

## **BALON, John And Eugenie**

My father, John, homesteaded in the Elm Springs district in 1912. Today, the land is owned by George Lawrick.

My mother, Eugenic, was the daughter of Gabriel and Aspasia Colibaba who arrived in the Wood Mountain area in 1921. She was quite proud of the fact that, as a young girl, her school had chosen her to give the flowers to Emperor Franz-Joseph, when he toured Austria in 1914, before the outbreak of World War I.

Grandfather Colibaba traded horses for wood with Indians at the Old Post. He enjoyed the trip which took at least a whole day and took a little "firewater" (for medicinal purposes only)! Whether it ever got out as far as the reserve I never know.

I, Peter Balon, was born Dec. 8, 1923, a day which is still marked as a red letter day on most of our calendars.

I can remember some of the trying days my parents went through no crops, violent wind and dust storms and trying to raise a family. Mom and Dad hauled water every evening by barrel for three-quarters of a mile to water our garden to raise vegetables. Mom made butter and we traded it for groceries. I don't remember anyone complaining too loudly. The neighbors visited and played cards but in times of adversity your neighbors were always there to help too. About 1936, my brother Howard and I and our neighbors, the Donisons, walked home from school two and one-half miles in a blizzard and Howard had his ear frozen. Mrs. Alex Lawrick knew that sour cabbage leaves would take out the frost. That night, Mom and Dad and the Lawricks were up most of the night but it did the trick. Lawricks were a little short of cabbage, but Howard still had his ear. There was no hope of getting to Assiniboia to a doctor as it was even difficult to get to the Lawricks who were only one mile away.

The first inkling I had that the metropolis of Rockglen existed was in 1935-36. It was the focal point of a meeting of the local farmers with the government bureaucrat 'relief officer' Ches Sproule! The farmers needed extra feed for themselves and their livestock. Things were really tough on the farm. Though I was only about eight or nine years old, even I knew that something was awry.

Apparently as a result of this meeting the farmers received an increase in the chicken feed quota by several pounds. This was a great boon as the grain could do double duty. The grain could be put through a special series of processes about which we learned early in life – fermentation, evaporation and condensation. These were further connected with the sterilization of copper equipment. The humans consumed the 'condensation'. This made them forget their problems and it sure pepped up the roosters.

The roosters were fed the fermented grain which gave them the energy to destroy the numerous grasshoppers and chase the chickens. The result was a steady supply of baby chicks which later produced eggs.

The whole exercise was good experience in economics and how to stretch a dollar.

There was no money to operate our '28 Chevy. Dad carried a cream can on his back one and a half miles to Dan Lawrick's. He took it, along with the mail, to Scout Lake and shipped it. The proceeds supplied us with gas. In comparison to 1977, we didn't realize we had it so good. Here we had a four cylinder car with a stick shift that burned unleaded white gas at twenty-nine cents a gallon and there wasn't any pollution because you couldn't afford to go anywhere, except maybe to church or to a doctor in Assiniboia in an emergency. The only accidents were when someone's horses ran away with the wagon.

In the fall of 1937 we had some crop but it was very rusty. The crews were covered with it and the threshing machine was in a red haze out in the field.

The crop of 1938 was a bit more promising.

It was in that year that my only sister Olivia was born. She was the only one in the family to have the luxury of being born in a hospital.

In 1939, just as World War II broke out, my dad took sick and passed away in November. That left Mom, with a one year old daughter and two sons, one fifteen and one twelve, to continue farming.

We had thirty-six horses besides the cattle to look after. That was some winter! The next spring we traded those damn horses to Anton and Otto Knops for a Ford tractor and a four and one-half foot one way. Boy were we mechanized!

As time went marching along we had to get our education. In the spring of 1940, Uncle Carl Kwasnicki and Aunt Gladys had me stay with them and go to school in Scout Lake. Uncle was really great and Auntie was a real good cook too. I only had five miles to walk to school, through Ager's yard and into town. Who cared about the walk — with all those nice gals. In the after noon, the walk back wasn't quite as joyous as I knew Uncle's cows had it in for me and they would be at the far end of the pasture.

Although folks, such as Ralph and Pearl Kwasnicki, guided us and helped us in our farming, it had become too complex a business for us to handle alone. I had obtained my Grade X through the compassion of Miss Bessie Lakken and so Mother moved the family into Assiniboia so that we boys could get our schooling and have better health care.

After high school, and a stint with a Central Manitoba Flying and Training school, came the big journey to the promised land. There it was — Rockglen! There were no bands out or anything to greet me. I knew Dutchy and Peter Knops, from that fantastic tractor deal and from parts ordered, but very few others. I went across the tracks to work for Walter Roberts for ten and one-half years. My guardian angel was really right on the job because, not only did I have a wonderful boss, but I also got board and room from Mrs. Schaffer and there was a country lull of new friends. These included a Father Schickler who was at least ten years ahead of Vatican II in his approach to people. Dick Kimball and I kept night watch at the Red Cross Outpost Hospital for awhile and checked the surrounding teacherages.

Eventually that "fell apart". Dick got a girlfriend and I met Audrey, the daughter of the "snoose"-chewing, curling, Fred McCutcheon. Since she was the only daughter and the only child always gets what she wants, she did — ME! Audrey and I were married in 1949 and were blessed with 4 boys; Kurt, Brett, Mark and Brendan.

We moved to the Regina area to try to make our fortune in farming on the Regina Plains. Since our move to Regina my grandparents and Mom have passed away.

### **BAKKE, Berent And Mina**

Berent was born in Rugsund, Nordfjord, Norway, in 1883, the youngest of a family of four. On May 1, 1905 he left Norway to immigrate to America. En route he contracted pneumonia and spent some time in a hospital in Ireland. Later he arrived at Forbes, North Dakota and worked with his uncle, Jacob Bakke, an established rancher.

Between Christmas and New Year's, 1909, he made the trek to Moose Jaw, bringing with him a pair of skis — the first to pass through Moose Jaw Customs.

Ole Sanderson, an acquaintance from the Dakotas, was a great source of help. The trek to the homestead, near Lisieux, began in 1910, by way of Willow Bunch. Two men from Willow Bunch furnished transportation for twenty-five dollars. They slept under the wagon for three nights and got directions to Pete Kabrud's homestead from a Willow Bunch resident.

The summer was spent building a sod shack. He hired ten acres to be broken at five dollars an acre and filed for his homestead August 13, 1910.

Carpenters were in good demand and he applied himself to his trade. Mr. Bakke had a part in erecting many local houses and barns throughout the following years. One that stands out predominantly today is the "Kea Farm" hip-roofed barn, south of Assiniboia. The original owner, Tommy Dunstan, did not spare the material — it took three carloads of lumber.

In the spring of 1915, Mr. Bakke bought two oxen at ninety-eight dollars each and a sulky plow from Jim Underdahl. He drove them home while sitting on the plow, a distance of ten miles. That summer he broke eighty acres.

Due to the war, he was unable to return to Norway until 1919, at which time he married his former schoolmate, Mina Endal.

To welcome them the community gathered for a good old-fashioned "barn dance" only this was held in a granary loft. Booze and vanilla extract flowed freely. The "Missus" was not accustomed to "tipsy people" and here they were lying behind the stove and about the house! A first impression of Canada!!

Mina was born in Davik, Nordfjord, in 1883, the seventh in a family of eight. She was an accomplished seamstress. During her life in Norway she helped raise the families of two brothers, who had both lost their wives while their children were very young. After her marriage, July 3, 1919, she immigrated to Canada with Berent. She found life on the prairies quite hard. Times were such that gardening was a must and this she enjoyed; she took much pride in her flowers. Little money was available for luxuries, but there was plenty to eat. The busiest time was harvest when the big threshing crews moved in. The men were ferocious eaters. Five o'clock was not too early to start preparing breakfast. Doing the family wash, baking bread, preparing endless meals and tending the garden was all part of a day's work. She had a deep love for her family which consisted of three boys, Reg, Harold and Bjarne.

Berent and Mina moved to Assiniboia in 1958 and enjoyed retirement. Berent died April 3, 1971; Mina died March 30, 1974. They are survived by their three sons and eleven grandchildren.

### **BARNSLEY, Arthur And Mable**

Arthur Barnsley was born in 1891, of English parentage, in Johannesburg, South Africa, but was raised and schooled in Birmingham, England. Mable was born in Nottingham, England, in 1891, and later moved with her family to Ruddington where her father owned a knitting mill. After her Mother died Mable decided to go to Canada, assured that she was qualified to find work in the Mercury Knitting Mills in Paris, Ontario, who were advertising in the British newspapers for laborers. She was eighteen at the time.

Meantime, the Barnsley family had immigrated to Canada a family of twelve children – and settled in Paris, Ontario, also. The older children found work in the knitting mills, and there Mable became acquainted with the family and eventually, in 1912, she and Arthur were married.

They moved to Hamilton, Ontario the following year, where Arthur apprenticed as a cabinet-maker. Their first son was born, but died at the age of two, as the result of an unfortunate street accident. Arthur served with the Canadian Army from 1915-18 during which time Hilda was born. After his return from overseas they were intrigued with the urge to "go west", to Saskatchewan where an older brother and sister were engaged in farming. As a result of their decision to move, Arthur took a course in Practical Agriculture and after the birth of their post-war son Donald, they were prepared to make the move. In the spring of 1921, they arrived in Saskatchewan, and found employment on the farm of Sam Archer of the Vantage District. Within a year they settled on a half-section farm near Valor adjoining the farm of their sister and brother-in-law Amy and Alvin Peterson, whose descendants still farm there. Arthur and Alvin farmed jointly for several years, and Hilda and Don attended school at the Weston schoolhouse. During the winter of 1930-31 Alvin offered to trade one section of land that he owned in the Rockglen area for the half-section Arthur was operating; the trade was made, and in March of 1931, the family which increased by one more child, Dorothy, born in 1924, moved to their new farm.

The move took two days on the road. Don, eleven years old, drove a team and buggy with provisions, Alvin Peterson drove a team and rack with farm equipment and a cow, and Arthur drove a cross-motor Case tractor and wagon with household furnishings. Mable set out a day later with the family car – a 1926 Chevrolet (bought in 1927 for eleven hundred dollars) with more household equipment, and Hilda and Dorothy. The car lacked the power to make the crest of the last hill, a mile and a half from the farm, and Hilda remained there with her foot on the brake, until Mable and Dorothy walked to the farm and the men were dispatched with a team of horses to propel the car up the hill. A few hours later the family was united in their new home, chilly and stark though it was with the stove-pipe temporarily protruding through

a window until such time that another length could be procured and added to cover the distance to the chimney!

The school district, Poplar Valley had been in operation since 1927, and Hilda and Don were soon attending. The farm was located two miles south of the school, and the other half-section was a mile west of the school, necessitating a lengthy move, for the type of machinery used. The Case tractor was dealt off for a Hart-Parr and horses were depended on for haying and winter trips to town.

The decade of the "thirties" was difficult, but, in retrospect, left a legacy of "Education in Living" unique to the families who lived through that era. Every farmer became some kind of horticulturist, carpenter, mechanic, veterinarian, inventor and financier who could make a dollar stretch. His wife became a gardener, seamstress, nurse, dairymaid, poultryman, horseman, carpenter, and mechanic's helper, and the kind of cook who could make food stretch! Together they were interested and active in school, community and government. The thirties were also a decade of "people needing people." Harvest called for large crews and large scale cooking. Buildings were erected; roads needed work as well as culverts and bridges. Raising a flock of turkeys was popular and they had to be butchered for the Christmas market. Cooperative effort was needed for running the school and carrying out social activities such as picnics, dances and church services. Quilting "bees" served as a social event and also produced a popular article for a raffle, or wedding gift.

Women's Associations were formed which included women from more than one district, a collection was gathered at each meeting and used with great ingenuity and eventually some needy souls benefited from their efforts. The moral and educational value of such associations was in the sharing of methods of preserving foods, and raising gardens and families. The men shared inventive ideas on farming which resulted in improved conditions such as wind-powered 32-volt electrical systems which created more candle power than the coaloil lamps provided, shop tools for repairing machinery, equipping wagons with rubber-tired wheels, and remodeling automobile bodies into trucks to effectively haul a barrel of gas.

By 1934 it became popular to think that this was a "God forsaken country" and that the northern part of the province may offer a better living, at least the wind would be stilled by the forests! So, Arthur and two of his neighbors Al Parries and Charlie Raymond headed north for a look at the Prince Albert country, but satisfied that things were bad all over, they returned and accepted the south for what it had to offer.

It would be honest to say that every farm family received relief cheques during these years. Food and clothing was sent out by train from the east, and the excitement of receiving a box of second-hand clothing was second only to Christmas. Food, such as dried cod, cheese, canned herring and chicken haddie varied the diet for one winter. Housewives were challenged to prepare the salted cod in such a way that the family found it palatable! This was a subject of much conversation at the social gatherings.

The first wedding in the family was in 1935, when Hilda married Dave Layton and they began farming in the Lisieux area. In five years they moved back to the Quantock district to the farm formerly occupied by Everet Campbell. Here their four children were raised until 1954 when they moved into Rockglen. Don married Tillie Nord of the Assiniboia district in 1941 and he served with the Canadian Army from 1941-45. Two sons Leonard and Garry, were born to them before they returned to the farm after the war ended. Lyle joined the family in 1950. Dorothy married Ador Keller in 1944 and moved to the Keller farm where they raised four children: Colin, born in 1949, Donna and Dora, in 1953 and Brian in 1956.

In 1944, the East half of seventeen was sold to Charlie Panzer and Arthur and Mable moved to a one section farm adjoining the Layton farm, where they lived until Don and Tillie returned.

Having the children married and settled in a life of their own made it possible for Art and Mable to return to England. Mable's father was in ailing health and living alone, so their visit extended to two years, after an absence of thirty-six. They returned in 1948, bought a house from Otto Knops, and lived comfortably in active retirement.

Mable passed away in 1965 and was followed by Arthur five years later.

As of 1977, forty-six years after settling in the Rockglen district, their descendants numbered 3 children; 11 grandchildren; seventeen great-grand children, living in various areas of Canada.

### **BARRETT, William (Bill) And Ruth**

I came to Canada, by train, from North Dakota in 1910, after graduation from College.

At Portal, it took three days to test the stock that we were bringing with us. We eventually arrived at Moose Jaw, one of the bigger land centers in those days. After unloading, we headed south with our belongings and stock.

After a few days, we reached our destination which now would be one mile north and four miles east of Scout Lake.

I returned to Wallace, Idaho, to teach school but the call of the prairie prevailed and, after one year, I 'caught' a train to Glasgow, Montana. I started walking to Canada but, on the way, I met people by the name of Murphy, who were hauling lumber to the Killdeer district, west of where Rockglen is now. They told me how to get to Grant's who lived by the lake, and said that they would show me how to get to the Little Woody district which was where I was heading.

In the following years, while working here and there on threshing and harvesting crews, I courted Ruth Heagy, also from the Dakotas. We married and had four children, two boys and two girls. The first child, a girl, died of the flu in 1918. The other children are John, Bruce and Bessie, in that order.

I eventually filed on land by 'The narrows' at Fife Lake (the lake). This is where the family grew up and I became involved with the Wheat Pool and the Co-op's.

When the children became of high school age, we moved to Constance to be closer to Fife Lake and Rockglen. Then, when World War Two came along, we moved to Constance permanently.

In 1945 John married Claire Schaffer and returned to Constance. Bruce and he farmed with me for a few years. John eventually moved from Rockglen to Moose Jaw and then to Nanaimo, B.C.

Bessie married Henry Davis and now lives in Vancouver, BC.

After moving back and forth, summer and winter. and doing our farming from Constance, we moved to Rockglen to stay in 1965. We then farmed from Rockglen. Son, Bruce, stayed with us all these years and has now retired from farming.

My dear wife passed away in 1972 after a long illness. I still have one quarter section of land – just have to keep in touch, you know.

### **BEAUBIEN, Lorenzo And Anna**

In 1910 Lorenzo Beaubien, a sixteen year old boy came west with his father and stepmother. Also his sister. brother-in-law and family came with them. They arrived in Moose Jaw by train and went the rest of the way with horses and wagon to his brother-in-law's ranch.

Lorenzo took up a homestead in 1912 and lived in one-room house until he and his father built a two-storey frame house in 1916. His parents lived with him until he got married.

Lorenzo and Anna Fontaine were married in Weedon, Quebec in 1928 and settled in Scout Lake.

Anna Fontaine was born in 1900 in Weedon, Quebec. She was a school teacher for seven years at Fontainebleau. She also worked in a Westinghouse factory for two years in Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts.

In 1930 their first son Benoit was born and died at birth. In the years that followed the rest of their children were born. Rejean, Carmel, Rayomde, Bertrand and Laval and later Juliette. She died later in 1949.

Lorenzo and Anna left their homestead in 1962 and retired in Assiniboia. Lorenzo passed away in 1968. Anna is presently living in Assiniboia and enjoys her children coming to visit her.

### **BEAUREGARD, Joseph And Juliette**

Joseph Pierre Beauregard was born at St. Dominique, Quebec in August, 1874. He married Juliette Beaubien who was born at Nicolet, Quebec in 1877. They were married on August 23, 1897. They had fifteen children.

In 1909 he came west and filed on a homestead and also leased ranch land.

He went back East to spend the winter and came West in early spring 1910. Juliette and seven children left the East in June and arrived in Moose Jaw. They drove the one hundred miles to Willow Bunch with a democrat and horses and later drove to the homestead. A small mud shack was built for their first home. Oxen were used to break the land for this first crop.

Mr. Beauregard bought a store in Leeville, some three miles northeast of Assiniboia, and the family moved there. All the merchandise for the store had to be hauled by wagon from Moose Jaw.

When the railroad arrived in 1913 and the townsite of Assiniboia was located, Joseph built a store, with living quarters for the family on the 2nd floor. At the same time he had a store in St. Victor for a few years.

In 1918 he was elected Reeve of the Municipality of Willow Bunch for one term. In the fall of 1918 the family moved back to the farm and ranch. He sold the store in 1919.

In 1927 a new, two-storey frame house was built. In 1927 Joseph was named postmaster of Scout Lake and had a beer store there too. When he and his wife retired in 1947 they went back to the farm.

Joseph died in Willow Bunch in 1947. Mrs. Beauregard died in Assiniboia in 1961.

There is only an old crumbled-down, mud blacksmith shop to mark the place of the old homestead and ranch, which is now owned by the O'Reilly brothers.

### **BELBECK, William And Annie**

William Belbeck came to the Rockglen district in the fall of 1909 and located his future farm site, which is on the southwest shore of the Fife Lake. In the spring he returned bringing his family.

They traveled by railroad to Weyburn, the end of the railroad line. Loading their belongings on wagons and trailing their milk cow, they trekked one hundred miles to their new home.

The summer of 1910 was spent breaking land and fifty acres were seeded. By winter the family was living in a sod house.

The first wheat grown for market was hauled by Mr. Belbeck and his ten year old son, John, with two wagons to Viceroy. In 1913 the railroad came to Verwood, but there was no elevator so they spent the winter hauling to an open bin near the railroad track. In the spring the grain was loaded into boxcars. The distance became less when the railroad came to Assiniboia in 1918, and Rockglen in 1926.

Mr. and Mrs. Belbeck spent their life on the farm raising their seven children, John, Julia (Mrs. Ernest Riley), Ivy (Mrs. Barry Hill), Muriel (Mrs. Raymond Heagy), Bill, Hal, and Dan.

Mr. Belbeck passed away in 1954 at the age of eighty.

Mrs. Belbeck moved to Rockglen in 1962, then to the Pioneer Lodge in Assiniboia in 1973. On September 1, 1976, her ninetieth birthday was celebrated on the family farm with fifty-nine of the family members present. She passed away in March of 1977.

**BELIVEAU, Edward And Clara** – by Clara Nichols Beliveau

Edward Joseph Emile Roland Beliveau, better known as Eddie, was born on December 2, 1899, in Providence, Rhode Island, the eleventh of eighteen children. As a teenager he apprenticed as a baker in Rhode Island. Eddie came to Canopus in 1918 where he stayed with his father who had moved to Saskatchewan two or three years earlier. It wasn't long before Eddie had one hundred and sixty-two acres of land which he began farming.

I, Clara Beliveau, née Nichols, was born in Cumbly County in Nova Scotia in 1906. I came to Stonehenge (which was later called Maxstone) in 1907, by train, with my mother and brothers and sisters. Here we were reunited with my father who had come out a year earlier to homestead. My first home was a sod house which was later replaced by a frame house located on the same property. I have many memories of my childhood – working in the fields in bare feet, listening to my father read the Bible every Sunday, watching him make soap and eating pull candy he made for Christmas. In 1918 the Asian flu struck our home taking both my father and a brother. We left Maxstone and moved to Scout Lake. After I finished school I worked as a janitor for a year and then went to work for my sister and her husband, Henry Jacobs. It was here that I met Eddie on one of his trips to Jacobs' place with the mail.

On August 11, 1924, we were married in Verwood and believe it or not our car ran out of gas just east of St. Victor my mother and Dave Beliveau were with us. HAPPY HONEYMOON!

Eddie and I farmed in Canopus. He made Bennett buggies out of old cars and sold them for thirty dollars. I had my turn hosting a quilting bee when the Ladies' Aid met at our home. Often neighbors would drop in to listen to the radio around election time as we had one of the first radios in the area.

All was not so well. After eight years of crop failure we sold all we could and went to British Columbia in 1934. We sold our cows for eight dollars a head. Thirty dollars was the top price we got for one of our horses. Eddie, myself and our family of five children, began our journey on June 2nd, and arrived in Grand Forks, B.C. on June 14th, where we made our home. We had bought an old Ford car, in which to travel, from Joe Fordema for thirty dollars. During the trip the boys had a decided advantage of relieving themselves through the floorboards of the car.

In Grand Forks we rented a house for six weeks. There was no water; we had no furniture except for beds. We had with us our life savings – three hundred and sixty dollars. We then bought a furnished house for one hundred and sixty-five dollars.

Eddie worked at many jobs and was well-liked by the people. He cooked for men who were fighting forest fires and worked in a fruit orchard. The latter was a daily eight mile bicycle trip. He then bought a Second Hand Store. During the Second World War, Eddie found himself holding down three jobs because of the lack of men folk in the area. He delivered groceries, worked as a baker and ran his own Second Hand Store. Later on he was called upon to perform many jobs plumbing, carpentry, shingling, cabinet making and building log homes, which won him the title of "Jack of all Trades". Besides this he now owned homes in the area and a trailer court at Christina Lake. This he enjoyed. By this time our family had grown to eleven children, six boys and five girls.

Although the distance from Saskatchewan to British Columbia, where we moved, was many, many miles, it was shortened by the occasional welcome visit from people from the homeland,

Rockglen. Eddie often reflected on memories he cherished of our early farming days. Eddie had his first heart attack in 1959 and he passed away on April 5, 1969. He lives on in the memory of his family and many friends.

### **BELIVEAU, Harry And Magdalene**

Joseph and Rose Beliveau of Providence, Rhode Island, were the parents of twelve children. Relatives at Willow Bunch wrote telling of the reasonable land offered in Saskatchewan. Joseph decided that this was the golden opportunity he had been waiting for – wide open prairie on which to loose his seven sons!

Joseph and his son, Dave, came to Willow Bunch in 1915 to survey the situation. They filed on adjoining homesteads ten miles west of the present site of Rockglen, then spent the winter with relatives in Willow Bunch. In the spring of 1916, Joseph bought a team of oxen and drove to his homestead. Farming with oxen proved to be a challenge. Heel flies drove the oxen to distraction and they often headed from the field to the slough for protection. There they would remain until the flies left in the evening. Dave was quite satisfied to let his father farm with oxen, but he chose horses, which were more reliable, to do his farming.

Joseph Beliveau migrated to Rhode Island each fall to spend the winters with his family and returned to Saskatchewan each spring to operate his farm. In approximately 1924, Joseph returned to Rhode Island permanently. Joseph died at a ripe old age in 1948; Rose almost reached the century mark before her death in the fifties.

Over the years Joseph had convinced several of his sons to join him in Canada. Harry, Eddie, Charlie and Leroy all spent some time in Saskatchewan. Eddie married and farmed in the Canopus area for several years. Charlie, a painter by trade, painted elevators along the rail line from Gravelbourg south. He was in the Canopus district from 1930 to 1933, then was never heard of again. Harry homesteaded in 1917 next to his father and brother Dave. Leroy, a younger son, came to the Canopus area in the late thirties but wasn't very impressed with the country. He left for Assiniboia with Harry's car and money to buy a supply of groceries for Harry and a neighbor . . . he never returned. Rose Beliveau wrote from Rhode Island several months later, that Leroy had arrived home safely.

Magdalene Margret Keck was born in 1902 in Chechedorf, Hungary, one of six children born to the Andrew Kecks. The family immigrated to Regina in 1905 and several years later homesteaded in the Gravelbourg district.

Magdalene Keck Nesiner came to the Canopus area in 1930 with Charlie Beliveau and four small children. They lived in the Joseph Beliveau house until after Charlie's disappearance. In the winter of 1933, Harry took deserted Lena and her five children to the home he had built in 1930. Harry became father to the entire family and made possible extended education for the children who desired it. Lena and Harry married in 1941. Harry and Lena and their two daughters, Carol and Katherine retired to Rockglen in 1951. Harry passed away April 29, 1966 at the age of sixty-three. Lena was almost seventy-five years old at the time of her passing in 1977.

Lena's three daughters, Annie (Mrs. Freddie Huggins), Margret (Mrs. George Pequin) and Beatrice (Mrs. Pat Johnson) became schoolteachers. Johnny is married and owns a trailer court in British Columbia, Robert married Coletta Fitzpatrick of Fir Mountain and resides on Harry's homestead. Carol (Mrs. Bernie Dighans) lives on a farm at Peerless, Montana and Katherine (Mrs. Omer Mondor) of Brandon, Manitoba has just become a nurse.

Harry and Lena Beliveau leave as descendants thirty-five grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren.

### **BENNETT, Fredrick**

Fred was the second youngest child in the Bennett family. He received his education in Creek School. He was interested in farming and helped his family until the Second World War started. He joined the army, and served with the infantry. He saw front line action, but fortunately survived many enemy encounters, unharmed.

When Fred returned home from Europe, he farmed for a number of years. In 1949 he left the farm, and was employed as a farm laborer on different farms. Later he found employment with the C.P.R. He lost his life in a car-train collision at Webb, Sask., in 1966.

Fred was married. His wife Edna resides in Rockglen.

### **BENNETT Henry**

I was about ten years old when we came to the Colony to house number four, so the early trials of pioneer life did not affect me much. When I found out that there was no school I thought that I was in Paradise! I suppose I spent the first summer doing what other youngsters did, trying, not too hard, to stay out of mischief. I, too, gathered my share of "buffalo chips" to keep the fires burning

I remember Mother talking about our trip from Rockglen to the Colony. It was a long trip, over prairie trails. The truck was loaded with boxes of our belongings. When father got out to pick up one of the boxes, which had fallen out, the driver was not aware of this. When we arrived at our new home father was missing! He wandered home later, following the truck trail left in the dust.

During the thirties much of our clothing came from relief boxes. The patches on my shirts and pants did not worry me much, as long as I was warm and comfortable. I remember Mother often remarking, "You have to be thrifty", as she added another patch to some piece of clothing.

I attended Creek School. It was very difficult to keep up with the studies because we were needed at home for farm work. I attended school for eight years.

Once when we were very young, my sister Emily, brother Fred and I were sent for the cows. It was a very misty evening. We did not return in the allotted time so our parents and some of the neighbors went out to look for us. They searched for many hours, but in the mean time we found our way home. When the search was over they found us comfortable at home, waiting for them!

In spite of "hard times" we did have a lot of fun. Almost every Sunday we attended church, which was held at our school. After church we played ball or games. Everyone did more visiting.

When the Second World War started I joined the Artillery Division of the army. I received my full training and got as far as Camp Shilo, the last stopping place before going overseas. It was a disappointment when I failed my medical and was discharged.

I took up farming in earnest. I acquired some land of my own, and for many years the only things I seemed to be able to raise were grasshoppers and Russian Thistles. One year we had a fair crop, but rust destroyed it. In about 1942-43 hordes of army worms walked away with the crops, gardens and leaves off the trees!

In the late forties things began to change. We had a nice herd of cattle; crops yielded up to twelve bushels to an acre. There seemed to be enough straw and bundles for winter feed for cattle.

Electricity was brought out to the farms in 1963 and later telephones.

One by one my brothers and sisters left home. I stayed at home with my parents, until both passed away. I am still residing on the farm that I came out to forty- seven years ago.

### **BENNETT, Robert And Eliza**

The first settlers to arrive at The Colony were Robert and Eliza Bennett and their family of two girls and four boys, in April, 1930. They arrived in Canada, from Ireland, in 1929, but spent a year in Red Deer. When they moved to The Colony, their oldest daughter, Elizabeth, was

employed in Panoka, Alberta and did not accompany them. There were three girls in the family.

The Bennetts had been farmers in Ireland, but farming was difficult in the old country so when the opportunity to move came, Mr. Bennett decided to take it.

The family traveled by train from Red Deer to Rockglen where a truck met them to take them to their new home. After loading the truck with six children, two adults and all the belongings they were able to bring, they started the twenty-five mile trip. There were no roads so trails were followed. It was a long, tiring trip.

Imagine their surprise and disappointment, when, in stead of the lovely homes and lush country, they were greeted by a hastily-constructed, unpainted house. Each house was numbered. This house was number four. A short distance from the house stood the barn, and half way between was the well.

The house was barely furnished. It contained a wooden table, later called a C.P.R. table, and four wooden chairs. There was also a stove and each bedroom contained a bed.

The first summer was a busy summer. Since the promised schools were not there, the older children were able to make the trip to town to get their horses. Mr. Bennett made this trip accompanied by his oldest son, Stanley. There was a carload of horses waiting, some trained and some not so well-trained, but all nervous after the train trip. It was a mini-rodeo when some of these animals took off in every direction. The pump on the town well was no longer there when the dust settled!

The first crop that was planted was five acres of oats. Whatever grew was harvested for winter feed for the animals.

During the first summer the Bennetts were kept busy breaking more land with the walking plough. Mr. Bennett guided the plough while Stanley drove the team. That summer they broke about twenty-five acres.

There were many problems to be solved in this new land. Wood for cooking and heat was scarce. When Mr. Bennett asked the C.P.R. supervisor what they were to burn, he replied, "Buffalo chips." This was a foreign word to the Bennetts, so Mr. Russell took them to the pasture lands to show them where their new fuel could be obtained. It turned out to be piles of dried horse and cow manure. (Perhaps this could be the answer to our present energy crisis!) Later they obtained lignite coal from the Cocking Mine for about two dollars a ton.

The Thirties were hungry years for the Bennetts. The one cow and twelve chickens did not provide enough food to feed a growing family. Relief was supplied from other parts of the country where it was possible to grow gardens.

The Bennetts depended, like all the other Colony families, on boxes of clothing donated by more fortunate people. For food and clothing supplies, trips were made to Killdeer by wagon and team.

1931 the C.P.R. began the construction of the railway from Rockglen to Killdeer. This was a back breaking job, but it did bring in a dollar a day, so Mr. Bennett joined the workers. Many of the farmers would get together and drive to work by team. During the week they stayed in the C.P.R. shacks, and came home for the weekend. The C.P.R. supplied food for these workers. The main food was "C.P.R. strawberries" – dried prunes.

While Mr. Bennett and the boys farmed, the women were kept busy doing their share of work. Mrs. Bennett and the two girls, Florry and Emily, planted a garden the first year. Most of the plants came up quickly, but the onions were missing. "When we checked the onion patch," says Emily, "We found out that I had put the onions in upside down." In time they did find their way up. There were dry years, so the gardens were watered. Water had to be drawn by pail out of a one hundred and twenty-five foot well.

All garden produce was either canned or dried. Many hours were spent making rhubarb, marrow or citron jam. Nothing was allowed to waste. Since there was little money for clothing, Mrs. Bennett spent hours re-making what they had. In later years Mrs. Bennett was heard to say; proudly, "My children were the best patched children on The Colony."

As time went on, and by very careful planning, things began to change. More cattle were added to the herd. There were milk and milk products for food. Turkeys and sheep were added to the farm.

In about 1936 the first good crop of oats was grown, but unfortunately it rusted out; however, it was harvested and stacked for feed but was lost in a prairie fire.

By 1940 the Bennetts were able to buy a second hand truck, followed later by a Hart Power tractor, also a threshing machine.

In the early years the colony was very much isolated. There were no roads and no telephones. Trips to town were made only when absolutely necessary. Mr. Bennett led a very quiet life. He served the school board for several years. When tractors replaced horses he was willing to let the boys do the work, while he did the chores around the yard. Every summer he split piles of wood for winter fuel. He spent many hours just reading and smoking his pipe.

Mrs. Bennett attended church regularly. It was held in a school. The couple visited their neighbors often and visitors at their home were welcomed. No one ever left the house before they had had a cup of tea and lunch.

Many thought the Bennetts should retire, but Mr. Bennett could not leave the farm on which he labored and which he had loved for thirty years. Mrs. Eliza Bennett died in 1961. Mr. Bennett died eight years later in 1969. They are survived by three of their sons, Stan, Henry, and Tom and by three daughters, Elizabeth, Florry (Thompson) and Emily (Hepburn).

### **BENNETT, Stanley And Nettle**

I came to the Colony in 1930, with my parents, at the age of twelve. I was the oldest of the Bennett boys, so was expected to help with the work involved in moving, but all this was an adventure. The condition of the house did not worry me. This was home. The novel way of getting upstairs fascinated me. I remember the steps were pieces of one by four nailed to the side of the wall. After learning the art of scampering up these steps, it was fun. Since there was no school for some time, I became my father's helper at all times. The first summer I spent following the horses and plough up and down the fields, to get new land broken. This was very hard work for a youngster of twelve, especially when there was never quite enough to eat.

I had to shoulder much of the responsibilities of supporting the family. I did not have much time for gathering buffalo chips for fuel, but I had to haul coal from the coal mine. Many times Father did not have the money to pay for it, so we had to work for it.

When my father went to work on the Rockglen Killdeer railway, I had his share of chores to do. I remember one Friday Mother and I made a trip to Canopus to bring father home. This was a long trip, by team, but it was a change from the everyday work.

At first, school classes were held in two houses converted into classrooms. These houses of learning were only eighteen feet by twenty feet, but were packed with about forty students in each. Mr. Dan Cameron, my first teacher, had a full time job keeping order in this classroom. Three students were crowded into desks that were meant for two. I had attended school in Ireland, also in Red Deer, but was put back into grade one in Creek School. This was very discouraging. It was difficult to keep up with the school work. I attended school off and on for four years and when Mr. Cameron suggested that I bring the plough to school, I quit and became a farmer.

We had fun in school. We had a well-organized ball team and played many games against Killdeer and Willow Vale School. I remember a paper chase our teacher organized. We chased through the hills, following a paper trail until we came to the "barrel spring". Here we had a wiener roast. The "barrel spring" was just a water hole, with a barrel stuck in it for watering cows.

During the thirties we received clothing and food bundles on relief. This was very much appreciated, but was not enough, so I had to go out to work too. I helped various farmers. At harvest time I stooked and hauled bundles. Wages were low, but it did help to bring more income for the family. I spent one winter helping a rancher, and all I got was a box of twenty-two shells.

Occasionally, when my parents could afford it, my brother and I would make a trip to Killdeer for groceries. I really enjoyed these trips. On the way to Killdeer we'd call at every house along the trail and they would give us their list for groceries. On the return trip we would deliver the groceries. We were invited into each home for tea and a visit.

When I quit Creek School that was not the end of my education. Later I enrolled in a correspondence school and took a course in Diesel Mechanics. The Second World War broke out and I was not able to get to school to finish this course.

In my younger days, I spent many hours hunting. My brother and I spent many hours chasing coyotes by horseback. I remember, one trip just about proved fatal to us. When we left home in the afternoon, it was sunny and forty above zero. We were very lightly dressed. Very suddenly a blizzard came up. In a short while, perhaps an hour, the temperature dropped to thirty-two below zero. We tried to find shelter in the hills, but when the cold became unbearable we headed for home. We could not see where we were going, but hoped for the best. My brother was freezing; he could not hang onto his saddle, so I put him behind me on my horse. Finally, around midnight, we made it home. My brother was badly frozen. His face and arms were blistered from cold. Mother had to do her best to ease his pains, because there was no way we could get him to town for medical attention.

In 1949 I married Nettie Sopko, the last teacher to teach in the Colony School. We moved to house thirteen where we still reside— only it is a much-improved place. The yard is green. There is a lovely shelterbelt around the yard. The only reminder of the pioneering days and of the thirties, is the C.P.R. table which is in the basement!

August 27, 1971 was the saddest day of my life. That was the day the Mounties brought us the heart-breaking news that our daughter Eileen was killed in Onion Lake, where she was employed training horses. She was buried three days before her twenty-first birthday.

Our two boys Steven and Lorne are interested in farming. I am certain that their farming experiences will be much easier than mine were.

### **BENNETT, Thomas**

Tom is the youngest of the Bennett family. He was only five years old when the family moved to the Colony.

The wide open spaced for play excited him, but whether the food came from relief boxes, or his clothing was patched it did not worry him.

Tom enjoyed school, but when the war started he stayed home to help with the farming. He completed grade ten.

"When I started school, in 1932 the Colony school had around forty students. In 1954, when our son, Raymond, started school the Colony School or Creek School, was closed, because there were not enough students to have it opened. This year, after our two daughters, Gwendolyn and Janice complete their grade twelve, there will be no students in this district."

In 1946, Tom married Moyra Clappen. Tom met Moyra when she and her mother were visiting Canadian friends they had met in England during war time. They had three boys and two girls.

Tom is farming and raising sheep in the district.

### **BENSON, Olanso And Anna**

The two young ladies walked out of the house, beyond the beam of light, and into the darkness. They had had a pleasant evening and now would walk a short mile home. They were a little edgy as they had been swapping ghost stories.

"I don't like walking after dark, Alma, I'm glad you're here."

"Don't worry, Helen," her sister answered, "I'm not afraid."

They hurried up the hill past the trees. Then right in front of them a ghostly, rattling sound stopped them in their tracks. They screamed in terror, as Alma dropped to the ground in a faint.

Her sister tried to revive her, but to no avail. Then Olanso Benson dashed out of the trees and picked up the stricken girl. "It's me, Alma, it's me, Alma, it's Olanso."

Earlier in the evening he had heard Helen Borgerson admit to being afraid to walk home alone, while Alma confidently said she wasn't afraid. This was enough to inspire Mr. Benson. He found an old hinder canvas and attached a twine to it. Then he placed it, slats down, on the road, while he hid in the trees holding the twine. At just the right moment, he pulled.

Jokes like this were common when Olanso Benson was around. He loved having fun and his good humor lightened many of the grim days the pioneers faced.

Mr. Benson was born in Hatton, North Dakota in 1882. The family moved to McHenry some time later, "where his father operated a livery barn. Mr. Benson was a lover of horses, and here he had ample opportunity to work with them. For a time he drove livery, largely driving salesmen to surrounding areas, and later was a harness maker. He took great pride in "well dressed" horses, and saw to it that the harness was always in meticulous shape. Later, while farming in Saskatchewan, his driving teams were well-known by their dressy collars and tinkling bells.

It was in McHenry that young Anna Kanten came his life, when she began work at the harness shop. She was the eldest daughter of Martha and Andrew Kanten and was born in Watson, Minnesota in 1885. In 1900 her family moved to McHenry, where she met Olanso Benson, whom she married in 1903. This same year the young couple filed on a homestead and lived there until 1911. Their first three children were born there, Myrtle, Ruth and Ervin.

Then, looking for adventure and better opportunity, Mr. Benson, with three others, Andrew Kanten, Eric

Moe and Tom Askeland, arrived in Moose Jaw, and, in February, 1910, filed on land, sight unseen, in the district that later became Kantenville.

The first grain was hauled to Verwood, and later to Assiniboia before the rail came to Lisieux in 1926.

In 1917, Mr. Benson bought his first car, a Ford Touring, for which he paid five hundred and forty-five dollars.

He farmed with mules from 1921 to 1938, and he believed they were superior to horses in many ways. They were smaller and more agile, and even after a full days work, would have energy left over to play. Being intelligent animals, they realized when it was quitting time. One mule, Colonel, always brayed at twelve noon.

Four more children were born on this farm, Selma, Lillian, Clarence and Gilman. The family can recall many happy memories of their childhood years, even though many of them were lived in the great depression. Farms were close together and there were many children. There was a great deal of visiting and twenty or thirty guests for dinner was not uncommon. Even when money was scarce, the women were resourceful and managed to put together good meals on short notice.

In summer, ball was a popular pastime, and in winter skating parties on nearby Fife Lake were enjoyed. At Christmas, the Norwegian custom of Jule Bok or Christmas Fool, was observed. The participants dressed up in old clothes and donned masks made by painting features on bags. Then they went from house to house, in sleighs, singing Christmas songs at each place. The evening ended with a lunch in some home.

There were many hardships, but people helped each other. Particularly bad was the lack of medical care. Babies were delivered in homes with the help of midwives. Theolina and Augusta Borgerson were two such midwives, and the story is told of how Elmer Kanten skated across the lake and brought a midwife on a hand sleigh, for the birth of one of the Benson babies, probably Lillian. The district was fortunate in having an herbalist, Charles Piot, on a nearby farm. His common-sense advice and herbs, wrought near miracles in many cases.

In 1938, the mules were traded in on a new Oliver rubber-tired tractor. This modern wonder even had a starter and lights. With it, life on the farm changed for the better. As the crops were better, so living conditions improved.

In his later years Mr. Benson was able to laugh at the hardships of the early days. He managed to see humor in any situation.

Mrs. Benson would smile at his antics, and then go contentedly on with her work in the kitchen. She hummed to herself as she prepared supper for the crowd.

They retired to Assiniboia in 1948. He passed away in 1955 and she in 1961.

The family all reside in Saskatchewan. Myrtle Farnham, Ruth Ekdahl and Ervin, who married Violet Campbell, live in Moose Jaw. Selma Ekdahl lives in Rockglen and Lillian Cowan in Fife Lake. Clarence married Violet Perrier, and Gilman, who married Inga Fjeldberg, farm east of Lisieux. Clarence and his family live on the original farm site.

In the early thirty-seven years of farming in Canada, the Bensons saw immense changes. Prairie trails became gravel roads and then pavement; their tiny shack became a two-storey, modern dwelling, and tractors replaced the horses and mules. Life on the farm was much better and beneath it all was the soil.

The land had been good to them.

### **BERTHELOT, Eugene And Clarinde**

Eugene Berthelot came to Canada from France with his parents, Francois and Geanne, and his brother Peter in 1913. His home country called him back for duty during the First World War, 1914 to 1918. After the war he returned to the Rockglen district where he homesteaded three miles east of the town. He obtained an adjoining quarter section through the army and then purchased his dad's homestead. On November 24, 1924, he married Clarinde Riel. They lost their first son, Eugene, at birth. Their second son, Aime, was born in the old adobe house. By this time work was progressing on their new home with the help of Albert Setrum and Art Heagy. Their third son, Paul, was born in the new house in 1928. This was the year Eugene breathed a sigh of relief no more trips to Verwood to haul grain. The railroad had come to Rockglen!

Unfortunately, there wasn't much grain to haul as this was the year of the district's worst hail storm. In 1934, their fourth son, Florent, was born. Dust storms and no crops were common in

the following years. In 1938 what little crop there was rusted out. It was stacked for feed. 1939 brought new hopes with an abundance of rain. In 1948 their fifth son, Jean, was born.

Eugene Berthelot passed away in 1954 and his wife in 1965.

### **BINDER, Clarence**

Clarence Binder was born in Minneapolis in 1894. His father, of German descent, was also born there. The family moved to South Dakota where they farmed for about ten years before returning to Wheaton, Minnesota, in 1910.

In 1918, when all eligible young men were drafted for war. Clarence was examined and classed "F" so he was not accepted for military service. He headed west to Montana and while at Lewistown he got a job with a rancher. This was his first experience in mountains. The snow was deep and "everything looked level". Needless to say, this inexperienced young man had a hard time hauling hay through the deep coulees. It was here that he heard his first coyote howl and he still remembers his fright in being left alone for a weekend. After that experience he decided he'd had enough of mountains and snow.

Following this he was taken in by a gentleman originally from South Carolina. In his interview he was asked if he played cribbage. He didn't, as he was brought up to believe cards were "the work of the devil", so he was glad to learn the game, especially since he was getting free room and board. He recalls the family being very nice. The mother was a reformed snuff dipper. This practice was common among young southern belles, but frowned upon in the north. A bit of powdered snuff was placed in the mouth with a dampened stick. Clarence tried it but he preferred Copenhagen.

Clarence took an early interest in motors, tinkering with the cars of the day and a motorcycle in 1914, so he was able to qualify for a job with an implement company as a "trouble shooter" repairing tractors. His real desire was to have a farm of his own, so in 1922 he went to Idaho intending to homestead but when he saw all the trees he decided he wanted to farm, not pull stumps. So he headed for Canada. He came to Moose Jaw by train, then to Assiniboia. His first job was at Valor where he worked for Alberta Pacific Grain Company building a house for a grain buyer. In the fall, harvest wages were more lucrative so he stooked, then operated a threshing rig owned by Harry Robson, Emil Dahlman, and Carl Frick. That winter he spent in Kansas City, Missouri, at an auto and electrical school. The following fall he returned to operate the same machine.

In the winter of 1923, he and his brother Alvin, who had also come to Canada, made an extended trip south. In a Model T – Touring car which was bought for \$50 at a Sheriff's sale, they went as far as Tijuana, Mexico, through Oregon and California and returned in the spring via Kansas to Minnesota. Most of the roads were gravel at that time.

Two winters were spent logging in Minnesota and the fall months saw him in the harvest fields of Saskatchewan. In 1924 he operated a threshing rig for John Fjeldberg, and in 1925 he realized his dream of owning his own farm when he bought land seven miles southeast of Rockglen. He lived there until 1948 when he sold to Carl Spagrud and bought the farm of Scotty Ross. In May of 1965 he retired to Rockglen.

He has never regretted coming to Canada, but he still holds his American citizenship.

### **BJORNSON, Anton And Lena**

Anton Bjornson was born in Ednedalen, Norway in 1876. Leaving Norway at the age of seventeen, he arrived in Benson, Minnesota, in 1893. Here he worked at jobs in the farming area, until he took a homestead at Peever, South Dakota, in 1897. Anton's older brother, Ole Bjornson, had come to the United States earlier and was homesteading in that district.

Anton met Lena Odden, who also came from Ednedalen, Norway, with her parents at a young age. Anton and Lena were married in 1904, living on the homestead at Peever where five of their children were born.

They decided to come to Canada, in 1914, in search of better land. Ole Bjornson, his older brother, already had a homestead in the Willow Bunch district, which later became Little Valley School District. They sold their farm at Peever, South Dakota, and loaded up their stock, machinery and household goods on the train. It was shipped to Verwood, Saskatchewan, where they unloaded. They then moved their belongings to their homestead in the Little Valley School District where they lived for four years. They moved to the Kabrud School District, in 1918, where they farmed for twenty-seven years and raised a family of twelve children. Being close to the Pole Trail, they had lots of company dropping in, especially the North West Mounted Police who stayed overnight while on duty between Wood Mountain and Willow Bunch. In 1928 they built a large new house which is still being used by their son, Louis.

In 1945 they retired to Moose Jaw where they lived for eight years. In 1953 they moved to Rockglen where they bought a house on 1st Street. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the home farm, with all their children present, except one.

In 1957 Lena passed away, followed by Anton in 1963. They are both buried in Rockglen cemetery.

In August 1967 the Bjornson family had a reunion at family farm. About eighty people; parents, children grandchildren arrived with tents and trailers. It was first time in twenty-nine years that all twelve of them had been together. They enjoyed a turkey dinner at noon and wiener roasts at night. The younger ones, and some not so young, enjoyed softball games and horseshoes and dancing on the grass at night. Music was supplied by whoever could play some musical instrument.

- 1 – Alfred – never married, lives in Regina at C.N.I.B.
  - 2 – Mabel – married Thor Spagrud, lives in Rockglen has four children.
  - 3 – Klara – married Ivor Spagrud, lives in Tisdale, has five children.
  - 4 – Bernard – married Ella Boyd, lives in Tisdale, has one child.
  - 5 – Anna – married Herb Derbyshire, lives in Assiniboia, has three children.
  - 6 – Ted – married Jean Brown lives in Rockglen, has two children.
  - 7 – Louis – married Edna Bell, lives in Rockglen, has three children.
  - 8 – Esther – married Bert Watson, lives in Stevensville, Ont., has five children.
  - 9 – Olga – married Harold Rosvold, lives in Saskatoon, has four children.
  - 10 – Edwin – married Doris Belter, lives in Moose Jaw, has two children.
  - 11 – Roy – married Eunice Kanton, lives at Scout Lake, has three children.
  - 12 – Kenneth – married Charlotte Yost, lives at Rockglen, has four children.
- There are thirty-six grandchildren and thirty-eight great-grandchildren.

### **BLOOM, Alfred And Mabel**

Mr. Bloom was born in Chicago Heights, Ill., U.S.A. 1894. He came to Canada in 1911 from South Dakota and spent the first winter in the Viceroy area. He homesteaded in 1912 in the Lacordaire district.

In 1917 he married Mabel Nelson. She was born in 1902, in North Dakota and came to Canada with her family in 1913. In the same year, while they were still living in a tent, a big cyclone occurred which was quite an experience. The cyclone took the tent and to keep from being blown away by the wind they had to lay flat on the ground and hold onto the grass roots until the storm was over. They, along with other neighbors who had lost their homes, spent the night at the old Slorach place, which was still standing after the storm. Mr. Bloom and part of his family were haying in Montana at the time and were also hit by the storm.

Mr. and Mrs. Bloom farmed in the Lacordaire district until 1928 when they took over the Bamfort place, one mile west of Wheat Bench School. They lived there rough most of the dirty

thirties' and in 1937 they moved to the Frank Slorach farm where they farmed until their retirement in 1953, when they moved to Rockglen.

Mr. and Mrs. Bloom had six children; Floyd, Myra (Mrs. Vic Gording), Ralph, Leila (Mrs. Leonard Borgerson), Vivian (Mrs. Charles Jarton) and Larry. Five of the children reside in and around Rockglen with Larry at Killdeer. Mr. Bloom still lives in his own home in Rockglen. Mrs. Bloom passed away in 1974.

### **BOLSTER, Lucius And Clara**

Lucius J. Bolster and Miss Clara Klebe were married July 12, 1913 at Mondak, North Dakota. Almost immediately they filed on a homestead on the west fork of the Poplar River, north of Opheim, Montana. They built their own small house and other necessary buildings. It was here their two daughters, Adeline and LaRene were born. They stayed on the homestead long enough to "prove up".

In 1918 they moved from Montana to southern Saskatchewan, to get to "high grass". The "high grass" disappeared but the Bolsters stayed on. Their cattle ranch was located fifteen miles southwest of Rockglen on what was later named "Bolster Creek", in the Willowvale district. Mr. Bolster was the mail carrier from Wood Mountain to Willowvale from 1922 to 1942. Mrs. Bolster was postmistress of Willowvale Post Office for many years. Mr. Bolster was secretary of the Bordervale School District and secretary of the Wood Mountain Turf Club for years. He was very interested in the Wild Horse Stampede which was one of the best at the time. Mrs. Bolster operated an eating concession during stampede days.

During the drought and depression years they worked hard raising a large garden which included thousands of cabbages as well as other vegetables. Water for the garden came from a good spring which ran through the yard. They sold butter, eggs and cheese to supplement their income. However they were more fortunate than many of the neighbours because of the small but steady income from the mail route and the post office.

Their two Sons Leonard and Edwin were born on the ranch. Leonard died in infancy. Their youngest daughter LaRene was killed in a car accident on August 14, 1936. She was teaching at Bordervale, the home school, at the time and living at home. Adeline and LaRene both graduated from Moose Jaw Normal School. Edwin attended high school at Killdeer.

Mr. and Mrs. Bolster and son Ed moved to Rockglen in 1942 where they operated the Bolster Hotel. They later sold the hotel and bought a dry goods store, "Pops Ready-to-Wear". L. J. Bolster served as overseer of the village of Rockglen for a number of years and, when it was incorporated in 1927, became the town's first mayor. He served dutifully in that capacity until his last illness. He passed away October 21, 1961, in the Rockglen hospital at the age of eighty-three.

After his death Mrs. Bolster maintained her home, living there until 1968 when she moved to Pioneer Lodge, Assiniboia. She died at Ross Payant Centennial Home on February 2, 1977 and was laid to rest beside her late husband in the Rockglen Cemetery. She was eighty-nine years of age.

Edwin with his wife Nora (nee Zopf) operated the telephone office in Rockglen for many years. Their three children Marilyn, Larry, and Donald were born here. They moved to Moose Jaw in 1968. Ed became ill and was forced to retire. He died in 1974.

Adeline is married to Wayne Lowthian. They live on a farm near Peerless, Montana where they raise wheat and cattle. They have one son, Wayne Michel.

### **BORGERSON, Julius And Inga**

Julius Borgerson's parents came to the United States from Norway in the late 1800's and settled, for a short time, near the town of Bellingham, Minnesota where Julius was born. A few years later the family moved to Watertown, South Dakota and after a short stay there moved to the district of Hamar, North Dakota. During the years at Hamar, Julius' family suffered many hardships, including the loss of his father, Andrew, and his brother, Berndt. This left a family of eight for Julius to help support.

Julius attended school until he was big enough to do a man's work. He worked on different farms as a boy until he rented land in that area and began farming on his own. Julius married Inga Rude at the age of twenty-three years.

Inga Rude's family, the Helga Rudes, originally from Norway, came from Iowa and also settled in the Hamar district where Inga and Julius attended the same school as children. They were married in the Sigdal Lutheran church which was the centre of community activity at that time and still is to this day. With the promise of free homesteads in Canada, Julius traveled north to Canada from the Dakotas in 1912, accompanied by his mother, his brother Morris and his Uncle, Carl. He brought his wife Inga and baby daughter, Alice, to Canada in 1913 and settled in the area known as Moyer School District. Some of their former neighbours, at that time and in the following years, were William Belbeck, Lon Chilson Sr., Minnow. Morgan and Aaron Moyer, Harry Knox, Lloyd Bloomfield, Hugh Whitelaw, Tony Prefontaine Paul Bechard, the Hunters and LaTours.

Julius hauled his grain to Verwood until the railway reached Assiniboia. With the building of the railway south from Assiniboia Julius eventually hauled his wheat to the new town of Rockglen by 1927.

He served for many years on the local school board, as a Pool delegate, briefly, and as a councilor for Division six of the Rural Municipality of Poplar Valley number twelve, for a number of years. During the thirties he became directly involved in the political issues of the day and was an active local member of the C.C.F.. immediately after its formation in 1932.

Inga and Julius Borgerson retired from farming and settled in Rockglen in 1951. Inga passed away in 1955 and Julius in 1972. They are survived by two daughters, Alice (Mrs. John Link and Bernice (Mrs. Clarence Heagy) both of Moose Jaw, and three sons Allan, Leonard and Malcolm. Allan married Anne Jupp from England, after a previous marriage to Linda Panzer who passed away in 1956. Leonard married Leila Bloom from the Rockglen district and Malcolm married Pat Sharpe from Regina. The three Borgerson families presently farm just north of Rockglen on land that includes the original homestead of Julius and Inga Borgerson.

#### **BREMNER, John** – by Edna Roberts

John Bremner began work with the Bancroft Times at Bancroft, Ontario, in 1894, at thirty years of age. He then went to Minnedosa, Manitoba to publish the Mercury from 1905 to 1908. Later, he published the Eyebrow Herald and the Bridgeford Free Press when he moved to Saskatchewan.

Eventually he took a homestead northeast of Willows, Saskatchewan, and worked part time in Assiniboia at the Assiniboia Times Office.

In November of 1926, John arrived in Rockglen to look for a building in which to begin publishing the Rockglen Review for its owner, W. W. Stewart of Assiniboia. Mr. Charles Haenel had harvested his wheat crop from the townsite, and the area was bustling with activity as people began to move in buildings and construct others.

John set up his printing business, publishing not only the Rockglen Review, but also the Coronach Courier as well. This necessitated a trip to Coronach by train each week to gather news and advertising. He would travel down one night and return the following morning.

In January of 1927, John's twin daughters, Dolly and Winnie, arrived in Rockglen. They made the trip by train, although the train was not yet carrying passengers. They left their older sister Edna behind in Assiniboia where she was working at that time.

The girls immediately adapted to life in Rockglen. They started taking their grade ten by correspondence, and worked with their father. They had no house at first and simply curtained off living quarters in the print shop. Both girls played softball on Rockglen's first ladies' team and traveled to Constance, Fife Lake and Coronach. Winnie pitched and Dolly was catcher.

In the summer of 1927, Winnie met Mac McBurney and lost interest in school. The couple was married in September of that year.

During that summer, John had decided to build a home. He built most of it himself with some help at pounding nails from his daughters. It was a happy day when it was completed.

Dolly left Rockglen to finish her school year in Assiniboia in the fall. She returned to take her grade eleven, and was in the first class to complete that grade in Rockglen. Her fellow students were Alice Borgerson and Marge Elliott. Their teacher was Mr. Prestead.

In the fall of 1930, Winnie and Mac moved Saskatoon and Dolly went to Normal school in Moose Jaw. She returned to Rockglen in 1931 and completed her grade twelve. Once again she returned to working in the print shop.

John and his daughter bought the shop from Mr. Stewart. They did a lot of "job" printing as well publishing the two newspapers. Dolly liked the work and John needed the help. He told Dolly she was the fastest, cleanest typesetter he had ever had work for him, with the exception of her mother who had set type for him the early years of their marriage.

Dolly taught school at Lingford School from 1932-34. She then went to Winnipeg and took a business course. When she returned to Rockglen, she taught at Ayrton School for two years. During the late 1930s she worked for Chess Sproule in the relief office in Rockglen for five years. Shortly after, in 1941, she met and married Harold Wang and moved to Winnipeg.

John retired from printing in 1938 and spent some time traveling and writing a book. He died in Moose Jaw in 1945 at the age of eighty-one.

Dolly and Winnie eventually moved to Tucson, Arizona, where they raised their families. Winnie followed in her father's footsteps and owned and operated her own print shop.

John's daughter Edna married and moved to Rockglen where she raised five children as Mrs. Walter Roberts.

### **BOUVIER, Henri And Adeline**

Henri Zoutique Bouvier, born in Bolveil, Quebec in 1884 came with his parents to Manitoba in 1906. He resided there for seven years, until April 1913 when he left Fortier, Man, for Vanguard. He had two boxcars and two flatcars, loaded with livestock, a tractor, a plow and a threshing machine. He arrived in Vanguard, with no information as to where his father's homestead was situated, except that it was south of Vanguard. He set off on foot to Ville Bouvier, the Post Office southeast of Vanguard, where his brother lived. He arrived in Arbuthnot, met a Mr. Johnson and asked him if he knew where Ville Bouvier Post Office was. Mr. Johnson said that it was his Post Office and was at the home of Moise Douville, Henri's brother-in-law.

Henri worked for Joe Beaubien of Meyronne and Gravelbourg for harvest. In 1913 he freighted from Meyronne to Vanguard, sleeping at night by the river to save money. During winter, he worked for thirty-five cents an hour as a carpenter in Gravelbourg.

In the spring of 1914, he broke one hundred forty acres of land at Meyronne, for Moise Douville and Alsime Bouvier for ten dollars. In June he filed on his homestead in Moose Jaw, without seeing it. Many events happened on the return trip to Gravelbourg. On Saturday he had missed the train, so he took the Tuesday train. When on the train, he found that he had lost his ticket. Luckily it was found by the conductor and returned. The train was derailed near Mossbank.

That fall, Henri took a job with the municipality to build graded roads to pay the taxes on the land.

In 1916 he went to live on his homestead in Kantenville. He also rented land from Michaud in Gravelbourg. The land was sold so Mr. Michaud paid Henri five hundred dollars to cancel the contract.

In 1918, on June 11th, Henri was called to serve in the army. After nine months of service, he returned to Kantenville.

Charles Prefontaine bought land in Manitoba in the fall of 1919. Henri worked the land for Charles. During 1923 he and Charles moved to St. Francis Xavier, and he bought himself a tractor.

In the spring of 1924 he worked at a lumber camp in Pigeon River, Ont., receiving five dollars per cord as a lumberjack, and three dollars and fifty cents per cord to haul the lumber. He went to Winnipeg with five hundred dollars and paid his debts. Following this he returned to Meyronne, and did the seeding for his father and brother and worked his land.

He returned to Manitoba and married Adeline Morin of St. Francis Xavier on November 4, 1925. On April 12, 1926 they moved to the homestead which was Section 3, Township 4, Range I, West of the 3rd meridian.

In the spring of 1927, Joeville was renamed "Lisieux". Mr. and Mrs. Henri Bouvier resided on their homestead until 1972 when they retired to Gravelbourg. They have sixteen children; fourteen of them are married and have a family. They have forty- nine grandchildren.

### **BRANDIEZS, Gus And Hazel**

I was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1911.

My mother, Aenne Brandiezs, died in 1912 and my father, Auguste Brandiezs, passed away in 1916.

My sister, Elizabeth (Mrs. Otto Knops), brother Joseph, and I were raised by my maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Adam Spies Sr., on a farm four miles southwest of Rockglen.

I attended Wheat Bench School and helped my grandparents on their farm.

When I left Rockglen I worked in various places; coal mines, logging camps, sawmills, and on farms.

In 1931 I moved to Maxstone and worked at the Assiniboia coal mine. I married Hazel Whitson in 1935 and we remained in Maxstone until 1938.

In 1938 we moved to Coronach where I worked for three years, helping to open the Coronach coal mine.

In 1940 we started farming three miles east of Coronach and farmed there until 1974. At that time we moved to the village of Coronach where we now reside.

We have a son and daughter, both of whom are school teachers.

### **BREWER, William**

Mr. and Mrs. William Brewer came to the Colony, to house number twenty-three, in 1930. Originally they were from Jersey, Channel Islands, but Mr. Brewer had been in Canada for about three and one-half years before he went back and brought his family to Canada.

Mr. Brewer was a jeweler at Jersey, so farming was a new experience to the family.

Mr. Brewer retired from farming in 1952. He lived with his daughter, Mrs. Gertrude Pilsner, until his death in 1955. Mrs. Brewer is still living with her daughter in Canopus.

The Brewers had three sons, William, Douglas and John, also three daughters, Dorothy, Gertrude and Margaret.

During the war William joined the Regina Rifle Regiment. He lost his life in action in 1944.

### **BROWN, Arthur And Martha**

Arthur Brown was born on April 10, 1884, in Edinburgh, Scotland. He was the son of William Brown, a dairyman, and Isabella Keilar.

He attended school in Scotland. The truant officer would make sure the children went to school by prodding any truants with a big stick. As a lad, he played foot ball (rugby) at school. He left then and went to Edinburgh and played with the "Northern Harriers". There, he also took up racing and boxing. They used to handicap the races according to your ability. A pistol was used to start the race. You could usually see the smoke before you heard the report. Some of the competitors would use this to their advantage in order to get a "flying start". However, if you were caught starting before the report was heard you would be handicapped a yard for going over your mark.

Before coming to this area, he lived at Portage la Prairie for three and a half years. He then went back to Scotland for a holiday. When he heard about the homesteading he came looking for land. He stayed in Moose Jaw until he found land. He walked from Moose Jaw to Quantock. "Scottie" has been here ever since. The reason for that is, like he said, "I've been broke. I could never get out of here."

On October 1914, "Scottie" married Martha Annie Davenport. He met her at Quantock when she was out on a holiday from Ontario. She came out in the spring and they were married in the fall in Assiniboia.

His first home was a twelve by fourteen foot shack made of lumber and tar paper. He had a mustache then and it used to freeze to the blankets on winter nights. He had to thaw it out in the morning.

He got his water from a spring with two pails. It was on his land, but he had to walk a quarter of a mile.

One time there was a fire at his shack. This is how he describes it: "I went to get the branding iron. I had it in the fire, you know, and I went to get it and left the damper off and by gul the missus was hanging her clothes and she see this fire on the prairie. She said, 'Gee, look at the roof!' and I hurried up and got up there with a pail of water and put it out."

The fair was held at Mr. Brown's farm for years. It consisted of a show for everything: horses, cows, and calves. Baseball was played. There were bucking contests. bread making contests and a bowery dance. There was a hall there. It was a good hall and it had a piano. The people held dances and box socials to raise money for the hail. The fair was always planned by the local men.

Mr. Brown recalls one year when he had some chickens that he entered. "There was a rooster and three pullets. One of the pullets laid a 'bally' egg that day and an old woman accused me of entering a hen.

The prizes weren't big but they were just as good as the ones in Assiniboia. You would get a dollar for first prize in baking. Prizes were also given out in the bucking contests.

There were about four baseball teams there and these teams were made up of local guys. There were good baseball diamonds.

When Rockglen came, the sports were held by Haenel's the first year. The wind came up one night and blew the hall away.

In the 1930's, the years were tough. You couldn't get enough of anything except grasshoppers. If the railway hadn't been here no one could have stayed here. Feed for the stock was brought in by rail. Even then a lot of people did quit and leave.

The dust storms were so bad you couldn't see a thing." One time "Scottie" was working on a church and a cloud of dust came over. You didn't dare open your mouth because the dust was so bad.

Mr. Brown described the action of the wind: "My quarter blew and I think it's gone yet. The grain was left uncovered on top of the land."

After the rains came the machinery got better and times began to improve considerably. "There were only one or two girls in the country during the early years. At dances the men played them out by keeping them dancing all night. Anyone would play instruments at the local dances. When the hall was built musicians who played there were paid five dollars each per night.

They used to have school and church picnics. The church picnics were usually in the coulees. At some picnics people would go berry picking. When a young couple went to pick they would come back with very few berries, not so with the old men, who always came back with a full pail.

Cards and checkers were played to pass the time when friends and neighbours came for a visit.

The municipality gave the men work by having them finish wet places in the roads. Mr. Brown worked on the road quite a bit. On the Quantock bench a contractor came in with the machinery and the men living there supplied the horses to run the machinery. The horses pulled graders.

Charlie Haenel had the first car in the community. Mr. Brown remarked, at one point that he didn't know what it was called but the first time he took it out he got it stuck. He spent about an hour trying to get it out.

They went to Regina to the fair one time with Hunter. They left here at seven o'clock in the morning and didn't get there until six o'clock that night.

"Scottie" and Annie have one daughter, Jean, who is married to Theodore Bjornson. Annie passed away in 1965 shortly after their Golden Wedding and "Scottie", with the aid of a "pace-maker" still enjoys life in Rockglen.

#### **BROWN, Ernest And Agnes** — by Bessie (Brown) Thiele

Ernie and Aggie, born and raised in Scotland, married in Edinburgh in April, 1912 and set sail within the week for the "Promised Land" — Canada! (Ernie often joked about them having the longest honeymoon in history for they never returned to Scotland.)

The journey by boat and by train was long and wearisome and on arriving in Moose Jaw they found they were also penniless as their bank draft, mailed prior to their leaving Scotland, had gone down with the Titanic.

Ernie's brother, Arthur, met them and they traveled by wagon to his homestead at Quantock, some six or seven miles west of present day Rockglen.

For the first two or three years Ernest and Aggie returned to Moose Jaw for the winter where Ernie worked at his trade as a butcher in the Hub Meat Market. They spent the summers on the homestead to work the land. From 1914 or 1915 they lived on their quarter section about two miles east of Arthur Brown's homestead.

What a change it must have been for Aggie, a girl who had lived most of her life in the city and worked as cook for the "Big Wigs" (wealthy people), to come to the primitive land. (She was the only white woman in the area for some time.) On her honeymoon, she and Ernie traveled many miles by wagon, stopping at bachelor's shacks overnight where they slept (?) on poles covered with straw and the mice dropped from the ceiling to scurry across their beds.

For years, until the coming of Rockglen. Ernie, along with his neighbors, hauled his grain to Assiniboia, a long, hard, three or four day trip through the Little Muddy, and brought back supplies. The trip was made about twice a year, in spring and in the fall. Towards spring meals were rather monotonous, porridge and potatoes.

There were good times and bad – the heartbreak of a lovely field of golden grain laid to waste in minutes by hail; the grasshoppers that blackened the sky before landing to devour the crop and any clothes on the clothesline; the army worms that crawled over everything, the buildings, the watering trough, and destroyed grass and crops as they went; the dust storms that buried the crops and piled sand drifts higher than the fence posts; the winter blizzards that nearly covered the buildings; the ice cream made in a syrup pail and frozen out in the snow bank; the tobogganing; the Christmas concerts in the little school house; the picking of wild berries, strawberries and oh! the yummy gooseberry 'Fool' Aggie made; Saskatoon wine and chokecherry syrup; Sunday services at Quantock church; the student ministers who came west each summer – not all of their experiences were in the ministerial field – they sometimes stoked and pitched bundles, too.

The R.C.M.P. were frequent visitors as Ernie was a J.P. (Justice of the Peace) for several years. Many trials were conducted in the kitchen of the old shack.

They had four children born, raised and educated while they lived on the homestead: Agnes (Nancy), George, William, and Elizabeth, (Bessie).

They left the farm in the early 1940's and lived for a time in Winnipeg and then moved on to London, Ontario where they lived until their deaths in 1969 (Aggie) and in 1973 (Ernest).

**BURNAY, Henry And Lucy** – by Dallas Loucks

Henry Burnay was born March 5, 1893, in Porchesse, Belgium. At the age of eight he became an orphan and was raised by his older sister.

Henry came to Quebec, Canada, on August 1, 1911, at the age of eighteen. He then came out to this area and worked for a farmer named Bill Schmidt. He applied for a homestead, then went to Forget, Saskatchewan for fall threshing.

When winter came he had to return to claim his homestead by living on it for six months. He and his brother lived in a little shack for the winter. They did little more than visit neighbors and play cards to pass the winter.

The winters were really bad; they had to get out of a window and go around to shovel out the front door to let others out. The winter of 1915-16 was the worst winter Henry has ever seen.

In 1915, the crop was the best he ever saw and he put in forty-five days threshing and hauling for the steam engine.

Wheat was hauled to Viceroy and Vanguard before the railway came to Verwood. Grocery supplies, which had to last the entire winter, were purchased in Willow Bunch.

Henry started farming in 1917 and married Lecy Weber, a Belgian emigrant, in 1918.

In 1914 a school was built on Bill Schmidt's land, just a couple of miles west of Burnay's, along with it a blacksmith shop and a store. The next year a branch of the First Citizen Bank from Scobey was there, along with a lumber yard and pool hall. This little town was called Pumpkin Center.

The railway came to Fife Lake in 1925 and with it came the Post Office, run by Norman MacLean, and an elevator, run by John Peterson. When Fife Lake began about seventy people lived and worked there.

When the depression came, about half the people left because of lack of money. Before the depression Mr. Burnay said he could sit at home, look out his window and count eighty-three lights. They cut Russian thistle to feed the cattle over winter. The lake went dry in 1937 and people dug coal from its banks.

It wasn't until 1957 that Henry Burnay returned to Belgium, where he got a surprise. The country and people had changed one thousand percent and he said he was a "damn sight" happier to be back in Canada.

Lucy and Henry raised a family of twelve children on their farm and then retired to Fife Lake. He said they took the bad with the good but will never forget what they have seen and enjoyed.