

The History of Nokomis
The Junction Town
1905 – 1955

An outline of the growth of the Town and District
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Forward

In compiling the history of the town and district of Nokomis, every effort has been made to provide facts that are accurate in every sense. All material is based on files and records, with the exception of some information previous to 1911.

Doubtless some will express disappointment that the account is factual rather than conversational. The prime reasons for this were the elements of time and space.

An attempt has been made to present a reference which may be used as a guide by future generations.

To everyone who helped by supplying accounts of the early days, filling in questionnaires and providing other classified information, a grateful “thank you” is expressed. We are especially indebted to E.J. Edwards for his homestead guide, to G.H. Hummel for his generous assistance and to J.I. Jamieson for his word picture of the town in the early years.

This book is dedicated to the Pioneers of Nokomis and District

“And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof;
it shall be a Jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.”

– Leviticus 25:10

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Geography

The Town of Nokomis is situated on the Canadian National (formerly the Grand Trunk Pacific) Railway transcontinental main line, 385 miles west of Winnipeg, and on the Canadian Pacific Railway Pheasant Hills branch, 85 miles north of Regina. It is located on highway No. 20, which runs north and south through the town, and at the junction of highways 15 and 20.

The surrounding district includes a portion of the rural municipality of Wreford No. 280 (Bannockburn, Saline and Colt Lake districts); portions of the rural municipality of Mt. Hope No. 279 (Newlands and Richfarms); and territory to the south of Nokomis extending south-west to Last Mountain Lake.

The country surrounding Nokomis is well cultivated, the soil is fertile and the land is gently rolling. Soil to the south and east is fertile, and in the Richfarms district to the north-east, it ranks with the best land in western Canada. During the early 1900's, the rich black loam of the Last Mountain Valley was considered to be the choicest farming district of the west. To the west and south-west lie alkali flats, suitable for ranching rather than wheat raising. In the early days, the land west of town was level, free of stones and grew fine grass. Later, as the country developed, the first chosen land proved too light, with only a thin layer of topsoil. During the early years, this land, aided by lots of rain, grew excellent crops.

Water of excellent quality, "an unlimited supply of the finest artesian water, which is soft and can be used for steam purposes", was discovered in the early days. Later, water was discovered by the C.N.R. in an underground lake 6 1/2 miles west of Nokomis. T.C. Main, C.N.R. engineer, told geology professors and students at the University of Saskatchewan in 1938 that subterranean streams which flow far beneath the surface of the earth in glacial channels carry off much needed precipitation in semi-arid districts of the province. In

speaking of tests made throughout the west, Mr. Main said, "The big surprise was at Nokomis. A billion gallons of the best water between Winnipeg and Edmonton, including Saskatoon, was discovered just under the ground a few feet. There is enough first class water there for a city like Saskatoon."

Annual precipitation averages approximately 12 inches, varying from 6.91 inches in 1937 to a high of 23.92 inches in 1954.

On one occasion an 18 ft. vein of bituminous coal was reported to have been struck in the heart of Nokomis, but was later proved false.

Three oil wells have been drilled in the area. These are Imperial Lockwood, Socony Sohio Ambassador and Socony Sohio Hatfield, all wild-cat wells. Socony Sohio Ambassador was drilled to a depth of 3010 feet and terminated within the Devonian, and the other two were abandoned.

Boring for gas and oil at Nokomis is not an entirely new idea. H.S. Bekemeyer Realty Co., which held lots in this vicinity in the early years stated, "There is hardly any question but what many of the little hummocks like those on farms near Nokomis were caused by gas heaving, and the pot holes were caused by a blowout of gas that burned out the coal, lignite, or other burnable matter, so that the crust of the earth sank and made the depressions. But the most likely theory is that before the Glacier period, that part of the earth was the bottom of the ocean and when the water went off, it left the depressions filled with fish, especially of the leviathan species such as sperm whales, spar whales, and other oil-bearing species; these, caught in the depressions were covered over by the sands and rock, then with the Glaciers there was an enormous quantity of sand and soil deposited on top of these depressions which pressed out these enormous deposits of oil; and there they have remained except where the gas has been ignited by subterranean fires and blown out through the surface of the earth. There are many indications of the blow-outs in the Nokomis district. It may not be such a wild proposition as one might think to make some experiments at Nokomis. Oil fields have been brought in where the indications were not nearly so good."

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Few landmarks exist in this part of the province. One such location, known as "Whitestone Crossing", however, was a landmark before Nokomis district was homesteaded. Lake Peter, situated on Sec. 0-29-21, is just north of J.S. McIntosh's farm. In the early days before the roads were made, Saline Creek, which drains Lake Peter, was always crossed at the McIntosh farm. A large limestone is situated there, and this was always known as "Whitestone Crossing". Some years ago Mr. McIntosh had occasion to hire a French Canadian who had fought in the Riel Rebellion. As they approached his farm the man recognized the country. "I have been here before," he said. "There is the creek we used to water our horses and a little way further there is a white stone where we used to cross the creek."

The Carleton Trail, which traverses north near Lanigan to Batoche, passes some six miles to the east of the Nokomis district.

Numerous trails wound throughout the district, crossing at intervals. One of the more prominent was the old Saskatoon Trail, also known as the Indian Trail, which ran through a mile west of Jim McIntosh's homestead to the Touchwood Hills. The Strassburg Trail, running north near the Gandy place and several others including the Peacock trail ran west of the present townsite. Located on the north and east main tracks was a red shack belonging to the Meikle family. Almost everyone who passed through stopped at the Meikle's red shack and no one who needed a meal or bed ever went on without it. This trail leading north across the prairie later became known as the Red Shack trail, and was one of the main trails leading south to Strassburg.

The old Telegraph Trail ran within 15 miles of the present location of Nokomis. The poles have rotted and fallen over now, but used to be located 15 miles east and 3 miles north, on the old Harry Chute farm.

Little has been found of early Indian habitation in the district. The first homesteaders reported it to be absolutely bare prairie, with no trace of shrubbery. All trees and bushes had been burned off by prairie fires. Some Indian stones have been found, such as utensils used for the pounding of corn. It is believed that this part of the plain was used by

the Indian for hunting, evidenced by the herds of antelope seen by the earliest, white men, and the finding of arrowheads.

After 1900, surveyors began to reach this part of the Northwest Territories and stake out the land. Again in 1925, C.C. Cowper of the topographical survey of Canada, encamped with a party of eight men in the vicinity of the Nokomis school. They mapped the Touchwood sheet of the section map of Canada. The Touchwood sheet is one of a series of maps covering western Canada. Each sheet covers approximately 90 miles from east to west and 50 miles from north to south. Nokomis lies in about the centre of the Touchwood sheet.

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“The Thrill of Turning The Sod”

Homesteaders came to the Last Mountain valley area which later became known as Nokomis because of the lure of cheap land, because they wanted to escape overcrowding or oppression, or because they were in search of adventure and new horizons. Following the work of surveyors, the area was opened for homesteading in 1904.

Frank Stinchcomb was the first homesteader to reach the Lockwood vicinity in 1904. His nearest neighbor was near Long Lake and he got his mail at Arlington Beach the first summer. He homesteaded 1 1/2 miles west of the present site of the village of Lockwood, with a nephew Dorsey Eckleberry. Their nearest neighbor was Jack Simpson, 25 miles away, and they were 50 miles from the nearest trading centre at Davidson. Mrs. Stinchcomb joined him in the spring of 1905. It is believed that Mrs. Simpson spent the winter of 1904-05 in the district, making her the first woman to winter here.

Several homesteaders came in the summer and fall of 1904 to choose a homestead site, among them William Massie, who claims to be the first man in township 30. He returned to Regina to file title, and came back to his homestead in the spring of 1905. John Shields homesteaded east of the present site of Nokomis. In 1904 Richard

Kells came to homestead from Qu'Appelle by wagon. He chose a site 3 1/2 miles south of Tate.

Early settlers came as far as Strasbourg, then the end of the steel, and transported their goods overland by various methods. Some travelled down from Lumsden, by foot or by horseback, having filed their homesteads in Regina. Many of the first settlers in the Nokomis district freighted their lumber, machinery and supplies over the trail from Craven to Strassburg in 1905 and 1906. This later became known as the "Trail of 1905" and legion are the stories of pluck and perseverance which argue well for the prosperity of homesteaders of the Last Mountain district.

During the early years, the steamboat "Qu'Appelle" transported goods and lumber from Lumsden and Valeport, 60 miles down the lake, and made the round trip to Watertown on the west side of the lake, 20 miles distant from Arlington Beach. From these points, mail was picked up and despatched to the various post offices. A store and lumber yard, long since torn down, at one time did a thriving business at Watertown.

In 1905, various groups and individuals swarmed into this area, following glowing advertising of the Last Mountain Valley as a grain growing paradise. Extensive advertising was carried on in the United States and even across the ocean in Great Britain.

In the fall of 1904, Jim McDougall and Frank Reynolds, forerunners of a group of 22 settlers from Humboldt, Nebraska, came north through the Canadian northwest on a scouting expedition. In Regina they contacted a land agent and asked for wheat land. They spent several days there, picking out land for some of their friends back in Nebraska, and for themselves, in the highly rated Last Mountain Valley. When they returned to Nebraska they bore enthusiastic tales of the north country. During the winter of 1904-1905, others, swayed by the literature they had obtained from a Canada tent at the State Fair in Lincoln, and from the Canadian Bennett Agency in Omaha, decided to come north. One of that group, G.H. Hummel, filed on a homestead by mail, with B. A. See, land agent at Davidson. With the arrival of spring in 1905, the party boarded an immigrant car, paid their fare of 1c a

mile and set off on their expedition. The majority of the young men were in search of adventure, and expected to prove up on their homesteads and “return to civilization”. Some came because of the overcrowded farmland in Nebraska. The cars started from Humboldt in a special train as far as Minneapolis, travelling on regular freights from then on to Davidson.

Russ Gandy and Hugh Viets were stowaways on the trip — young men going to the wild and woolly west after adventure. Russ Gandy was put

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off the train just south of the border. The trains were slow moving in those days, and in his dry manner, Russ remarked “Reckon if I was in a hurry I would have to walk anyway.” He struck off down the track and caught the train at the next divisional point. They landed at Davidson with 11 cars of settlers effects on March 24th, on a Canadian Northern Immigration train.

After their arrival at Davidson, the party split up. Part of the group settled around Tegaske. The remainder trekked by team and wagon around the north end of Last Mountain Lake to take up their homesteads, all of which were located to the south and west of the present site of Nokomis. Of this group only two remain at Nokomis — Art Stalder and Guy Hummel. The others have either returned to Nebraska, moved elsewhere, or died.

Arriving at their destination they located their homesteads, although they rode all the first day, bareback, without seeing as much as a shack anywhere. Great was their dismay when they located the homesteads, to discover some of them square in the middle of the alkali flats. Guy Hummel abandoned his and journeyed to Regina to file on another location, and Art Stalder also filed nearby in August.

With the help of some of the others, Guy Hummel built a sod barn the first summer of 1905. The party lived in tents the first summer, as did many of the early pioneers.

Ready cash was scarce at that time. However, the party had plenty to eat and had brought a cow and chickens with them on the immigrant train. A fifty bushel to the acre crop of oats was harvested that first year, by means of a separator driven by the power of eight horses. Their hardships were not great. They were young and healthy. They had ample supplies of vegetables, butter, eggs and milk. Prairie fires proved to be the main scourge of the homesteaders. On more than one occasion, the party camped for safety on ground that had been burned off by the flames.

During the first months, mail was obtained from the post offices at Taylorboro, Lake City or Peacock. It had been brought down the lake by the Steamer "Qu'Appelle" which plied the lake from Valeport regularly.

In 1904, the Jamieson family, who had come out from Scotland and settled at Melita, filed on a homestead, and in 1905 George and Jim proved up on it. They also lived under canvas the first summer. Jim did the teaming and drew lumber from Lumsden. In 1906, when the family came to live, they obtained a post office on their land, Sec. 36-29-23-w2 and called it Ythanbank, after their old home in Scotland on the banks of the river Ythan.

The earliest known settlers to choose land in the district were a party of German Baptists, led by the Rev. Adam Litwin. Mr. Litwin, accompanied by a Mr. Berenz, acted as advance scouts for the party. They travelled the prairie from Saskatoon through Humboldt and south, living off the land, eating boiled eggs, wild duck, etc. Wolves were plentiful making it necessary for the two men to keep a fire burning throughout the hours of darkness. The fires had to be watched constantly to guard from spreading and starting a prairie fire in the chest-high grass. They travelled around in a democrat and finally selected townships 29 and 30. These two townships were reserved by the government for Baptist immigrants in 1903 and 1904. When the immigrants failed to arrive, the land was opened for general homesteading in 1905 and 1906.

The Baptists who arrived came from Europe originally, to Manitoba, but decided to come further west to escape flooding of the Red River.

Earliest members of the staunch group included, in addition to its scouts, Gottlieb Stagman, who is alleged to have built the first shack south-west of the present townsite, Gottlieb Rahn, August Hoffman, Wm. Zepik, E.W. Schunke and Gottlieb Felske. Mr. Felske, a German, was a former member of the Czarina of Russia's bodyguard. He arrived in 1906 and homesteaded across the alkali flats from the old Jamieson homestead, then known as Wind Flats. Rev. Litwin, a Baptist minister, preached at Nokomis until 1909, when he moved to Saskatoon.

From Ontario, on the first day of May 1905, by way of Saline Creek, came Archie and Willie MacFarlane and Jimmie Kidd. They spent the night at the cabin of John Shields and next day proceeded along the range line in search of the homestead. Finally they located their land, Sec. 4-31-21-W2 and also met another

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early settler E.J. Edwards. They located their homesteads after much time spent in looking for corner stakes, and pitched their tent on Archie MacFarlane's quarter on May 2, 1905. Three weeks were spent in breaking 24 acres which were seeded to oats that year. Their spare time was used in erecting a frame shack with lumber brought in the settlers' car. They moved into the new shack on May 24, 1905.

Settlers came in fast that summer. At that time, it was necessary to go to Taylorboro at the head of Last Mountain Lake, or Long Lake as it was commonly called, for mail. They soon tired of the long trip and decided that they should have a post office of their own. A petition was sent to Ottawa asking for the new post office and word was received that it would be given consideration. Eventually, through the assistance of Walter Scott, who became the first premier of Saskatchewan, and who was candidate for Lumsden constituency at that time, the post office was obtained. W.A. MacFarlane was named postmaster and his sister, now Mrs. J.D. Kidd, became assistant postmistress. After Tena MacFarlane came out, she had no time to be lonely, for she was kept busy constantly with people coming and going. She was one of the first unmarried women to arrive in the

district. Louie Halstead, who later married Roland Reed, was the first. Bessie Rowand (Mrs. J. Philip) was the only other unmarried girl in the territory that first summer.

Mr. MacFarlane was also mail carrier, and mail was supplied from MacFarlane post office during the year before the post offices were established in the surrounding towns and villages.

Jim and Roy Rowand drew the mail during the winter of 1905-1906. Willie MacFarlane drew it the following summer, once a week, from Taylorboro. Mr. Kempton and later Horace Beeler drove the mail. MacFarlane served the district from Drake south to near Tate, west past Lockwood, and east to the alkali.

On one occasion, while delivering mail along the route from Taylorboro, Mr. MacFarlane called at the home of Thomas Halstead, on Sec. 24-29-22-w2. Mrs. Halstead asked if he thought the authorities would consider the establishment of another post office at their home, with her as postmistress. She obtained signatures and forwarded a petition from the settlers in her vicinity, and Mr. MacFarlane sent it on to Ottawa with the request that the name "Nokomis" be chosen. She had selected the name Nokomis from Longfellow's poem "Hiawatha", because to her, newly arrived from England, the west represented the romantic domain of the Indian. "Nokomis" farm post office was opened for business on August 6, 1906, when the first money order was sold to Albert W. Bridgewater.

Following the survey of the territory, every even section was laid open for homesteading, with the exception of 3/4 of section 26 in every township, which was given to the Hudsons Bay Company. This land was sold at a later date.

Another group which contributed sizeably to the establishment of the district, came from Nova Scotia. Forerunner of this party was Cory Potter, who had come west from Clementsvale to Manitoba in 1901, for harvesting. To a man whose native district, with its shortage of timber, held little future, the promise of 160 acres of land for \$10.00 was an inviting proposition. In 1904, Cory Potter homesteaded in the Richfarms district and returned in the spring of 1905 to stay. Others in this group, who came largely in 1906 and 1907, through Cory's

encouragement, included Everett and Mr. Potter Sr., Amos Potter, H.N. Chute and N.B. Chute, members of the Beeler family including Horace and Henry Ruggles, Ezra Potter, Oran Potter and Les Potter. The latter three returned to Nova Scotia.

Other early homesteaders who came from England and Scotland, and

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from eastern Canada, included E.J. Edwards, Noble Hicks, Andrew King and William Riach, Louis and Jake McNichol, Bill Elson, Bert Stevenson, Albert and Charlie Ramshaw, Fred Trotman, Alf and Tom Skippon, W.C. Denniss, Jack Howat, Tom Passet, Teddy Ancell, S.M. Carter, Norman and Arthur Trafford, Bob Carter, Noble Hicks, Dick Howie, Charlie Swan, Guy Piercy, Donald Stephenson, John Harding, Dan and Joe McGurran, Adam Patterson, Foster and Norman Morris, W. Mobberley, A.W. Bridgewater, O.S. Stephenson, Harry Mooney, W.H. Zepik and many others.

Church services were at first held in the various post offices or in farmhouses. At Ythanbank, Presbyterian services were conducted by Jas. Simpson, who came from Strassburg, and Methodist services by a Mr. Hanley, who came from Davidson.

Both men travelled on horseback. Adam Rowand, who had already spent many years farming in Manitoba, was a respected pioneer, and became the first elder. In the district around MacFarlane post office, the first preacher was a Presbyterian, a Mr. McLean, who was a student medical missionary who homesteaded south of Tate. Meetings he conducted were held in private homes, and on various occasions were held in the large, substantial sod structure of old Mr. Potter, father of Cory and Everett Potter. Church in the Boulder Lake district was held in Ingwall Theissen's granary.

To earn money — cash was very scarce — some of the homesteaders hired themselves out to other farmers or sought employment with the railroads. The C.P.R. reached Govan in 1906 and Nokomis in September, 1907. Louis Rote, who homesteaded in the Boulder Lake district, hauled wood to bachelors in the area by mule team. Jack

Edwards and Noble Hicks drew stone for the foundation of the school, hospital, etc., and sometimes had cars of coal to unload.

During the years from 1905 to '07, a number of sod barns were built and a good many of the homesteaders also built sod dwellings. Others built houses of logs or lumber. Of the sod dwellings, one homesteader remarked "If there was no sod in this country, there'd be no one living here today". Some of the homes were built of lumber, brick veneered with sod on the outside. Sod shacks were easy to make, and cheap in a land where little money was in circulation. Most were one or two roomed dwellings, and were, on the whole, small, compared with the homes of 1955. Mr. Potter's sod house was known throughout the area as one of the largest in the vicinity. It contained one large living room and two bedrooms, and had a pure white floor.

Throughout the winter months dances were held, whenever the settlers took the notion, at the various homes. Mac Cumming played the fiddle. People came from all around until the places were filled, and between dances the men had to sit on the steps or stand in the yard to catch their breath. Lou McNichol called for square dances, and waltzes and two steps were also popular. For seats, boxes and planks covered with blankets were utilized. Frequently they danced till daylight. With all the bushes and clumps of trees burned off by prairie fires, and no roads, there was no means to guide a couple home.

During the summer, picnics were held frequently. The first big picnic, which all the early settlers recall vividly, was held at John Shields' lake, when homesteaders gathered from many miles around.

This picnic, held in 1906 and most vivid in the memories of all the early pioneers for miles around, was organized by Teddy Ancell and S.M. Carter.

Early homesteaders harvested their grain largely with binder and separator. J.W. Simpson is reported to have purchased the first steam outfit at Regina in 1906. Jas. McDougall and Garfield Gordon, a brother-in-law of Mr. Simpson, brought it across the prairie to the Nokomis district, taking 10 days to make the trip.

Oxen were not too widely used in this district, however, some farmers did break land with a team of oxen and a walking plow. A fairly common method of conveyance was a stoneboat, pulled by oxen. Horses and broncs were widely used. For travelling, a democrat or buggy was horse-drawn. A democrat was a vehicle, larger than a buggy, and two seated, drawn by a team or one big horse. Road carts were also in use.

Mrs. E.M. Felske recalls the first means of winter transportation her family used was a stoneboat with apple boxes for seats, for travel to

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choir practice. Flatiron were heated for foot warmth.

Before coal was available, wood was the sole source of heat during the long winter months. The homesteaders often made several trips during the winter months, either to the Touchwood Hills, to Manitou or to the bluffs near Lanigan. Of his first trip to Touchwood, E.J. Edwards says, "We took food to last a week. We met up with other homesteaders on the same quest, who had a large tent and stove. We had to cut roads into Touchwood as no teams had ever been in there before. We chopped a way within two miles of the big hill and there we made a camp, set up the tent and made a rough log stable, chinking the logs with ox manure. Then we hauled wood and put it in piles ready to haul home. Sometimes when we went back for wood the thermometer was down to 40 below zero and we slept in the tent quite warm. In the early days we drew our wood home on the narrow bunks, but we had so much trouble in upsetting, the trails building up so quickly and the long wood causing the hind runner to cut down. We had to do something about it. We began to make wide bunks, anywhere from 4 to 6 feet wide, and our trouble was overcome."

Coal was made from horse manure by some of the early settlers in the manner described by Emmanuel Felske, whose father, Gottlieb Felske was one of the original party of German Baptists. "Horse manure and straw were spread on level ground in a circle of about 30 ft. circumference. This was wetted down with water. With two horses and

three harrows, we walked round and round until this was packed solid like brick. This was left about a week or ten days, to bake in the hot sun. Then we took a sharp spade and stood the hard bricks on end. They were baked some more in the sun and then piled like a pyramid or igloo to shed water so the rain would not soak it. Eventually they were piled in the shed for winter. We used a couple of bricks in a small heater and they burned all night.”

Oats was frequently planted as a breaking crop. One homesteader threshed 300 bushels and had plenty of oat sheaves for his horses. He says, “I cut the oat crop with a Frost and Wood five foot cut binder which we brought with us from Ontario. I also cut 25 acres of wheat on the homestead of John Howat. The land had been broken and disced the same spring, early, with oxen. It was Red Fife wheat and when threshed made 23 bushels per acre of No. 1.

During the early years, Long Lake was widely used for carrying goods other than mail. Lumber was brought from the south end of the lake by steamboat, raft or scow to a yard located at Watertown. Jimmy Kidd brought a load from there on one occasion for a Mr. Beach, who built a shack on the west corner of E.J. Edwards’ farm and ran a little store there for a time. He called it the Red Flag Store. During the years 1905 and 1906, the homesteaders travelled to Strasburg or Davidson for supplies and groceries. Later, a store was opened at Tate.

With the coming of the railroad, C.P.R. officials selected a site three miles north of the present location of the town, and called it Blaikie. Here, two general merchants, W.N. Ingram and A.A. Barber, erected stores and a blacksmith shop was started. The Ingham store is the present Nokomis Hardware. There was no post office located at Blaikie.

At the same time as the C.P.R. approached, work was also proceeding on the Grand Trunk Pacific. Blakemore was the name selected for this station, and the location was a site 1 1/2 miles to the east of the present townsite of Nokomis.

About this time, from Malone, New York, came several men who established the Franklin Realty and Trading Company. These men, A.C. Allison as manager, John Durgan as president, George S. Brush

as vice president, and O.E. Allison as secretary, became the original owners of the townsite of Nokomis and organized the lots. They built the first house in Nokomis — 8 rooms — known as the “Company House” a little south of the present C.N.R. station, near the Agricultural Fair grounds of today. In this house was formed the first Union Sunday School in 1907, with W.M. Rath as superintendent and Mrs. Reta Gentle as secretary. The Franklin Realty and Trading Company began construction of a model farm, known as Hiawatha Farm, a half mile south of Nokomis. A barn was actually the first building built in the site of Nokomis.

The original townsite of Nokomis was surveyed by the Grand Trunk

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Pacific about 2 miles east of the present location. Through the efforts of A.C. Allison of the Franklin Realty and Trading Company, influence was brought to bear on the G.T.P. to change the townsite to the junction point. The G.T.P. then surveyed a quarter section. Mr. Allison approached the C.P.R. and drew attention to the junction rather than Blaikie as proposed. Buildings erected at Blaikie were moved further south. A.H. Nichol excavated a cellar on the corner opposite the C.P.R. station and there constructed a general store. It was later moved to its present site when the town did not mushroom as expected. During the late spring of 1907, the Franklin Realty and Trading Co. contracted to build the railway stations. Their office was situated south of the Grand Trunk right of way, and later was moved to Jimmy Graham’s farm.

Dr. B.A. Sandwith was one of the first to arrive. He reached Nokomis in the late spring of 1907, when Nokomis was in the very early stages of development, with some buildings under construction, some completed and many tent-dwellers. The Green livery barn was built at that time, and also W.J. Rath’s blacksmith shop (on the site of Nichol’s store today. The forge is used by Nichols as an incinerator). George Brush had also started a lumber yard across the street, later occupied as an implement agency by Jamieson & McKirdy. Dr. Sandwith entered the office of Mr. Allison where he was shown a plan of the

town. He chose a lot on the southeast corner of Main and 3rd ave. (padding pool). Since he was informed it called for \$2,000 building restrictions in keeping with plans for a future Junction City, Dr. Sandwith erected a shack at the rear of the lot, and later added onto it, using it as office and residence for a number of years.

Following the purchase of the townsite by the Franklin Realty and Trading Company, Mr. Allison approached Mrs. Halstead at Nokomis Post Office, and asked if she would consider establishing a post office within the townsite. In the fall of 1907, Nokomis Post office was moved to the townsite and located in the building occupied now as a pool room. It was then operated as a general store by Montgomery and Henry, and a post office, was fixed at the rear of the store. Thus the townsite adopted the name of Mrs. Halstead's post office, and became known as Nokomis.

Freight and settlers effects came in by the carload in the fall of 1907, when steel reached Nokomis via C.P.R. M.R. Young, first C.P.R. station agent, arrived on October 1, 1907. He said, "The train on which I arrived at the Junction City set off 10 cars loaded with lumber, coal and household effects, also 10 cars containing way freight. The latter consisted of groceries and small lots of household goods, machinery, etc., a portion of which was for people at Watrous, Semans and intervening points. Most of this trainload of freight was for Nokomis, where construction was proceeding at a lively pace. The C.P.R. station was just being completed and could not be made full use of till later. My office was established in the rear of Mr. A.H. Nichol's store, with a sleeping room upstairs, for a time".

An example of the speed at which buildings were mushrooming in Nokomis in 1907 occurred in October. A carload of lumber with freight charges of more than \$200 was unloaded, without the knowledge of Marty Young, C.P.R. agent. Since buildings were springing up all over, he was in quite a fluster. He enquired at various places, and finally encountered Bill Crozier, who pointed to the Nokomis Hotel, where a swarm of men were working. "There", said Mr. Crozier, "is your lumber."

In Brief

In June, 1913 W.J. Rath, blacksmith, moved his building from the rear of A.H. Nichol's Maple Leaf Store to a lot on 4th Ave. East (Mrs. L. Reed's house).

January 13, 1911: Yen Woo, proprietor of the restaurant on 2nd Ave. has closed his doors to the public. A number of frequenters of the restaurant have been playing havoc with the business by making a "rough-house" night after night. Yen thought it would be wise to close up.

August 1915: The New City Cafe has been opened by Yan Woo. It was constructed by Brownlee & McCreary. It has 11 good sized bedrooms upstairs and a large dining room, kitchen and hall on the main floor.

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Economic and Social Development

In 1907-08 the Canadian Bank of Commerce was constructed with K.W. Reikie as manager, and the Northern Crown Bank with R.S. Inkster as manager. Mr. Inkster's residence (Earl McDougall's house) was one of the first residences constructed. Others were homes of Norman Townsnd and J.I. Jamieson. Ewart's hall opened above the Northern Crown Bank and here the first school room classes were held. Miss Mabel Dobbyn, who later married K.W. Reikie of the Bank of Commerce, was the first teacher.

By April, 1908, carloads of lumber, hardware and carpenters were arriving, and the Sash and Door Factory was kept busy. For a time the Franklin Realty Co. contemplated starting a brickyard, using the good clay of the district. Almost every train brought in new settlers, and many cars of settlers effects. That month, the Nokomis Times building was put up on 2nd ave. by W.C.R. Garrioch. Other early establishments include:

Hotels — the See Hotel, built by B.A. See, real estate dealer, was the first and was shortlived. The Nokomis Hotel, built by Bill Crozier and George English in 1908; the Dominion, built by Jos. A. Vimont and

Leopold Turcott; and the Grey Goose, also known as the Temperance and Patricia at various times, soon followed.

Lumber — George S. Brush (later sold to Dutton-Wall), North American Lumber & Supply, Independent Lumber Co., and Beaver Lumber with Wm. Mason as manager. Previous to this, Mr. Mason was in the draying business, and ran a flour and feed store with bakery in connection.

Hardware — F.C. Arthur, also Rollins Bros, (later Mason & Durgan).

Druggist — R.H. Norris, opened 1906; Jeweller — E.A. Robins.

Implements — Massey-Harris, R.J. Wells, bought by Jamieson & McKirdy in 1908; Nokomis Implement Co., I.H.C., Cockshutt, J.W. Richardson and Harry Wigle; Howie & McGinnis, farm machinery; Armour & Campbell.

General Stores — A.H. Nichol's Maple Leaf Store; E.W. Long; R.A. McEwen; Nokomis Trading Co. (J. Rathjen, manager).

Grocery — W.C. Norris; W.J. Henry.

Insurance & Real Estate, Notary, Barrister — G.A.W. Braithwaite, Angus J. Kidd, W.A. MacFarlane, Armour & Campbell, W.E. Lawton & Co., T.F. Thompson, J.J. McGurran; E.E. Gilliat & Son, who later moved to Winnipeg, dealt in real estate and helped to erect some of the first buildings in the community.

Auctioneer — J.I. Jamieson, W.C.R. Garrioch.

Meat Markets — J. White, Palace Meat Market, J.A. Evon, Pioneer Meat Market, S.F. Lyne, butcher.

Barber Shop — T. Trimble owned the first barber shop and poolroom and V.L. Eastman also operated a business.

Clothing, Boots, Shoes, Furniture — Montgomery & Henry; Sid Jennings.

Dentist — Dr. James McBride.

Photography — Jack B. Jessop.

Blacksmith — W.J. Rath; B.A. McKay; York Bros. Mr. Rath also ran a stage coach from the C.P.R. station to town and carried the mail from the trains.

Builders and Contractors were Gentle & Johns & Hunter, Cantelon & Co. Mr. Gentle ran a planing mill and died in 1911, accidentally, when an emery stone burst.

Undertaker was F.G. Arthur; Tailor, A.S. McGowan; Harness, furniture, George R. Kerr.

The first dairy was operated by Wm. Dodsworth of Hilltop Farm, and Henry Mould ran the first bakery and restaurant. The Commercial Cafe was an early structure.

Shoemaker was H.W. Buck, Livery barns included the Green Barn and Red Barn (Palace).

The first elevator was built on the C.P.R. in the fall of 1908, by North Star, with Norman Townsend as first agent. Prior to that time, wheat had been loaded directly into the boxcars. T.F. Thompson became agent of a second elevator on the C.P.R. Later, the Standard and Ogilvie elevators were constructed along the Grand Trunk.

Believed to be the first babies born in Nokomis were Ashley Henry and Muriel Ingham. Among the first married in Nokomis were Mr. and Mrs. Lou McNichol, Mr. and Mrs. Cory Potter, Mr. and Mrs. W.C. Denniss and Mr. and Mrs. Alf McNichol.

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First children to come to the district, prior to the establishment of the town, were either Gladys and Susie Kempton or Mollie and Carl Cumming, during 1905.

In 1909, the post office which Mrs. Halstead operated until 1941, was built, and the business section laid out according to plans submitted to Ottawa.

Early in 1910, the Carter Land Company began purchasing land in the Nokomis district. They held over 15,000 acres, 1100 under cultivation. The company comprised H.C. Carter of Malone, New York as president and treasurer, and Robert O. Morris of Nokomis as manager. Mr. Carter believed Nokomis to be one of the surest and most reliable districts for wheat farming in western Canada. Later, the Franklin Realty & Trading Company purchased the Carter Land Company farm, and Hiawatha farm, model of the Franklin Company, was sold to George S. Brush. Still later, the Carter Land Farm was sold to Jim McDougall.

At one time, in the early years, it was predicted that Nokomis “The Junction City” would become the largest urban area between Winnipeg and Vancouver.

Once the town became established, businesses began to change hands. The Nokomis Times was purchased by S.L. Small and Glassford G. Muir, on October 15, 1910. J.A. McGowan took over Mr. Muir’s interest in January 1911 and operated under the name of McGowan and Small for about two years. Mr. McGowan then became sole owner and continued to publish until January 1, 1920 when he sold to Gerald Humphrey. In 1910 R.A. McEwen purchased the Pioneer General Store from W.N. Ingham. The Hotels changed hands frequently over the years, and also the livery barns.

In 1911, the Canadian Pacific Railway sent surveyors west from a point on the Manitoba and Northwestern Railway near Yorkton, with the evident intention of building directly into Nokomis, and westward. In addition, the Canadian Northern Railway surveyed a line through Nokomis which was being shown on its maps as a proposed line from Winnipeg to Calgary. A delegation comprising A.H. Nichol, K.W. Reikie, C.L. Campbell, F.G. Arthur, G.A. Braithwaite, A.J. Kidd and A.G. MacFarlane from Nokomis; McNeil and Geottler from Lockwood; Bradshaw from Tate and others from Semans, Raymore, Quinton and Kelliher, journeyed to Regina by special train to interview the Attorney General regarding the establishment of a judicial centre at Nokomis. This, however, did not materialize, and the judicial centre was eventually awarded to Wynyard. At that time, it was expected that Nokomis would be fed by eight railways.

Business increased in Nokomis and district at a slow, steady pace until by 1913, there were over fifty businesses. Nokomis was noted for being one of the cleanest towns in the west, with well built and neatly painted homes rather than rough shacks of a boom town. By 1918, businesses included 3 garages, 2 general stores, drug store, 3 grocery stores, shoe store, bakery, newspaper 2 lawyers, 3 implement agencies, 2 lumberyards, blacksmith shop, planing mill, milliner, 3 drays, theatre, 2 livery barns, 2 banks, private hospital, skating and curling rinks, hardware store, 3 restaurants, private boarding house, 4 real estate and insurance offices, 2 barber shops, 2 contractors,

billiard hall, jeweller, undertaker, 5 elevators, meat market, furniture store, harness shop, hotel, clothing store, 3 doctors, dentist, post office, telephone office, 2 railways, 2 drovers and several grain and cattle buyers.

Nokomis experienced a building boom in 1917, and again in 1953. Population, according to the 1921 census, was 547, an increase of 173 over 1911. In 1925, the population stood at 550. It decreased in 1931 to 445, hit a low of 436 in 1947, and has steadily climbed since, to the 1954 census of 528.

The year 1912 was the best year Nokomis had experienced to that time. More property changed hands, more buildings were erected, and more improvements were made than any time since the inception of the town. By 1911 and 1912, farmers were beginning to purchase additional land. During the season of 1910-1911, the total grain output from Nokomis mounted to over 255,000 bushels. In order to handle this amount, five elevators were kept busy.

AGRICULTURE

Wheat cutting commenced in the Nokomis District on Aug. 16, 1913.

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The yield was expected to be exceptionally heavy. In 1913, grains from this district were forwarded to emigration agencies in the U.S. and Great Britain, including sheaves of wheat, oats, barley and bundles of flax and timothy. The wheat crop of 1913 in the Nokomis district proved to be the equal of any district in Canada. A bumper crop of wheat yielded from 30 to 55 bushels per acre. Before it was two thirds marketed the amount totalled 415,000 bushels shipped from the local yards.

In 1914, Guy Hummel had 310 acres of new breaking that threshed 30 bushels to the acre of wheat, and Alex MacFarlane threshed 29 bushels off new breaking. The 1915 crops were reported the equal of any in the west. C.L. Campbell received instructions from Ottawa to purchase two car loads of wheat sheaves in the Nokomis district for

the Immigration Department. Again in 1922, the Immigration Dept. purchased three car loads of sheaves, from a total of 20 in western Canada.

What was believed to be the largest car of wheat ever shipped on the North American continent was car CGR 260482, shipped by G.H. Hummel to Blackburn & Mills. It was unloaded at the Grand Trunk Pacific elevator, Fort William, on October 16, 1917, and contained 129,000 lbs. or 2150 bushels of No. 1 Northern wheat, without dockage. At the set price of \$2.21, less freight and commission, this single car netted the shipper \$4,458.00. The freight alone on this car from Nokomis to Fort William was \$271.00.

It was in 1918 that the first carload of Henry Ford & Son tractors arrived. The first tractor was purchased by W.J. Brown, and the remainder were quickly sold. W.B. Ewen, 16 miles southwest of Nokomis, was the first farmer in the district to purchase a combine reaper. M.C. Potter also purchased one. This was in 1927.

In 1930, most of the wheat graded about 10 bushels to the acre, with amounts from 5 to 20 bushels reported. East of town in the Richfarms district, yields were much better than south and west of town. W.M. Meikle reported 18 bu. average and Gordon Meikle's summerfallow went over 20 bu. to the acre.

In November, 1930 a Central Relief committee was appointed, with representatives serving from the various organizations in the town and district. A Local Relief Advisory committee was appointed by the Sask. Relief Commission in 1931, comprising G.H. Hummel, D. Adam, Mrs. J.N. Morris, J.Y. Clark and W.R. Fansher. G.H. Hummel went to Regina in October of 1931 to organize a department for the distribution of feed grain and fodder, and take charge of the distribution. During the winter months, the congregation of the Nokomis United Church voted unanimously in favor of holding services on Sunday afternoon in order to economize on fuel. The I.O.D.E. sent no delegate to the provincial convention and cut down lunches at their monthly meetings. As a relief measure, the town paid 30 percent of a \$600 gravelling project on the roads of Nokomis.

In July of 1932, crops promised the best yield since 1915. The Relief committee had a refrigerator car on the C.P.R. tracks for donations of vegetables for the dried out area of the province. The R.M. of Wrexford decided not to collect taxes by force in 1934, but relied on the ratepayers to pay when they had the money. By the end of August, 1934, threshing was well advanced. Stooking wages of \$1 to \$1.50 were paid, and for threshing, \$2.00. Noble Hicks threshed 1400 bushels of wheat off a 40 acre field, 35 bushels to the acre. The drought was far worse in the south and west of the province than in the Nokomis area.

It was in 1937 that a car of vegetables was received in Nokomis from The Pas. It weighed approximately 17 1/2 tons. An accompanying letter said, "It is a matter of pride that this is the first car load of vegetables ever to be shipped south from 'north of 53' ". In all, two carloads were received for distribution among the needy around Nokomis. In 1938, a cistern was dug in the rink as a relief project.

Crop prospects have been more favorable in the years since, attaining a new high in wheat production in 1952 and 1953.

Throughout the years of its growth Nokomis has become known, in addition, for its specialized livestock breeding. Jamieson Bros. imported from Scotland, Clydesdale horses, and these were bred by George until he left the farm in 1920. Shorthorn cattle were also bred by Geo. Jamieson. Sam Stoltz became widely known

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for his Duroc Jersey hogs, some of which were shipped to New Zealand, Australia and Venezuela, where they won championships. He also shipped to the University of Saskatchewan. Since Mr. Stoltz retirement from the farm, Bob Edwards has continued to breed these hogs. In 1935, Robert Seeley's Percheron horses walked away with all the prizes in their class at the Regina fair. Also worthy of note are Beelers' Ayrshires, Keeler's Herefords, Reynolds' and Felske's Shorthorns, Masur's Holsteins, and Edwards' and Massie's Purebred

sheep. Other specialized farming includes J. Richter's mink farm and P.A. Barton's pony ranch of Shetland, Welsh and Dartmoor ponies.

DEVELOPMENTS IN TRANSPORTATION

DEVELOPMENT of COMMUNICATION

The initial steps toward telephone communication were taken in 1911, when meetings were held in the Nokomis Council chambers in March, at which the farmers of the district decided to proceed with the necessary steps towards forming a joint stock company. Reports of the committees appointed to canvass the district for subscribers showed upwards of sixty had agreed to take phones and subscribe the full amount of four shares each. Appointment of provisional directors included president W.A. MaFarlane, directors Gus Lopthein, A.C. McNichol, Duncan Meikle, W.J. Casterton, James Thompson, George Ewers, and sec.-treas. C.L. Campbell. The district was divided into seven circuits, with one director for each circuit. Since it was agreed the rural system would be practically useless without a town system, a resolution was passed "that this meeting of farmers met to organize a joint stock company for the purpose of erecting a rural telephone system with Central at Nokomis, request its secretary to bring the matter before the Town Council with a view to the town putting in a telephone system and meeting the proposed rural system at the boundary of the town."

In early August, 1911, poles arrived for rural telephone lines. Holes had already been dug. By October, work on the local exchange was being rushed to completion, for use at the end of that month.

The switchboard, property of the government, was located at the rear of the R.H. Norris drug store, with

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Miss May Norris as first operator. Also operating the switchboard from its inception was Miss Dema Girden. In July, 1915, when long distance came through, the local telephone central was moved to the rooms over the drug store, and in 1916, when Miss Girden resigned, Miss Ila Sommerville became head operator, assisted by her sister Ruby. Mr.

E. Saunders was in charge of the switchboard at night. When the system was first installed, there were 64 subscribers in the town itself, and about 100 in all. By November, 1914, there were over 182 telephones in the town of Nokomis and surrounding district. In September, 1916, the exchange was moved to the M.R. Young block, and in June, 1925, the Central Telephone Board arranged for the purchase of the A.G. Nichol house, which is the present location. Mrs. Gwen Dodsworth is in charge of the office. The Central Board comprises the rural companies of Nokomis, Ambassador, Wreford, Richfarms, Hayes, and MacFarlane. Richfarms, Hayes, and MacFarlane gained representation on the board in Jan. 1922.

In September, 1922, the first radio set in the district was installed at the farm of W.J. Brown, and a newspaper account at that time shows Mrs. Brown entertaining friends for an evening of radio listening, in contrast to today, when the radio is generally turned off when guests arrive. F.T. McDougall had one of the first sets, and by November, Jim McDougall also had one installed. Sets were distributed by Floyd McDougall. Amateur or "Ham" radio sets have been operated by Jim Massie and by Gordon Simpson.

The first television sets were installed by Orville and Gordon Simpson in 1953. In Sept. 1954, when television stations in Regina and later Saskatoon came into operation, sets were installed by Dr. Wahl, J.H. Marvin, F. Gotski. A. Ramshaw, M.L. Pilon, Wm. Rahn. F. McDougall and in the Nurses' Residence of the hospital.

INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

A flour mill, moved from Manitoba in 1909, and managed by H.E. Bird, was the initial contribution to the industrial development of the community. Unfortunately the mill elevator was burned in March, 1911, causing extensive damage to the milling equipment. In 1914, the Dominion Milling and Elevator Co. Ltd., who had purchased the Nokomis Flour Mill, overhauled the machinery and replaced it with larger equipment, increasing the capacity by 160 barrels daily. The mill failed to prove a paying proposition, and was closed in 1915. It was later dismantled. In 1926 and 1928, representatives from a firm advocating midget mills advocated installation of one at Nokomis,

raising the necessary funds by the sale of shares. A committee was appointed in conjunction with the Nokomis Board of Trade, but farmers were not strongly in favor of the project and the idea failed to become a reality. As late as 1933, Auctioneer J.I. Jamieson conducted a sale of the planing mill and contents. The main building was sold to John Ediger of Lockwood, who in the spring of 1934, moved it and planned the installation of a flour mill. This, too, failed to materialize.

A more successful industrial venture, a co-operative creamery was built on the golf course site in May, 1927 by P. Burns & Co. with Wm. Wilson as manager. Arrangements were made to ship in a car of Ayrshire cows and a pure bred bull. Orders were taken from farmers and a full car of 18 cattle was ordered. D.A. MacAlpine and G.H. Hummel rented a block of vacant lots on the northeast end of town adjacent to the big bluff, which were fenced off for fattening hogs, using buttermilk from the creamery. R.H. Carter was the first farmer to bring a can of cream to the Nokomis Creamery, and by June, 1929, cream was shipped from Fenwood to Zelma on the C.N.R. and Bulyea to Guernsey on the C.P.R. The huge churn had a capacity of around 1,000 lbs.

During 1929. the creamery closed down because of the lack of business. An effort was made by the Nokomis Board of Trade in July, 1931, to have the creamery reopened, and Burns Co. stated that it had been closed because of lack of local patronage. A second attempt was made to reopen the business. In 1934, Downey Brothers began making regular trips to Regina with cream, servicing the farmers along their route. The creamery in Nokomis was later moved away.

GROWTH OF UTILITIES

Streets: — A bylaw was issued March 1, 1909 by the Town of Nokomis

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to the amount of \$4,000.00 for parks and streets. In October, 1912, a bylaw for the purpose of raising money to build crossings and grade streets was passed by a vote of 40 to 10. Considerable work had been done previous to that time. On November 2, 1913, debentures totalling

\$18,000 were issued for cement walks and another \$5,000 for street work. During the early depression years, in 1931, the streets were covered with a fine gravel. This was paid for as a relief measure, 30% town, 35% province and 35% dominion. With the exception of spring frost boils, roads in Nokomis have not presented a problem until the fall of 1954, when excess moisture conditions raised the level of a number of sloughs. The road linking the business section with the north end of town was covered with water and the portion of road leading south from town was built up considerably. In the spring of 1955, flooding increased, and a budget was brought down allowing \$4,000 for roads.

Fire Department: — Debentures were first issued in 1909 to the amount of \$2700 for a combined town and fire hall and site, also a \$1,000 debenture for fire equipment. Equipment purchased in 1910 comprised two chemical engines. It is believed that George Alexander was the town's first fire chief as well as first chief of police.

In 1917, six large fire extinguishers were ordered and placed at certain points about town. Numerous disasters, including hotels, elevators, stores, and a few homes occurred. A tragic fire in 1921 took the life of Mrs. Jas. Rodger, the only fire fatality in the history of Nokomis, and destroyed a block containing several business premises and the hall in which moving pictures were shown. A blaze in 1941 which destroyed the Beauty Shop, badly burned Steve Sevick. However, a bylaw to purchase additional firefighting equipment was defeated in November, 1930.

In 1949, the Nokomis Fire Department was reorganized. Ken Kidd replaced retiring chief Albert Cogger. Arrangements were made by the town for the purchase of a fire fighting unit from War Assets at a cost of \$3,500. It consisted of a truck, 6 wheel drive, carrying a 480 gallon tank with 200 ft. of hose, two nozzles, one fog and one straight. In 1951, following the destruction of J.S. McEwen & Son Locker Plant, the town council made the decision to purchase two wagons on rubber, with 500 gallon tank for each, and the town agreed to pay the volunteer fire brigade \$8 per hour while engaged in fighting fires. The capacity of the crash tender was increased to 70 gallons. A firemen's ball was held to raise money for a new siren, which was connected

with the telephone switchboard. The two chemical engines originally purchased, were sold to the villages of Lockwood and Tate.

Electricity: — By 1917, battery operated electric light plants were coming into operation in Nokomis. Mason & Durgan and W.J. Henry installed electric light plants in July. Among the first in the rural district was a Delco plant installed in the new home of G.H. Hummel. Electric light was installed in the Rest Room and a light placed on the corner of 2nd Ave. and Queen St., the power being supplied from the Junction Garage and Machine Shop, plant free of charge.

In July, 1919, councillors Wm. Rankin and R.J. Riddell interviewed the Local Gov't Board in Regina concerning electric lights for Nokomis. The chairman of the board promised to consider the issuing of debentures to cover the cost of a plant to light the town of Nokomis. Nokomis was the seventh town to take up the electric light proposition with the Local Gov't Board within the space of a month, and Nokomis was the only town promised any consideration. A short time later, W.A. Armour, secretary of the town of Nokomis, received a communication from the Local Gov't Board stating that they were in favor of the installation of an electric light plant. A bylaw was prepared and a vote taken about the middle of August.

In September, a tender was let to Fairbanks Morse following a bylaw to authorize the issuing of debentures to the amount of \$20,000 for the purpose of paying the cost of constructing, installing and equipping an electric light and power system in the town of Nokomis.

By January of 1920, the electric light plant was operating on a 24 hour basis, and the switchboard arrived. Electricians wired the various homes in the community, charging a fee of \$ 5.00. The plant consisted of two engines, one 15 H.P. and the other 25 H.P. semi-diesel.

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In April, 1928, Midwest Utilities of Edmonton, made a bid on the electric light plant, offering to take over the balance outstanding of the electric light debentures to the town, and furnish electric light current at a much reduced rate in return for a 20 year exclusive franchise.

After a full discussion and adjustment of some of the proposed rates, it was moved that a bylaw providing for the sale of the electric light plant utility of the Town of Nokomis to the Midwest Utilities Ltd. be prepared and submitted to the vote of the burgesses. By a vote in May of 75 to 1, the burgesses of Nokomis favored selling the electric light plant and by the same majority passed a bylaw granting a 20 year exclusive franchise. In June, the sale was fully completed. The purchase price of \$17,000, together with a further sum of \$770 was deposited in a bank trust account bearing 4% interest. From this account, the bank guaranteed to pay the annual payment of the electric light debentures, amounting to \$2236, on the first of November, from 1928 to 1930.

The company requested that the town continue to operate the plant until the new installation was ready to supply current. A 240 h.p. engine was ordered. In August, 1928, the holes for the poles line from Watrous were dug, as far as Cymric. The main line passed in the direction of Govan and branched off en- route to Semans. The small engine was sent to Lockwood and the large one to Allan. Mr. Julius Proseilo was re-engaged by Canadian Utilities Ltd.

In September, Canadian Utilities arranged for the change over from B.C. to A.C. current. The council announced it would obtain and supply A.C. motors at wholesale prices. Light users having washing machines or other motors of 1/4 h.p. or less were supplied with a new motor for \$10 and the old motor. Current was turned on Tuesday, September 25, 1928. Work on the power house commenced, and Mr. Scampton, in charge of the operations, moved his office from Watrous to Nokomis. The building was erected on the site of the old flour mill.

In November, 1930, the Saskatchewan Power Commission began negotiations with Canadian Utilities to purchase power from Nokomis to be used in linking up Raymore, Quinton and Punnichy. In February, 1931, a fight opened between Canadian Utilities and the Sask. Power Commission for the contract to supply light and power to the town of Watrous. Before the problem arose, a lowering of the rates for towns and villages, including Nokomis, was anticipated. However, with the loss of Watrous revenue, Canadian Utilities were forced to raise their rates to other subscribers.

In May, 1931, the Sask. Power Commission bid on the power system out of Nokomis, and met the price which Canadian Utilities thought they had set sufficiently high to deter acceptance. The system served from Nokomis covered the towns of Nokomis, Govan, Semans, Strasbourg, Watrous, Young, Imperial, Simpson, Duval, Manitou Beach and Tate.

Representatives of the Sask. Power Com. met with the town council to endeavor to secure their agreement to turn over their franchise for light and power held by Canadian Utilities. Mr. Parker of the Power Commission intimated that coercion would be employed, if necessary, to compel Nokomis to fall in line. A motion to turn down the Power Com. was unanimously made, since Nokomis stood to lose \$1700 in taxes annually. Finally, in August, 1931, the town of Nokomis signed with the Commission. The Power Commission began their policy of rural expansion, and in November, 1934, G.H. Hummel and W.J. Johnson became the first farmers in the district to have their buildings connected with the Sask. Power Commission system. Rural electrification has proceeded during the intervening years. Much of Newlands and Richfarms were signed in 1953, and the Killarney district in 1954.

In May, 1954, the town council arranged to purchase 11 mercury vapor lights for downtown Nokomis. Nokomis became one of the first towns in Saskatchewan to install this type of lighting.

Water: — From its earliest beginning, Nokomis obtained water from wells drilled at various locations. Finally, in March, 1911, Fitch and Templeton, well drillers, completed a well on King Street which was 108 ft. deep and contained 90 ft. of excellent water. A second well was drilled on Queen street. It was felt that with the two wells located at different parts of town, the fire protection problem would be more easily solved.

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When the Grand Trunk Pacific was constructed, water for their engines was required. Believing Jack Shields "lake" to be fed by

underground springs, they purchased it from him and piped the water three miles west to Nokomis. Unfortunately, the "lake" was pumped dry and the railway discovered it was just a big slough.

In December, 1932, C.N.R. engineers began drilling for water seven miles west and one mile south of Nokomis. They found that the water on Jim McDougall's homestead tested the best of any water in the province. They stated it was the best water they had ever tested, and even better than pure rain water. They followed the vein and eventually located an underground lake, 6 1/2 miles west of Nokomis.

In November, 1937, the C.N.R. decided to tap the water deposits. A gang of men was put to work digging test holes and drilling to ascertain the depth of gravel. Work on the piping commenced in the spring of 1938 from where the pole line turns north at Nemaha school.

The secretary of the town of Nokomis was instructed to write the C.N.R. ascertaining the cost of water for Nokomis residents when the proposed water tower and pipeline was completed. In February, 1938, T.C. Main, C.N.R. engineer met with the town council to discuss supplying Nokomis with water from the new water tower. The intention was to have a lead pipe leading to some central point within the town limits. The water would cost the town approximately 60c per thousand gals. The approximate cost of bringing the water to Nokomis was \$90,000. Discussions followed, with the Montreal office of the C.N.R. pressing for the water to be taken to Undora to save expense, and the Winnipeg engineers urging that it be piped to Nokomis. It was estimated that a trillion gallons existed in the underground lake. It was stated that with an adequate supply of water for fire fighting, hydrants located at strategic points about the business district would pay for themselves in decreased fire insurance premiums over a period of 5 or six years.

It was June, 1939 when eight men eventually began work on the pipeline to Nokomis for the C.N.R. The contract was let to the Nelson River Co., with 8,000 ft. of pipe 8 inches in diameter, and the balance 6 inch pipe. The water tank was built between a half and 3/4 mile east of the depot, and the meter house to supply an outlet for town use, in the vicinity of the station. The C.N.R. engineers submitted estimates of

various plans to pipe the water around the town. One plan involved nine blocks, another eight blocks. The most ambitious plan was to have the water main go to the Hotel, down 2nd ave. to W.J. Rath's corner, up 3rd ave. to the Anglican Church, to the school, down 5th ave. to the Baptist Church, down Queen St. and around via the town hall and down 2nd ave. to Wreford office. This would have cost, in 1939, \$7,230 for laying the main. Sixteen hydrants would have been required, costing \$175 each.

A committee of the town council met with the Local Gov't Board in Regina and obtained their approval on the water scheme. The laying of the 6 inch pipe to the Hotel, and 4 inch pipe around town was fully approved. A public meeting was held in the theatre. Councillor D. Adam explained the proposed scheme, stating that the capital expenditure would be met by a levy not exceeding 4 mills on property with 300 ft. of the main. The C.N.R. engineer replied to questions and said, "Never again was it likely that the town would get a chance to obtain supply of good water at as low a rate."

In September, 1939, shortly after the outbreak of war, it was stated that owing to a holdup in obtaining a satisfactory contract with the C.N.R. the plan of installing water around town would have to be shelved for the present. However, the contract was signed, and sent to the Local Gov't Board at Regina for their sanction before the application was made for borrowing \$13,000 from Ottawa under the Municipal Improvement Act. In 1948, pipeline was laid to the Nokomis Hospital, also servicing the Nokomis Hotel.

FINANCE

On September 25, 1907, before Nokomis was incorporated as a town, K.W. Reikie opened the Canadian Bank of Commerce. About the same time, the Northern Crown Bank began operating, with R.S. Inkster as manager. The Northern Crown later become the Royal Bank. It dropped out of business circles in Nokomis about 1921. The Bank of Commerce

weathered the depression years, finally ceasing operations on June 30, 1941. Funds were transferred to the Royal Bank at Govan, leaving Nokomis without adequate banking facilities, and giving the town a black name in banking circles.

In April, 1940, the Nokomis and Community Credit Union was formed, with A. Colquhoun as president, F. Edwards as secretary and E. Errey as treasurer. Directors comprised Gordon Simpson, Morley Braithwaite, A.E. Wheatley, Dr. W. Rennick, W. Johnston, G. Ross, E.L. Taylor, John P. Potter. By February, 1941, at the first annual meeting, dividends of 5% had been declared. In September, 1953, the Credit Union opened an office on Main street, with B.G. Delgatty as full time manager. Premier T.C. Douglas officially opened the new office in June, 1954, when the gradual growth of the Nokomis Credit Union was traced from total assets in 1940 of \$202 and 27 members, to 657 members and assets of over \$300,000.00.

NEWSPAPER

Since its early beginnings, Nokomis has been fortunate in having a newspaper printed and published in Nokomis. It was in April, 1908 that W.C.R. Garrioch erected a building on Second Avenue, directly west of the present O.K. Agency. Type was handset and mechanical equipment almost non-existent.

The Nokomis Times, as it was named, was purchased from W.C.R. Garrioch by the Nokomis Publishing Company, comprising S.L. Small and Glassford G. Muir, effective October 15th, 1910. J.A. McGowan took over Mr. Muir's interest as at January 1, 1911 and the business operated under the name of McGowan & Small for about two years, when Mr. McGowan took over. Mr. Muir moved to Regina and was an active minister in the city for several years. He had no knowledge of pricing, but devoted his full time to writing editorials and reporting religious meetings which he is said to have done very well.

Mr. McGowan operated the Nokomis Times as editor and publisher during the years of the First World War. His writings show that he boosted his community unceasingly.

In November, 1918, he erected a new, one storey brick plant on Main Street, which is the present home of the firm. The original building was a frame, two storey structure, 18 by 28 ft. with five living rooms on the second floor, and a 7 by 28 one storey addition.

In August, 1919, new equipment was purchased for the new plant. The following appeared in the issue of August 28: "Since the last issue, the editor has purchased at Winnipeg a large newspaper press, a new type cabinet and other equipment, for the Nokomis Times office. These articles were purchased because they were needed to complete our printing plant, also because we firmly believe that Nokomis is going to be one of the big centres of this province."

Mr. McGowan sold his business to Gerald T. Humphrey on January 1, 1920. Mr. Humphrey had recently returned from four years fighting in France. Previous to that, he had assisted with the publication of the Nokomis Times before managing the Strasbourg Mountaineer.

In 1928, a linotype was installed, making the setting of type faster and easier. A succession of printers were employed, including K.A. Miller, publisher of the Semans Gazette, Art Johnston now in Victoria, Eric Lach, now in Yorkton, and Bill Wilson, in Portland, Oregon.

For a time, the Semans paper was published by the Nokomis Times, as well as Lockwood News. In June, 1931, publication of the Govan Prairie News was taken over from Nokomis with the following announcement: "Once more the Prairie News is coming to its readers, under different management. It is now being printed in conjunction with other towns. It is better to have the home town paper printed in the home town but in these times of depression, it is only by cutting down the overhead that a paper can hope to continue. Miss Edith Neely is acting as correspondent."

The Govan Prairie News is still printed in Nokomis, in conjunction with the Nokomis Times.

In October, 1947, there was another change in ownership of the Nokomis Times & Govan Prairie News, when Jack Humphrey became a partner, with the firm becoming known as Gerald Humphrey & Son.

When the Lanigan News, published by Jack Fehler, sold out his plant in 1949, much of the stock and mailing lists, were taken over by the Nokomis Times. In 1955, they pub-

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lish the Nokomis Times & Govan Prairie News, Lanigan News, Drake and Lockwood News, and coverage is also given to the Jansen, Esk, Sinnet and Tate districts to the north and east, and Duval and Cymric to the south.

The Nokomis Times and Govan Prairie News was the first small weekly in Sask. to become a member of the A.B.C. This is an organization with headquarters in the U.S.A., which audits the mailing list closely to protect the interests of national advertisers. In 1943 when it became a member, there were only 4 other papers in Saskatchewan having membership in the organization. They were: Saskatoon Star, Regina Leader, Western Producer and Sask. Farmer. Since that time the mailing lists of the paper have increased from between 500 and 600 paid up subscribers to the present rating of 1298. This number does not include free copies, checking copies, etc.

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Medical Profession and Hospitals

MEDICAL PROFESSION

It was late spring, 1907, when the first doctor, Bertram A. Sandwith, arrived in Nokomis. He purchased a lot and erected a shack at the rear, into which he moved that summer and set up his practice. Later the shack was moved to the front of the lot and served as office and residence for some years. Later in 1907, a Dr. Wm. Robertson, graduate of Trinity College, arrived from N.D. He opened an office over the drug store run by R.H. Norris. However, he was not a registered practitioner and left Nokomis for another location where he entered the hotel business.

During the early years, Dr. Sandwith was assisted by Mrs. Edwards, mother of E.J. & George Edwards. Mrs. Duncan Jamieson frequently performed tasks of midwifery in the early years.

In the early months of 1908, Dr. J.A. Cowper came to Nokomis and opened an office in the building opposite the drug store on Main street. Dr. Cowper at one time practiced in Birmingham, Alabama. He was crippled with arthritis and died about 1917.

During the early years, a Dr. J.P. Byrne, who farmed west of town, also practiced medicine in Nokomis.

During the absence of Dr. Sandwith overseas in the First Great War, from 1915-1917, a Dr. Groulx took over his practice. Dr. Cowper replaced Dr. Sandwith as medical health officer in R.M. Wreford. About the same time, Dr. A.V. Brown of Medicine Hat located in Nokomis and started a private hospital, mostly for maternity cases. Mrs. Brown, a trained nurse, assisted her husband in operating the hospital. Dr. Brown was located in the present Earl McDougall house. He later sold out to Dr. Harry Hicks who also continued the private hospital until he left to do municipal work. No appreciable change occurred in Nokomis medical practice until June, 1932, when Dr. Sandwith left for Drayton, Ont., ending the longest, most colorful medical career in the history of Nokomis. Dr. Jos. Fieldman of Winnipeg purchased the house and practice of Dr. Sandwith, and fitted an operating room, remodelling the house for hospital accommodation. Dr. Fieldman remained until 1937, when his practice was bought by Dr. W.C. Rennick of Abbey. Dr. Fieldman had a successful practice until his hospital was destroyed by fire on March 30, 1935. A succession of doctors followed, including a Dr. Ketchum, Dr. Maxfield and Dr. Waugh. In May of 1944, the R.M. of Wreford and Nokomis Town Council purchased a house for the doctor, and shortly after Dr. LaBelle arrived. In 1946, Dr. M.W. Dobson, who had spent one year in the Army Medical Corps, arrived. He remained for three years, leaving shortly after the official opening of Nokomis Union Hospital. The municipal doctor committee accepted the application of Dr. O.E. Wahl, to succeed Dr. Dobson. Dr. Wahl's wife, Dr. S.M. Williams, also set up a practice, and the two worked as a team, sharing adjoining offices in the basement of the hospital.

In April, 1952, the Medical services scheme was discussed at Nokomis town council and application was made to join in place of the municipal doctor scheme in force at that time. Medical Services was put on a voluntary basis, effective only if signed by 75 percent of those eligible. Nokomis and district are members of Medical Services, Saskatoon.

In 1953, the first public health nursing service came to the district. It was not until 1954, however, that the regional office of the public health nurse was located at Nokomis, with Miss Erica Langner, R.N. in charge.

Several dentists have practiced their profession in Nokomis. The first, Dr. McBride, arrived in 1907 and stayed until 1920. Dr. Widdowson took over from him, leaving in 1930. Since then, there have been a couple of dentists. Efforts on the part of the BOT in recent years to secure permanent dental service have proved fruitless.

HOSPITALS

The first hospital in Nokomis commenced as a tent-house-hospital with a number of buildings about 10'x10' with wood floor and sides up to about 3 ft., a canvas roof with wire screening in the sides above the boards; canvas panels were hinged above and came down over the screening. They were adequate for summer use, pro-

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viding there was not too much rain. Early in 1907, the Franklin Realty Co. sold lots on the corner of 3rd ave. to two women from Chicago, Mrs. Buck and Mrs. Hesse. In June, 1908, work was completed on a cement block building which became the hospital. The cornerstone was laid with a ceremony, including a short religious service and brief speeches. The Royal Templars also gave open air entertainment. This building is the present home of Frank Sotski. The hospital was fairly successful for a time, but money was scarce and fees high for the times. People often patronized the hospital but left without paying. About this time, steel was being laid on the Grand Trunk Pacific railway, and consequently, the population, though transient, was much

increased. Accidents occurred among the railroad workers. Dr. Sandwith held the position of doctor to the G.T.P. and all cases of accident and illness were turned into the hospital. Eventually, the rail workers left, the hospital ended, and Mrs. Buck and Mrs. Hesse returned to Chicago.

After the close of the hospital, operations were frequently performed in the home. Dr. Sandwith nursed many patients through critical cases of influenza in 1918 and 1919, among them Bert Cogger. A total of 29 died from "Spanish flu" in Nokomis and district. The first were Miss Hannah, a milliner in town, and Mrs. A.C. McNichol in the country. Many young people died, including Peter Graham, Tom Ings, Harry Fraser, S. Taylor, Mrs. F.J. Howes, Harry Carson, and at Medicine Hat, the Rev. A.M. Harding, early Anglican minister in Nokomis. During the weeks that the flu was prevalent, services at Christ Church, Presbyterian and Methodist churches were cancelled, and schools closed. A special meeting was held in the Wreford council chambers to discuss the situation created in the municipality. Councillors McDonald and Art Stalder were absent with flu. A committee headed by J.J. McGurran was appointed to take what action they considered necessary to assist in control of the spread of the epidemic. An emergency hospital was set up over A.H. Nichol's store.

As early as 1917, the councils of Mt. Hope and Wreford and Town of Nokomis discussed the municipal hospital movement and each appointed a committee of two to look into the matter. During the years, Dr. Brown operated a private hospital, mostly for maternity patients, and Dr. Sandwith took patients into his home and also performed operations at patients' homes.

It was not until 1932 that the hospital service was augmented. Dr. J. Fieldman remodelled the house and engaged a Nurse Neal of Saskatoon to care for the patients. The 12-bed Nokomis Cottage Hospital, as it came to be known, was equipped with private and semi-private wards, nursery, treatment room and lab, operating room, doctor's office, waiting room and hospital office. X-ray and diathermy equipment were installed, and a quartz lamp. A meeting of various ladies' organizations was held at the Hospital in September, when a provisional committee was formed. Mrs. S.G. Thompson was elected

chairman. Arrangements were made for the official opening on Sept. 5, 1932.

In November, 1932, a meeting took place to organize the Nokomis Cottage Hospital Committee. Mayor Wm. Mason was named chairman, and Gerald Humphrey, secretary. Since the opening of the hospital in July, there was a total of 63 patients — 10 medical, 8 maternity, 37 surgical — from Watrous, Semans, Lockwood, Drake, Dafoe and Nokomis districts. Dr. Fieldman approached the Nokomis Board of Trade and obtained their support in adopting a proposed hospital insurance scheme, where, by paying \$ 20, a family could obtain 20 days free hospital treatment.

By December, the Dept. of Public Health regulations were met and the provincial authorities recognized the hospital.

In August, 1934, Dr. Fieldman erected a new home on the hospital grounds (located west of the Baptist Church). The Alexander building was moved to the rear of the hospital and used for nurses' residence, after renovations. A few months later, April, 1935, the Nokomis Cottage Hospital was completely destroyed by fire, at a loss of \$23,000, about half covered by insurance. The Board of Trade met immediately to discuss rebuilding plans. A committee consisting of G.H. Hummel, Jno. Clarke, Jno. Coggins, J.I. Jamieson, A.E. Wheatley, Rev. J. Phelps and G. Humphrey was appointed. A drive for certificates to create a building fund began at once. An architect arrived from Saskatoon and laid plans for a 15-bed

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hospital. Certificates in aid of the rebuilding became known as Contribution Certificates for the Hospital Building Fund, and each certificate entitled the holder to several benefits. The drive was successful in Nokomis, and meetings were also held at Newlands, Richfarms, Bannockburn and Rowandville. By October, 1936, the Nokomis Hospital was ready for re-opening, fully equipped for surgery. It was located on 5th Ave. West, in the building formerly used as the nurses' residence. This structure was a 4-bed unit.

In March, 1937, Mayor Wm. Mason offered to remodel his building on the corner of 2nd Ave. and King St. An enthusiastic public meeting was called by the Board of Trade Hospital committee in April, to discuss ways and means of financing the purchase of a suitable building and the equipping of a hospital. Requirements were laid down for a 10 bed hospital to meet the Dept. of Health grant for hospital assistance. Arrangements were made to purchase the house from Mr. Mason and remodel it so that it conformed with regulations, at a cost of \$6,000 with \$2,000 for equipment. It was proposed to raise the money from grants of \$1,000.00 each from the Town of Nokomis and Wreford, and \$500 from Mt. Hope, the balance to be obtained from levies of 1 1/4 mills on the four divisions of Wreford nearest Nokomis and div. 3 and 6 of Mt. Hope, and a 5 mill levy on the town of Nokomis. Despite the worst crop year in Nokomis' history, plans proceeded. A full concrete basement and large cistern were built and an up-to-date heating system installed. A hospital board was chosen by the B.O.T. comprising J.H. Marvin, C.L. Wallace, Rev. R.C. Pollock, D. Adam, A.A. Stalder. Various organizations were contacted for furnishings for the hospital, and for cash contributions. An organization meeting of the Ladies Hospital Aid was held at the home of Mrs. George Jamieson. Corinne Lettner was appointed matron, with Jean Ross of Govan as assistant matron. The first birth occurred on November 1, 1937, when a daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Schoenberger of Tate.

From that time, the Nokomis Community Hospital made steady progress. During the year, accommodation was given to 261 persons, 38 of them newborn. During the first four months of 1945, 127 patients were admitted. Conditions became extremely overcrowded in the 11 bed unit, so in 1947, the Nokomis Town council accepted an offer of the Sask. Reconstruction Corp. to sell half of a wing of a building at Dafoe airport for \$375, to be used as an addition to the present building. The Department of Health had been urging the hospital board to take steps to form a Nokomis Union Hospital district, which would include 1 division of Osborne, 4 div. of Wreford, 2 of Last Mountain and the towns of Govan and Nokomis. The Nokomis hospital was supplying the only hospital facilities in the entire union hospital district of 18 municipal townships, two towns and two villages.

Donald Adam was appointed provisional secretary and representatives were elected in each section of the Union Hospital district. May 27, 1948, a vote was passed by a large majority in favor of the project. Debentures were issued to build and equip the hospital, as the sole means of finance.

Permission was granted to pipe water in from the C.N.R. outlet. Patients were moved into the new wing at the end of November, 1948, into rooms with steam heat, running water and kentile flooring. The hospital by then had a 22 bed capacity without cots. A new x-ray machine was installed, and other modern equipment. On June 1, 1949, the new Nokomis Union Hospital was officially opened, with over \$53,000 subscribed in public debentures. Guy Hummel was named chairman when negotiations began for the community hospital, and in 1955, continues to hold that position. Matron since 1950 has been Mrs. L.I. Walton.

In Brief

September 1915: Town Council gave notice that no operator of motor vehicle or bicycle shall drive or ride such vehicle on any street in town at a speed greater than 8 miles per hour, and no bicycle shall be allowed on sidewalks.

Items from A.H. Nichol ad, November, 1916: new suits, \$9.50 to \$25; fur coats, men's dog, goat, sitka beaver, Korean tallup and Wallaby from \$30 to \$37.50; ladies coats, quilted lined coats with Sable Coney collars, \$22.50; one dog lined coat with Otter collar, \$40; mink muff, \$70

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(Webmaster's note:) This page contained a series of photographs)

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Political Development

CIVIC GOVERNMENT

First steps toward incorporating the hamlet of Nokomis as a village were taken by interested citizens who submitted a petition to that effect to the Commissioner of Public Works Regina, on December 3, 1907. Correspondence in connection with the proposal was over the signature of Dr. Bertram A. Sandwith. Preliminary notices having been posted, a proclamation was issued by the Lieut. Governor-in-council establishing the Village of Nokomis on March 3, 1908. Election for first overseer was scheduled for March 16, 1908, and Dr. Sandwith was appointed returning officer. Mr. Frank G. Arthur was elected to the position. Duncan Jamieson was first secretary-treasurer.

On July 15, 1908, a petition was submitted from the village asking for incorporation as a town, as a census taken May 25th had shown the population to be 452. The Town of Nokomis was formally established on August 15, 1908. Mr. Frank G. Arthur was named returning officer for the first election of mayor and councillors. The town council elected for 1909: Mayor, Frank G. Arthur; councillors, Robert H. Norris, Dr. B.A. Sandwith, W.C.R. Garrioch. J.I. Jamieson, Fred W. Gentle and Colin L. Campbell. Sec.-treas. was W.A. Armour.

The following have served as town clerks: W.A. Armour, 1908-1919; C.L. Campbell. 1919-1929; Oates Halstead, 1929-1936; J.I. Jamieson, 1936 to present time.

The following have served in the capacity of mayor: F.G. Arthur 1908-1909; A.H. Nichol 1910-1913; W.A. MacFarlane 1914; Wm. Mason, 1915-1917; G.A.W. Braithwaite 1918-1819; J.B. Garland 1920 (died in office); W.A. MacFarlane 1920-1921; C.H. Durgan 1922-1923; A.J. Kidd 1924-1925; J.J. McGurran 1926-1928; Dr. Widdowson 1929, (left in March); W.J. Adair 1929; J.A. McGowan 1930; Dr. B.A. Sandwith 1931-1932; Wm. Mason 1933-1948; L.L. Lymburner 1949-1955. Mr. Lymburner has been mayor or councillor for 28 consecutive years. Mr. Wm. Mason also served a great many years in the capacity of councillor, school trustee, and in recent years, Mayor.

The first annual meeting of ratepayers was held November 27, 1913 in Nokomis, and has been held in succeeding years with varying

degrees of interest, ranging from one ratepayer to a full chamber. Wives of ratepayers had their first opportunity to vote in the 1917 civic election. It is interesting to note that Nokomis was one of seven towns with a population under 1,000 in Canada, to balance its 1935 budget.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

During the months after this section of the west became known as Saskatchewan, instead of the Northwest Territories, settlers felt the need for some form of rural government. They formed a Local Improvement District with George Ewers as chairman, Sam Ferrie as sec.-treas., and councillors Art Stalder, Bob Snell, Emil Sundwall and Jack McGunigal. Officials at that time, it is noted, were more frequently appointed than elected. Each L.I.D. consisted of four townships. A vote was taken June 10 regarding division into the rural municipalities of Wreford and Mount Hope and in November, 1910, the first council of the rural municipality of Wreford No. 280 was elected, with offices located in the Town of Nokomis. George Ewers, a school teacher at Saline, was the first reeve. Councillors included Emil Sundwall div. 1; Jas. Thompson div. 2; Jack McGunigal div. 3; G.H. Hummel div. 4; Mr. Funnell div. 5; Wm. Isherwood div. 6. Sam Ferrie became the first secretary, followed in 1911 by J.J. McGurran. Mr. McGurran served continuously in that capacity until his departure from Nokomis in 1930, when he was appointed permanent secretary treasurer of the Sask. Association of Rural Municipalities. In 1927, he was made secretary of the organization on an annual basis, and G.H. Hummel, who had declined the presidency in 1926, was elected to head the S.A.R.M. that year also.

In November, 1911, there was a radical shakeup in the Wreford council. G.H. Hummel became reeve and has since served 33 years, not consecutively, in that office. He was also

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a councillor for 3 years. For seven of the 12 years that he was a member of the Sask. Ass'n of Rural Municipalities, he was president.

It is interesting to note that Wreford Municipality got its name from the old Wreford post office, named by Wm. Hele. He was a descendent of Matthew Wreford, an officer in the Crimean War. The family originally came from Denmark in the 15th century, settling on the banks of the river Wrae.

PROVINCIAL

The earliest provincial political meetings were held in the summer and fall of 1905, and the closest to Nokomis was held at Arlington Beach, a small schoolhouse. The meeting was addressed by a Mr. Walter Scott, Liberal candidate for Lumsden constituency. The area, now Nokomis, was included in the Provincial Constituency of Lumsden in the 1905 election. At that time, the constituency of Lumsden was a perfect rectangle in shape, 7 twps. wide and 17 twps. in length, commencing in the south, just north of Regina in twps. 18 continuing north, including twp. 34 in the area of ranges 17 to 23 inclusive. Walter Scott was elected in Lumsden constituency and following the election of Dec. 1905, became the Hon. Walter Scott, first premier of Saskatchewan. A redistribution of constituency boundaries was in effect at the next provincial election, held August 14, 1908, when the constituency of Last Mountain was christened, and with a very few boundary alterations has existed ever since. Nokomis has always formed a part of this constituency.

The following are the representatives in Last Mountain Constituency, and the parties they represented: 1908, T.A. Anderson, Provincial Rights; 1912, 1917, 1921, 1925, S.J. Latta, Liberal; 1929, J. Benson, Progressive; 1934, G.H. Hummel, Liberal; 1938, 1944, 1948, J. Benson, C.C.F.; 1952, Russ Brown, C.C.F.

From the time of the first provincial election in 1905, to 1929, the Liberal party was in power continuously. From 1929 to 1934, a coalition government headed by Hon. J.T.M. Anderson, made up of supporters of Conservative, Progressive and Independent political parties. In the 1934 government, not one member of the Anderson government was returned.

In 1917, Sam Latta of Govan became provincial minister of highways and in 1927, minister of municipal affairs. Mr. Latta homesteaded near Govan in 1905 and later published the Govan Prairie News.

In August, 1920, over 300 delegates and supporters from all parts of Last Mountain constituency met in the Ford Garage on behalf of the New National Party. Organizers were J. Benson of Semans and W.R. Fansher of Govan.

With the passage of several years, the New National Party grew into the Progressive party, and in 1932, the new Farmer-Labor party nominated Jacob Benson. Progressive MLA, M.J. Coldwell of Regina, was leader of this new party. At a meeting addressed by Mr. Benson and by W.R. Fansher, Mr. Fansher advocated taking the wealth of the country from the hands of a few private individuals and investing it in the state.

In June, 1933, G.H. Hummel was nominated Liberal standard-bearer, successfully capturing the seat in 1934 from J. Benson, who by then was nominee for the C.C.F. party. Mr. Benson held the seat until the 1952 election. During his final session, 1948-1952, he broke from the C.C.F. Party and sat as an Independent.

FEDERAL

In the field of federal politics, Dr. D.B. Neely first held the seat as a Liberal. Later, J. Fred Johnston sat as Liberal-Unionist, and still later, as candidate for the New National Party. The Redistribution Bill of 1924 divided the constituency into Long Lake constituency west of Last Mountain Lake, and Last Mountain constituency east of the lake. In 1925 the Progressives cast off Mr. Johnston, and in 1926 W.R. Fansher, Progressive, won the federal seat. John G. Diefenbaker, prominent Progressive-Conservative, later won the seat and the constituency was known as Lake Centre. Mr. Diefenbaker held the seat for two terms, and was the only Sask. Progressive Conservative during that time. In the Federal election in 1953, Ross Thatcher was elected as a representative of the C.C.F. party, but in April 1955, Mr. Thatcher announced his break from the C.C.F.

Education

Preliminary steps toward organization of a meeting of residents at Kellett's Store on July 23, 1906. A temporary committee of E.E. Gilliat, Guy Piercy and Thomas Halstead was authorized to carry out organizational procedure. Names proposed for the district were Horncastle, Nokomis, Bridgford, Willowdale and Needmore. The first school meeting was held at Mr. Piercy's on March 4, 1907. Ratepayers present voted in favor of erection of the proposed district. However, this plan was not proceeded with owing to the selection of the townsite of Nokomis at the junction of the main line of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and the Pheasant Hills branch of the C.P.R.

A meeting of interested residents on June 21, 1907 decided that the school should be built in the town. A formal school meeting to this end was held at Nokomis on November 26, 1907, with A.W. Schunke acting as chairman, and S.M. Carter as secretary. The ratepayers voted in favor of erection of the proposed district and elected a Board of Trustees; namely A.W. Schunke, chairman; J. Harding and S.M. Carter. The Nokomis School District No. 1936 was officially erected by order of the Commissioner of Education on December 18, 1907. Arrangements were made to hold school in temporary premises above the Northern Crown Bank, and classes appear to have opened on March 2, 1908, with Miss Mabel Dobbyn as teacher.

On March 3, 1908 the Deputy Commissioner of Education issued an order declaring the district to be a village school district, for purposes of assessment and on August 5, 1908 the district was empowered to borrow the sum of \$12,000 as debenture for the purpose of erecting and furnishing a schoolhouse. The school district became a town district effective January 1, 1909.

The new school was a two storey, 4 classroom, brick building, designed and constructed by John Hunter of Indian Head. Coats were hung in the lobbies on each floor, and the basement was utilized for play, furnace and toilets. The classrooms were lit by kerosene lamp until the installation of electricity in 1919.

Enrollment increased from about 24 in 1908 to a total of 86 in 1911, and staff increased to three. In January, 1915, owing to the rapidly increasing number of pupils attending the school, and on the recommendation of the Government Inspector, the trustees furnished the fourth room and appointed a fourth teacher. Enrollment by that time had reached 132.

In April, 1915, A.J. McCulloch, inspector of schools, Watrous, reported the Nokomis School to the commissioner of Public Health and advised the Department of Education to withhold the school grant. Mr. McCulloch's objections were six-pointed, the lighting, poor seating arrangements, open pails and common drinking cups, closets for boys and girls under the same roof, small school playground, backwardness of some pupils due to a combination of causes.

Within a year, overcrowding became a factor. In October 1920, ratepayers voted on a money bylaw for the first time since 1908, in favor of erecting buildings and equipment to the value of \$12,000. The enrollment had increased steadily until a sixth teacher became necessary. In 1919, the Town Hall had been fitted for a fifth classroom but arrangements were unsatisfactory, and lower grades had become overcrowded.

Four lots were purchased opposite the large school at a cost of \$550 and on each pair of lots, identical one storey, frame cottages were erected, 24 by 32 ft. with full basements, capable of seating over 40 pupils each. Arrangements were approved by the Dept. of Education and the Provincial architect. The Local Gov't. Board also approved the debentures. By January 1921 the new schools were ready for occupancy with the Misses Smith and McLeod (Mrs. J.E. Nichol) as the first teachers. Again in the annual report of 1927 the inspector proposed the erection of a new school, declaring the present structure old and in need of repair. In December 1928, crowding was again a problem and a special

meeting was called to discuss the advisability of erecting a new building. Nothing definite came of this meeting, some ratepayers feeling that the town should wait until the debentures were paid on the present school. In 1934 the medical health officer found them overcrowded but stated that the matter of an additional room should be held over until the next term. Classes were again held in the upper town hall to alleviate the situation. Again in 1955 the Nokomis School Board discussed the need of a new school because of the considerable expense involved in repairing the old one. The Unit board vetoed the proposal, saying that overcrowding must exist before a new Building can be erected. Worth of note is the fact that J.I. Jamieson has held the office of secretary treasurer since 1922. The first grade 12 classes were held in Nokomis in 1927 consisting of 12 pupils.

On May 20, 1915 the first teachers' Institute was held in Nokomis, a sort of miniature normal school, when teachers formed themselves into a convention. They continued to hold annual institutes.

In January 1931, crops had not been good, many were on relief and a special meeting of trustees and teachers of Nokomis School was held to discuss the financial situation. An understanding was reached that considerable reductions in salary would go into effect at the next term. In May, the Nokomis district teachers organized. They met in Nokomis school and formed a local with W.R. Smith as president and Miss Enid Cook as sec.-treas.

The Nokomis-Lockwood Teachers' Alliance in November 1941 sponsored a talk on the proposed larger Unit set-up. Again in April 1945, a meeting in the interests of a larger school unit was held at Nokomis, with the intention of including Nokomis in the Watrous Larger School Unit. Another 5 years elapsed and Nokomis distributed a petition to enter the Govan Unit, and the Govan Larger School Unit discussed admittance of the Nokomis S.D. in April 1950.

In the district surrounding Nokomis schools sprang up where needed. In the spring of 1908, Richfarms School was built by Mac Cumming. The first teacher was Mr. Tom Hanna. There were 13 children, Gladys and Susie Kempton, Goldie and Annie Beeler, Violet and Hattie

Munroe, Tom, Frank and Mabel Ings, Gordon and Margory Meikle and Mollie and Carl Cumming.

By 1909 most of the districts had their small schoolhouse. In 1909 Wolverine School was opened, and Saline School about the same time. Both were named after the creeks in the area. Mr. Elmer Bushfield was the first teacher at Wolverine, followed by Miss Lou Matheson. Mrs. McDougall boarded the teacher in the summer, and Mrs. Jas. Simpson in the winter months. The school district was organized by James Simpson, Mr. Coffin and Jas. McDougall. Boulder Lake and Bannockburn schools were also built in the early years. Nemaha School began about 1917, with Mrs. George Jamieson its first teacher. Art Stalder was instrumental in organizing the district and served on the board most of the years it was kept open. It closed about 1938 or 1939. Colt Lake was opened more recently and with few farms on the alkali, it was shortlived. Elizabeth Hummel taught there for a time. East of Nokomis, Newlands, Kutawagan, Killarney, Rowandville and Howat schools were built. In May, 1950 a meeting of the Kuta-wagan, Killarney and Richfarms districts was held and the decision made to use Richfarms School for some 14 pupils attending the three schools. Shortly after purchase was arranged for a school bus and bombardier, opening up a new era in school travel.

Graduates of Nokomis and district have taken their places in the world as teachers, nurses, doctors, ministers and in various professions. Outstanding are Dr. Arthur MacFarlane, Rhodes Scholar and Dean of Medicine at the University of Toronto; Dr. David Russell, writer and educator; Professor Hilda Neatly, whose work "So Little for the Mind" gained her prominence and gave impetus to education from Newfoundland to British Columbia, also attended school for a time in Nokomis.

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Growth of Local Churches

With the arrival of large numbers of settlers in 1905 and 1906, Sunday observances of the various faiths soon became an integral part of life.

These services were at first held in homes, post offices and school houses. At Ythanbank, Presbyterian services were conducted by Jas. Simpson from Strasbourg, and Methodist services by Mr. Hanley from Davidson. Both travelled by horseback. In the eastern district, Mr. McLean, a student medical missionary conducted meeting in private homes and post offices, including MacFarlane. In the Boulder Lake district, church was held in Ingwall Theissen's granary. Bannockburn School was also used for a number of years for church and Sunday school. First Anglican services were held at the Halstead farm.

In Nokomis, the German-Baptist congregation began to hold services in 1906, conducted by their leader, Rev. Adam Litwin. Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican & Roman Catholic faiths began to hold their services shortly after.

In the "company house" of the Franklin Realty and Trading Co. was formed the first Union Sunday school in 1907, with W.J. Rath as superintendent and Mrs. Reta Gentle as secretary. This Sunday School remained in operation until the real church union came.

The Anglican Church was the first church to be erected, in the year 1908. It was built on two corner lots donated by Mrs. T. Halstead. The Rev. John Riley was the first Anglican priest in the district. Ada Elizabeth Carter, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Carter, was the first recorded baptism, performed May 7, 1908. The Bishop of the Diocese visited the Mission on Palm Sunday, 1912 for the first confirmation when fourteen candidates were presented by the Rev. Justice F. Southam, then priest in charge. In May, 1923, a new vicarage was constructed.

Rev. Adam Litwin left Nokomis in 1909, and it was not until 1911 that the imposing German-Baptist church, situated at the corner of Queen St. & 5th Ave. was erected by a large gang of men.

In 1912, the new Presbyterian Church was formally opened, when Rev. Munro, superintendent of the Home Mission Committees for Sask. preached. The church was described as plain, consisting of a main build. 30x46 ft., with ceiling 21 ft. high and choir and clergy's rooms at one end. It was built of wood, resting on a stone wall foundation and plastered throughout. Heating was a large hot air furnace situated in

the basement and the lighting system consisted of Pitner gasoline lamps capable of giving a maximum of 6,000 candle power. The building was arranged to seat 170 comfortably. Total cost was less than \$3,000. Rev. McLean, who travelled on a donkey, was also the first Presbyterian minister at Nokomis, as well as Tate. He was followed by a Mr. McLeod from Halifax.

As Nokomis grew, the Northern Crown Bank was erected, where the present Masonic Hall and Municipal office stand. The Methodist congregation procured the use of the upper storey as a meeting place. Rev. Gordon Burgoyne was the first preacher, followed by the Rev. Wm. Eltom in July, 1908. That summer, the new Methodist manse was erected.

Recalling the good times had in the Methodist church hall above the bank quarters, Mrs. W.A. MacFarlane says "I recall our putting on a play 'The Ladies Aid of Mohawk Crossroads', with about twenty or more ladies in the cast. It was surprising the number of old-fashioned costumes we dug up."

Later, the bank building was sold, and the Methodists were left without a church. The Methodists had a parsonage, the Presbyterians a church. Without delay, the Presbyterian Board met and offered the Methodists the use of their church, alternating services with them.

Although church union was discussed as early as 1913, it was 1917 before members of the Church Union Committee decided that it would be well to have the congregations interested vote on the question before any definite plan was decided upon. Ballots were in the hands of M. St.C. McLean and A.H. Nichol. The official result of the vote "Are you in favor of Union of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches of Nokomis under one minister and joint services," was Presbyterian, 20 for, 51 against; Methodist 53 for, 18 against. Meet-

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ings on the subject continued during the next few years. In June, 1921, Union had been decided, and meetings were called to discuss the kind of Union desired by the joint congregations of Methodist and

Presbyterian churches. Affiliated union was decided upon — that is, a United Church in Nokomis in affiliation with both Presbyterian and Methodist Churches. At the conclusion, the following members from each church signed papers to be sent to Presbytery and Conference, asking for Union on Affiliation basis: for Presbyterians, Mrs. R.J. Riddell, Mr. W. Mason, P. Campbell; for Methodists, A.H. Nichol, W.A. MacFarlane, H.A. Johnston. The Union committee chose a Methodist minister.

The first annual meeting of the Union Ladies Aid was held in December, 1921, with Mrs. R.J. Johnston as president; Mrs. George Jamieson, secretary and Mrs. R.A. McEwan treasurer. In 1953, the United Church Ladies Aid, under the presidency of Mrs. G. Humphrey for a number of years, became known as the United Church Women's Association. There is also a Women's Missionary Society.

On December 5, 1954, an electric organ was dedicated by the Johnston family in memory of Mr. and Mrs. H.A. Johnston and F.O. Leslie Johnston. A pulpit drape and gold cross were dedicated at Easter, 1955 the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Eric Johnston.

The Roman Catholic Ladies of Nokomis parish met in February, 1919 at the home of Mrs. J.J. McGurran to organize the Catholic Altar Society. Elected were: president, Mrs. Thos. McGurran; vice-president, Mrs. P.M. Fonk; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. J.J. McGurran; committee, Mrs. T.E. McNulty Sr., Mrs. D. Maynes, Mrs. Thos. McGurran, Mrs. J.D. McNulty, Mrs. W.J. Brown. In July, the Altar Society made plans to hold their first bazaar in Nokomis during the fall. It is believed they realized \$350. Supper was served on another occasion, and the Ladies cleared \$500. With this money, the society purchased an altar for the church, and supplied the organ.

On June 18, 1920, work started on the new Catholic Church on 5th Ave. Measurements were 46 ft. by 32 ft. with an altar 18 ft. wide, with raised altar and vestry on either side. A tower was planned for the entrance end, 40 ft. high to the peak. Light was to be admitted by five Muranese colored, Gothic windows, on each side, and two at each end. The building was finished inside with fir. Work was contracted for locally and pipeless furnace for heating was also locally supplied. The

Board of Trustees in charge of building included J.J. McGurran, P.K. Fonk and J.D. McNulty. The completed structure cost about \$7,000.

Each church has its various groups, from Sunday school up, and at various times, district meetings have been held in Nokomis. The first annual Abernethy Presbyteral was held in 1909, and the fifth held in Nokomis in 1914. In 1913, almost 300 ministers and delegates of the German Baptist congregation from Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta attended a convention at Nokomis. They met in a large tent. The convention comprised 28 German speaking churches in the 3 provinces. The Methodist and Presbyterian services were withdrawn during the July convention and a large number attended the German Baptist services.

In September 1916 a branch of the Anglican W.A. was organized. The Anglicans became noted for their concerts, and in later years, for their pageants depicting the nativity.

Christ Church was built on two lots owned by Mrs. T. Halstead, the first Postmistress of Nokomis. When Mr. and Mrs. Halstead moved to Nokomis, they lived in a small house adjoining the church which was later moved to the rear of the post office, and later the vicarage was built there. Mrs. Halstead donated the lots to the church, and Christ Church, although built earlier, was dedicated in 1911.

Early groups in the Methodist Church were the Philathea-Baraca (Philathea meaning "Love of God") classes, for young people and young adults. This group was formed in November 1911 at the home of W.N. Ingham, as a group of junior ladies. Chairman was Mr. K.W. Reikie, superintendent of the Sunday School. Activities of the Philathea class included the presentation of plays, garden parties, mother and daughter banquets, etc. The membership leaped in 1920 from 10 to 60. They were a Bible study class which met on Sunday, usually during the afternoon. The Epworth League, a midweek group for young people, engaged in a variety of activities during

the early years of the church, and noted for their lively debates on timely subjects. In 1912, they presented a mock lawsuit, Williamson, Metcalfe vs Stokes, Alexander. The ladies were mostly seated forward and as the audience was large, they considerately removed their hats to enable those in the rear to see and better hear the witnesses. Barristers were W.A. MacFarlane and Mayor A.H. Nichol for the plaintiff and Rev. George Jack and Principal Horning for the defence. W.N. Ingham, sheriff George Alexander, constable, and A. McKirdy clerk of the court, performed their parts in veteran style, and kept as good order as could be expected. The jury of six was composed of J. Rowand, Reeve Hummel, J. Phillips, R.J. Johnston, E.E. Tyron, C.L. Campbell, foreman. Rev. A.B. Johnston acted as judge. The case concerned a fire in a warehouse stored with cotton. The claim against the defence was that a cat with a rag around its leg had started the fire, and the rag had been placed by the client, making him liable.

The Union Bible Class, formed in the early day of Nokomis, comprised members of Baptist, Presbyterian and Methodist churches. Baptist K.W. Reikie was superintendent, Presbyterian Wm. Mason was secretary-treasurer, and Methodist Henry Johnston was teacher. A.H. Nichol taught for many years as did W.J. Rath. Picnics were held each summer by the Bible Class. In 1916, the Bible Class motored to Arlington Beach, when a civic holiday was declared, August 3. About 40 carloads made the trip. The Bible Class in the early days met in the Town Hall, and later at the home of J.I. Jamieson.

Each church had their various Sunday School picnics. In 1913, the Methodists held theirs at Pitts' Bluff. Annual Baptist picnics were held, in 1920 at the farm of Otto Litwin, with various games played.

Each Ladies Aid performs a variety of activities. The Baptist group present excellent annual birthday programs, the United Church have Easter and fall suppers, the St. Patrick's C.W.L. their bazaars and Easter Monday dance, and the Anglican group their bazaars. The United Church has for many years had an excellent choir. Peter Campbell, an old country Scotsman, organized the first Junior Choir. His methods, not necessarily approved in today's musical circle, was the tonic sulfa, which brought excellent results. Several years later, Mrs. A.G. Nichol conducted the Jr. choir. M.R. Young was director of

the senior choir for about 8 years, from 1922 to 1930, and of the junior choir for two years. Mrs. Young was organist for more than fifteen years . The United Church choir was reorganized after their departure, with A.E. Wheatley as president and choir-leader. The Baptist Church have also had excellent choirs at various times, organizing first in 1924.

The German Baptist Young People Group was formed in 1912, and are a most active group within the church. The Ladies Aid was formed in 1923.

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Organizations

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Nokomis Agricultural Society: One of the pioneer groups formed in the Nokomis district was the Agricultural Society. On Tuesday, March 31, 1908, the initial meeting was held in the Park Hotel, with A.C. Allison as chairman. Elected were president F.T. McDougall; vice-presidents, K.W. Reikie, W.H. Hebe; secretary-treasurer, Duncan Jamieson; directors, A.C. Nichol, Geoffrey Sell, A.W. Schunke, N.V. Richardson, Henry Mould, Nokomis; T.B. Miller, M. Crussand, F. Stinchcomb, Lockport; J.E. Mullhorn, G. Booth, Lewiswyn; James Meikle, A. MacFarlane, W.A. MacFarlane, W.H. Hele, Wreford; F.T. McDougall, Ridgeford; Guy Hummel, Ythanbank.

The first fair was held August 10 and 11, 1908, with \$600 offered in prizes. Receipts that year were \$231; liabilities, \$333. Entries in stock totalled 641, in domestic, 186. In 1910 negotiations began for purchase of the first fair grounds, but it was impossible to raise the necessary money. By June, 1912, the fair grounds were a reality, located east of the present townsite. In 1914, three ladies were added to the committee to revise the prize list, and the fair was reduced from two to one day. In 1916, a committee was appointed to obtain a building for exhibiting agricultural products. The 1915 fair exhibits had totalled over 1,000. In July, 1919, a committee was selected to choose

a suitable site for the new agricultural grounds. No fair was held this year because of the early harvest.

In 1920, plans were discussed for a race track. This was finally achieved in June, 1922, with J.S. McIntosh in charge of the project. While the volunteer work was being done, the two restaurants of the town and the Patricia Hotel gave free meals to all the workers. Chas. Swan gave free accommodation and feed in his barn. The year 1921 saw the ladies take over the revision of parts of the prize list effecting them, and plans were laid for constructing a booth. In 1922, 10 ladies were elected as directors of the society.

The Nokomis Speed Barn was built on the Agricultural grounds with the arrival of spring. The building measured 80 by 20 ft. with a 7 ft. shelter on each side. The stabling accommodation comprised 16 box stalls 10 by 10 ft. The estimated cost was under \$1500, with money raised by selling shares. In 1924, the two day fair was again held.

During the following years, and especially throughout the “dirty thirties” interest in society waned. To create interest, a car was raffled in 1930, and was won by Bobby Wheatley. Finally, in 1941, a complete reorganization took place, with J. Shields as president and J.I. Jamieson as secretary-treasurer. The decision was made in 1946 to retain the buildings and continue to act as Agricultural Society. In 1949, interest again surged, with R.H. Beeler taking over the reins, and Mrs. R. Stevenson, secretary-treasurer. In 1955, despite adverse weather, plans proceeded for erection of a Jubilee Exhibit Hall to honor the early pioneers. G.H. Hummel, the only living member of the executive in Nokomis, was asked to officially open the new hall. Substantial grants were received from the Town of Nokomis, Wreford and Mount Hope municipalities and donations came from numerous organizations.

As early as 1918, a Boys and Girls Club was organized to work in conjunction with the Society. In February 1924, Roy McDougall won a heifer at Moose Jaw Fair for scoring the highest under 15 years in judging. Glen McDougall placed 5th in Grand Aggregate at Regina Fair out of 270 boys. The Nokomis team, comprising Glen, Fred Hummel, Wilmot Johnston, Kenneth Kidd, George Raymond, won fifth

place. In January 1931, George Raymond won the Junior Marquis Championship at the Saskatoon Seed Fair, and Rob Felske won third. At that time, there were 12 boys in the club, under the direction of Ecklin Wallace. July 1942 saw eight entries in the first Calf Club show, with Alex Munroe Grand Aggregate winner.

In October, 1936, a district and local achievement day, comprising Homecraft clubs of Lockwood, Govan and two Nokomis clubs, was held in

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Nokomis United Church with about 90 girls.

In 1915, the Agricultural Society sponsored a short course in agriculture and domestic science, and in 1919, a gas engine school.

On November 27 and 28, 1911, the first annual seed fair was held, with 32 entries. In 1916, Seager Wheeler, world's champion wheat grower, was judge. In the Marquis wheat class alone, there were 14 entries, indicating the popularity of this variety in the district. James McDougall won first for Marquis wheat.

GRAIN GROWERS

Grain Growers Association: Bannockburn Grain Growers was formed in 1912. Annual features were huge picnics and dances, held at the home of George Jamieson, west of Nokomis. In later years, debating became popular. Richfarms formed a branch in 1919, with L.J. McNichol as president. In December, 1920, the Ladies Grain Growers Association was formed, with Mrs. James McDougall as president; Mrs. A.A. Stalder, vice-president; Mrs. W.J. Johnson, secretary-treasurer; directors, Mrs. S.A. Raymond, Mrs. H. Steeves, Mrs. J. Kidd, Mrs. Jas. Graham, Mrs. Eric Johnson, Mrs. Dodsworth.

The most successful of the ten grain growers' federal constituency conventions was held in June, 1919 in the new brick garage. Two hundred and fifty delegates including a large number of women, turned down the recommendations of the central executive regarding

the methods of organization. An executive of 24 was instead selected, representing each rural municipality. It was the unanimous feeling of the convention that the price of wheat be fixed, but as a minimum.

In 1923, a public meeting to hear the Honorable J.G. Gardiner, Minister of Highways, speak on behalf of the wheat pool committee was called. Despite the busy season, the theatre was crowded. Mr. Gardiner explained the Sapiro wheat pool plan and contract in enthusiastic terms. The following committee was chosen: A.H. Nichol, chairman; W.A. MacFarlane, secretary; canvassers, L.J. McNichol, G.H. Hummel, Roy Rowand, A.C. McNichol, W.J. Brown, A.A. Stalder, F. Reynolds, E.B. Bell, A.H. Nichol, Henry Fenske, A.G. MacFarlane, W. Mason, S. Raymond, J. McDougall, E. Ramshaw, Fred Wolfe, Jas. Gandy, Rev. W.C. Colter, H.N. Chute, A. Harvey, Dr. Brown, A. Greenfield.

In June, 1924, the new Saskatchewan Co-Operative Elevator on the C.N.R. was completed and work was commenced on a siding four miles west (Viola). Following the decision of the Board of Directors of the Sask. Wheat Pool to create organizations of contract signers at every shipping station in the province, a meeting of the shareholders of the Sask. Wheat Producers Ltd. who shipped from Ambassador, Undora, Viola and Nokomis, was held in Nokomis Theatre, with 75 attending. C.L. Campbell, delegate for the sub-district, explained that the object of the meeting was to appoint a committee consisting of chairman, secretary and three local directors to look after the interests of the shareholders at each shipping point. Appointed were Ambassador, L.J. McNichol; Undora, A.A. Stalder; Viola, G.H. Hummel; Nokomis, A.G. MacFarlane; secretary, H.R. Williams; chairman L.J. McNichol.

In March 1926, at a meeting of the Co-op elevator, shareholders of Nokomis and Viola chose C.L. Wallace to represent Nokomis, and W.H. Zepik, Viola, at a meeting to discuss the acceptance of the Pool's offer to purchase their elevator facilities. A resolution was unanimously passed in favor of selling to the pool.

In December, 1928, a crowd from an area of 30 or 40 miles gathered for sessions of the Saskatchewan Royal Grain Inquiry Commission at

Nokomis. Mass evidence was heard in support of farmers dissatisfaction with the present system of grading grain.

In August, 1923, a meeting with T.S. Riley as chairman, was held in the Nokomis Theatre, when 7 or 8 farmers showed interest. They advocated a grain pool and compulsory marketing in contrast with the wheat pool advocated by the SGGA. In March 1924, a second meeting was held when a Farmers Union was organized, when 21 farmers joined. A week later, a Farmers Union Lodge, No. 292, was organized.

In July of 1925, a Joint Farmers Union-Grain Growers picnic was held. In recent years, the Saskatchewan Farmers Union have again demanded a voice. A lodge was formed in Nokomis in February, 1951, attended by about 18 farmers. Pres-

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ident was G.E. Wallace; vice-president, Jack Shields; secretary-treasurer, R. Harley; directors, Albert Greenfield, Albert Edwards, Paul Riffel.

CO-OPS

Co-operative Organizations: The Nokomis Co-op began operations in April, 1938 with A.E. Wheatley as manager. In January, 1940, Chas. Hendry and A.E. Wheatley drove around the rural districts, canvassing for shareholders of a proposed Co-op store. The store began operations on March 1, with Marvin Potter in charge, and over \$2,000 subscribed. At the shareholders meeting in March, two directors, George Ross and Chas. Hendry, were re-elected. Morley Braithwaite was chosen to replace A.A. Stalder, who resigned. Albert Greenfield was re-elected president, and other directors were H. Fenske, H.A. Johnston, C.L. Wallace, Cory Potter, Eric Johnson.

A Co-op Ladies Guild, held at the home of Mrs. G. Kirk, was attended by 17 ladies. Mrs. A.E. Wheatley was president. Other officers are secretary, Mrs. A. Thomson, directors, Mes. G. Raymond, G. Parker,

A. Cochrane; store advisory committee, Mes. A. Powell, W. Cowan, E.B. Bell, John Hicks.

BOARD OF TRADE

Board of Trade: The Nokomis Board of Trade was first formed in May 1914, with A.F. McConkey as president; A.J. Kidd, secretary; executive committee, C.L. Campbell, W.A. MacFarlane, A.H. Nichol, G.S. Brush, M.R. Young.

At the time, there was talk of building a creamery. The Board of Trade continued to press for its construction until it finally became a reality. In 1920, the Board of Trade was reorganized, with E.G. Wilson, president and J. Jennings secretary. The creamery became the topic for discussion again, although it did not become a reality until 1927. The Board of Trade labored to have a flour mill erected at this point after the loss of H.E. Bird's mill in 1911, but despite efforts which continued until almost 1940, all attempts were unsuccessful. They were, however, instrumental in having a Union Hospital in Nokomis following the destruction of the Cottage Hospital. They immediately formed a committee and laid the groundwork for the new building.

More recently, the Senior Board of Trade has pressed for the services of a resident dentist in Nokomis. They are responsible for the annual sports day which was first held in Nokomis in 1908.

In September, 1937, Dr. W.C. Rennick was elected to head a shortlived "Young Men's Board of Trade". L.L. Lymburner was named honorary president, with secretary Eric Lach, and treasurer Joe Hadfield. They aided with work on the new hospital. December saw the organization of the Retail Merchants Association of Nokomis. It was held in G.R. Kerr's furniture store and officers were president R.E. Rollins; Vice-president, A.H. Nichol and J.M. Mawhinney; treasurer R.H. Norris; secretary, F. Campbell.

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Women's Organizations: I.O.D.E.: The Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire is believed to be the first women's organization in Nokomis. Groundwork was prepared in the fall of 1914, supported by

the ladies of the various congregations both of Nokomis and Bannockburn. On Monday, November 23, a meeting of the ladies of Nokomis was held in the Town Hall for the purpose of organizing a local chapter of the I.O.D.E. Mrs. H. Morell, secretary of the provincial chapter, Regina, attended and gave an address on the objects of the order. Mrs. W.A. MacFarlane was in the chair, and Mrs. A.F. McConkey was secretary pro tem. Elected were regent, Mrs. W.A. MacFarlane; vice-regents, Mrs. J. McBride, Mrs. W.A. Armour; secretary, Mrs. A.F. McConkey; treasurer, Miss E. Pearson; standard bearer, Mrs. G. Kerr; deputy, Mrs. M.R. Young.

It was decided that the name of the Chapter should be "Alderson" and the motto "The Empire expects every woman to do her duty." The meeting was attended by 50 women. The number of members who joined was 42. The first project was a patriotic tea, proceeds of \$20. Shortly afterwards, it became known as Last Mountain Chapter.

In February, 1915, the Bannockburn Chapter was formed, with 13 members, and Mrs. R.J. Johnston as regent, and Mrs. Bert Williams as secretary, and Mrs. R. Rowand as treasurer. This was the one and only country chapter in Saskatchewan.

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Throughout the years the I.O.D.E. in Nokomis has been closely associated with Red Cross work, and has done extensive Patriotic and educational work. Together with Bannockburn and Jutland-Carlyle (Lockwood) chapters, elaborate Empire Day programs were presented at the schools. In 1920, historical pictures were presented to Nokomis School; in 1922, a library of 37 historical books was presented to the public school, and 20 volumes to grade 8; baskets and basketball were presented.

Wreford Homemakers: Wreford Homsmakers Club was formed in June 1915, at the home of the Misses Gandy. The club was organized by Mrs. Angus Currie and Mrs. W.R. Fansher of Wessel's Club (White Heather Homemakers). Mrs. George Jamieson was elected president. Mrs. Jamieson and Mrs. G.H. Hummel are the only two original

members who still reside in Nokomis. Many of the ideas for community projects have originated with them. Mrs. Jamieson was vice-president of the provincial Homemakers in 1920, and district president in 1923. The original members of Wreford Homemakers lived to the south and west of Nokomis. For a number of years, the annual meeting was held in June at the Gandy home, and on various occasions, members also met at Saline School.

Mount Hope Homemakers: Mount Hope Homemakers Club was formed on June 29, 1916, when a number of ladies met at the home of Mrs. S. Stoltz. Mrs. George Jamieson and Mrs. G.H. Hummel of Wreford Club assisted with the organization of the group. Mrs. Stoltz was elected president; Mrs. P. Stewart Vice-president; Mrs. W.A. Armour, sec.-treas.; directors, Mrs. J.D. Kidd, Wreford; Mrs. F Morris, Mt. Hope; Mrs. Arthur Smith, Richfarms. The annual meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Stoltz until she moved to Nokomis. In October 1933, the club first initiated their annual Grandmothers' party. Mrs. Stoltz served as provincial president of the Homemakers in 1929. Mount Hope members reside in the district to the east and north of Nokomis. In recent years with the trend to "gentleman farming", many of the members of clubs reside in Nokomis.

Wreford and Mount Hope have worked together on various projects since their inception, especially on baby, tonsil and pre-school clinics. In 1954, Wreford Homemakers alone sponsored the monthly Child Health Centre in the Rest Room. In June, 1954, the two clubs supplied lunch at a road machinery field day at Killarney school sponsored by Mt. Hope and Wreford rural municipalities.

Rest Room: Major undertakings of the Homemakers Clubs have been the Rest Room and Library and the Cemetery Improvement Fund.

In February 1917, a special meeting of the Nokomis town council was held to discuss arrangements for a public rest and reading room. A grant of \$200 for 1907 was given and the municipal taxes for 1917 refunded on the Hotel Nokomis property for maintenance of a public rest room.

However, country women felt the need of a place to rest and care for their children while in town. Three country clubs, Wreford and Mount

Hope Homemakers and Bannockburn I.O.D.E. united their efforts to start a movement to supply the need. Articles of agreement were drawn up by the clubs wherein it was agreed that the rooms should be under the management of a board of six. The first board consisted of Mes. G.H. Hummel and George Jamieson from Wreford; Mes. S. Stoltz and J.D. Kidd from Mount Hope and Mes. W.J. Brown and R.J. Johnston from Bannockburn I.O.D.E. Each club donated \$10 from their own treasury and by means of bazaars, food sale and tea, they raised about \$175.

In May 1917, a temporary location was secured in the McDougall building, and later in the Young Block. These rooms were opened in July. The rent was set at \$15 per month, and rooms were furnished as extensively as present funds permitted. Miss Adair, first matron, upon request, served light refreshments to anyone from a distance. The rooms were opened for the use of the public and were used, as shown by the registration book, by women from a radius of 15 and 20 miles.

By means of donations from Mount Hope and Wreford clubs, and the University of Saskatchewan, \$40 was raised to lay the foundation of a library for the rooms. The books were chosen by the University. In November 1907, Mt. Hope council made a donation of \$100 to the Rest

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Room. Grants are now received annually from Mount Hope and Wreford Municipalities, and from the Town of Nokomis. Last Mountain Chapter has replaced Bannockburn I.O.D.E. on the board. Mrs. Stoltz was first chairman of the board, and Mrs. G. Jamieson was sec.-treas. The rest room later moved to the former Braithwaite building and in the 1940's was located on its present site. The library was run from Nichol's store, for a brief time.

The Cemetery Improvement committee comprises two representatives from each Homemakers club and two from the I.O.D.E. The idea originated with several of the rural women and proceeds from various projects were set aside for this fund. The I.O.D.E. in June 1921,

appointed a committee to work in with the town council, to plow and level the cemetery. The plots were lined up and iron stakes placed at the corners. A canvass was made of plot owners for assistance. In 1928 Memorial Gates were erected, adding considerably to the attractiveness of the cemetery, and the walls were completed in June, 1935. Evergreens were also planted, and a large number of plants are set out annually. In September, 1934, the three local ministers, Rev. E. Faul, Baptist, Rev. A. Woods, Anglican and Rev. J. S. Mills, United, agreed to make a survey of the cemetery and stake it out. It is believed that Duncan Jamieson, first person to be buried in the Nokoms Cemetery is beneath the front walls. Caretakers have included Mrs. Wm. Lach, and more recently, Mr. Wm. Massie.

Nokomis Hospital Auxiliary: A meeting of various ladies organizations was held at Nokomis Cottage Hospital on September 1, 1932, when a provisional hospital committee was formed. Mrs. S.G. Thompson was elected chairman. Arrangements were made for the formal opening of the Cottage Hospital on Sept. 5th. By the time the Community Hospital was officially opened in December, 1937, a Women's Auxiliary had been formed, with Mes. Adam, Coburn, Lettner, E.G. Wallace and R.W. Downey as directors, For a time, a group, known as the East Side Hospital Auxiliary, functioned east of Nokomis. During their lifetime, they provided several pieces of costly equipment for the hospital. They disbanded, and when the Legion Hall was under construction, they formed themselves into the East Side Community Club, and aided with the equipping of the hall.

During the years of its growth, Nokomis has had numerous shortlived groups, formed to suit the circumstances of the period. In February, 1911, a Women's Christian Temperance Union was organized. A prohibition League was formed in 1924 with A.J. Kidd, chairman.

CULTURAL ACTIVITY

In 1917, the first Chautauqua Festival was held in Nokomis. It lasted for three days, and included six performances. It is best described as a sort of twentieth century country fair featuring intellect, oratory, art, music and entertainment rather than carnival attractions. The Chautauquas were presented annually from 1917 to 1922, and each

years program was different from any previous. At first the Chautauquas were held in a tent on the fair grounds, then later moved to the Brick Garage (known as the Ford Garage) and the Nokomis Theatre. Some featured special entertainment for the children. In 1922 the Chautauqua was a failure financially, and the committee were forced to make up the deficit themselves. In 1928, the Chautauquas were revived when 25 businessmen and farmers contracted the Community Chautauquas Ltd. Agnes McPhail was a speaker at the 1929 Chautauqua. The final series was held in September, 1934, when the Saskatchewan Chautauqua "Eranova" visited Nokomis.

Another phase contributing to the culture of the community was a musical festival, first held in October 1935. A meeting was held the fall of 1934 to organize the district as a Central Branch of the Sask. Musical Association, with W.J. Gray as president. The district committee comprised members from Govan, Imperial, Allan, Watrous, Drake, Raymore, Renown, Strasbourg, Simpson, Semans, Watrous, Young, Viscount, Lockwood and Lanigan. A second festival was held in Nokomis in May 1938, with A.E. Wheatley as president and J.I. Jamieson secretary.

One of the early groups in Nokomis was the Bachelors' club. Through the Wallace Graham Agencies in Brandon, they obtained programs, concerts, etc. of excellent quality, and also sponsored skating parties and dances locally.

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In July 1915, the Men's Social Club was formed. Over fifty local citizens supported the group. G.A.W. Braithwaite was appointed chairman to make out rules, secure rooms etc. The intention of the club was to have a good reading room, good furniture and a well fitted gymnasium.

Contributing to the cultural existence of the community with a variety of talents, have been the Jamieson family. Mrs. Duncan Jamieson, accomplished needle-woman and pianist, also had four of her paintings hung at the annual exhibition of Saskatchewan artists at the

Regina City Hall in November, 1925. George Jamieson has contributed to the field of elocution. He won three medals, a silver medal in 1901, a gold medal in 1906 and a provincial grand gold medal in Saskatoon in '27. Lloyd Jamieson has become known in musical circles in Saskatoon as a tenor of considerable ability, singing leads in cantatas and winning honors at musical festivals. Winston Nichol became accomplished in his field. His mother, Mrs. A.G. Nichol, taught music for some years in Nokomis. Mrs. M.R. Young was the first teacher of pianoforte in the town, and another local teacher was Miss Lois Fenton. Around 1920, Mr. P. Campbell instructed a junior singing class, and led a charming choir.

Fraternal Organizations: Orange Lodge: The Orange Lodge was formed originally in Nokomis on Sept. 20, 1908. In 1911, a hall was built at Richfarms, and the lodge met there. In May 1922, 21 former members of Richfarms L.O.L. started a lodge in Nokomis. Five new members were initiated that evening. In March 1931, George Jamieson was elected Grand Lodge secretary a position which he still holds. In 1936 he was presented his Grand Master's Jewel as G.M. of the Grand Black Chapter of Saskatchewan.

L.O.B.A.: Naomi Chapter No. 325 was formed in Nokomis on August 14, 1920, with 15 charter members.

Masonic Lodge: On June 14, 1917, Philathea Lodge was instituted in Nokomis. Visiting brethren from outside points were present and the following officers were installed: G.A.W. Braithwaite, R.J. Riddell, H.B. Smith, J.W. Deagle, T.B. Armstrong, Dr. A.V. Brown, C.L. Wallace, T.B. Miller, J. Grigor, H. Townsend. In September, 1918, The Masonic Lodge room was the centre of attraction for many Masons from Nokomis and surrounding towns. Members of the Grand Lodge were present and during the afternoon constituted and delivered the Charter to Philathea Lodge, No. 133, Nokomis. In the evening, 78 Masons, including other lodges, gathered for a lodge of instruction. Past Masters' Night was held in 1927, when Philathea Lodge celebrated its 10th anniversary. Ten charter members remained, and three were present. Seven members belonged to WaWa Temple of Saskatchewan, the highest realm of Masonry. They included C.H. Durgan, H.E. Smith, J. Philip, G.H. Hummel, D.C. Gerrand, R.A.

McEwen, J.I. Jamieson. In 1941, G.H. Hummel was elected a member of Grand Lodge of Sask., A.F. & A.M. progressively moved along until he was installed Most Worshipful Grand Master of Saskatchewan.

Eastern Star: On Friday evening November 13, 1925, at the Masonic Hall, Nokomis Chapter, O.E.S. was instituted by the Grand Chapter, O.E.S. of Sask. Mr. Chas. Philip of Hanley, W.G. Patron, officiated, assisted by Mrs. Gertrude Smith of Semans, P.G.M. acting as secretary.

Canadian Order of Foresters: In October 1916, a branch of this organization was formed in Nokomis, local court No. 1477. Chief Ranger was L.L. Pullan, and other officers included Dr. Brown, W.H. Liese, Wm L. Lane, F. Howes, W.J. Brown, C.H. Durgan, T.B. Armstrong, A.G. Nichol, Chas. Brown, Dr. Hollister. Mayor Mason, a former member was appointed past chief ranger. Over 25 members were initiated.

Nokomis Community Club: With A.H. Nichol as its chairman, the Nokomis Community Club, by December 1919, had received its certificate of incorporation, and an executive composed of A.H. Nichol, Mrs. R.J. Johnston, Mrs. S. Stoltz, G.H. Hummel, L.J. McNichol, W.A. MacFarlane and Wm. Mason was chosen. It became known as the Nokomis Community Company, and was organized in an effort to direct the social life of the community. Nokomis Community Club attempted to undertake the task of strengthening and developing a generous, sympathetic spirit toward all classes of people in the district. They urged erection of a community hall because they felt that the hall was the location around

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which all this work centred. A canvass to acquire shareholders was undertaken. A large clock was designed and set up at the Main and 2nd Ave. intersection to show the amounts subscribed. The committee hoped to build a memorial hall or hospital to commemorate sacrifices of servicemen. Enthusiasm was great but difficulty was experienced in obtaining money. In January 1922, a community club teen age

program was set up with Mrs. R.J. Johnston as convener and a committee of Mrs. Cooper, Rev. A.F. Bloedow and George Jamieson.

In April, 1927, the I.O.D.E. expressed the desire to amalgamate with the Nokomis Community Committee, in erecting a memorial, but wished to keep their identity. A motion was passed to the effect that the community memorial take the form of a gateway to the Nokomis Cemetery. A.H. Nichol, G.H. Hummel and L.J. McNichol were appointed a committee to select an appropriate design for the gateway and also call for tenders for work. About \$600 was on hand, and an estimated further \$600 would be required to complete the project. Bronze tablets alone were estimated to cost around \$259. Mr. McKay of Strasbourg began work on the gates in October 1928, using stones gathered by the school students and residents of the community.

The executive committee comprised A.H. Nichol as president, G.H. Hummel, vice-president; Wm. Mason secretary; C.L. Campbell, treasurer; Mrs. S. Stoltz, Mrs. F. Morris, Mrs. Hummel, Mrs. Geo. Kerr, Mrs. W.J. Rath, Mrs. R.J. Johnston, Mrs. M.R. Young, W.A. MacFarlane, L.J. McNichol, Mrs. W.J. Johnston, Mrs. G. Jamieson, Mrs. C.L. Campbell, A.J. Kidd.

In August 1928, the Memorial Hall auxiliary held its final meeting. A motion was made at that time that the books of the secretary and treasurer be placed with other records in the cornerstone of the memorial.

The Nokomis War Memorial was unveiled and dedicated on Sunday, October 28, 1928, when between 1500 and 1600 people attended. A huge platform was erected, with servicemen seated thereon. Mrs. Laing and Mrs. Harding, both of whom lost sons in the war unveiled the tablets, one at the north and one at the south.

CANADIAN LEGION, B.E.S.L.

Legion: A community hall had been proposed for Nokomis as early as 1914. The hope was not realized after World War 1. Following the second war, the returned boys formed with W. Ellsworth as its first president in 1945, and Robert Strachan as secretary. These two, with many other members, moved from the district, and the branch slid

downhill to two members, although considerable cash was in the bank to their credit. With the return of Jack Brewer from Govan in 1951, the Nokomis Branch of the Canadian Legion, B.E.S.L. was reorganized, and membership immediately spurted upwards. The first task the body set themselves to perform was the placing of an adequate hall in Nokomis to serve the needs of a centrally located community of its size. An immediate response was given by the citizens and a \$1200 fund raised by the I.O.D.E. and Rehabilitation Committee was turned over to them. Another \$1000 was raised by a carnival queen contest. Donations of cash and grain solicited. The hall committee meanwhile located an excellent barn, which had been used for raising purebred horses, with the arrival of the mechanized era, the barn had fallen out of use, and was purchased for a fraction of its worth. The walls were cut down to the loft floor, and this upper section was moved by Henry Fenske to its foundation on 5 lots on third Ave. June 7, 1952 marked the completion of the initial stage of "Operation Memorial Hall". President Jack Brewer and secretary A.E. Wheatley organized volunteer work parties, and work was done as funds allowed. Women's groups, including Mt. Hope & Wreford Homemakers, the I.O.D.E. and the East Side Club have rallied behind the Legion to provide interior furnishings.

YOUTH GROUPS

Youth Groups: In September 1918 M.S.C. McLean organized the first school fair, at which the students displayed their work in raising livestock, school work & other lines. A manual training class was begun in 1820 in Peter Campbell's ice cream parlour. Various persons contributed towards the cost of work benches, and a committee of seven was appointed to manage the class,

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with Mr. Campbell as instructor. A students council was organized in Nokomis High School in December, 1925, with a close campaign between Fred Hummel and Walter Donkin for president, and Dorothy Sandwith and Helen Rath for secretary. The latter were elected in both cases. C.G.I.T. and Tuxis groups were formed during 1920's.

The Boy Scouts were originally formed in Nokomis in 1916, with L.L. Pullen as scoutmaster. In June, the 36 boys camped at Strassburg and won a Challenge Cup, In July, 1923, the Boy Scout organization was revived, with G.T. Humphrey as scoutmaster and Dr. Widdowson as assistant. In October, 1937, a Baptist troop of the Scouts was organized, with Philip Zapf as scoutmaster. Scouting revived around 1950, when Jack Woods became scoutmaster, assisted by J.H. Marvin. Cubs were started shortly before the scouts by Earl MacDougall and Ken Kidd. In July, 1952, 9 year old Duane Marvin received the Governor General's Medal at the scout Jamboree at Prince Albert "for meritorius conduct in rescuing two companions early this spring when their boat sank."

A miscellany of groups, clubs and organizations have sprung up and deteriorated with the times. In 1927, a Canadian Diamond Jubilee committee was formed, and in Sept. an Old Settlers Association, also known as the Nokomis & District Pioneers' Association. All who were resident in the town or district prior to December 31, 1907 were eligible for membership. During the first war, a St. John's Ambulance class was held, in addition to various patriotic organizations. In February, 1928, a meeting was held in the interests of the Klu Klux Klan in the Orange Hall, when a Dr. J. Hawkins spoke in the interests of the Klan, and advocated formation of a Ladies' Branch. It is to the credit of the good judgment of Nokomis citizens that this group made no headway.

In 1930 lady Tories and lady Liberals both formed organizations.

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Sports and Recreation

After the first few months of breaking sod and erecting buildings, the homesteaders felt the need for some form of recreation. They gathered frequently and held baseball games, and picnics were frequent impromptu gatherings. The most memorable picnic in the recollections of the greatest number of homesteaders was the day in the summer of 1906 at Shield's Lake. Some families travelling from

west of the present site of Nokomis laid eyes on what was to become the town for the first time. A couple of hundred persons are estimated to have congregated that day, and vivid still are the memories of those few hours. The organizers of the Shields Lake picnic, who did an amazing job of advertising the event to the homesteaders, were Teddy Ancell and E. Maurice Carter.

Early dances were held in various shacks and sod houses. As Mack Cumming, who supplied music with his fiddle for many of the early dancing parties recalls, "Our social life was terrific. Everyone in the district belonged to the Elite 400, so we just visited and had parties at the drop of a hat".

In a short while the town was established, and recreation centred in Nokomis. A rink was built and the first bonspiel held in 1907. The rink became the focal point of winter activity in Nokomis, and remains largely so. The 1911 bonspiel, with 22 rinks, was the biggest event to date in the history of Nokomis. Average entries were about 22 rising and falling with the times. In January, 1916, a Ladies Curling Club was first formed, comprising four rinks. They became affiliated with the Sask. Ladies' Curling Ass'n several years ago. In 1911, the Men's club applied for affiliation. Rinks from Nokomis have proven they could hold their own with neighboring towns. In 1914, a rink comprising Bissett, Rollins, Durgan and Brown won at Melville, and in 1923, Robert Kirk won two cups at Watrous. He also won the Nokomis Grand Challenge several times. His son Bob, followed in his father's footsteps, winning in the 40th annual 'spiel in 1947, and duplicating the fete in 1953 and 1954. In January, 1912, a trophy valued at \$100 was donated by T.A. Anderson, MLA of Earl Grey, for competition.

Debentures were issued in 1909 for the erection of a rink. It blew down in 1912 and was immediately rebuilt. The new building became known as one of the finest in Saskatchewan, and hockey became one of the highlights of the winter season. Novelty games, such as Benedicts (managed by W.A. MacFarlane) vs. Bachelors (managed by Stokes and Buck); and women's teams, "The Daughters of the Empire" vs. "The Outlaws", were popular. A Nokomis team won the McRae cup in 1911, defeating Drake. In November, 1911, the Big Four Hockey League was organized, with J.J. McGurran, Nokomis, sec.-

treas. Included were the town of Nokomis, Semans, Watrous and Strassburg. Nokomis showed years of both increased activity and lagging interest in hockey. In 1926, after a very successful season, Nokomis won 9 out of 12 games played. In March, 1933, the Lake Town Challenge Cup was brought to Nokomis for the third time, and was successfully defended against the Melville team. In 1936, Nokomis Juniors defeated Semans to lift the Lake of the Woods Challenge Cup. Mike Horbul's brilliantly engineered passes won for Nokomis the Lake Town Challenge Cup again, in 1936, from Watrous, and in 1939 from Semans. In February, 1941, the Diefenbaker cup was offered for the first time for juvenile district championship, and was won in March by Nokomis, over Strasbourg. For several years, after the war, the juniors and also seniors, were managed by Mike Horbul. He also spent two seasons as coach of the Humboldt Indians. No account of hockey would be complete without mention of Elmer Lach. He played for the Nokomis Maple Leafs, defeating the League allstars in 1934.

The first carnivals in the rink were monster affairs, with people of all ages in costumes of every description. A series of three were held each season for a number of years. In 1927, the carnival was revived when Kathryn Graham was chosen Queen and Olive McNaughton princess royal. In 1945, 1946 and 1947, the I.O.D.E. held carnivals, with June Wales,

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Annie Ediger and Gladys Hendry respective queens.

Again in 1952, the Nokomis legion held a monster winter carnival, raising approximately \$1,000. Marilyn Morrison was crowned Queen.

In 1930, extensive repairs were required on the rink, and waiting and hockey rooms were added. In Jan. 1938, as a relief project, a cistern was dug and cemented in the rink. In the spring of 1955, after considerable preparation, 8 trucks formed a motorcade and travelled to northern Sask. for lumber for a proposed new four sheet curling rink.

Baseball played a much more prominent part in the sports life of the community in the early years, than it has for many years. In 1915, the Hiawatha League was formed, comprising three local teams and the North Star team from Richfarms. By 1920, interest lagged. The club has reorganized several times in the following years, but has never gained real prominence.

Tennis was a major sport as early as 1913, with annual May tournaments. In 1915, work was completed on the new grounds on 2nd ave. Another tournament was held in 1933, and the sport was revived in 1948, on a small scale.

Golf took a prominent spot in the sporting life of Nokomis when a club was formed in 1924 with Dr. Hicks as president, M. St.C. McLean as vice president, and H.B. Martin as secretary. The use of the town pasture was obtained, and 8 holes laid out. A.A. Claus, who owned the Nokomis Pharmacy, donated a cup for monthly competition. In August, 1926, G.T. Humphrey won a cup at Imperial, and in July, 1930, he won the Free Press Tournament in Winnipeg.

Sporting groups which grew and died with the times, were the Nokomis Driving Club and the Motor club. The Driving club was organized in 1908, and it is believed T.S. Riley was first president. It wound up in 1919. The grounds and buildings were sold by public auction, and the proceeds received by the shareholders were donated to the Agricultural Society. With the disposal of the property, it became necessary for the Agricultural Society to purchase suitable grounds for the holding of their summer exhibitions.

The Nokomis Motor Club was formed in April, 1917, when automobiles became more common. G.H. Hummel was president, T.B. Armstrong secretary. They met in the Town Hall, and membership fee was \$3. Wednesday afternoon, July 18, was set aside as a day for making minor repairs on roads, levelling hummocks, picking off stones, etc. There were 72 members. On one occasion, they travelled in a motorcade to Semans, Govan and back to Nokomis.

Sports Days, held since 1908, have annually featured baseball tournaments, races — foot and horse — and other sports and attractions. The Last Mountain Short Ship Circuit, formed in 1920,

included Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Nokomis, Watrous, Strasbourg, Balcarres, Cupar, Melville, Punnichy, Semans. In 1912, a new track was built at Nokomis, on which record time was made. In 1929 L.C. Reynolds' "Cyclone" won the harness racing. More recently, in 1952, Nokomis was included in the Carrot River Racing Circuit.

The North Star Rifle Ass'n was formed in 1913, in the Richfarms district, and produced many crack shots, who took part in provincial and dominion rifle shoots and brought honor to Nokomis. In July, 1923, Perry Burrell won the grand aggregate, tyro aggregate and McDonald Brier match at the provincial shoot, while his teammates, Fred Harris and J. Dallas also won high honors. Together the local marksmen brought home \$325 in cash prizes, 6 cups, a match rifle, 6 medals and a D.R.A. medal. In 1924, the Nokomis Riflemen brought back 4 cups, the Walker Team cup, McCallum Challenge cup, Nokomis cup, and Perry Burrell won the Lieut. Governor's cup. Five of the Nokomis team numbered in top 13 in grand aggregate, which entitled them to a place on the team representing Sask. at the Dominion Rifle Ass'n meet in Ottawa. Once again in 1925, the North Star Rifle club cleaned up at Regina bringing back five cups, 2 medals, \$350 in prize money. Perry Burrell won the first stage of the Lieut. Governor's match, getting the silver medal, and J.W. McNichol the second stage, with the cup and \$40. In 1953, Bert Stevenson won a place for himself at Dundurn on the Dominion Rifle Ass'n team at Ottawa. In early 1955, the Nokomis Legion Rifle club was formed, with M.L. Potter as the guiding light. A range was set up in the Legion hall and Wednesday evening shooting was

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largely attended by men of the town and district.

Other groups which have played a part in the growth of sport include the Gymnasium club, cadet corps and badminton. The Gym club was formed in 1921 and equipment was purchased by the Ladies Auxiliary to the Community Club. A group of 10 public spirited men guaranteed rent of the hall. Mrs. George Edwards was instructress for girls and women, and J. Phillip and M. R. Young for men and boys. A weekly

schedule was mapped out for the various age groups. The cadet corps was formed first in May 1920, with instruction in flag wagging, physical education and squad drill. During the second world war, Nokomis High School Cadet Corps No. 1934 was established with 28 Cadets under J. Hadfield and later Lt. G. Humphrey RCAC. It was closed out in 1947.

In July, 1940, the paddling pool was built for youngsters, when the town council appropriated money towards swing and slides, and the BOT constructed the cement pool.

No account of the growth of sport in this area would be complete without inclusion of hunting and fishing. This area of Saskatchewan is one of the finest for duck hunting. The north end of the lake is a refuge for wild game, and the lake itself is well stocked with fish. Since 1950, with the raised level of the lake, boathouses have been built and the area has once again become a popular summer resort. During the 1920's, a number of residents owned cottages at the lake. During the "dirty thirties" the level of the lake dropped alarmingly and there was virtual danger of it drying up completely. John Diefenbaker, M.P. for Lake Centre, urged the House of Commons to raise the level of the lake in 1945. He said that the lake was a valuable fishing centre with a catch of between 500,000 and 600,000 pounds in 1944, as well as a summer resort centre. The reserve waters of the South Saskatchewan River were tapped, and taken down the Qu'Appelle River into Last Mountain Lake. At the turn of the century, it was a navigable lake and wheat from central Sask. was transported through it on barges. In 1909 and earlier, the steamer "Qu'Appelle" and sailing yachts "Nokomis" and "Imperial" carried passengers around the lake.

The Govan-Nokomis branch of the Fish and Game League has cleared and obtained the lease on a beach several miles south of the head of the lake. During the summer of 1953, and again in 1954, they sponsored Red Cross Swimming & Water Safety instruction. Children from seven towns, as far distant as Raymore and Drake, participated, travelling daily a round trip of over 75 miles.

Recreation

The Nokomis Band, known variously as the Citizens Band, Town Band, Farmers Brass Band and Legion Band, has figured prominently throughout the growth of Nokomis. It was first organized in 1910, with Mr. Marty Young as the leader. Open air concerts and appearances at Sports and Fair days, concerts at the lake in summer, and on Remembrance day, have been highlights of the band's life. In March, 1917, the Farmers Brass Band organized, with 27 members, under J.G. Geilert of Yorkton. Within two months, they gave their first concert. Julius Proseillo and Bill Miller were in this band. After the departure of M.R. Young from Nokomis, W.G. Grey became leader in 1932. In February, 1945, leadership was taken over by R.W. Grey, until 1950, when C.T. Rogers, veteran bandsman, took over. Shortly before the war, Mr. Rogers organized a band comprised largely of young girls. During the 1954-1955 season, Ted Klassen has taken over training a group of young boys and girls as the nucleus of a band. The Nokomis Band has participated in the Yorkton Travellers' Day parade in 1949, and in 1946 won the district final in the CFQC-TB amateur hour.

In 1925, a Nokomis Orchestra, called the "Melody Men" led by L.L. Lymburner was formed, and accepted dance engagements in Nokomis and district towns.

Also worthy of note because of the prominent part it took in the social life of the community was the game of bridge. During the 1920's and 1930's, it was an extremely popular form of social recreation. A book on bridge was written by J.S. MacEwen and G.T. Humphrey, and various types of parties were held. Two ladies Bridge Clubs were formed, the first in 1937 and the second around 1940. Three of the original members Mes. J.H. Marvin, Geo. Jamieson and G. Humphrey still reside in Nokomis. Mrs. Jamieson and Mrs. Humphrey

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continue to be active in the present club, which meets Thursday evenings.

In the entertainment field, moving pictures are a definite type of recreation. The first movies were shown by Jenkins Bros. In December, 1913, Beechy Bros, of Govan entertained with a moving picture. By July, 1915, V.G. Magel of Lanigan opened the first commercial theatre, and showed a program of silent pictures, with player piano accompaniment. In 1917 the theatre business was purchased by Charles Plummer. Albert Cogger bought the business in 1919. A disastrous fire destroyed the hall, although his equipment was saved, and in 1921, Mr. Cogger erected a new hall. Talkies were added in 1935 and cinemascope in 1955. Prior to the opening of the Legion Hall in 1962, the Nokomis Theatre was used for all meetings and dances, as well as moving pictures.

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The Community in Two World Wars

Throughout two devastating world wars, which greatly affected the lives of Nokomis district residents, although they were untouched by the ravages of either war, men and women of the district gave their 100 per cent effort to the winning fight. Many types of community activity ceased, while the families at home waited out their anxiety by helping in whatever way they could. The Imperial Order, Daughters of the Empire, was formed in November 1914 so that the women of Nokomis could contribute their help. During both wars, the I.O.D.E was extremely active in raising money, aiding the Red Cross, packing parcels, holding patriotic teas and knitting teas, bazaars, etc. The I.O.D.E. in Nokomis grew to be synonymous with Red Cross. The first war work of the chapter included 340 pr. socks, 52 pr. pyjamas, 23 handkerchiefs, 7 pr. wristlets, 15 surgical gowns, 12 ties, 1 pr. mitts, 41 housewives. The Last Mountain Chapter was one of the largest and most active in Saskatchewan during the first war. With Bannockburn Chapter, money was raised by tag days to aid in purchase of an ambulance overseas. Last Mountain Chapter, during the first war, gave each Nokomis man who enlisted two pairs of socks, and during the second war, packed boxes.

Shortly after the outbreak of world war 1, the Nokomis branch of the Canadian Patriotic Fund was organized. The finance committee comprised G. Bell, A.F. McConkey, W.A. MacFarlane and the relief committee was W.A. Armour and Rev. Mr. Rollo. A Nokomis branch of the Returned Soldiers Welcome and Aid Society was also formed in 1917. Projects such as Red Cross picnics, patriotic bonspiels, were popular, and many collections were turned over to the Red Cross. Citizens gathered en masse at both railroad depots when boys left for overseas.

In July, 1915, a meeting of citizens was held in the Town Hall, convened by the Mayor, to consider the advisabiity of forming a Home Defense Company. R.A. McEwen moved that a Home Guard be formed, consisting of a company of infantry and a troop of horsemen, not to exceed 25. A.J. Kidd and A.F. McConky were elected officers of the town guard, W.A. Armour and J. Phillip officers of the horsemen.

On December 2, 1918, a meeting was held with Mayor G.A.W. Braithwaite as chairman and C.H. Durgan, secretary. A monster public meeting was planned in celebration of peace with an auto parade, public meeting and bonfire in the evening, at which the Kaiser was hung in effigy shortly after sundown. The celebration was held on Saturday afternoon, July 19 with parade, baseball, field sports, basket supper, program of patriotic songs and Nokomis Band.

With the war over, citizens began to think of a permanent memorial, to those who had not returned. At a meeting of the Returned Soldiers Welcome and Aid League, the question was discussed. Various organizations discussed it at their individual meetings, and both a hall and a hospital were proposed. Eventually the Nokomis Community Company was formed, and after a period of years, the Memorial Gates on the Nokomis Cemetery were dedicated as a memorial, in memory of Major T. McFie, Captain J.P. Byrne, Lieut. O. Stephenson, Lieut. A. Stephensen, F. Forrester, J.W. Kerr, W.C. Norris, W. Harding, J. Kimmerly, R. Laing, J. Sloan, N. Trafford, J.H. Beaty, C. McCoy.

In March 1922, the I.O.D.E. presented a service flag to the Town Council of Nokomis, hearing the names of the 109 boys who enlisted. Of these, twelve names appear in gold letters.

Frank Rogers has the honor of being the first actual resident of Nokomis to enlist in the second world war, and E.I. McGinnis was the first girl to enlist in the C.W.A.C. in 1942. Others who left early were Eric Lach. Prior to their departure George Raymond, John Tyndall, and John Coggins of the Hotel Nokomis tendered a banquet to some of the boys on Christmas day.

By May, 1940, a war service workroom had been established in the Municipal Office, and women met on Tuesdays to make articles for the soldiers. Mrs. Lach offered the use of a sewing machine and all women were called upon for assistance in making surgical gowns, pyjamas, quilts,

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to knit socks, sweaters scarves. Boxes were packed and mailed overseas. The I.O.D.E. was in charge of the project. Mrs. Albert Greenfield donated a large bag of wool which was carded by Mrs. Jeschke. Two quilts and a top were donated by the Baptist Ladies Aid.

A War Services Committee was formed, with president, Donald Adam; secretary, Wm. A. Mason; metals, P. Richardson; paper, rags, J.S. Williamson; fats, rubber, R.H. McDougall; aluminum, copper, Geo. Hamilton, W.S. Certs, J.I. Jamieson; glass, J.H. Marvin; bones, A.E. Wheatley. G. Hummel was appointed by the federal government as organizer of salvage for Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

In September 1942, "victory blisters" were reported, with businessmen & high school boys assisting in the harvest fields. Some of the girls and lady teachers helped with chores and in kitchens to release men. A cub messenger service was initiated in 1942, by George Jamieson and Harry Fea, for boys from 6 to 8, who ran errands and put their earnings into war savings. War savings and bond drives were frequent.

In August 1944, a blood donor clinic was held in Nokomis, sponsored by Ambassador Red Cross, Last Mountain I.O.D.E., Eastern Star, Mt. Hope and Wreford Homemakers. Seventy four donors attended.

Several families had more than one son or daughter in the forces. The L.J. McNichol family had three daughters and one son serving, and Mr. McNichol and Mac trained with the reserve unit at Semans. Nokomis boasted two flying families, F.O. James, Flt. Sgt. Ross and Sgt. Bomb. Bob McConnell; F.O. Ron, Flt. Lt. Doug and A.C.2 Wm. R. Riach.

In January 1945, F.O. Tony Horbul was presented with the D.F.C. and a wristwatch by Mayor Mason. By July, the loal lads and lasses were beginning to return home, and community activity gradually gravitated back to normal. Plans were laid by the Citizens Rehabilitation Committee for a welcome home dance held in July. Earl McDougall spent six years and one month overseas, the longest overseas term of services of any Nokomis boy.

The I.O.D.E. workrooms were closed in March 1946, and surplus material sent to I.O.D.E. headquarters. During the war, the I.O.D.E. served hot dogs from a stand adjacent the Hotel, and the proceeds from this, together with other money, totalling \$1200 was put in reserve by the Rehabilitation Committee for a permanent memorial. A public meeting to discuss the form a memorial would take was held. In May 1947, 147 men & women volunteers were honored at a banquet catered to by the various women's organizations. Plaques were presented to each veteran, and a proposed memorial in the form of a recreation field and sports ground with suitable gates was suggested for the eight boys who did not return. These were Eric William Bray, Malcolm Frazer, Kenneth Leslie Johnston, Allan Morris, David L. McNichol, Robert Henry McNichol, Douglas Athol Riach, Robert Noble Wallace, William Wallace.

Eventually, the \$1200 Rehabilitation Fund was turned over to the Nokomis Legion and work on the Community Hall begun.

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Nokomis, originally lauded as the Junction City, the largest proposed urban area between Vancouver and Winnipeg, has fallen far short of population and development expectations originally predicted. Not

only in Nokomis, but all over Saskatchewan, glowing accounts were published back in the boom days. Naturally, the question which arises in the minds of the present generation is “Why did these towns not become the towns and cities they were supposed to be?”

Nokomis, like many of these other towns, had what appeared to be great possibilities. In the early days of the community, with the larger percentage of residents in a young age, no proposition seemed too large to tackle. As the years passed, the same propositions received deeper consideration and were taken less seriously, owing probably, to the lack of financial backing.

Has Nokomis failed as a community in not meeting its predicted growth? It is a clean town, due on a large part to the fact that when the lots were originally sold, minimum building regulations were set, and consequently, instead of rough, ugly shacks appearing as permanent landmarks, lovely, well built homes and buildings were constructed. Many of its citizens have gone out into the world to accept positions of responsibility and trust. They have had fine church training, excellent schooling and clean sport.

As a small town, Nokomis has a proud past, a rich, full present, and a bright, hopeful future.

(Webmaster’s Note:) page 44 has a picture of Edith Halstead with the caption:

“Now Mrs. Edith Taylor of Regina, in the costume she wore at the first carnival at Nokomis. It was her mother Mrs. T. Halstead, who gave Nokomis it’s name.”

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PRAIRIE LAND 1906

I’ve reached the land of frozen wheat
Where nothing grows for man to eat.
The wind that Mows the cold and sleet
Across the prairie is hard to beat.

Oh! Prairie Land, sweet prairie land,
As on the burning sands I stand
I look away across the plains,
And wonder why it never rains,
And Gabriel blows his trumpet sound
And says the rains have passed around.

We have no wheat, we have no oats,
We have no corn to feed our shoats,
Our hens they are too poor to lay
Go scratching dust along the way.

Our horses are of the broncho race
Starvation stares them in the face,
We do not live, we only stay,
We are too poor to move away.

All day we tramp behind the plow
Mid flying ants and mosquitoes now,
We seek our shack to get some rest
And curse the day that we came west.

PRAIRIE LAND 1909

(A PARODY)

My former song I must confess
Would never suit the golden west,
It is the land, my boy, my girl,
The land destined to feed the world.
Oh, Prairie Land we love so well
Oh, thou are made for man to dwell,
It is the land, my boy, my girl,
The land destined to feed the world.
It is the land, my boy, my girl,
The land destined to feed the world.

We've lots of wheat, we've lots of oats,
We've lots of corn to feed the shoats,
Our hens they now both set and lay,
And bring an income every day.

Our horses are the broncho race,
No other horse can fill his place,
A hardy beast of great renown,
He's helped us hold the homestead down.

No more we tramp behind the plow,
We're riding gangs and sulkies now,
And every day our boys are seen
A-plowing land with gasoline.

Both are sung to the tune of "Buelahland".

The original verses, written in 1906 by Henry M. Beeler, Nokomis homesteader, became known as "The Dustbowl Song". Mr. Beeler wrote the parody when farmers began to get a foothold and realize the west had something to offer.