilled and my only wish is that it could have been done when **Mother** was on the farm, as a lack of water was the bane of her life.

We got the original pipe from the Co-op when **Les Horner** was manager. It went by the trade name **Carlton** and had a white stripe on it. I think the 1/2 inch cost us 8c per foot and it was a very good product. The original installation cost some \$600.00, and I think when we had it dug in with new pipe the total cost was under \$2,000.00. Not a very big price to pay for a steady supply of good water.

I still have my well in the basement and, when it runs low I just run the water over from **Ken's** and fill it. In the summer it waters the gardens and lawn at all three homes. It runs 365 days a year and, when it is not used in the winter, it flows into a well in **Ken's** basement, where it gets away into a gravel subsoil.

1955 and 1956 was a real bad winter. That fall I was hired to install a bathroom in the manse at Miniota. I got the field and septic tank in before freeze up and, when winter came, I started working inside. I finished it before Christmas and ready for use when Rev. Mac Watts and his wife Bev came at Christmas. It was -30° most mornings that December and we had several bad storms. That winter we had a hard time keeping the roads open, but I think we were successful most of the time. I remember one memorable occasion when we failed. We had planned a big winter carnival for about the 20th of February. We had a queen contest, costumes and races planned. **Marge, Kae and Muriel** had spent a lot of time making costumes and that evening had the kids all dressed for the occasion. We started for town but the wind had risen and was blowing up quite a blizzard.

We got as far as **Brod's** granary and turned around and went home. I don't know who was the most disappointed, the adults or the kids. Had we proceeded, we would have been all right, as the wind went down shortly after. The carnival went on and **Betty Howard** was crowned queen. Sad to relate her husband, **Russ**, didn't even make it. Of course, winter carnivals are hazardous any time in an open air rink. In late March we had a **Glenlochar Bonspiel**. It was a lovely warm day and we thought spring had come. We were wrong, as spring didn't come till the end of April. That winter the creek had flooded until our little bridge was completely filled with ice. When the snow finally went, the water ran everywhere and the kids missed a day or two of school. Of course the river flooded again. Three years in a row was

discouraging, so we determined we would have to rectify the situation.

In August we met with **L.B. Thompson and Len Shuttleworth**, the minister of agriculture in the Campbell government. They gave us the go ahead to build **six miles of dike**. Just as we were to get started **L.B. Thompson**, who was the head man of P.F.R.A., passed away unexpectedly. We were afraid this might upset our plans, but fortunately it went ahead. **L.B. Thompson** was quite a prominent man. He was a native of Australia, and had been responsible for restoring all blown out farm land in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, in the late thirties, The engineer in charge of our project was **George Forsyth** who was back to look at the dikes in 1980, just prior to his retirement from P.F.R.A.. **Keith Smith**, one of the members of the survey crew, became a good friend and we still hear from them at Christmas. Our son **Bill** worked with him at **Shellmouth** for a couple of years.

In August of 1956 we had started to raise our dikes by hiring a cat and dozer from **Russel Johnston** of Binscarth. When **P.F.R.A.** took over they hired two machines from him, two from **Fouillard of St. Lazare**, HD 14.5 and a D7 and TD 18A from **McMillan of Dauphin**. They worked around the clock, with **Clarence Grant** the day foreman and **Keith** doing the night shift. The survey crew staked and checked levels. The weather co-operated and in about six weeks it was complete except for some finishing which was done the next spring. I think it cost about \$30,000.00, and the grain from the area amounted to that figure very soon. Due to the flooding that started in **1954**, **Ivan** had taken a job with the municipality. He kept this job until the fall of 1957. All during the time they were building the dikes, I was busy getting some of the land back in shape for seeding in 1957. I was successful in getting a couple of hundred acres in shape. The remaining acreage was so water logged, it had to be rebroken in 1957.

In the fall of **1956**, **Marge's mother and dad** celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. As most of their friends were in this area, the celebration was held here at the farm. **Florence** came from Kelowna, **Bill and Shirley, and Wes and Merle** from Winnipeg. All their friends from Crandall and Isabella called to offer congratulations. It was the last time the entire Bardwell family would be together as their son **Bill** was accidentally drowned in Lake Manitoba in the fall of 1957. I think we spent Christmas in Winnipeg in 1956 **with Merle and Wes and family**.

That winter I took a rink to curl in Isabella. I **had Vern and Roy Lelond and Bill Strachan**. We finished curling on Friday afternoon, and had won one of the first events. On arriving back at Miniota I was told that **Dad** had suffered a very severe stroke and had been taken to Hamiota hospital. He died a few hours later. It was February 22, and I had celebrated my 45th birthday the day before. **His funeral** was held a few days later, on a bitterly cold, windy day. **Rev. Mac Watts** took the service and he was buried in the family plot in Miniota cemetery, from the United Church in Miniota. **Pick** had come home for Dad's funeral and was curling in the local bonspiel when he received word that **his mother** in Council Bluffs, Iowa, had taken sick and was not expected to live. She was also my mother's mother, but, due to the recent death of Dad, she didn't feel like going, so **Keith went with Pick**. **Grandma** lived for a week, but **Keith** was unable to stay, and came home before she died. She was 96 years old, and had lived a long and useful life. **Pick** then went back to Ontario where he had worked since 1946. In the spring of **1957** the river again flooded some of the low lying land. We were very happy to

see the water being held back by our dyke.

It is of interest to note that the river did not flood again till 1969, twelve years later. We had a good crop that year and in August, traded our old No. 22 combine on a new 65 John Deere combine. It was a wet fall but we finished up in fair time. That summer we reclaimed all the flood land that had grown up to willows, cattails and grass, plowing it all with a **Moldboard plow**. That fall I did a lot of work at **Tom Ellerington's**, building a house. We did a lot of fall work and had our land back in fair shape. That summer we put up a large amount of couch grass hay on the farm across the river, which is now owned by **Jim McArthur**. **Coke Argue** and **Chris** had helped us and had hauled theirs home at the time. We had also hauled a lot home, but had stacked some 7,000 bales on the river bank, with the intention of hauling it in the winter, when we would load it on sleighs. That December we decided the ice should be thick enough to carry a tractor, so went for a load. Due to a miscalculation, I got onto some thin ice and one back wheel broke through, nearly upsetting the tractor. Fortunately the other three wheels stayed up and no serious damage resulted. But it took most of the next day to get it back to shore. We waited till some more cold weather before trying it again.

Our financial picture for **1957** did not look too good by today's standards. Gasoline by bulk was 25c a gallon; 2-4-D was \$15.75 for five gallons. Baler twine was \$9.00 a bale. We paid **Duncan Mitchell** 90c an hour to stack bales, and paid \$450.00 for a **Massey Harris side delivery rake**, which in 1982 is still in use. Diesel fuel was 21c a gallon.

That fall we purchased a new **John Deere combine**. Pigs that year were bringing about \$50.00 apiece, and we sold \$2,683.00 worth. Cattle income was \$5,703.00, van driving was \$840.00. Wheat No.4 was \$1.09 a bushel. Feed barley was 73 3/4c. a bushel. Feed oats was 50 3/8c. a bushel. There was probably a small final payment the following year. **Pick** had come home for Dad's funeral and stayed the remainder of the winter. After 1946, he had gone to work in Ontario full time, but used to often come out for the winter.

That spring I went to a sale north of Crandall. I had not gone with the intention of buying anything, but when a **Minneapolis U tractor** was going cheap, I bid on it and was successful in buying it. It was in pretty good shape and we used it and retired the old Oliver 80, that had served us for sixteen years. That spring was very dry and it continued cool and dry until the first week in July. We had sown the south east field to oats at the end of Hay and nothing grew on it, till we had a light rain in the first week in July. It then germinated and we had an excellent crop of good quality oats off it. The grain crop was pretty good, due to the fact that we had a good reserve of moisture from 1957. The hay was a complete failure and that year we only baled a few hundred bales. We had a large carry over from the year before and baled a lot of straw so made out O.K. That summer we had used the new tractor to break out some scrub land on the **Duncan and Stewart and school land**, squaring out fields, etc. That fall, as feed grains were cheap, we decided to put more cattle in the feed lot and bought about 35 feeders, which, along with our own, made a total of some 55 head. In 1956 I had bought a **8N Ford tractor**, which we used for chores instead of horses.

In the middle of December, I had taken a load of manure from the barn to the field to spread. The snow was not deep, but I became stuck and got off to push. While exerting myself, I did not feel very well, but thought nothing of it. That evening I felt poorly with what I thought was indigestion. It got better and I had a good night's sleep. The next day was real cold and we went to Virden to do some Christmas shopping. I didn't feel too well, but helped

with the chores on Sunday. On Monday morning we had to take **Ken** to the doctor, so I went along to have a check up. I guess I was not particularly surprised when they hospitalized me, as I had a feeling it might be a **heart attack**. It is an unpleasant experience to find out you have something seriously wrong with you. However, after a few days I was feeling fine and was about to be released to be home for Christmas, when I had a setback. I was quite sick for a few days and on Christmas day, when **Marjorie** and some of the family came to see me, I still couldn't appreciate Christmas. The **doctors** at that time were **Hudson, Hames and McMillan**. It was **Dr. McMillan** suggested that they try thinning my blood, a technique fairly popular at the time. It seemed to work in my case and again I started to improve. About this time they moved another patient in with me. His name was **Tom Peart** and he was from Cardale. He was an elderly man with a cheerful disposition, and was an excellent conversationalist. He was excellent therapy.

In **1958** our income picked up a bit, due to getting our land back in shape after the severe flooding. That year we sold hogs (63) for \$2,668.00, and cattle (42) for \$9,989.00. Wheat was selling for \$1.09 ½ for No. 4. Feed barley was .69 3/4c a bushel.

Our gross income was	\$24,559.00
Our expenses were	\$15,345.00
Net	\$ 9,194.00

Baler twine was \$9.00 a bale, diesel fuel 21.3c a gallon, gasoline 25.4c a gallon. The weather turned very cold around New Years, but the roads remained O.K. I don't think **Marjorie** missed a day coming to see me, many times being brought by neighbors and friends. I was sorry to see **Tom Peart** leave, but he only remained for four or five days. We remained friends from that day forward. I still see his son, **Everest**. My next roommate was a young Ukrainian man from Oakburn. He had been operated on for a perforated ulcer and was terribly ill. This upset me and I asked them to move either him or me to another room. They moved him, but he died in a day or two. I remained there till January 21, when I came home. I was very glad to get home. I suffered from depression for about a month, and had to take tranquillizers and sleeping pills. Apparently this is not unusual when an active person finds himself incapacitated. I had to go to Hamiota every week for a blood check. When the spring came, I picked up but was unable to do anything all that summer.

That spring also **Ken** took sick one Saturday evening, and we had to take him down to the hospital. **Dr. Ed** examined him and was not sure what it was. The tests showed there was infection in his system. He summoned **Dr. Hames and Dr. McMillan** and they operated that night. He found it was **diverticulitis**, a growth on the bowel that was leaking and causing infection. They removed it and the appendix and we were greatly relieved when **Dr. Ed** came out after the operation and told us everything was O.K. It was after midnight when we left the hospital. He was in the hospital for about ten days, and the nurses used to let him go upstairs to watch television.

Keith and Ivan and Chas. carried on the farm work. I was very disappointed to miss most of the harvest, but I did get in a few rounds on the combine. I even started the **old 31RD** and straight combined a slough for **Roy Currie**. The old combine never ran again, and still sits out on the **Stewart quarter**, in company with some other old farm implements, dating back to the thirties. Our crop in **1959** was excellent, and we stored a bunch of wheat up at **John Wiens**.

sure thought he was entitled to win at least one pool. I think that was the year that **Coke** brought **Danny** down for a haircut. **Danny** was sat on a stool in the kitchen and a cloth draped over his shoulders. **Marge** had just picked up the clippers to commence, when **Danny** made a break for the door and up over the hill with **Coke** in hot pursuit. **Danny** didn't get his haircut.

A **new school system** had come into effect. All the present school boards were dissolved and were replaced with a larger school division board. This spelled the end of all the one-roomed country schools, and in our municipality **Arrow River** children were transported to **Miniota**. High school rooms at **Isabella and Beulah** were also closed, and the pupils taken to Miniota.

In the spring of **1960** we had our sprayer overhauled and for the first time we tried chemical control for wild oats. The **Avadex** worked well, but the **Carbyne** was only border line. I had decided before taking sick that we should have a **hay shed** for baled hay. In the spring of 1960 I was able to purchase a quantity of good used lumber from Hamiota and Virden. In June that year we built a shed 32'X56', and the side walls were 16' high, and over the years it has paid for itself many times over. We had a good crop of hay and clover and had it all baled, and the new shed filled by mid July.

After haying in mid July, **Wes, Merle** and boys **Jim, 10,** and **Kelvin, 5,** with **Marjorie** and I left on a trip to Kelowna and Vancouver. Wes took his 1955 Pontiac and we camped our way to the coast and back. We were away for a little over two weeks, and visited **Florence and Austin** at Kelowna, and their two girls at Vancouver. We had a nice trip, as that was my first trip to the mountains. In our absence, **Mother** came and stayed with the kids. While we were away, a big thunder storm came up one night and our dog, by the name of **Toby**, who was terrified of thunder storms, got under the bed they were sleeping in and refused to be removed till the storm was over. When we got home, the crops were turning and before long we were into harvest. It was a good crop, thanks to the reserve moisture from the big fall of snow the year before.

That fall we traded work with **Chris and Coke**. They combined our malting barley, and we did an equal amount of work for them. By this time **Elinor, Bill and Linda** were all in high school. **Bill** and **Ken** had calves in the calf club, and **Shirley** and **Carol** were not yet in school. **Chas.** had a full load of Armitages, as **Rick** and **Arlene** were also in the van. That summer we had quite a surplus of grain from the '58 and '59 crops, and we bartered some of it to **Cleggs** for a manure spreader. We also sold grain on other farmer's permits, a process not exactly legal, but very prevalent at the time. That fall we had a visit from the **Income Tax man**. He spent about eight hours going over our books, and ended up not finding anything out of order.

That fall I helped **John Weins** in town to convert his shop into living quarters, where he moved that fall. **Coke** had bought the **Weins farm**, and that fall he and **Dorothy, Danny, Dianne** and **Olive Ann** moved in. While we were sorry to lose the **Weins** family, it was nice to see the old home back in the family. That fall we purchased new metal roofing for the south side of the barn. That year by December we had sold 80 hogs for \$2,555.00, and 42 cattle for \$7,450.00. Baler twine was \$7.50 per bale; 2-4-D was \$19.50 per pail; diesel fuel 21.5c per gallon and gasoline 25.4c plus a 14c tax. That year we had spent \$3,390.00 to purchase cattle and had a \$1,215.00 fuel bill, had a new manure spreader, a grain auger, a new JD baler and a \$650.00 hay shed.

Our gross income was \$22,231.00

Our expenses 13,355.00
Leaving a net of \$8,876.00

In the winter of 1960-61 I started curling again after an absence of two years. That winter **Massey Ferguson** started a competition only for farmers. Each dealership would hold a bonspiel and then the winners from that zone would meet at a central zone and eventually a provincial and a Dominion final. I think it was **Roy and Chas. Ellerington and Chris** who asked me to skip for them. We won our first game, but were unsuccessful in our second attempt. I used to go with **Brod** to the zone finals, one year to Russell, once to Melita and once to Souris. **Brod** was very disappointed, as his team got to the zone finals twice, but were never able to win it. The spring of 61 was early and dry. On the last day of March, **George Dodds died** at Birtle. He was only in his mid fifties, and he left two children **Jack**, now of Winnipeg, and **Margaret** of the U.S.A., presently at Minot. **George** was buried at Miniota, from the Birtle United Church. **Mary** continued living at Birtle till the children were through school.

That spring we applied the new metal roof to the south side of the barn. We had **Vern Lelond** helping us, as **Vern** was not afraid of height and was quite active. While we were working on the roof, we had a visit from my old friend **Vern Andrew**, then of Virden. He was not feeling well at the time having had heart problems all winter. We were not surprised to hear about a week later that he had passed away. Some of us attended his funeral at Virden. He had been a good friend for quite a few years.

There was no snow then and we didn't get any more moisture that spring. Most of the crop germinated, but about the end of May it turned hot and we had only had about a quarter inch of rain. June remained dry and hot, and July was even hotter and just as dry. In early July I went to Swan River with **Roy Currie**. The Swan Valley was almost as dry as here and all along 83 highway the crops were short and burned. We came home to find that **Ken** had had an accident, upsetting the old **one ton Dodge**, while watering his and Bill's 4-H potatoes. Fortunately, there were no injuries, and the box was the only casualty. As a result of their efforts, they won first prize for their plots, as theirs were the only ones that survived the drought. **Ken** was only twelve years old at the time. At the end of June that year **Catherine was born to Keith and Muriel**. She was to be the youngest and last grandchild for **Mother**, for whom she was named.

Bill and Ken had calves at the McConnell fat stock and 4-H show. **Bill** did very well with his calf and won a prize for showmanship and grooming. The hay crop was light, but we had sowed all the top land the year before to grass and clover, and from this we got a half crop. We also got a fair cut along the dike and some below the bush. We realized by mid-July that we were going to be short of feed, and also if we put crop through the combine and dropped it, we would never be able to pick it up with the baler. I dreamed up the idea of putting an elevating conveyor on the back of the combine and catching it in a wagon pulled behind the combine. I spent a week or two in putting my plan into action. I already had a chute and a belt-driven conveyor, so I worked from that, and about August 1st made our trial on the corner field. It had one drawback, someone had to ride in the straw wagon to spread and keep the straw from piling up. As the box was all closed on top and sides, it was very warm and dusty. Needless to say, there were no volunteers. However, the trial was deemed successful.

Next morning we received word that **Marjorie's father had passed away** in Winnipeg. We took off immediately and had a hot ride to Winnipeg. **Mr. Bardwell** was in his mid

seventies and had been in poor health for several years. He was buried in Winnipeg where they had lived for fifteen years. I was named executor and had to make several trips to Winnipeg that fall to wind up the estate. That summer the river dropped to levels never before seen. I recall being there one evening, and I am sure you could have run all the water through a two foot culvert. The kids practically lived in the river all that summer, and we all used to gather there after a day's harvesting.

We got along fine with our harvest. We had **Wilfred Reeves** and **Jim Russell** alternating in the straw box, which we dumped when it filled. We then forked it into the baler and stacked it. We did all ours and some for **Chris and Coke**. That fall people went to Hamiota and Oak River to bale straw, as that area had a fair crop due to a freak rainstorm in that area. In all, I think we baled nearly 10,000 bales, and didn't have to buy any feed. Just before we had finished harvesting, we were all called out to fight a fire that had been started by a train on the C.N. north of town. As everything was tinder dry, it burned over several hundred acres before being contained 48 hours later. That same week **Mrs. Ellerington Sr.** passed away suddenly, while visiting her daughter **Ruth** at Birtle.

Finally, about the end of August we had a rain and the grain that had been planted in the spring, and never germinated, came up and some fields looked just like spring. While the yields were poor, the quality was good, and the wheat graded No. 1. The late sown crops were no good at all and were turned into summer fallow. Some of the best wheat yielded about 18 bushels per acre, while others would only go five.

Winter came and with it came the usual winter activities. Miniota by this time had a big high school and a good sports programme. **Harvey Kingdon** was principal, and as they now had an auditorium, basketball and volley ball became popular. **Linda** and **Ann**, being tall, made good at basketball and also track and field. **Beth**, being two years younger, had to wait for another couple of years when she also became a good athlete. **Elinor, Bill** and **Ken** never excelled at sports, but **Bill** was an avid hunter and, with **Bob Draper**, spent many hours walking the valley and hills. That year our finances improved mainly due to the carryover from the year before. Steers brought 22c; cows 16 to 17c; wheat \$1.20 for No. 2; barley 85c. Our gross income was \$25,115.00; expenses \$10,875.00, net income \$14,242.00.

We sold 46 cattle for \$10,207.00

5,987 bushels wheat 7,087.00.

2,230 bushels barley 1,893.00

66 hogs 2,411.00

We had purchased a new **Oliver 1800 tractor** for \$5,750.00; and our taxes were \$1,042.00.

That winter we had an improved stock watering system to work with. In **late 1961** we dug a new well at the feed lot. We cemented it and put an automatic waterer in the line, so the stock outside could use it as well as the ones in the lot. This has proved very satisfactory and the original pressure system and fountain are still in use today. Our family were growing up and **Marjorie** joined me in curling. We curled at Arrow River, Crandall and Two Creeks. That spring we went into a rink with **Gib** and **Brod Currie**. **Brodie** and I alternated as skip, and we went to the finals of one of the first events. We were finally beaten by an Arrow River rink

skipped by **Ken Mitchell**. Along the way we beat rinks from Birtle and a powerful rink from the Slough skipped by **Russell Howard**, then at the top of his curling career.

Spring that year offered better prospects, as we had some fairly good rains and the crop got off to a good start. That year the grass hoppers were very bad, and we did a bit of spraying to control them. That spring I went to a sale at Oak Lake, looking for a small tractor to replace the Ford 8N. The tractor went a bit too high, but I bought a good plywood boat, which we could use to go back and forth to our land across the river that **Chas.** had started to break in 1961. I had, prior to this, made a bargain with a friend, in which he said he would buy a motor if I would buy a boat. As I then had the boat, I asked when I could expect the motor. To this day he never came up with it, but we still remain friends. A few weeks later we went to a sale near Elkhorn. There was a larger, newer tractor at this sale and I made a deal with the man who bought the tractor at Oak Lake, and we ended up buying the **Ferguson 35**.

In 1961 the residents of Glenlochar had organized to build a **cairn** to commemorate the memory of the pioneers of the district, and mark the site of the **Glenlochar school**. The date set for the unveiling was July 9, 1962. We had many former residents, teachers and pupils, some coming all the way from Vancouver Island. We had six of the original pupils who had attended the school, when it opened in 1907. **Mrs. Currie**, the most senior Glenlochar resident, cut the ribbon, and **Chas. Boyce** and **Mother** participated. Mrs. Currie was 92 at the time. We held a picnic in **Armitage Park** following the ceremony, thus bringing to a close a memorable occasion.

That summer we also built another hay shed, it had a capacity of about 5,000 bales and was built in the feed lot. I also moved the old hen house and converted it into a small machine shed. I also supervised the construction of a hay shed for **Coke**. Finances must have been fairly good, as that summer we all bought cars. I got a **1961 Chev.**, trading my old faithful 51 Chev. **Chas.** got a **'57 Chev** and traded his 51 Chev, which had well over 100,000 miles on it, as he had driven the van with it for ten years. Keith got a **56 Ford**, I think, and I don't remember what **Ivan** got.

Shortly after this, **Wes, Merle** and the boys came from Winnipeg, and we took off in two cars, planning to go to Flin Flon. We camped a couple of days at Madge Lake, and spent a very cold night at Clear Water Lake, north of The Pas. We made it to Flin Flon the next day and visited with the **Don Marshall** family, who were old friends of **Marge, Wes and Merle**. They had lived at Isabella for many years. We then went out to Beaver Lake, where their daughter **Hannah Hillier** and her husband **George** had a cottage. We spent a couple of days there, and **George** took us fishing on the lake. It is a big lake and, without a guide, you could easily get lost. **Wes** caught some nice pickerel, which he intended to bring home, but somehow forgot. We didn't miss them until we made camp at the Overflow a day later. Saturday we visited with the **Les Curries** at Swan River, where we left **Wes and Merle** to spend their next week in the Duck Mountains. We arrived home that night to find the men had been combining oats and grasshoppers. They had got into the swaths and had done a lot of damage by cutting the tendrils and leaving the oats on the ground. We had some heavy rains shortly after and the grasshoppers developed some kind of a disease that wiped them out.

As **Chas.** had broken about 50 acres over the river in 1961, and had broken another 50 this year, he was anxious to put in a **bridge** to make it more accessible. I was involved in other projects at the time, so he undertook the task himself, with the help of **Ken, Bill, Don** and **Jim**,

who by this time were able to do quite a bit. He obtained a couple of steel beams out of an old C.P.R. coal dock. They weighed about a ton each and were 24 feet long. He supported one end on an old undercarriage from a portable gas engine, and the other on the river bed which he had raised by the dumping of stones. It was built on a gravel bar, where the present low bridge now sits. I am not quite sure how he manoeuvred those beams into place, but somehow he managed it. The river was very low at the time, which no doubt helped. After filling the approaches, using logs and stones, he laid three inch planks and had a successful crossing we were to use until the **new bridge was built in 1976**. It could only be used in periods of low water, as the planks were not fastened in any way and had to be removed every fall. Only once did they get away on us, and we had to use a boat to retrieve them.

That fall while working that breaking over the river, **Chas** had a bad fall which affected his heart and he spent a week in Hamiota hospital and another in bed at home. He made a good recovery, but it possibly had something to do with surgery he had in 1976. The fall of **1962** was quite wet and we had a rain in early August that left water standing in the fields. That fall we purchased a new 12 foot P.T.O. swather from **Brod.** and **Ivan** became the owner of the old one. It was quite a contrast between 1961 when it was so dry, and 1962 when it was so wet. As 1961 was such a poor year for crops, we received P.F.R.A. and also an acreage payment of \$200.00 each, which brought our income up considerably. As prices remained stable all through this period, we didn't feel the impact of the '61 crop failure too severely.

That fall we purchased \$2,300.00 worth of calves. We had sold only about 20 head in 1962, and the average was about 24c for good steers. That winter was about the same as the previous ones. We curled and spent some time watching the girls play basketball, as they had a very good team that year. In a playoff with Russell, they won their first game but lost their next two. That spring Miniota had a track and field meet, in which they won the most points of any school in the division, and quite a few of them went to Winnipeg to compete in the Provincial finals. I guess the crop was average, as our income didn't change much. The "1962 crop was of a lower grade and some of it graded tough, so did not bring as much per bushel. We sold No. 3 tough wheat for \$1.22, and 3 CW barley for 87c and feed oats for 43c per bushel.

I don't remember anything very exciting happening in **1963**. I remember helping, along with **Chris, Coke, Russ Howard** and **Tom Ellerington** combine a big field of oats for **Oswald Blai**ch, after his son **Alfred** had taken sick. That fall also we had bought out **Ivan's** share in the **65 John Deere**. He then bought a **55 J.D., self-propelled**, and we harvested with the two combines. That fall also we celebrated our **25th wedding anniversary**. We were honored by our family by a supper at **Chas. and Kae's** where I think we were presented with an electric mixer. The community held an evening at **Coke and Dorothy's**, who were by now living in the old **Ellerington** home. That fall, also, the **new motel** opened in Miniota. That fall we had a nice bunch of cattle for the feed lot. We had bought \$2,500.00 worth of cattle through the year, and would have between 40 and 50 head to fatten. I was not feeling well that winter, so did not curl.

Just before Christmas we made a deal with **Tom Andrushuk** for a new **one ton International truck**. We didn't get delivery of it till March, and I then had to build a box for it. It was a good truck and a pleasure to drive, after the old Dodge and Fargo we had been driving. We put a drill fill on it and it certainly helped, when filling the drill. That spring **Ivan** had traded

the old Minneapolis U on an **80 John Deere**, which we used for seeding. By this time we had the field across the river all broken, and we had to go around by the highway to get to it, unless the river was very low.

The crops in **1964** were good. We had lots of help coming along now. **Bill**, that year, went to work for P.F.R.A. at Shellmouth and other locations. **Linda** started university at Brandon, and **Elinor** was in her final year at the University of Winnipeg. **Ken** was helping at home, and **Don** and **Jim** were as well. They were all in the calf club, also. As the harvest looked promising, we bought two steel bins, the first of many. At this time we were not using fertilizer. That year we sold 52 cattle, but had no hogs on the farm. Malting barley was .86c a bushel, and No. 2 wheat \$1.30. Our expenses remained much the same, but chemicals and baler twine had risen some. Our net income that year was about the same as the year before. We purchased 25 cattle for fattening in 1965. That fall a vote was held to see if a rink could be built by raising the money by taxation. The vote was defeated. A new rink committee was formed, and in 1965 they made a canvass and got enough money to order a **new Armco steel building** suitable for a rink.

That fall we traded our 1961 tractor on a **1964**. In the spring of **1965 Ivan**, who had been sharing work with us since 1958, went on his own. We then bought a **new 24 run John Deere press drill** with a fertilizer attachment and started using fertilizer. 65 was another pretty good year. The hay crop was good and we got it all under cover in good shape. About the first of August **Chas. and Kae, Marge** and I took off for a trip to Saskatchewan. We went to Yorkton, where we spent a half day looking through the Pioneer Museum. On to Watrous, where we tried swimming in the salt water of Lake Manitou at Watrous. On to Saskatoon, where we visited **Milburn Mckenzie**, who was awaiting a donor kidney, which he received shortly after. We stayed all night and the next morning visited the Pioneer Museum. Our wives were not too interested, so we had to take them on a short shopping tour of the stores to put them in a better mood.

We then went to North Battleford, through a nice, scenic area, crossing the North Saskatchewan River on the way. We found a nice motel between the two Battlefords and spent the night there. We then toured north to Jackfish Lake and called at Prince, the home town of **Clarence and Earl Johnson**. It is a nice area and good camping facilities, are available there. We spent another night at Battleford and next morning did a tour of the historic site of the old R.C.M.P. post. It is situated on high ground, right above where the Battle River runs into the North Saskatchewan. The North Saskatchewan River here is about 1/4 of a mile wide. From there, we went to Biggar and Rosetown to see the big sky country, on to the Gardner Dam just under construction at that time, but nearing completion. We spent the night at Davidson and came to Regina the next morning. We did the R.C.M.P. museum and the Nature museum in Regina. We then went to Fort Qu'Appelle where **Elinor** was working that summer. After a visit with her, we went to see **Clarence and Teenie Johnson** in Indian Head. We arrived home Saturday noon to find the crops ripening fast.

In all our travels we had seen no crops as good as the ones at home. It had been a very enjoyable week. Even our wives finally admitted it. We started harvest shortly after, and as the weather was good, I hired another combine from **John Wiens**. That year we had an excellent crop of barley on **Duncans**. We had fertilized that year and I think it must have run about 80 bushels per acre. About the tenth of September the weather turned wet and we had four or five inches of rain over the next four weeks. We spent most of this time working on the new rink, which had been started that summer. I recall working most of one night running the basement,

as the weather had turned better and everyone wanted to get back to their harvesting. We only had a couple of days left and our hiring of the extra combine was a good investment, as all grain harvested after the rain was low grade and tough. After we finished at home, we combined a big field for **Les Curry**, that had laid in the swath for two months. It was freeze- up before many people finished that year.

That fall **Mrs. Currie**, who had been in failing health for some time, had to be hospitalized in Virden hospital. She was in her 95th year, and on December 24th, 1965, she passed away. She was buried in Crandall cemetery, after a service in the Community centre. The service was conducted by the Church of Jehovah Witnesses, a faith **Mrs. Currie** had followed for many years. She was the oldest living resident of the Miniota district, and had resided here since her marriage to **Luther Currie** in 1898. She had been a close friend of our family, and **Mother** and she had shared many experiences of life when they were both very busy raising large families. She had been widowed in 1908, when her family was very small, and had raised them all on the farm where they remained till 1920.

In **1965** we sold 56 cattle at an average of 22c for steers. We sold 10,430 bushels of wheat at \$1.30 for No. 2, and 86c for malting barley. When winter came, all activities moved to the rink. That winter we had a senior hockey team, but as we had no waiting room yet it was rather inconvenient. In March we had our annual bonspiel. We had a record breaking 78 rinks, but unfortunately the weather turned mild and it was finished with great difficulty. I guess you would rate 1966 as an average year. We had that year to spray quite a few acres for wild oats, using Carbyne. We bought a new 60 foot sprayer, and sprayed several hundred acres. The results were variable but, where the wild oats were thick, disappointing. We had a good hay crop and, by mid August, we were into harvest. We were finished by mid September. On September 15 **Marjorie** and I left by car for a vacation in Ontario. We left **Ken**, who by this time had quit school and was working for **Brodie Currie**, in charge. We went as far as Brandon, where we had a visit with **Linda**, then in her last year at University. We then went to Carberry and had supper with **Roy and Vera McCaw**, who had lived in Miniota for some years. We went to Winnipeg, where we had a visit with **Wes and Merle**, and Marge's mother, more commonly known as **Grandma B**, to distinguish her from my mother, who was **Grandma A**. We left Winnipeg and took a leisurely trip along Highway 1 to Kenora, Dryden and Thunder Bay.

We had a beautiful day's drive along the north shore of Lake Superior, and spent the night at Wawa. While stopped at a lookout, an American woman asked me if any one had ever told me I looked like Lyndon Johnston, then President of the U.S.A. There must have been some resemblance, as in Toronto my cousin also noticed the resemblance. Leaving Wawa, we ran into the hard woods and at that time of year the colors were beautiful. We went through Sault Ste Marie and on to Manitoulin Island where we boarded a ferry that took us to Tobermory on the Bruce peninsula. The ferry crossing took four hours and the wind had risen, so we had a rather rough crossing. My stomach became upset but I was able to make it without being sick. It was nearly midnight when we disembarked, so we spent the night in Tobermory. Next morning we drove south through a rather poor part of Ontario, as the land is gravelly and unproductive. Owen Sound is the only city in this area, and it is situated on Georgian Bay, which is part of Lake Huron.

We followed Georgian Bay through Meaford, which is the center of an apple growing area, and the trees were loaded with apples, which they were just starting to pick. Our

destination was not far from here and, that afternoon we arrived in the area where my **mother and grandmother** were born. We were among Mother's relatives and where **Pick** had lived and worked since 1946. We toured the area pretty thoroughly for about a week. I knew most of our relations from my visit to the area in 1956, exactly thirty years before. We then went to Guelph, where my Uncle **Les** and **Aunt Vera** had a cottage on a mill pond just outside the city. They made us very welcome, and wanted to know if we played bridge. We assured them that we played at it, so every evening we would have a game. They took us to Toronto, where I had two cousins, **Maxine** and **Ross** and their families. We spent the night at **Maxine's** and she took us to see **Ross** and family. We also had a ride on the Toronto Subway, and had a smokey view of the city from the top of Toronto City Hall. We also drove past my grandparents' old home **on 58 Annette Street**, with the sidewalk right up to the steps, due to street widening. Toronto is a huge city now, with twelve lane highways feeding traffic in and out.

We left Toronto and went back to Badjeros, and were entertained that evening by **Bert and Marge Douglas**, who visited us this fall, (1982). Also present were **Ray Aldcorn** and **Doug and Blanche Clayton**, who also visited us this fall. As my cousin **Norman Priddle and his wife Edna** were in the process of retiring from farming and building a new home in the village, they had been unable to have us at their home. They were then able to move in and we were their first guests in their lovely new home. They took us to visit his brother **Harvey and his wife Mary**, both school teachers at Fort Erie, an historic small city on the lake of the same name. They, in turn, took us to Niagara Falls, a must for everyone at least once in their lifetime. I had foolishly promised **Marjorie** when she married me, we would go there on our honeymoon and finally made good on it.

We visited Queenston Heights and visited Brock's Monument, a very impressive structure with stairs inside that will take you right to the top. I was disappointed in the Niagara peninsula, expecting to see most of it under cultivation. To me, it appeared that there was a great deal of wasteland, and the valleys were all productive, and the fruit from the roadstands was the best I had ever eaten. We stopped at Thorold on the Welland Canal, and watched the ships going through the locks, some of them ocean going vessels. This was a very interesting trip. After we got back to Badjeros, we spent a few days renewing acquaintances, and the day after Thanksgiving, we left for home.

We took a different route home, going through Barrie and North Bay and New Liskeard which is practically on the Quebec border. We spent the night at Cochrane, and next day continued on Highway 11, now swinging west. We stopped at a Trans-Canada pipeline pumping station to visit with **Earl and Martha Johnson**, former residents of Miniota. We stayed overnight and had a nice drive to Nipigon, where we got back on 17 and drove that day to Dryden, where we spent the night. Next morning we had a short visit with **Gordon Coles**, a friend and former resident of Two Creeks. We spent the next night in Winnipeg, **visiting Merle, Wes and Grandma B**, who came home with us. We had been away for a month and had a very enjoyable time. I wish now we could do it again, but at our age I am afraid it is out of the question,

After I got home I did quite a bit of land work. **Keith** had been working at the rink, helping **Russ Lelond** get it ready for the official opening. Our income for that year was about the same. Grain and cattle prices had risen some, and that year our steers sold for an average of 27c and No. 2 wheat was \$1.30. Farm inputs had remained stable. Winter that year was as usual. In January of 1967 plans were started for the official opening of the new rink. It was Canada's 100th

birthday, or better known as Centennial year. That winter, several couples went to Minot to curl. **Howards** and **Horners** were one rink. The **Wayne Johnstons** and **Keith and Muriel** made up the second foursome. **Bill and Evelyn Barrett** went also and they joined Evelyn's sister **Audrey** and her husband **George Graham**, who were residents of Minot. Apparently they had a good time but brought home no prizes. They did bring home some cheap tape recorders, which afforded us some entertainment later, when I taped my rendition of "There's a love knot in my lariat". This tape has since disappeared. In the absence of **Bill Barrett**, I was hired to run the store. As this was before Bill had the liquor outlet, it was not too busy. I sold a lot of car licences, and collected hydro and telephone bills and sold general merchandise.

The weekend of February 25th was the date set for the **official opening** of the rink and the new bank. That weekend I was again employed by Bill and it was a very hectic few hours from 4 to 6 that Friday, when all the tickets for the queens were brought in to be tabulated, and the money counted. I was just able to get home and pick up **Marge** in time for the crowning of the queen. It was a memorable weekend, and is all recorded in the supplement to Bridging the Years. About that time while in Brandon, I saw a white **1965 Pontiac**, which I liked. As I knew the former owner, I traded in the 1961 Chev, which I consider the best car I have ever owned.

That March we had a good bonspiel using the new waiting room and nine sheets of ice. That bonspiel, **Marge** and I curled with **Len and Norma Bryant**, with Len and I alternating as skips. We didn't win any prizes, but had a lot of good games and managed to stay in till Friday. It had been a memorable winter.

Spring came early that year. We started to fence the land we had just bought from **Willard Potter**. Early in April, the district was saddened by the sudden passing of my school time companion and friend, **Vern Lelond**. A big snow storm coincided with his death and the funeral had to be postponed for a day or two. We also had trouble getting **Linda** back to Brandon to write her final exams. She graduated from Brandon University that spring with a B.A. degree. On the 24th of May weekend, we went to Medicine Hat to attend the wedding of **Ron Shurvell**. We took **Shirley Lindquist** and **Helen Penelton and Linda**. That same weekend **Bill** left for Thompson and he has lived there ever since. The crops that year were on the light side. On July 31, a monster parade kicked off the biggest day in my memory for Miniota. The thing that impressed me most was the number of former residents who returned for the occasion. There is a good account of it all in the supplement to Bridging the Years. The crop that year was light, so we purchased a double swath attachment for the swather. It laid two twelve foot swaths, side by side, and made it convenient for baling the straw. We only used it for a year or two when the crops were light.

In September we took **Linda** to Miami where she had taken a teaching position in the high school. I think she was a bit nervous, and looked rather forlorn when we left her. She remained in Miami for fifteen years. That fall we had a return visit from **Norman, Edna and Percy Priddle** of Badjeros, Ontario. We had a nice visit and, as the **Priddles** were first cousins of Mothers, they spent some time with her. It was to be their last visit with her. We had a pretty fair year financially. Wheat prices had risen and we received \$1.50 a bushel for No. 2. wheat and a substantial final payment from 1966. We turned off 59 head from the feed lot, at an average of 27c a pound for steers. I consider this era one of the most stable times for farming in my

lifetime. Winter came early that year and we had considerable snow. In late December, **Mother** took sick and, after a short illness, **passed away** on December 27, 1967. I have written a separate story of their life of retirement in Miniota, and it will follow later. **Mother's** death brought to a close sixty two years of dedicated service to her family and community. Just at the same time, **Bill**, who had been at Thompson, was married to **Deanna Metcalf** of Bowsman. We were unable to attend the wedding which took place at Dauphin. They were later divorced.

Dad and Mother retired to Miniota in 1946. The first winter in the new house was uncomfortable as the house was cold, there being no central heating. The following summer, I enlarged the basement, dug a new well, put in a septic tank and field, installed a pressure system and a full bathroom. He had a new forced air furnace installed and from then on the house was always comfortable. They entered into the life of the community and **Dad** became an avid curler, both on the ice and behind the glass. He had, as curling companions, **Jack Stowe, Russell Lynch, Bob Peel** and others whom I have forgotten. He also played pool in **Bill Yarwood's pool room** and barber shop. He also played cards in **Reg Oliver's printing office**, where a game of bridge, canasta or cribbage was often in progress. In 1954 he had been told by his doctor that he had cancer. It was a fairly mild form that could be kept under control by medication, but in his last couple of years he had lost weight and lacked his old drive.

In the fall of **1956**, his brother **Les**, from Ontario, accompanied by his wife **Vera**, made their first trip to western Canada. They found the west very different, having lived their whole lives in Toronto. They spent a few days here and went on to Vancouver to visit their daughter.

1957 was an average winter. **Dad** didn't curl that winter. I think it was the first year he had missed. I was curling at Isabella in a bonspiel when I got word that he had suffered a severe **stroke**, and **Dr. Ed Hudson** had come and taken him to Hamiota hospital. He died a few hours later, never having regained consciousness. He was in his 78th year. He had made plans to curl in the local bonspiel, which was to start shortly after he died. He had lived a long and active life, and for the most part had done it his way.

Mother carried on as usual. Her family were very supportive and there were always the grandchildren to spoil. She took in girls to board mainly for company I think. **Gayle Topps**, later Morton, boarded there for some time. And Larry Stowe went to school while boarding with her. **Mother** had never taken a very active part in community activities, as she was very involved in raising her family. When she moved to Miniota, she joined the W.I. and some United Church Women's groups and she at one time was on the Board of Stewards.

Dad had a car. When he lived on the farm he could generally think of an excuse to go to town. When he moved to town, the process was reversed and he spent quite a bit of time in the summer fishing, hunting or scouting for wild fruit. He would often be accompanied by a boy or two, who liked to get out of town. They would drive to Winnipeg to visit **Fay and Jim King** and family, and up to Birtle to see **Mary and George Dodds** and family. They also kept in touch with their old friends from Two Creeks, mainly the **Fred Reeves** and **Maxfield** families. **Mother** kept open house to all her old **Glenlochar** neighbors, as well as her own family. The grandchildren were always welcome and I think sometimes took advantage of her good nature.

I think it was in 1953 that they went to Ontario for a summer holiday. This was to be their last trip back to their old homes. In 1951 **Dad** had bought a **new Chev. car**. This was the only new car he ever owned. In September 1955, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

The family were all home and many old friends called to honor them on the occasion. In March of **1961**, **George Dodds, Mary's husband died suddenly**. Their children **Jack** and **Margaret** left home shortly after that and **Mary** came and lived with **Mother**. In her later years Mother's eyes bothered her considerably and she went to various eye specialists, who told her that they could not help her. It bothered her that she could no longer knit and read. I think she must have knit a thousand pairs of mitts and socks, as she considered knitting a form of relaxation. The years went by. The grandchildren were all in school and some in university. **Elinor** and **Bill** were already out on their own.

In the summer of **1967** Miniota, with all of Canada, celebrated its **100th birthday**. Mother rode in an open car in the parade, along with some other seniors. A few days before Christmas in 1967, she complained of not feeling well, but she didn't want to go to the doctor. On Christmas Day she was bad enough to give in and go to the hospital, and the next evening when some of the family called to see her, she was feeling well enough to quote some lines from Robbie Burns "Tam O Shanter", in relation to her short night gown. That night about 4 a.m., we got a call saying she had taken a turn for the worse. **Mary** and I went down, but she didn't know we were there. She died that afternoon. The doctor believed the cause to be an internal haemorrhage. **She died December 27** and would have been 86 on January 2nd. She had lived a long and useful life. The people who came from a distance to her funeral, as well as the many floral tributes, attested to the great respect in which she was held.

The winter of **1968** was a repeat of former years. Community activities centered around the rink with the Carnival and bonspiel being two of the main activities. That spring, we purchased a new **Cockshutt 1850 tractor**, trading our 1964 model in to **Percy Watts**, who in turn sold it to **Ivan**. Our 1850 has been a good faithful machine and as of December 82 is still being used every day. We got the crop in but the late sown crop germinated poorly, due to a lack of rain in June.

In early July **Marge** and I accompanied **Bill and Evelyn Barrett** to Flin Flon, Snow Lake and Thompson. We spent a night at Cranberry Portage, where we stayed with **Henry and Betty Reeves**, who ran a Motel there. **Rick Barrett** came from Snow Lake where he was working and went with us to Thompson to see **Bill and his wife Deanne**. It is 200 miles from Cranberry Portage to Thompson, and at that time it was mostly gravel and very rough. We spent the night in Thompson which is a nice clean little city. The next day we retraced our route stopping in to Snow Lake where we left **Rick Barrett**. We stopped at the Overflow, and I recovered my glasses, which I had inadvertently left at the cafe three days previously. We spent that night at Swan River, where we had a visit with the **Harvey Gibbings'** and **Les Curries**. We had an excellent trip and seen a lot of new country. On our way home the next day we called in to Silver Beach and spent a few hours with the **Wayne Johnston** family who at that time were living in Shoal Lake. We arrived home to find everything in order.

That summer we **renovated the barn**. We took off all the old siding on the south side and the two ends and replaced it with plywood. It was a bigger job to build the scaffolding than it was to apply the plywood, as the barn is 36 feet high. While the scaffold was still up, we gave it two coats of paint and put the name **Arrowdale** on the end in one foot letters. We were fortunate in having **Ken, Don** and **Jim** home, as they were a great help and didn't mind the height. When we finished the barn we overhauled the old workshop in the yard, improving its

appearance greatly. We also wired it at the same time and reshingled the roof. Mother had named the farm **Arrowdale** when the barn was built. It was very appropriate I think as the Arrow River creek ran through the yard.

In early August we got started swathing the early grain. About the 10th of August we had a killing frost, which devastated the late crops. Our early crop was O.K. but we had quite an acreage of wheat which, due to poor germination, was late. After the frost it never did mature, and as a result it was hardly worth harvesting. We were unable to get any barley accepted for malting, and at that time quotas were very low. We bought a **Mix Mill** from **Kents of Virden** and they took half the value in barley for which they allowed us 75c a bushel. The Mill was valued at \$1,800.00. In a catalogue I see the same machine in 1982 is \$14,000.00. No wonder so many farmers are going broke. That year we sold 50 cattle for a 25c average, sold feed barley and feed wheat for \$1.00 a bushel, open market. Thanks to the carryover of 1967 grain, we had a fairly successful year and were able to make the maximum Canada Pension contribution, which in **1968** was \$162.00.

In the winter of **1969** I was suffering from a bladder infection that I was doctoring for. I don't think I curled in the bonspiel on account of it, so I looked after **Bill Barrett's store** when he had to curl. If I remember correctly, he had three women on his rink and I can't recall them winning any prizes. That spring in March we went in to visit **Wes and Merle**. On our return, we brought **Grandma B**. We stopped in Brandon where we helped her purchase a bed, a carpet, a chesterfield and a kitchen suite to furnish a suite in the just opened **Park Residence**. She had been living with her daughters for the previous seven years. We moved her in at the end of March, and that very day we had a big blizzard that blocked the roads for several days. **Grandma B** enjoyed her stay there until her death in September 1977.

That spring, I was persuaded against my better judgement to participate in a game of broomball. The ice was very slippery, due to the warm weather, and I slipped and fell, cutting my forehead. It was not a serious wound, and after receiving first aid I retired permanently from the sport. I have never been quite able to figure out why so many people including my wife thought it humorous.

In seeding time I had a recurrence of my bladder infection and, at the end of May, **Dr. Ed Hudson** had me go to Winnipeg for an operation. I was there for about two weeks. **Marjorie** was in and stayed with **Wes and Merle**, and used to come up to see me every day. I had many visits with former Miniota friends living in Winnipeg, and made friends with some of the other patients on the floor. I came home much improved, but was forced to convalesce for a month. I then had a very busy summer preparing for **Linda's wedding** planned for August. That summer I built the patio and the retaining wall and numerous other improvements. I made a good recovery from the operation, and have had no serious trouble since.

We had a good hay crop, but the crop was just fair due to a very dry June. On August 23 **Linda and Bill Schrader** of Plumas were married in the United Church in Miniota. I think it was the hottest day that year, as the temperature was over 100°F. The reception was in the Rink waiting room and it was, I think about 110° in there. The evening was beautiful and we entertained all our guests and friends on the lawn and patio till after midnight. They took up

residence in Miami where they both taught.

The harvest that year was dry and we made good time getting it off. That fall **Marge** had a visit from her friend of Normal days, **Bertha (Hill) Thompson**, and **her husband Art of Cartwright**. After we finished our combining, we finished up **Roy Curries** harvest for him. I think this was the last year that **Roy** farmed, as he was in failing health. I felt "very badly about **Roy** having to give up farming, as he and I had worked together for thirty five years and had many fond memories of things we had accomplished together. **Roy and Mabel** moved to Brandon in the winter of '69 and '70, and have lived there ever since. Our income for **1969** was down somewhat due to the poor crop of 1968. Again the cattle and pigs saved the day, as we had been able to get rid of a lot of cheap grain we would not have been able to dispose of otherwise. We sold 72 cattle at an average 28c for steers, and 43 pigs at an average \$50.00 per pig. Our low grade wheat was only worth \$1.00 a bushel, while No. 2 was \$1.50. At this time we were no longer raising our own pigs, but buying them as feeders or weanlings. That fall we bought 80 pigs and 23 cattle. **Ken**, that fall, went to Whitecourt, north of Edmonton to work for a contractor, building cement weights for the pipe lines. He was home by Christmas.

In the winter of **1970** we had about 50 head of calves in the feedlot. We had decided to fatten the calves rather than pasture them as yearlings. That spring I helped in renovating the hall, when new wallboard was applied to the walls and tiles on the ceiling. In April I bought a new **Ford car**, trading in the 1965 Pontiac. In May I became a member of the Community Centre board. That spring **Ken** rented **Roy's** valley land, but still did all **Brod's** farm work as well as setting up and servicing the Massey Ferguson machinery Brod sold. That year was the year that **Otto Lang**, then Minister of Agriculture, brought in the **Lower Inventories for Tomorrow** program, better known as "Lift". The government paid farmers to reduce their wheat acreage as the carry over at that time was large. We were in it but it didn't make us any money. In June we had good rains so the hay crop was good. In July **Marjorie** and I took a trip to Thompson. We spent a night at Cranberry Portage with **Henry and Betty Reeves**. We then went to Thompson over 391 highway, which was somewhat improved from our previous trip. We spent about three days at Thompson, where we got to know our granddaughter, **Tricia**. We returned home by Dauphin, spending the night there and home the next day.

That July 27 we had a big, one day celebration to commemorate **the 100th birthday of Manitoba**. We had a large parade, and I drove the tractor pulling the Community Centre float. One item of entertainment that was well received was a Swather square dance, featuring four S.P. swathers. In August I was named as person in charge of renovating the United Church basement. This was rather a large undertaking. We stripped it back to the bare walls and worked from there, relocating the furnace and putting in new duct work. It was late October before they were able to use it. **Kae** was chairman of the committee and did a good job of procuring volunteer help and finances. That fall we purchased a new **Massey S.P. Swather**. It was a 15 foot machine, and cost \$2,900.00. **Charles** became very fond of this machine and spent many hours working it.

1970 was not one of our better years, grain prices were depressed and quotas low. We were fortunate in being able to ship two carloads of malting barley, which netted us 85c per bushel. No. 2. wheat was \$1.30 a bushel. We sold 75 pigs at \$48.00 a head and 47 cattle at 31c for steers. Once again our livestock had helped us over a period of grain surplus and low prices.

Early in 1971 **Ken and Terry and Stan Bryant and his wife Bonnie** went to Fort Nelson to again work for Permanent Concrete. **Ken** didn't stay long and was soon home. The reason was soon obvious, as he announced his intention to marry **Rita Sheane**, a girl he had been going with for some time. They were **married** February 27, 1971, at McAuley. **Linda** came from Miami to play the organ, and **Jim** stood up with **Ken**. It was a quiet wedding, with only the immediate families in attendance. They took up residence in **Roy and Mabel Currie's** house where they would live for the next five years. There was a lot of snow that winter, and in April that year we took **Grandma B** and **Mrs. Baldwin**, a friend of hers, to Winnipeg to visit with their daughters. We left them in Winnipeg and went on to Miami. The fields between Winnipeg and Carman were mostly under water due to the heavy runoff. When we came back to Winnipeg we came by Morris, where the Red River was running high, and I believe it flooded that spring. We had a flood here that spring and our land that was not diked was flooded. In May I became Chairman of Community Centre, a position I had not held since 1956.

That June was very wet and the hay crop was excellent. In early July I **hired Dennis Richardson** to help with the haying and harvest. We always hayed with **Coke Argue**. That year we had a heavy crop and were able to sell one thousand bales to **Leonard Bryant**, who had that spring suffered a slight heart attack. After haying, I commenced building a utility shed at the back of my house. I had a problem that caused me no end of trouble. It was in the form of a big lime stone about 10 feet long, 5 feet wide and about two feet thick. First I dug around it and tried to move it with two tractors, but had no success. I then decided to bury it and this is what we did. It took Dennis and I quite a while to accomplish this, but we finally got it low enough that we could put a cement floor over it. That fall I formed it and built a cement walled structure right into the bank.

About the first of August **Marge** and I and **Len and Norma Bryant** took off for a holiday in northern Saskatchewan. We went to Yorkton and north to Greenwater Lake, crossing the headwaters of the Assiniboine along the way. From Greenwater Lake we went north and west to Tisdale and Melfort and Birch Hills. We then swung south west and followed the north Saskatchewan river to Batoche, which was our objective.

We spent an interesting few hours looking over the museum, surrounding points of interest, the lookout over the river and the cemetery with the fieldstone monument that marks the grave of **Gabriel Dumont**. We then went back to Prince Albert and on to the campground at Waskesiu. We spent a couple of days there and enjoyed the stay, as it is a beautiful spot. We then went back to Prince Albert and west on No. 3 highway, through Shellbrook to Shell Lake, the scene of the **Shell Lake Massacre**, when a mentally deranged person shot and killed nine members of the **Peterson family**. I also inquired about an acquaintance of mine by the name of **Frank Gooden** who had a store there. We found that both he and his wife had died. Our next stop was at Jack Fish Lake, where there is a nice regional park, then, North Battleford where we camped in the yard of some of the **Bryant** relations. Next morning we did the old police barracks at Battleford and had lunch at a restaurant where a bunch of very worried farmers were discussing an outbreak of **Bertha Army worms**, which at that time were just new to Western Canada. We spent that night at Manitou Lake at Watrous and made it home next day by supper time. We had a real nice holiday and I had furthered my education regarding the **1885 rebellion**. I have a few slides of the main points of interest and the weather for the week had been perfect.

We then had a good crop coming on, so decided we would buy a new combine. **Floyd Sheane** had taken the **Cockshutt agency**, and as sales had been slow for several years, they were selling their inventory at reduced prices. As a result, we bought a **5542 S.P.** with cab for \$10,000.00 plus our old faithful JD 65 with which we had taken off fourteen crops. That year we had grown our first rape. We have continued growing it ever since. **Dennis Richardson** helped **Ken** to harvest **Brod's** crop. That harvest we had a lot of barley, so bought a bunch of pigs from a man at Harding to use some of it up. That year we were able to sell two carloads of malting barley at 91c per bushel. Wheat No. 2 netted about \$1.48. We had sold 46 cattle with steers at 31c. We had a quite successful year.

That summer, as chairman of Community Centre, I helped in building new rodeo facilities at **Coke Argue's**, terminating the picture shows as they were not paying any more, dismantling the old waiting room and building a new west wall in the curling rink, putting a new cement foundation on the south wall of the rink, new metal also, and lining the ceiling of the rink with styrofoam. This was my last year on the board and my final act in renovating the curling rink. I can't remember too many details of the winter of **1972**, but it was probably much the same as previous years. Miniota had a good hockey team, as we had four or five Decker players on it. That spring Community Centre had acquired the old **CPR station** in Miniota and I was in charge of separating it into different pieces, so we could offer it for sale. We divided it into about four parcels and sold it by public auction, making a fair profit for the corporation.

That winter **Marjorie's** sister, **Merle Shurvell**, was very sick and **Marge** spent as much time as possible with her. I made a couple of trips in also, and on one trip took **Grandma B and Florence**, her other daughter from Kelowna. **Merle** was finally forced to go to the hospital, where she **passed away** early in May. It was a sad funeral as **Merle** was only 55 years old, and she and **Marjorie** had always been close.

We finished sowing in good time under favorable conditions. In June we buried the **waterline** from Copeland's spring below the frost line. After haying, we were invited to drive to the coast with **Len and Norma Bryant** and their **daughter Sheila**, who was 15 years old. We left on a Sunday morning in mid-July. We went the Yellowhead route and spent our first night at Maidstone, where it rained heavily. Our tent trailer however kept us dry. Next day we visited the Game Farm and then went as far as Edson, where we had a nice campground and while there we visited **Sharon Broughton and her husband Brian**. **Sharon** is a niece of **Leonard and Norma**, Next day we stopped at Jasper for a look, also Mt. Robson, which we didn't see and went to Kamloops, where we were able to park for the night in the yard of **Clive and Joyce Gilchrist**. **Joyce** is **Marjorie's** niece, and we were very grateful for their hospitality, as campgrounds were all full in the vicinity. We left next morning for the beautiful drive down the Frazer Canyon. We arrived at Langley, where **Len and Norma's** daughter **Judy** and husband **Clark Stewart**, a Mountie, lived with their son **Derek**.

Next morning **Judy** drove us into Vancouver, where we caught the bus to Victoria, to visit **Mark and Shirley Lindquist** and daughter **Lois**. We rented a car the next day and drove up the

island to see **Cliff and Helen Lelond** and went as far as Port Alberni in search of the big timber. We saw some in McMillan Park. **Mark and Shirley** showed us a good time, but our time was short and after three days we were back in Langley. We spent a couple of pleasant days there and then started to retrace our steps. We stopped at the Hope Slide, where a Manitoba car pulled up beside us. It was **Murray Carnegie** and family from Flin Flon. We came back on No. 3, better known as the Hope-Princeton. It is a scenic route, but a bit hair raising in places, and at one point gets up to about 4,000 feet. It was a hot day and we were glad to get to Kelowna, where we stayed about three days with **Marge's sister Florence and her husband Austin. Lorraine** and family also live there, and **Joyce and Clive** from Kamloops were also there that evening. We had a nice visit and then came to Banff via the Rogers pass and stayed overnight. The next day we took the chair lift up the mountain, where we ran into some Miniota people. We spent that night at Cochrane and came via Kindersley, the Gardner Dam and back on to No. 1 at Moose Jaw. We arrived home about 9:30. We had driven 3,367 miles in fifteen days.

That fall while combining, a bear crossed the road and went right through **Keith's** yard, and headed up the ravine towards **Coke Argue's**. That same afternoon, it went **through Ken and Rita's** yard, where **Lyanna**, who was about two and a half years old, was playing. **Lyanna** said "Look Mommy a horse". I don't think **Rita** remembers exactly what her reaction was, but by the time she caught her breath the bear had taken off. Bears at that time were a rarity, but today are becoming too plentiful.

That fall **Grandma B** had to have an operation for cataracts in Brandon. This coincided with the wedding of **Rick Barrett** at Swan River and **Ginny King** in Winnipeg. We were unable to attend either as **Marge** was in Brandon with her mother. That night, **Leonard Bryant** who had attended the **Rick Barrett** wedding with **Norma and Reg Bryant**, suffered a heart attack and **passed away** before he could receive medical attention. We had that summer accompanied he and **Norma** to the coast and it came as a severe shock to us. We had curled together and socialized together for about ten years. The **first couple of years of the seventies** were fairly stable, but by **1973** prices started edging up. The price of all farm fuels up to this time had remained unchanged for years. Farm prices had been increasing slowly since the second World War, but in **1973**, increased substantially. This was blamed on the world oil cartel increasing the world price of oil. I guess I would have to agree. In **1973** our income doubled, but our expenses also increased, but not as fast as our income.

The yellow school bus was now picking up the kids and transporting them either to Miniota up to Grade 9 or to Birtle for high school. **Charles** was now on pension, and his health was not the best. Our neighbor **Brodie Currie** was also in failing health and had sold his **Massey business** to **Pat Dales**. We then worked out an arrangement whereby we would custom work his land and **Ken** would become a partner with **Keith and I** and cash rent **Charles'** land as well. We then bought another tractor and related equipment and continued this arrangement until my **retirement in 1979**. That June I had a visit from our old neighbors, **Bill and Hilma Aylward**, from Malagash, Nova Scotia. It was thirty years since they moved from Miniota and we were pleased to see them.

The **mid seventies** were good for farming if you were in a position to cash in on it. The N.D.P. government started buying farm land at greatly inflated prices, pushing the price of farm land far beyond what it was worth. In January **1975 Linda** presented us with a grandson, **Christopher Allan**. **Marge** went to Miami to stay with her and remained for a week. I remained at home. I continued curling, taking in just the local spiel and perhaps Isabella. I went to Isabella one year with **Coke, Dorothy and Chas Ellerington**, and while we curled reasonably well, the opposition curled better, and we never won a game. Another time I went **with Stu and Marg Taylor and Lil Horner**, and again we won no honors. But **Coke** came along one day and, as it was my birthday, we had a small party.

In February I bought a new car, trading in my 1970 Ford. That summer **Marge and I** took a trip through the Riding Mountains and crossed the causeway on the narrows of Lake Manitoba, and spent the night at Ashern. Next morning, we drove east to Lake Winnipeg, calling at Arborg, Selkirk, Beausejour and into the Winnipeg River area, where we saw all the power sites. It was a nice change of scenery.

Harvest that year started early. The crop was good again. We had rapeseed that yielded pretty well, but it had cost us quite a bit to produce it, as we had to spray it in June for **fla beetles** and have an airplane spray it in August for Bertha Army worms. In August we were invited to the wedding of **Maurice Currie and Darlene Lazenby**, at the home of the bride's parents at Reston. It was a memorable occasion and one of the times when we were able to fraternize with all the Currie **clan**. In October **Ken and Rita** presented us with our second male grandchild, **Allan Kelly** and the first male Armitage of the fourth generation of our branch of the family. That year we had been able to sell two carloads of barley for 95c, rape for \$3.00, and No. 1 wheat for \$1.52, steers at 47c and flax \$4.25 per bushel.

In January 1974 our friends **Bill and Evelyn Barrett** and **Russ and Betty Howard** flew to Hawaii for a two week holiday. We were invited to accompany them, but declined. In their absence, I kept an eye on **Bill and Evelyn's** house and I don't know who looked after the store. That winter **Marge and I** curled with **Coke and Dot Argue** in the winter schedule. When it came to bonspiel time, we divided our rink and **Marge and I curled with Fred and Eileen Stanford**, and **Coke and Dot with Harold and Barb Friesen**. Our rink went on to win the Citizens' event and **Coke's** rink won an event also. If anyone doesn't believe this, we still have the trophies to prove it. That spring **Marjorie** had developed a tremor in her left arm. That summer, after numerous tests, it was confirmed that it was **Parkinson's**.

That spring we put in about the usual crop. As we were custom farming **Brod's** land, we had quite a bit of crop to sow. We were using a discer as well as the press drill, and were also using some of **Brod's** equipment. This was the year that the cost of farm fuels, fertilizer and chemicals took a big cost increase, doubling from a couple of years previous. We continued to rent the land from **Charles**. This arrangement worked out fine. **Charles** continued living on the farm and spent his time gardening or visiting his family, which by this time were fairly scattered. **He and Kae** took a trip to Florida one year to visit **Aunt Vera**. He would always be available for swathing or mowing, as he still liked to get out on the land. That fall we bought a **new Massey swather**. It was an 18 foot machine, so laid a pretty heavy swath. Our crop was pretty good again. That fall **Don Armitage**, who had graduated as a vet in 1975, married **Sandra Heise**, daughter of **Dave and Margaret Heise** of Isabella. **Don**, at that time, was practising in Shoal Lake,

Prices that year hit new highs. We received \$11.95 per bushel for flax, \$7.00 for rape, \$3.50 initial for wheat, and \$2.10 initial for barley. Steers were 50c and farm fuels went up 10c a gallon from April to October. It would seem now, in retrospect that this was the beginning of the inflation cycle that has got us into the terrible state of the economy today.

That fall I was in charge of removing the stage from the **hall**. There was some opposition to doing this, as over the years it had seen many activities, such as travelling theatrical productions, Chataqua, many travelling orchestras, and of course the local amateur theatre productions. There were the annual Christmas concerts always held there prior to the opening of the high school auditorium. So, it was understandable that there would be concern at the removal of the stage with so many nostalgic memories. However, in recent years, it was seldom used and the extra space has been very useful for suppers and wedding receptions.

In the fall of **1974** we began negotiating with the Council for a **low level bridge** over the Assiniboine at the site of the present one. It was suggested that the road be moved from its old route and moved to its present site. This involved buying some additional property and some other considerations that were in dispute. An agreement was arrived at and that winter **Suddaby Construction of Virden** drove the piles in anticipation of finishing it when the water was low the next summer. The grade across the valley was also built and everything in readiness for the completion of the bridge. I will enlighten you further on this in succeeding pages. That fall I supervised the renovation of **Dorothy and Coke's** living room.

Farming continued to be profitable. We were using a lot of fertilizer and it was paying off. We had a problem with drainage, as when the river was high the drainage ditches could not work. I had been interested in getting a pump large enough to pump the water over the dyke, as each spring we had about 50 acres that was flooded. It seemed like a reasonable idea. We finally found what we were looking for, and that spring invested \$3,500.00 in the pump with 100 feet of 16 inch hose. It was quite successful initially as it would pump 500,000 gallons an hour, with a 90 h.p. tractor. **Ken Mitchell and Brod** bought a share in it, thus spreading the cost. Shortly after seeding, we had a big rain that undid all our work. It also flooded out about 20 acres on our field across the river.

In May of **1975** **Ivan and Irene's** daughter **Arlene** was married to **Joss March**, a pharmacist who now has a drugstore at Rivers. We had plenty of rain that year and the hay crop was good. The grain crops were pretty good, but suffered some from excess moisture. We were busy combining across the river with two combines. It was a hard crop to harvest as, due to the wet summer, we had been unable to spray it. The wild buckwheat was bad in it also. My combine was working well, when all at once the motor seized. We were finally able to get it going but in the meantime we had considered trading it for a bigger machine, and this is what we did. We got a **Massey 750** from **Pat Dales**, trading the Cockshutt 5542 and paying \$19,000.00 cash. We retired **Brod's** combine and have just used one machine ever since. Our crop was fair and that fall we hauled 5,000 bushels of barley to Virden and sold it on the open market for \$2.00 a bushel. Wheat that year was \$3.48 initial, flax was down to \$8.00 a bushel, and baler twine was \$29.00 a bale. The river had remained very high all that summer, so it had been impossible to do any work on the bridge. After we finished harvest, I helped **Ken Mitchell** hauling barley from his land across the river all the way to his farm, via No. 83 highway, a distance of twenty miles. In early December, **Marjorie and I** were asked to stand up with **Wes Shurvell and Norma Bryant**, who were married by **Rev. Bob Kayes** at a quiet wedding in Brandon.

In the winter of **75-76** winter came early, and by Christmas the snow was deep. For some reason I didn't curl that winter, but I took a rink into the bonspiel. **Marjorie** didn't curl, so I had **Beth Oliver** in her place, and I can't remember who else. That was my last year of curling and I have never curled since. That spring I traded my 73 Ford on a **76 Granada**, a smaller car that was supposed to save gasoline. In March we had a lot of snow, and we were having trouble keeping the roads open.

On the last day of March **Marjorie** and I departed for the coast in our new car. It was a beautiful spring day, and the snow was just starting to melt. As we drove west, the snow was deep all the way to Swift Current and I could see the prospects for a flood on the Assiniboine. We stayed overnight with **Beth and Richard Hall** and the next day took the bus for Kelowna, leaving our car in Calgary. We had an uneventful trip, although at times the visibility was poor. There was no snow at Kelowna but the weather was cool but bright. We remained there for a week and **Florence and Austin** then took us to Kamloops, where their **daughter Joyce and husband Clive Gilchrist** and family lived. We spent a couple of days there and **Clive and Joyce**, who had to go to Vancouver on business anyway, took us to the bus station in Vancouver. From there the bus took us right on to the ferry and delivered us to downtown Victoria. We were met **by Shirley and Mark Lindquist**, who took us to their home. **Shirley** had been married to **Marge's brother Bill** and after his death, had married **Mark Lindquist**. They took us around to various places and then my cousin, **Evan Armitage and his wife Francis**, took us to their home near Duncan. We spent a couple of days with them. **Evan** was the son of **Doug and Ethel Armitage**, who I have mentioned previously. He was born and raised in Winnipeg and at one time worked for the Free Press. He passed away not long after our visit. The weather while we were on the Island had been terrible, windy, rainy and cool. The natives described it as unusual for mid-April. While at Kamloops, we had phoned home and been told that the weather had been very warm and the snow all gone. This was on April 14th. But, sad to say, the river had flooded to record heights and had topped our dykes.

We took the plane from Victoria and a couple of hours later, touched down in Calgary, where **Beth** met us with our car. We spent a couple of hours with them and departed for Red Deer, where we spent the night. We had a visit with **Betty and Ken Baskier** and family. **Betty** was the daughter of **Charlie and Florence Ellerington**. **Ken** took us to see some deep oil wells they were drilling in the foothills. We also visited with **Don and Sandra Armitage** at Sundre, a small town right in the foothills and on the banks of the Red Deer river, where **Don** is a partner in a veterinary clinic. We then went to Edmonton, where we visited with **Ann and Dave Kuva**. They had not been living there very long, but as of 1982 are still there. **Dave** has his own computer business and **Ann** is a teacher and the mother of **Elizabeth and John**. We stayed overnight, but was anxious to get home to view the flood at first hand. We stopped at Lloydminster to shop and spent the night at Lanigan. Next day we came to Yorkton and detoured to cross the Shellmouth dam, where we found the water running over the spillway a foot deep. As we came to the top of the hill at Miniota, we could see the whole valley flooded from bank to bank. I was very disappointed to have missed this most spectacular flood and vowed to never leave home again at that time of year. Apparently the day of the biggest rise, you could actually see it rising, and starting to run over 83 Highway and that evening it was running over it over a foot deep. It forced **Ivan** to move some grain to higher ground and the water came right up to his house. When I arrived home ten days later, the river was still high, but **Keith and Ken** had cut a hole in

the east end of the dyke and the water in the flats was dropping as fast as the river. This was considered pretty early in the season for such a high flood. It continued dropping and we had a dry spring, and were able to sow quite a lot of the flooded land. The combination of deep snow and the fast thaw had caused thousands of dollars damage to roads and bridges and the provincial government instituted an assistance program to help the municipalities.

That winter **Charles and Kae** had sold their farm to **Keith, Ken and I** and planned on moving to town. As no suitable houses were available, they decided to buy a ready to move home from a firm at Kola. They bought a package deal, whereby they would look after the cellar, plumbing, wiring and steps. They were able to buy a suitable lot and the house was set on the basement about the first of August. Just prior to the moving of the house, **Charles**, who had been poorly all summer, was forced to go to Winnipeg for a serious operation. It was to repair an **aneurysm** on the large artery that supplies blood to the heart. He came through it O.K., but was unable to have a hand in the final planning of their home. I recruited **Ken, Coke and Danny Argue** and we dug the well and put the crib in in one afternoon. We then put in a pressure system and did the preliminary landscaping, and had it ready for occupancy. About the first of October, **Ken** and family moved to the old family home and **Chas and Kae** moved into their new home, which was a two bedroom home, with a large living room, a dinette, a nice kitchen and a utility room large enough for the freezer, washer and dryer. It had a full cement basement and was heated with an electric furnace. They were very comfortable in their new home. I think **Kae** enjoyed living in town more than **Charles**. Due to the heavy spring flooding, our crop that year was smaller than usual, but as prices were good, we managed to make a small profit.

In November that year **Grandma B** was visiting us when she took sick. We had to take her to the hospital in the middle of the night, as she was quite sick. About the same time a good friend, **Chris Ellerington** took sick and was taken to the hospital in Brandon. **Brodie** was also poorly and we had to make several trips to Hamiota with him in the past year.

Roy was a chronic patient in a Brandon hospital, **Charles Armitage** was recuperating and **Charles Ellerington** was by now on his perhaps tenth pacemaker and my health was questionable. So it was a kind of depressing time in our little corner, where we had had such a close relationship for so many years.

Chris didn't respond to treatment and **died** in December in his 75th year. He had been a true friend and I have fond memories of working with him and the many bridge and cribbage games we had together. **Brodie**, who was living alone, on the doctor's advice moved in with his sister, **Ruby**, who took very good care of him.

After harvest I did some work on my garage, replacing some cement walls that had crumbled. I also was in charge of building a new two car garage for **Coke** and **Danny Argue**. Over the years, I have done a lot of carpentry for **Coke**, dating back to when he lived in the stone house, when I built a clothes cupboard for he and **Dot**. **Grandma B** had a poor winter. She got out for Christmas but was in and out of hospital until spring, when she was able to get back to her suite.

That February, I was approaching my 65th birthday and I thought it should be celebrated in a fitting manner. After some tough negotiating, I appointed **Bill Barrett and Russell Howard** to stage the event to be held at the home of **Russell and Betty Howard**. I was to contribute my first old age pension cheque and they were to handle all the other details. They lived up to their end of the contract and staged a very nice evening. But they have complained ever since of the

money they lost on the deal.

Brodie had been in and out of hospital all winter, and as **Grandma B** had also, I visited with them both quite often. I was surprised when **Dr. Hudson** phoned at 9 a.m., on March 15 to say that **Brod had passed away**. **Ruby** and I had visited him the night before. He asked me to break the news to **Ruby**, which **Kae** and I did. As **Les** was in Texas, I got in touch with him and **Mabel Currie** in Brandon and Brod's cousin, **Maurice**, who lives in Miniota. **Les** asked me to help **Ruby** make the funeral arrangements and he came as soon as he could to Winnipeg, where **Glencyce** and family met him and brought him to Miniota. The service was held in the Chapel in Hamiota, with **Les Jamieson** a lay reader of the United Church and a good friend of **Brodies** taking the service. Burial was in Crandall cemetery, where his **mother and sister Eva** had been interred.

A week later we received word that **Gilbert Currie**, a cousin of Brod's, had **passed away**. I was asked to be a pallbearer for his funeral, which was to be held at Whitewood, Saskatchewan. I had, in previous years acted in that capacity for his wife and son. I was unable to attend due to sickness, so **Keith** went in my place. In the span of a few months, I had lost three very good friends. **Brodie** and I had been very good friends for many years and had planned and worked on many projects from building rod weeders in the thirties to taming the Assiniboine in the fifties. He had known hard times in the thirties, but had died in good financial circumstances, leaving \$75,000.00 to Park Residence in Hamiota and his business premises to Parkissimo Lodge in Miniota.

That spring we traded our 1855 tractor on a new **Massey 1135**. That spring, a meeting was called to get an update on building of a senior citizens' home. A new committee was formed, composed of **Bill Barrett, Beth Oliver, Russell Howard, Shirley Richardson, Jim Morton and myself**. **Bill** was named chairman. **Shirley** was named acting secretary. We began by looking at other homes such as St. Lazare, Newdale, Hamiota and Oak Lake. We liked the one at St. Lazare best. We began negotiations with **C.M.H.C.**, but before this we made a canvass of the Miniota and Arrow River areas and had collected some twenty thousand dollars, which is needed as a show of support for any project. After many meetings and much correspondence, we engaged the services of **Murray Simpson**, a Brandon architect.

To get anywhere with the powers that be, you must come up with a blueprint. This we did, committing ourselves to spending about one quarter of our \$20,000.00 and having our architect draw up a working plan. This was our salvation, as then we had an estimate of costs as well as a workable plan, without which it would have been impossible to get anywhere. The first plan we presented was too costly, so our tentative contractor, **Hoffman Construction** of Minnedosa, in consultation with the board and architect, were able to cut out some frills and by substitution of materials cut the price by \$20,000.00. This brought it down to where we were able to get the approval of C.M.H.C. who loan the money for all such projects. I must give full credits to **Bill Barrett** and **Shirley Richardson** for their untiring efforts on behalf of this project. Once we had our approval, things moved along very well. We were very pleased with our contractor and also our architect and I think we have a plan that is as good as any in Manitoba. By March 1st, 1979, we were able to move in our first resident. The contract had been let August 1, 1978.

I have got ahead of myself and will now go back to 1977. We had a warm, dry spring, and an outbreak of tent caterpillars, which left many of the poplar bushes without leaves. In June we

had ample rains and a good hay crop. That July **Marge** and I went out to Kenosee **where Coke and Dot** were camping, and spent three days with them. In late September **Grandma B**, who had been living in her suite all summer, was taken to hospital where she **passed away** September 28. **Florence** came home from Kelowna and the service was held in the Chapel in Hamiota. The service was conducted by **Rev. Lynas** and burial was in Chapel Lawn cemetery near Winnipeg. Her husband, son **Bill** and **daughter Merle** are buried nearby. She was in her 93rd year and had lived in this area since coming here to marry in 1906. She and her husband had both been born in England.

When we went to Winnipeg to **Grandma B's** funeral, the fields around Winnipeg were water logged and so wet that they couldn't get on them. We were luckier here, as our fields were fine. That year we had a bumper crop of flax on **Duncan's**. I don't know what it yielded, but I know it was over 30. That fall we were able to sell all our flax straw also. The price of flax had dropped to \$5.25 from \$12.00. **Charles**, who in his lifetime had spent quite a bit of time in hospital, that fall had to go again to have a cataract operation on his eyes. He made a good recovery and was soon home. In what was probably my last contribution to the upgrading of the Community Centre hall, I was in charge of planning the extension or annex as it is more commonly known. In combination with numerous other members of the community, I helped in the construction and finishing, right up to December 31, when it was first used for the New Year's Eve dance.

That January we had some excitement fairly close to home, when a **Mounted Policeman was shot and killed in Virden**, and two more wounded, one seriously. The subsequent hostage-taking and holding in Oak Lake was front page news for a week.

Charles' health continued to give him problems. In June **he and Kae** left for a trip to Alberta to visit **Ann and Dave Kuva** and family, and also **Carol** in Edmonton, and had intended to visit **Beth, Richard and family** in Calgary. While in Edmonton, he had a serious stroke **and passed away** the same day. It was June 26, 1978. He had his 72nd birthday two days before. His funeral was held from the Miniota United Church on June 30, with Rev. **Lloyd Lovering** taking the service. **Pick** came from Ontario, and their whole family were home, as were most of the **Armitage family**. Six nephews acted as pallbearers and some close friends as honorary pallbearers. He was buried in the family plot in Miniota Cemetery. **Charles**, with the exception of four years spent in the service, had spent his whole life on the farm where he had been born. He had seen farming change from the era when horses were dominant, to the era of the tractors in the hundreds of horsepower. From the steam threshers to the combines, where one man could thresh more in one day than the big threshing outfits, which required 25 men to operate. He was well known for his dry humor and is still quoted today by many of his friends. He had driven a school van for twenty years and was a regular attendant at the coffee counter at **Mikes**, along with **Bill Barrett, Charlie Bryant** or **Russell Howard**. He was a reliable conveyer of mail, groceries, cream cans, or what have you, for all the **Armitage** families. He never excelled in sports and would never take part in bonspiels. He played cards, sometimes reluctantly. I think his greatest love was reading. He had read all his life and could remember and discuss many different authors. He had spent several winters in Toronto, where he had been a member of several libraries. He also subscribed to magazines, such as Time and was always recognized as an authority on current affairs. From the time I stopped school in 1925, we had worked together without ever having a serious

disagreement. **Dad** had pretty well left the farming decisions to us and after a few years, I guess you could say I became the dominant partner, which seemed to suit him. All through the thirties we worked hard to keep the farm from going bankrupt as so many did. He was very fond of land work, but disliked the winter, as he couldn't stand the cold. I don't think I could have found a more agreeable partner to work with for the fifty years we worked together.

Crops were looking good. We had a good hay crop and got it all up in good shape. That July we were invited to the wedding of **Olive Ann Argue and Randy McKean**. I was honored in being asked to propose the toast. In August we had another wedding to attend when **Jim Armitage married Sharon McKenzie**, a nurse from Ontario and a niece of **Coke Argue**. We were in the process of building a new implement and grain storage as the crop looked promising. It was fortunate we did, as we had to store 5,000 bushels of wheat in it. That fall all grains had to be sold in metric measure, a damned nuisance. If I told you malting barley was \$98.75 per tonne, would it mean anything to you? I will convert it to Imperial and it is \$1.86 a bushel, No. 2 wheat was \$3.20 a bushel, flax \$5.00 and steers 65c.

That fall the contractor building **Parkissimo Lodge** was making good progress and had it all closed in before winter. It was a good thing he did, as that December was the coldest on record. Various sub-contractors came and completed their duties, and the stoves and fridges we had tendered for, were installed. It was a cold winter, with a lot of snow. In March I bought a new car, another **Granada**. On the fourth of April **the last train on the Miniota subdivision** departed and the **elevator was closed** for good. That March and April it snowed and blew every day I think, and it was hard to keep the roads open. That spring we were invited to **Ken and Meryleen Mitchell's** wedding dance at Elkhorn, and were unable to attend due to a blizzard. This was March 24th. It was the same day that Mr. and Mrs. **Whit Howard** celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Spring finally came about the middle of April and we had a fast melt and a big runoff. The creek was over the road for a few days, and the kids had to be taken to the bus on the big tractor. When the water went down, it left a lot of driftwood and ice floes behind.

While cleaning this up, I had a large, green log roll off the rack onto my leg. **Trevor and Kelly** were on the tractor. I was lying on the ground in a great deal of pain. **Trevor** said "Are you dead Grandpa?" I managed to get home, but had a very uncomfortable night. I went for an X-ray the next day and they found I had a broken bone in my ankle. I wore a cast for the next seven weeks. The river also flooded, but didn't stay up for too long and did minimal damage. That May we were invited, with **Kae and Bill and Evelyn**, to a 40th wedding anniversary at Swan River for **Harvey and Alice Gibbings**, former residents of Miniota. we had an enjoyable weekend and had a visit with **Les and Lil Currie**. We found Les somewhat improved after a serious illness. That summer I put new siding on the front of my house, and also a new door. I then painted the whole house. That summer the haying was changed when we switched from square to **round bales**. As this was my final year of farming, I was more or less neutral, but I consider it a retrograde step. While handling big bales that summer we had a narrow escape from tragedy when a bale fell off the upraised fork onto **Danny Argue**, who was operating the tractor loader. It hit him a glancing blow, crushing some vertebrae and hospitalizing him for a week.

On September 7 we had the official opening of the home. We were very pleased with the way it turned out, and we were pleased that it was finished, as we had spent many days making sidewalks and doing all our own landscaping.

That September, **Marjorie and I** took a trip to Thompson to see **Bill**, our oldest son, and

his wife to be. We went by Ste. Rose and over the Narrows to Ashern, and north to Grand Rapids, where we spent the night. Grand Rapids is an old settlement and was prominent in the early fur trade of the **Hudson Bay Company**. It is best known today as a power source for **Manitoba Hydro**, as they have a large dam there. There are still many Indians living there. As you drive north towards Thompson, you parallel two big power lines, bringing power from the Nelson River power dams to southern Manitoba. We arrived in Thompson and had a good visit and were shown the points of interest. **Bill** has lived in Thompson since 1967, and has worked heavy machinery all over that country, sometimes spending months away from home. After several days, we came home the other way, calling into Flin Flon, where we just had a look and back tracked to Cranberry Portage, and spent the night in The Pas. Next morning we came to Swan River, where we had a visit with **Les and Lil Currie**. We spent that night in Roblin with friends, and came home the next morning, by the Shellmouth dam which I have always been interested in. In our absence we had missed a party put on by **Russ Howard** to officially open his new building. However, a bigger event was in the books, as five people were reaching 65 in 1979. It had the potential for a fine evening, sponsored by Parties for Old people, or **PFOP** as it is more commonly known.

The candidates nominated were **Marjorie, A. W. Barrett, Les Horner, Kae Armitage** and **Wes Shurvell**. Each candidate was allowed to invite a number of guests. As I was a Charter Member, I was in on the planning process with **Russ and Betty Howard**. Space does not permit going into too much detail, but it was planned along the lines of the Academy Awards. Each candidate was honored in rhyme composed by the committee, and was presented with a fitting ceramic figure. Each figure had a plaque attached and the figures were selected to represent the trade or profession of the recipient. There were some humorous skits, dancing to taped music, a song composed just for the occasion and a sumptuous lunch. There was just one hitch, **Kae Armitage** was in hospital and missed the proceedings. Her Award was presented to her in the hospital the following day. The Evening was held in **Russ Howard's** new shop and we are all very grateful to **Russ and Betty** for their continual hospitality.

That December **Ruby Potter** had the misfortune to break a hip. She was taken to hospital, where she developed pneumonia and passed away. She was buried beside **Brodie** in Crandall Cemetery. That Christmas we attended the fiftieth wedding anniversary for our friends, Mr. and Mrs. **Jim Maxfield** of Two Grecks. **Jim** is the son of **William Maxfield**, a close friend of my parents. Just before Christmas we went to Miami, Manitoba, to visit Bill and Linda and kids, who had just moved into their new home. It was a very nice home and had a lovely brick fireplace, for which we had taken a load of ash wood in the half ton.

The weather turned cold, but the holiday season went off fine. In early January we were surprised to hear that **Gordon Lelond had died** of a heart attack. His family were all grown up, and away from home. Besides his wife **Joan**, he was survived by his aged parents, **Will and Hazel Lelond**, who had been good friends of ours for many years. They had depended on **Gordon** to do their chores and bring their mail and groceries, as he was the only member of their family in this area. As I had lots of time on my hands, I assumed these responsibilities, until they were able to get into a senior home at Hamiota. **Hazel passed away** in 1981, but **Will** is still living in the home and at 94 years, his mind is still alert in spite of his having had several strokes.

In February of that year, **Keith and Muriel**, in company with other couples went to Hawaii for two weeks. In that month also, Canadians made a grave error when they voted the **socialists**

back into power. It was a fairly mild winter and spring came early. The firemen were kept busy putting out a series of grass fires. On May 20th, we were subjected to a stifling hot, dusty day, when **Mount St. Helens** blew in Washington State. The germination of the crop was poor and as a result, the farmers were able to collect crop insurance. The dry weather continued till the end of June, when we had 2 1/2 inches of rain.

That summer we had a series of weddings and wedding anniversaries. Our son **Bill** married **Linda McIntyre** of Roblin, at the home of her parents at Roblin. On the same weekend, our friends **Bill and Evelyn Barrett** celebrated their fortieth and just prior to this, **Will and Hazel Lelond** celebrated their 64th. In December we went to Birtle to attend the 50th anniversary of **Rose and Alec Curtis**.

That summer I was doing a good turn for my sister-in-law **Kae**. I was hauling a load of gravel on Old Blue, my 1964 half ton, when a Mountie stopped me. He found several things wrong with the truck, and informed me I was contravening the law by hauling gravel on a farm licence. However, no charges were laid, but I have never been able to live it down, as there were numerous witnesses to the event. That fall the crops were just fair, due to the dry spring. As my basement wall was in poor shape, I took part of it out and replaced it. We also did quite a bit of work on **Ken's house**, removing the old balcony and applying new siding and shingles. This was the first time the outside appearance of the old home had ever been changed.

In October, **Marjorie and I** decided we would fly to Kelowna to see the **Warrens**. **Keith and Muriel** took us to Regina on a terribly windy morning. The wind that day blew the flax swaths very badly. We caught the plane at Regina and after a stop at Calgary, we were in Kelowna in time for lunch. We spent about three weeks with them and they took us to Victoria, where we visited friends and relatives, and their daughter and family at Kamloops. We arrived home at the end of October. There had been snow here in our absence, and the flax was still out, but was combined shortly after. The partners traded the 1135 Massey tractor on a **2390 Case**, and a 25 foot cultivator. In late November we hired the municipal cat and raised the dike from **Warrens'** bend to **Duncans**. It took nearly a week and we raised it about a foot. I also helped **Ken** put in a wood burning furnace, to supplement his oil furnace. It has worked very well and is much more efficient than the old original of my childhood. In December **Jim and Sharon** had a son, and **Don and Sandra** of Sundre, Alberta, had a son also.

One of the things I notice now, as I write my memoirs, is the many deaths that keep coming up. **1981** proved to be no exception, as February 5th we received word that **Les Currie** had **passed away** at his winter home in Texas. He was flown home for burial at Swan River. I was feeling poorly at the time, so was unable to attend, **but Ken and Rita and pick and Chas Ellerington** drove up on a very cold day to represent our families. **Les** had been going to Texas for the past twenty years, and had been the originator and president of the **Pine to Palm** trailer court at **Weslaco, Texas**. He was survived by his wife **Lil**, who I have known since 1930. They had no family.

Our winter carnival that year was a washout, as the weather turned so mild in mid February the ice became unusable. Our granddaughter **Lyanna** was crowned queen, but in the hall instead of the rink. It was a most unusual year, as the creek started to run on February 17, and the normal date is around the first of April. March continued above normal and by mid-April we were on the land, which was by now quite dry.

They say that deaths go in threes. I am inclined to believe that as in April I was asked in

the period of a few days to act as pallbearer for two friends of ours. **Jim Maxfield** had been a friend of our family since **Dad** came here in 1905 and although about 12 years older than me, we had maintained a good relationship. In 1929 he had married a girl from New York city and they had farmed in the Two Creeks district till his death. He had planted hundreds of evergreen trees around his yard that will remain as a lasting memorial to him. His wife **Florence** still lives in Virden, but is in failing health. The other friend was **Jim Walker**, who had come from Saskatchewan just before the war. He and his wife Ann had lived with **Pick** after we left him in 1959. He had lived in Miniota for quite a few years, and their family of two boys and two girls had attended school here. They had then moved to Virden, where **Ann** still lives.

The dry years seemed to be coming more regular. This was marked by the return of the **Richardson Ground Squirrel**, or Flicker Tail, or Yellow Gopher. That spring I waged war on them by trapping and poisoning and, while I decimated the population, I didn't entirely eliminate them and the following year a new generation had moved in. In May we were called to Miami in connection with a family matter that caused us much concern. In June we had a change of neighbors when **Coke and Dorothy Argue** moved to town. **Danny**, mentioned several times previously, married **Karen Packham** of Hargrave and took over the farm. **Coke and Dorothy** had lived there for twenty years and we were glad to have them settle in Miniota instead of Oak River, his home town. **Danny and Karen** have a son **Dustin** and by the time you read this will have an addition.

When **Brodie** died a few years ago, we continued to rent his land from his estate. In **1980** Ken bought one quarter from **Mabel Currie** and **Jim** bought the half across the river from **Brodie's** estate. They hired a cat to clear quite a large area of mostly oak trees and that summer **Ken** broke it with a breaking plow. I spent quite a bit of time that summer with discs and an improvised land leveller, preparing it for crop in 1982. It was very hot and dry and I really appreciated the air conditioned cab. I used to walk back and forth across the river and the water didn't come to my knees. The harvest was early and we got all our wheat and barley off before the rains came. When the weather did break, we had a lot of rain without which our 1982 crop would have suffered.

Every year for quite a few years, about six couples celebrate their wedding anniversaries. They are **Marge and I, 43 years; Bill and Evelyn, 41; Keith and Muriel, 32; Les and Lil, 31; Buss and Betty, 27; Chas and Kae** were the other couple and had been married 36 years. In **1981** we had an additional couple when we honored **Clarence and Teenie Johnson**, on their fiftieth anniversary. They had lived in Miniota for some time and are now residents of Indian Head, Saskatchewan. We all went to Virden, where we were joined by **John and Jean Weins** and had dinner at the Claemar Inn. We then came back to Arrow River, where we had a dance, thus bringing to a close a very nice weekend. That fall we went into Winnipeg to celebrate **Fay and Jim's 40th** wedding anniversary, at the International Inn. In November 1981 **Doug Armitage**, son of **Ivan and Irene**, married **Doreen Howell** of Brandon. So much for anniversaries. **Bill Barrett** got the idea that he should hold an appreciation party for all his ex-employees. These were **Mary Hurlin, Ruby Weber, June Johnston and myself**. It was an invitational affair and turned out very well. We were all presented with a small memento of the occasion. **Wayne and June Johnston** came from Regina to attend. **Wayne** was a bank manager here for five or six years in the Sixties.

The holiday season came and we had **Linda and the kids, Chris and Margo** from Miami, and **Dianne, Patricia and Barb** from Winnipeg. In January there was the local mixed and ladies'

bonspiels, which used to be held in March, but had been moved to January. In early February I took an antibiotic pill for an ailment I was suffering from. Within an hour I had broken out in hives and was having trouble breathing. **Marjorie** called **Sharon Armitage, Jim's wife**, who came immediately and prescribed a trip to Hamiota right now. **Ken** took us down and I became the centre of attention. After a few needles and a night in the hospital, I was able to go home. I think it was my closest brush with death since falling in the creek in 1923.

In February we had a Glenlochar rink in the senior ladies provincial playdowns in Brandon. **Lil Horner** was the skip and **Ruby Weber, Norma Shurvell and Joy Lelond** were the other members. They gave a good account of themselves, but didn't get to the finals. In March, **Ken** and I renovated our front room, putting in a new ceiling and texturing it, new carpet and a new chesterfield and chair. I consider this will be the final renovation we will have to do. Spring was average. The men got the crop in successfully and the rains came at the right times. On June 16, we had a heavy hailstorm that knocked off a lot of leaves and branches and flattened the rape, but didn't do any permanent damage and the moisture was very welcome.

On July 2nd Arrow River held their Centennial celebration. In anticipation of this event, I had restored a John Deere gang plow, which I placed on a trailer and entered in the parade. My float was representing **Arrowdale Farm**, with **Kelly** being the representative of the fourth generation. A month later, Crandall held a home coming weekend for their school, and I entered my float in their parade. This time I had **Pick** representing the first generation and myself, **Ken** and **Kelly** the other three. Miniota also got into the act, when they dedicated a field stone cairn with the old Miniota school bell mounted on it. Many former teachers and pupils returned to attend. It was held July 11 in conjunction with the Miniota sports day.

In August **Linda** moved from Miami to Brandon to take up residence. She had lived in Miami for fifteen years and left many good friends there. Harvest was fairly early and the crop was again very good. In mid-August we had a fairly hard frost that did great damage to the late sown rape and wheat crops. In September we had a visit from relatives from Ontario. We have maintained a friendship with many Ontario people for many years. While they were here, the community held a harvesting bee for a local family. **Russell Lelond** had lived here all his life and had contributed greatly to the welfare of the community.

In October Marjorie's sister and her husband Austin Warren came from Kelowna to spend a short holiday with us. We were able to get them around to visit with some of their old friends and took them to Brandon to visit **Linda and kids**. In October **Jim and Sharon** broke ground for their **new home** beside their present trailer home.

Wayne Poppel is the chief carpenter. I tried to assist them, but was unable to continue, thus bringing to a close my career as a carpenter, dating back to my youth, when my first project was building a pig trough. I find it interesting to walk into the church, rinks or hall or many homes and be able to identify some of my handiwork. It is much easier building today, as so many of the components such as rafters, doors and windows come already assembled. Perhaps the greatest disadvantage is the high prices charged for these conveniences.

In October **Kae** went to Winnipeg to stay with her sister **Gertrude**, who due to a car accident has been confined to a wheel chair for twenty five years. She also spent some time with the **Johns family** at Steinbach, who at that time were awaiting the return of **Elinor** from Montreal, where she has been undergoing medical treatment. I had been considering **this writing** project for several years, so in December I started writing and it has gone on from there.

Over the Christmas holidays the weather was fine and we had **Dianne and girls, and Linda and kids** for Christmas. As we go into **1983**, we are going into the **100th year** of the founding of the **R.M. of Miniota** and are all looking forward to the big celebration to be held July 9 this year. All our activities this year will be based on the centennial theme.

As I have arrived at the present in writing my life history, I think I should **review** some of my observations. In my lifetime, I can remember when a car was a novelty, and when one was met on the road the driver of horses would often get out of their rigs to hold the horses by their heads. I can remember a sign at the top of the Miniota hill that said, "Automobiles slow down and sound your horn this hill is dangerous!" At the end of World War I we saw our first airplanes when pilots used to come to fairs or sports days and take up passengers at so much a head. I think the rate varied but worked out to about a dollar a minute. They also did stunts, such as wing walking and parachute dropping. Needless to say, they always had an audience of boys of my age group. In 1929 they built an airfield on what is now **Roy Laite's farm**. It was just a grass field, but had a rotating beacon, which was supposed to be visible from one airfield to the next. They then started flying the mail by air and we would look forward to seeing it fly over. Due to the Depression, it was discontinued about 1931. As I mentioned previously, we had planes overhead constantly at the start of World War II.

With the coming of the Jet age, a new era began and then we were able to watch on television **John Glenn** go around the world eight times in as many hours, and make a safe landing in the ocean. We then saw men walk on the moon and this past year, saw a manned space ship land in California. All this in my lifetime.

As a boy I remember Dad bringing home an **Edison phonograph** that played cylinder type records. I derived much pleasure from listening to records of **Sir Harry Lauder** and I was particularly fond of one called "The Preacher and the Bear" There was also a character called **Uncle Josh**, who used to sing and recite humorous ditties. The coming of radio in the early twenties killed the gramophone and it was some years before it made a comeback. **Radio** came into its own in the thirties, with the big bands becoming very popular and comedy shows with stars like **Jack Benny, Fred Allen, George Burns, and Fibber McGee** to help to while away the evenings in the thirties. News broadcasts kept us up to what was going on in the world, especially during the war. And who of my generation doesn't **remember Amos and Andy, Ma Perkins, or the WLS barn dance, or Hockey Night in Canada?**

With the coming of television in the fifties, we were treated to a new medium that has changed our way of life. Who would have Imagined thirty years ago that you would be able to sit in your own home and watch the World series and hockey from almost anywhere, the Grey Cup or the blast off of space rockets from Cape Canaveral?. As of now, early **1983**, we are on the verge of a whole new field of television as pay **TV** is to become a reality for better or worse. The **computer** they tell us will change the way we live also. The small **calculator** has eliminated the need for kids to learn arithmetic as we used to do. Just imagine how difficult it would be to operate today without a ball point pen.

As of the present, the original three quarters Dad bought in 1905 has expanded considerably and now consists of fifteen quarter sections owned by **Keith, Ken, Jim and I** and an additional six owned by **Ivan**. This land is all in the Assiniboine Valley and contains quite a bit of pasture land, on which are pastured some 125 cows and their calves. I am pleased to note that the expansion has not made any reduction of the number of households supported by this land,

as it remains the same as it was in 1905. Today all the arable land is under cultivation, whereas then much of it was growing wild hay and some of it was heavily treed.

When I was quite young, I used to study the **Eaton catalogue**, and the thing that always caught my eye were the kids wagons. They always showed a small girl or boy, who seemed to be having a lot of fun. When a little older, I developed a yearning for a bike. **Charles** had one but just as I got big enough to ride it, he sold it to **Roy Currie**. I never got either one, so I guess you could say I was an underprivileged child. I have made sure my grandchildren have them, but I think they consider themselves underprivileged because they don't have dirt bikes. I guess this is what they call a generation gap.

I mentioned earlier that as a boy I was very interested in threshing as it always seemed to be where all the action was. The coming of **combines** removed much of the hard work, such as stooking, a job I never liked doing, or pitching sheaves, which I always enjoyed. Perhaps one of the things I missed most was the good meals and sociability that prevailed around the dinner table. When we had our own small threshing outfit with three stock teams, if you threshed five or six hundred bushels of wheat in a day it was considered a good day's work. At present, with a good sized combine, one man can thresh that much in an hour, in an air conditioned cab with electronic controls and monitors to remove all the guess work. This fall I attended a threshing demonstration at Alexander and concluded I would not want to return, to the so called good old days. As the winter of 1983 winds down, we are surrounded by controversy over the demise of the Crows nest freight rates, the split in the Conservative party over **Joe Clark's** leadership, the different points of view over unemployment and increasing government deficits.

Our life goes on much as usual. We continue to go to church and to the rink to watch hockey and curling. We play a few cards with neighbors and friends and occasionally go to Brandon to visit with **Linda and family**. We continue to take our medication which, in **Marjorie's** case, has been a great help in controlling the symptoms of her Parkinson's. I take a medication to help regulate my heart beat. We are most fortunate to have some very good friends close by, with whom we socialize. We have both given up any public office we may have occasionally held, but still support all community activities. I don't know how much longer we will be able to look after our garden and yard, but **Kelly and Trevor** are almost big enough to help now, so I might have to call on them for assistance. Our other grandchildren are **Tricia 14**, and **Barbara 8**, daughters of **Deanna and Bill Armitage**, who live in Winnipeg with their mother. **Linda**, our only daughter lives in Brandon now, where she has a good job with the government working with children with hearing problems. Her children are **Chris 10**, and **Margo 6**. **Linda and her husband** separated in 1981, after thirteen years of married life in Miami, Manitoba.

Ken, our youngest son, lives on the original home farm with his wife **Rita** and **Lyanna 13**, **Kelly 9** and **Trevor 7**. **Bill**, our oldest, lives at Thompson and remarried in 1980 to **Linda McIntyre**, who had a daughter **Kim** who is fourteen years old. In the summer I keep busy doing little jobs that I consider need doing. I have a small chain saw and derive much satisfaction from removing down trees and, if suitable as wood, I bring them home for **Ken's** furnace. I also have four mowers at my disposal, a 7 foot sickle mower and a five foot rotary, both tractor mounted, with which I mow road allowances and drainage ditches. I also use a ten H.P. riding mower for yard work and a lawn boy for our lawn. I also look after the yard at the Currie stone house and the Glenlochar cairn. As I bring this project to a close, I must apologize for the many omissions in my

writings. I think in retrospect I could do a better job of it if I were to do it over again. I hope it will help my descendants to have an insight into the past, and perhaps prove of interest to future generations. All the reminiscences are strictly from memory, with the exception of the last ten years when **Marjorie** started keeping a diary. The financial information is accurate, as it was taken from records I started keeping in the mid-fifties.

When **Mother died in 1967**, ten years after **Dad's** passing, there were four sons and two daughters surviving. There were also twenty-two grandchildren.

As of **1983**, there are now twenty-five great grandchildren and this is an accurate record of their descendants.

Charles married Kathleen Staples and raised four daughters.

Elinor married **Rev. Rob Johns** in 1972 and have three children, **Stephen**, and twin girls **Carol and Sheila**.

Ann married **Dave Kuva** in 1970 and have two children, **Elizabeth and John**.

Elizabeth married **Richard Hall** and they have three children **Andrew, Allison and Joseph**.

Carol remains single.

Mary married George Dodds and raised two children.

Jack married **Rita van Schepdael** and have two children, **Bradley and Amber Lee**.

Margaret married **Carl Mensch** and they have no family.

Allan married Marjorie Bardwell and they raised a family of three.

William married **Deanne Metcalf** and they have two girls, **Patricia and Barbara**.

Linda married **William Schrader** and they have two children, **Chris and Margo**.

Kenneth married **Rita Sheane** and they have three children **Lyanna, Kelly and Trevor**.

Fay married Jim King and they raised five children.

Robert married and has one son.

David remains single.

Ginny married **Robert Moody** and have a daughter, **Rachael Fay**.
Ian and Randy remain single.

Keith married Muriel Boyd and they raised a family of four.

Donald married **Sandra Heise** and they have a son, **Brian**.

James married **Sharon McKenzie** and they also have a son, **Mark**.

Shirley married **Robert Andrew** and they have no family.

Catherine remains single.

Ivan married Irene Hooper and they raised a family of four

Rick married **Elaine Attwood** and they have a daughter, **Caroline**.

Arlene married **Joss March** and they have two children, **Gavin and Chris**.

Debbie remains single.

Doug married **Doreen Howell** in 1982 and have no family yet.

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