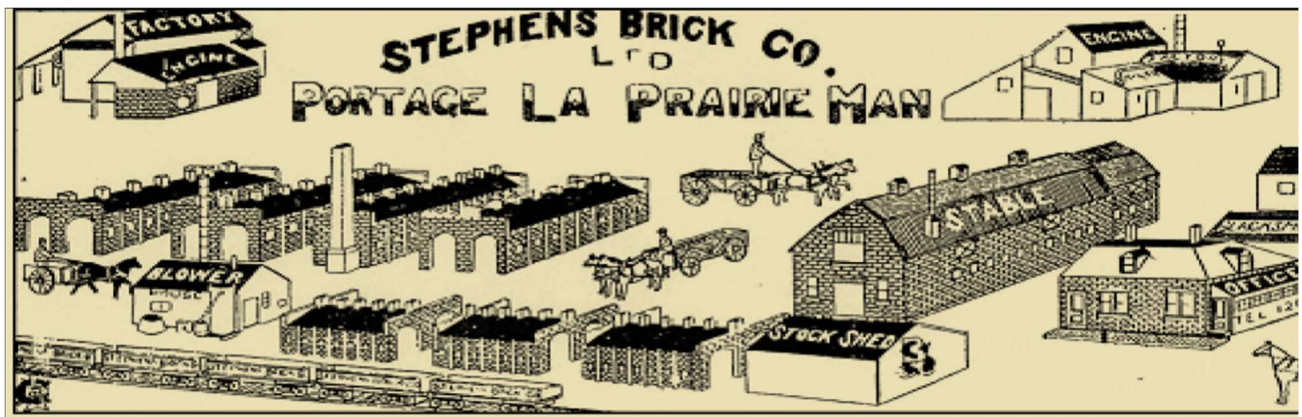


# MANITOBA BRICK

## A History of Brick Manufacturing in Manitoba, 1860-1990

### APPENDIX 2:

#### SMALL URBAN & RURAL OPERATIONS



Drawing of Stephen's Brick Yard, Portage la Prairie, ca. 1909

## **MANITOBA BRICK**

### **A History of Brick Manufacturing in Manitoba, 1860-1990**

## **APPENDIX 2: SMALL URBAN & RURAL OPERATIONS**

# **INTRODUCTION**

The following inventory of brick manufacturing sites in small urban and rural situations in Manitoba was developed for the province's Historic Resources Branch (HRB) in 2010 by Mr. Randy Rostecki.

This inventory is one of three appendices that also includes an inventory of brick-manufacturing sites in Winnipeg and St. Boniface (which at the time of the most active period of brick production in Manitoba was a separate city) (Appendix 1), as well as a technical focus (Appendix 3) that highlights key claims for various aspects of the industry over its 130 years of activity: first, oldest, largest, etc.

The two main inventory appendices have been used in the development of the analytical narrative that has been the main purpose of this project: "Manitoba Brick: A History of Brick Manufacturing in Manitoba, 1860-1990."

The small urban/rural inventory contains narrative information on 68 individual communities. A list following this introduction notes each community with the relevant page reference. Note that in certain larger communities several operations will have been active at the same time, and in some communities there will be operations that succeeded from an earlier activity – in both instances the operations will be noted under the community name. The inventory is presented alphabetically.

The information in this report also contains the results of an inventory research project undertaken in 1992 for the Manitoba Museum by Mr. Hugh Henry. This has been included because it occasionally provides additional information on certain sites, and because there are a few additional brick plant locations that have been identified. In the presentation of these two information collections, the content developed for HRB by Mr. Rostecki forms the main content of the report, presented first, with the information from Mr. Henry included as support material for certain of the entries. Mr. Henry's data is noted with his name along with a reference to the Manitoba Museum; otherwise it should be understood that information in this report is the work of Mr. Rostecki.

It is important to note that historical information on Manitoba's small urban and rural brick operations is scant, given that they were not typically the subjects of much attention even during their operation. Thus, for the most part, research has focused on available newspaper accounts for much of the information for each entry. Where possible, visual information that was available in various sources has been included by Mr. Rostecki for particular entries. This can include site plans, drawings and photographs of plant operations, and brick manufacturing equipment.

# LIST OF SMALL URBAN & RURAL SITES

Altamont.....	4
Assessippi .....	4
Balmoral.....	5
Beausejour.....	8
Brandon .....	15
Brookdale.....	21
Carberry.....	23
Carman .....	24
Clearwater .....	32
Crystal City .....	33
Cypress River .....	34
Darlingford .....	36
Deleau .....	38
Deloraine .....	39
Dominion City .....	43
Douglas .....	45
East Selkirk.....	46
Eden .....	48
Edrans .....	49
Emerson .....	52
Gilbert Plains .....	54
Gladstone .....	56
Glossop .....	58
Grand Valley .....	58
Grandview.....	59
Hamiota .....	59
Hartney .....	60
Holland .....	63
Kenville-Durban .....	65
Killarney.....	66
Lac du Bonnet.....	67
La Riviere.....	70
Lavenham .....	76
La Broquerie .....	76
Leary's .....	77
Lockport.....	84
Macgregor.....	84
Manigotagan .....	85

Manitou .....	85
Melita .....	86
Millwood.....	88
Minitonas .....	89
Minnedosa .....	90
Morden .....	93
Morris .....	95
Neepawa.....	98
Nelsonville .....	102
Newdale.....	104
Ninga .....	106
Oak Lake .....	107
Pilot Mound.....	108
Portage la Prairie .....	109
Rapid City .....	117
Russell .....	124
St. Alphonse .....	124
Shoal Lake.....	125
Sidney .....	128
Somerset .....	136
Souris .....	140
Stony Mountain.....	143
Strathclair.....	144
Swan River .....	144
The Pas .....	145
Thunderhill.....	146
Virden .....	147
Wawanesa .....	158
Whitemouth.....	161
Whitewater.....	170

# ALTAMONT

## Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1904-1905

Owner/Operator: Snowdon and Company

Location: Manitoba District

Related Information: cement clay only, cream brick from Baldur

Sources of Information: "The High Mountain," Swain, 1973 (Dept. of Energy and Mines files)

# ASESSIPPI

## Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

### Operation 1

Dates of operation: early 1890's (1893-1902)

Owner/Operator: John A., (Jack) Gill, (storekeeper)

Location: NW along right bank of Bear Creek, above confluence with Shell River

Related Information: Jim Monroe was the brickworks foreman. Bill Hall and Cecil Harvey were Helpers.

The bricks were used for chimneys and basement floors and several buildings in Russell including the Graham Boulton home and W.J. Doig store (Russell Hardware)

Sources of Information: "Aseissippi Townsite," Government of Manitoba, 1981 (Historic Resources Branch) "Ghost Town of Manitoba," H. Mulligan and W. Ryder, 1985

"A Review of the Heritage Resources of Roblin Planning District," Karen Nicholson, 1985 (Historic Resource Branch)

# BALMORAL

John H. McClure, a Stonewall/Balmoral area lumber man, purchased a farm south of that latter place in March 1905. Attracted to what he saw as “first quality brick clay” on the property, he began assembling a work force and a manufacturing plant there during April and May of that year. McClure apparently had 25 years experience in the brick yards of Winnipeg – he also seems to have had some influence, for by late May the Canadian Pacific Railway had already laid out a spur track into the new yard. By the end of May 1905 his brick-making machinery had arrived. Though the area newspaper remained optimistic that Balmoral Brick was to be on the market in a few weeks, it was not until late July that McClure fired his first kiln of brick. While the product of this first kiln was considered “not altogether perfect,” the quality was nonetheless high, the brick being a bright pale yellow in colour. It was stated that clay from deeper into the deposit would produce a red brick of firm, dense texture. McClure’s first shipment of brick came to Winnipeg during the first week of September 1905. These sold for \$10.00 per thousand at the kilns, while at the Farmers’ Cooperative Warehouse in Stonewall the cost was \$12.00. Probably the best advertisement for J.H. McClure and Company’s bricks came from Stonewall’s founder, S.J. Jackson, who in 1905 was building a brick and concrete block house immediately to the west of his own home. The brick he used came from the new Balmoral Yard. <sup>1</sup>

McClure’s bricks were marked “B.B.Co” – Balmoral Brick Company – in their suction cup. In the spring of 1906, McClure faced competition from “interested parties” from Winnipeg and St. Boniface who were scouting the area. This did not materialize, and McClure was left to burn four kilns of brick that summer. Indeed it was said that the Balmoral brick yard was one of the busiest places in the Rural Municipality of Rockwood that summer. McClure’s yard settled into a regular manufacturing pattern over the next few years. In July 1910, the Balmoral Brick Company Ltd. was incorporated with mostly Winnipeggers as the principals, though John H. McClure remained front and centre in the operation. Late in 1912 Balmoral Brick was sold to the Winnipeg Supply and Fuel Company, which evidently wished to compete more effectively with its large Winnipeg counterparts such as Alsip Brick and Lumber. The Balmoral operation was to remain under its own name. In fact in 1913 they erected a new shed for drying brick that was 75’ x 270’ in size, with a capacity of one million bricks. The Balmoral yard was said to have closed during World War I with a decline of building construction, though the firm still existed as part of Winnipeg Supply as late as 1926.<sup>2</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Stonewall Gazette, 29 March 1905, p. 4; 3 May 1905, p. 4; 24 Mat 1905, p. 1; 31 May 1905, p. 1; 28 June 1905, p. 4; 2 August 1905, p. 4; Commercial, 9 September 1905, p. 33; Gazette, 6 September 1905, p.4; 20 September 1905, p. 1

<sup>2</sup> Stonewall Gazette, 11 April 1906, p. 4; 31 October 1906, p. 4; 18 September 1907, p. 1; Manitoba Gazette, 6 August 1910, 99. 1092-1093; Stonewall Gaze, 20 December 1912, p. 8; 9 April 1913, p. 1; Balmoral, 1872-1897, p. 27; Henderson’s Directory, 1926

## **BALMORAL**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: Before 1920

Owner/Operator: Winnipeg Supply and Fuel Company

Location: NW ¼ 31-14-2-E1, 1 ½ miles north of Balmoral (possibly Twp 15)

Related Information: soft-mud, common brick

Sources of Information: "Report on Manitoba Clays," Walsh, 1931 (dept. Of Energy and Mines files)

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1910-1919

Owner/Operator: Balmoral Brick Company Limited

Location: NW ¼ 1-14-2-W1,

Related Information: location questionable; letters patent 1910; offices likely in Winnipeg, but no tax record

Sources of Information: "Henderson Directories, 1916-1919," Manitoba Gazette 1910, (Manitoba dept. Of Energy and Mines files)

#### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1910

Owner/Operator: J.H. McClure

Location: Fabis Farm (1972)

Related Information: bricks used in construction of school and Slater's offices

Sources of Information: "Balmoral: 1872-1972," N. Gorman



A typical product of the Balmoral Brick Company. ([Balmoral, 1872-1977](#), 9. 27)



# BEAUSEJOUR

A growing building boom in the rapidly-expanding metropolis of Winnipeg during 1904 led to the founding of the Manitoba Pressed Brick Company Ltd., which was incorporated later that year. Though his name did not appear the principals of incorporation, the financial power behind the project was future Senator George H. Bradbury of Selkirk. The brick plant was to be associated with the future Manitoba Glass Manufacturing plant, for both used the same copious amounts of sand found in the Beausejour area. This was to be known as Silica brick, and at the time there were 50 such plants in operation in the United States, as well as one Ottawa plant which had then been in the business for two years. The process required no drying of clay, with the brick being hardened by steam. Construction of the Beausejour plant was begun in the spring of 1905, and it was projected that the operation would produce 15,000 to 20,000 bricks per day. All of Bradbury's equipment was Canadian-made, while the plant was considered to be the largest brick plant ever built in Canada. Bradbury estimated that the brick would cost \$12.00 per thousand, while the owners claimed it was the equal of imported brick put down at Winnipeg for \$25 to \$35 per thousand. A trial of the plant machinery was made in August 1905. Using a Berg Press, Bradbury's bricks were a light grey in colour, but supposedly could be a made in any colour. The plant shipped its first carload to Winnipeg during late October 1905. In November a contingent of Winnipeg builders and contractors were given a tour of the plant, complete with a luncheon. A Beausejour house which highlighted the sand-lime brick was also inspected by this group. At the plant six different colours of brick were on display, including dark red, light red, buff and slate-coloured. During 1906, the brick plant was joined by the new glass factory. According to a 1913 R. G. Dun commercial report on this firm, it was still making money. Indeed, the firm had just signed a contract to supply the Town of Beausejour with electricity from its power house. All this was for naught, however, as the brick business wound down in the early months of World War I. In financial straits early in 1915, the firm's Letters of Incorporation were accidentally cancelled that summer, only to be reinstated a couple of months later. A March 1916 Fire Atlas sheet, however, showed the plant to be "Silent", an insurance euphemism for "Closed".<sup>3</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>3</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 10 December 1904, pp. 855-857; "A New Industry", Selkirk Record, 19 May 1905, p. 4; "Big Brick Industry", Winnipeg Tribune, 11 August 1905, p. 1; Record, 11 August 1905, p. 6; "Sand Brick Shipped", Manitoba Free Press, 30 October 1905, p. 6; "Manufacture of Bricks", Tribune, 21 November 1905, p. 5; Selkirk Expositor, 17 August 1906, p. 8; Manitoba Gazette, 31 July 1905, p. 852, p. 4 September 1915, p. 990; City of Winnipeg Archives. Board of Control Communication, 08712/1913, particularly Confidential R. G. Dun Report on Manitoba Presses Brick Company Ltd, 29 January 1913; as well as letter T.A. Hunt to Magnus Peterson, 26 November 1914.

## **BEAUSEJOUR**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1906-1916

Owner/Operator: Jim Turner

Location:

Related Information: sand-lime brick plant; bought by Dominion Glass; Beausejour Hotel built of this brick

Sources of Information: "Annual report, Geological Survey of Canada, 1916 (Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files, "They Stopped at a Good Place: A History of the Beausejour, Brokenhead, Garson and Tyndall; Ares of Manitoba, 1875-1981, 1982.

## A New Industry

An enterprise which promises to be a great boon to the building trades of the west is just being opened at Beausejour, and any person who happens to be down in that district should not fail to pay it a visit. It is the plant of Manitoba Pressed Brick Co., situated in that thriving and go-ahead village. This company was promoted last fall by Geo. H. Bradbury with a capital of \$60,000, all of which has been subscribed by Manitoba people. The officers are:—President, Angus Brown, of Winnipeg; Vice-President, Mr. Fairchild; Secretary-treasurer, Wm. Pindlay; and Manager, G. H. Bradbury.

The plant is for the purpose of making brick out of sand and lime, called Silica brick. It is an old German process and is gaining popularity in the United States where there are at present about fifty plants in operation. The manufacture of brick by this process is only as yet in its infancy in the Dominion. One plant has been in operation at Ottawa for two seasons, and the product of the plant is equal to the best clay pressed brick, is much stronger and is almost a fire brick. The bricks will stand more fire than any other material used in building.

The Beausejour plant will produce from 15,000 to 20,000 brick every 48 hours, and the brick made to-day could be built into a wall to-morrow, as there is no drying required the brick being hardened by steam. Another feature is that any color of brick can be produced.

The Beausejour plant cost \$50,000 and is being put in order as speedily as possible, and operations will be commenced in a very short time. Through the courtesy of Mr. Bradbury, the Editor of The Record was shown over the premises a few days ago, and judging from the surroundings there is a supply of sand in the immediate neighborhood of the works to keep the works in operation for many years to come. It is safe to say that a finer deposit, both as regards quality and quantity, could not be found in any other section of the province.

The machinery for this mammoth enterprise consists of a sand dryer forty feet in length and 4 feet 6 inches in diameter, encased in a shell where the steam is applied, and which runs on ball bearings. There is also two large pug mills or mixers, each 16 feet long, through which all material passes and is thoroughly mixed. The press is the latest improved Berg press—the most powerful brick press ever invented. Then there are two large hardening cylinders 6 feet 6 inches in diameter and 60 feet long. The boilers are 150 horse power and the engine 100 horse power. In addition to all of the above there are tracks, cars, etc., making one of the most complete and up-to-date sand and lime brick plants ever erected on the continent.

The process of manufacture is an interesting one. The sand is first taken from its natural bed in the bank by machinery and fed into the sand dryer and ultimately deposited in the measuring device, which measures the proper proportion of sand and lime into the dry mixer. After passing through this it is thoroughly mixed and elevated to the top flat of the building and deposited into the wet mixer, where it is again thoroughly mixed and moistened and then deposited in the press. When taken from the press it is quite firm in brick form and is placed on steel cars, which

hold about 1000 bricks each. These cars are then run into the hardening cylinder and at the end of the day the cylinder will contain between 15,000 and 20,000 brick. The heads of the cylinders are then closed and sealed and the steam pressure turned on and raised to 125 pounds, which is maintained for eight or ten hours. After this the bricks are drawn out of the cylinders and are ready for shipment and could be built into walls when hot if found necessary. The lime used will be procured from Tyndall.

The building consist of a main building 40 feet square and 2½ storeys high, a boiler and engine room 37 feet square, hardening cylinder room 133 feet long by 18 feet wide.

There will be about 1000 feet of tracking in connection, with the plank in addition to a spur connecting with the C. P. R. main line. All the floors and bearings for the machinery are being made of concrete. All the machinery was made in Canada, a firm in Toronto having secured the right to manufacture this class of work in the Dominion. Mr. Bradbury is on the ground at Beausejour superintending the works at that place and has a staff of engineers and men employed in building and placing everything in position, and expects to have the whole plant in operation in about thirty days.

The enterprise will be a great boon to the people of Beausejour and district and indeed to the whole province. To the people of Beausejour and district because they will derive a benefit from the large number of men employed and to the people of the province because the works will supply a good quality of building material at reasonable cost. Mr. Bradbury is deserving of congratulation for the success he has made in establishing such an industry in our midst.

# MANUFACTURE OF BRICKS

## A Visit to One of the Important Industries in Beausejour District.

On Saturday a number of prominent city builders and contractors were the guests of the Manitoba Pressed Brick Company, on a trip to Beausejour to inspect the plant of this company. A number availed themselves of the opportunity to see working one of the most up-to-date plants in the country. The brick plant is situated about a quarter of a mile south of the Beausejour station, and is admirably placed for doing good work. The brick manufactured at this plant is a sand-lime brick and is manufactured under a process known as the Berg process. The brick manufactured is composed of sand and lime only, and it is claimed for it that it is stronger than any clay brick, and has greater resisting power; it is a non-conductor of electricity. It is especially adapted for sewer and catch-basin purposes, as the more exposed it is to water and all the harder the brick becomes. A particularly noticeable feature about this brick is its uniformity in size, all the bricks being 4 inches by 8 1/2 inches by 2 1/2 inches, and weighing 5 pounds. This uniformity in size makes it valuable for face purposes. It is also claimed for the brick that it is a dry resistor and resists fire better than any other class of brick, which is not actually a fire brick. A reporter of The Tribune was shown a number of the bricks which has just been manufactured, and found them well formed, and as hard or harder than an ordinary clay brick that had stood out to be seasoned for months. This sand-lime brick is a pretty color, and can be manufactured in any color desired by the purchaser. Six different colors were on view at the plant, a sand colored brick, which was also shown, built into a house in the town, the brick wall, made from this natural brick, was most artistic, having a very finished look. A dark red, a light red, a buff and a slate-colored brick were also on view. All the bricks shown were well finished and as hard as a brick several weeks old. These bricks, it is understood, can be made and placed on the cars at Beausejour for about \$12 per thousand's car, which practically means \$14 a thousand in Winnipeg. The brick making machinery was erected by a Berg, who is the patentee of the press, has a capacity of 20,000 bricks a day, and it is understood this plant can turn out 20,000 bricks a day if the demand requires them.

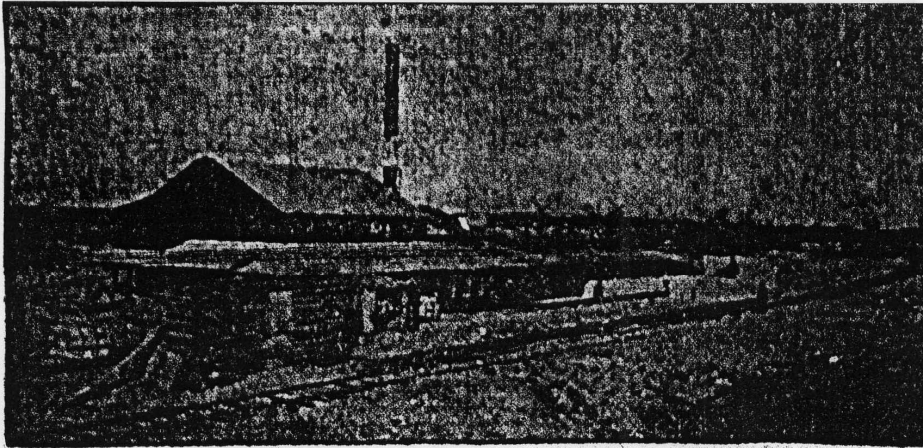
The plant itself is an interesting study, and is designed with the view of getting the best possible returns for the work done. The plant is composed of a magnificent Berg brickmaking machine, which works with true precision, exerting 1,700 ton pressure on each brick. The lime is first slacked in pans weighing 50 pounds each. It is then, by mechanical means, fed into a mixer, along with the sand, which is carried from the pit into a sand drier, and from there into a bin, from which it is carried by another belt to the mixer. After passing through the measuring room, where both the lime and sand are measured with precision, the materials pass down a shaft into the press, which forms the brick, the machine turning out four bricks on each motion. A reporter of The Tribune timed the machine, and found that exactly 24 well-formed bricks were made every minute. As soon as the brick is taken from the machine, it is loaded on to a trolley, which holds on an average 1,040 bricks. When the trolley is full, it is moved into the hardening cylinder, which is subjected to 125 pounds' steam pressure and is hardened by the steam hardening process. The batches of bricks are left in the cy-

linders, about 8 hours. When the party arrived at the brick works a batch had just been turned out of the cylinder, and were shown to the visitors. The brick shown were a fine sample of a hard brick (ad was favorably spoken about by all present, who expressed the opinion that the new brick would prove a boon to the building trade of Western Canada. The cylinders in which the bricks are steamed are heated by two Bertram boilers. A peculiar thing about the colored brick is that notwithstanding the steam pressure to which the bricks were subjected, the coloring of the bricks did not change in the least, which would go to show that the manager has solved the question of a non-fading brick. The company's works are in charge of Mr. Geo. H. Bradbury, who has labored hard to make the enterprise a success, and although the work of manufacturing bricks has only been commenced within the past couple of months, the success of the venture is far above the keenest expectations of the shareholders, and members of the company. The process of manufacture of the brick turned out by the company is not altogether new, as the process has been known in Germany and the United States, where the sand-lime brick have ousted any other make of brick out of the market. To Mr. Geo. H. Bradbury is due the credit for introducing the system in Western Canada. Ottawa has already had one plant erected; Toronto has two, Montreal one and Sydney one.

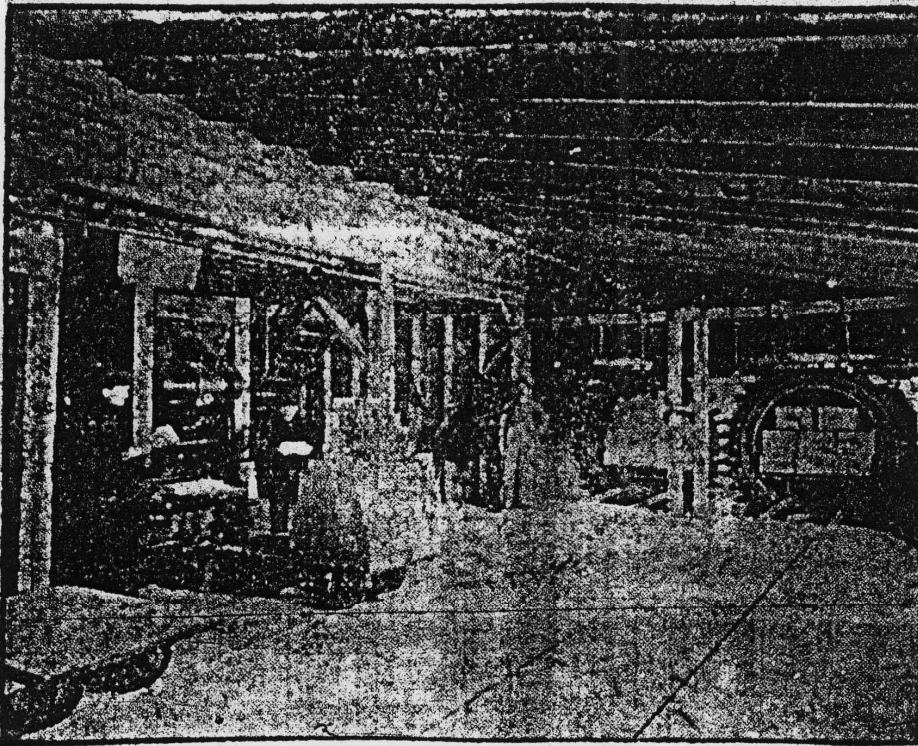
After a thorough inspection of the works, a recherche luncheon was served by C. A. Maddin at the Hotel Beausejour. The luncheon was a credit to the gentlemen instrumental in getting it up. Complimentary remarks were heard as to the quality of the bricks manufactured by the company and a most prosperous career was mapped out for them in the building fields of the west.

Amongst those who accepted the company's kind invitation were noticed: Angus Browns, chairman of the company; J. E. Fairchild, vice-president; William Fladlay, secretary; treasurer Geo. H. Bradbury, manager, and the following shareholders: D. G. Connery, D. A. Ross, J. E. Mitchell, Chas. Browns, K. S. Johnston, W. Wright, Samuel Hooper, T. H. Johnston. All were loud in their praise of the price manufactured and expressed the opinion that the brick would do a lot to revolutionize the building business of the west.

Winnipeg Tribune, 21  
November 1905, p. 5.

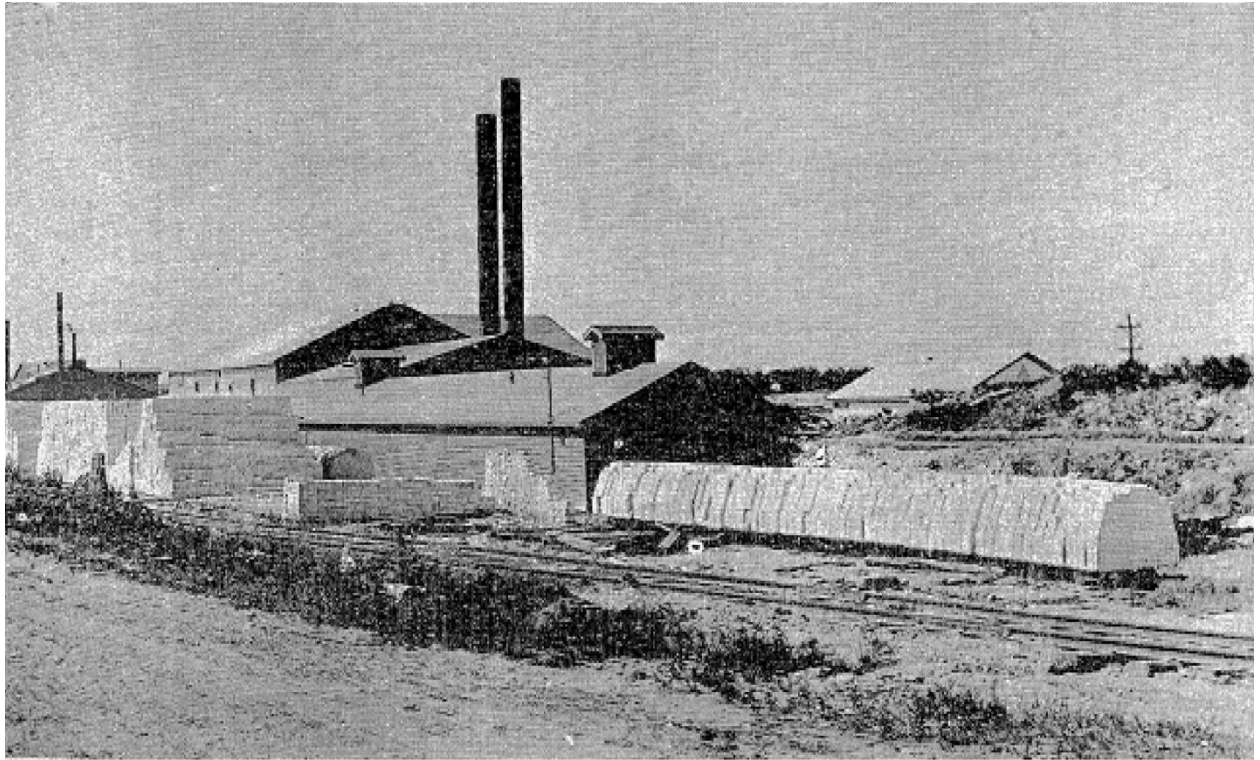


**VIEW OF THE WORKS**



**VIEW OF THE PRESS AND HARDENING CYLINDERS**

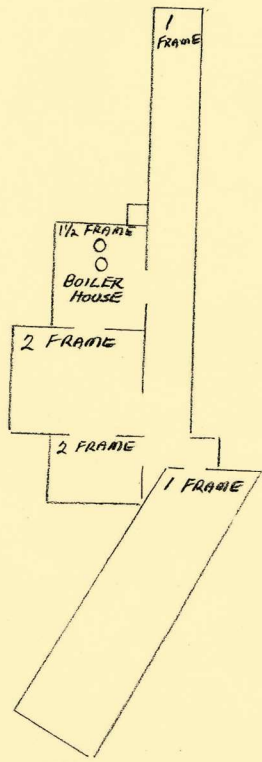
The new Beausejour brick plant. Winnipeg Tribune, 21 November 1905, p. 5.



The Beausejour brick plant, shown with its neighbouring glass factory. [Beausejour-50<sup>e</sup> Jubilee, 1912-1962](#)

WESTERN CANADA  
UNDERWRITERS  
INSURANCE PLAN  
of  
BEAUSEJOUR  
27<sup>th</sup> MARCH 1916  
SHEET 2  
SCALE: 50' = 1 inch

1 BRICK  
TRANS-  
FORMER  
STATION



MANITOBA PRESSED BRICK  
CO LTD  
(SILENT MARCH 1916)

Site Plan of Beausejour brick plant, traced from original Western Canada Underwriter's Insurance Plan, 1916.

# BRANDON

Brick making in Brandon began in the spring of 1882 when local entrepreneur J. E. Woodworth established the Brandon Brick Works. By June of that year, he had acquired the services of an experienced brick-maker, T.D. Whiting, formerly of the Pullman Brick Works near Chicago. Woodworth had also ordered two Philadelphia-made Martin brick machines. These were said to be capable of turning out 50,000 bricks per day. Woodworth was supposedly with his operation that year, as he stated that he had several orders for brick. Brandon was in its birth pangs in 1882, and was largely composed of wood frame buildings. It was said in the summer of 1882 that Brandon brick had problems with cracking while drying. Like Woodworth's yard little more is known of the yard of his competitor, Alexander Lang. This was located outside the-then southern limits of Brandon. With 15 years' experience in the craft, and employing 15 hands, Lang expected to turn out half a million bricks during that season. Perhaps some of Lang's bricks were those used in the construction of the Winnipeg Post Office (1883-1886). The Western Canadian boom which had created Brandon collapsed during 1883, and took with it the associated building boom. As a result, operations such as those of Woodworth or Lang likely remained very small in the ensuing years. Directory listings up to 1890 showed no brick making at Brandon.<sup>4</sup>

In the early 1890s Duncan McVicar as well as F. and H.R. Reid were the only brick manufacturers shown at Brandon in the Directories. McVicar had yards at Brandon and Carberry at the time. One photograph exists of McVicar's Brandon yard, and was considered to be the largest in the area. Brick making at Brandon was then bedevilled by poor clays, so said the manufacturers. However, local architects claimed that the local clays were well-adapted to making good brick, and that it was the manufacturers who were not making a good product. Brick buildings became more pre-eminent in Brandon during the 1890s, and this was a time when Rosser Avenue became substantially-built, along with the appearance of large brick homes in the city. By the end of the decade, J. and H. Sampson were dominant in the local brick-making scene, and their operation appears to have been known as the Brandon Brick Works. It is not known if this was the same firm as that of Woodworth in the early 1880s. Henry Sampson seems to have been the principal member of the firm, and would be prominent in area brick-making during the ensuing years. Indeed, in 1903 it was said that one brick firm was then in operation in Brandon, though a more modern plant was said to be almost started. Ordinary and pressed brick were then manufactured at Brandon, though red brick was still being imported from St. Louis, Missouri, much as it had been during the early 1880s in Winnipeg.<sup>5</sup>

Henry Sampson was involved in the formation of the Brandon Brick and Lumber Company, Ltd. in July 1903. Its establishment did not come quickly enough as Brandon contractors were experiencing a brick shortage at the time. This firm was soon turning out a sand-lime brick according to the

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>4</sup> "Brandon Brick Works", Winnipeg Sun, 8 June 1882, p.1; Steen and Boyce. Brandon Manitoba and Her Industries, September 1882. (Winnipeg; Steen and Boyce, 1882)., pp. 18, 44; Emerson International, 10 August 1882, p. 5; , 10 August 1882, p. 5; Winnipeg Sun, 2 August 1883, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Dominion Business Directory, 1890; p. 310; Dominion Illustrated, 31 August 1899, p. 141; Brandon Sun, 23 October 1890, p. 8; Business Directory of Canada and Newfoundland, 1899, p.470; Henderson's Manitoba and Northwest Directory, 1900, p. 910; Lovell's Directory 1900-1907, p. 812; Brandon As An Industrial Centre", Winnipeg Telegram, 9 May 1903, p. 17; Western Home Monthly, December 1903, p. 17.



Hirenniches system (one of the several manufacturing systems which were competing at the time). Their brick was of a white colour and heavier in weights than clay brick. It apparently had remarkable strength, with a resistive force of 47,000 pounds per square inch. By the summer of 1906 Brandon Brick and Lumber was being managed by G.N. Misener, a man who had erected and installed many American brick plants. The firm's capacity was then at 23 bricks per minute with an average daily output of 14,000 bricks. In 1910 the firm changed its name to the Brandon Sandstone Brick Company, Ltd. Though this firm was still listed in Directories during 1915, but by 1917 it had vanished, possibly a victim of the general building slow-down during World War I.<sup>6</sup>

Other Brandon brick operations appear to have been very small, and may not have had much output, nor longevity. Directory listings have yielded names such as George Murray (c1904-1907); McDiarmid and Clark (c1912); the National Brick Company, Ltd., incorporated in 1911; as well as the Robinson and Bell Yard, possibly also known as the Brandon Brick Company, in business about 1911-1912. Robinson and Bell were located on the south escarpment of the Assiniboine River valley, a mile and a half from Brandon. Its bricks were a greenish-buff colour, cracked and baked with an open granular structure. This may have been due to firing in scove kilns, as well as in a down-draft kiln used for firing the face bricks. At the same time the Silicate Brick Company was located west of Brandon and drew its sand from a ridge to the rear of the plant. In 1912 it was said by Dominion Government specialists to be running full time. Its lifespan may have been very short, as the firm's name was not included in any Directories of the period. At least one firm, the Edrans-Brandon Pressed Brick Company, Ltd., incorporated in 1905, listed Brandon as its chief place of business, while it exploited clay deposits in another city. By 1905 Brandon had become a secondary business centre to Winnipeg. By that token, the latter place had a number of firms listing Winnipeg as their chief place of business, but which had works elsewhere, such as that at Beausejour. Edrans would become one of the centres of brick production that survived the debacle which befell most brick plants during World War I, though the parent firm may have only had a Brandon sales office.<sup>7</sup>

Brandon appears to have been defunct as a brick-making centre after World War I, its operations having succumbed to either a lack of building, manpower shortages and market consolidations which favoured strong firms such as Alsips in Winnipeg or Snyders in Portage la Prairie.

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>6</sup>Manitoba Gazette, 254 July 1903, pp. 523-524; Brandon Weekly Sun, 23 July 1903, p. 6; "Brandon Building Material Plentiful", Winnipeg Telegram, 25 August 1906, p. 19; Manitoba Gazette, 16 July 1910, p. 983; Business Directory of Canada, 1915; 1917.

<sup>7</sup> Henderson's, 1904, p. 596; 1907, p. 2390; Business Directory of Canada, 1912, p. 546; Manitoba Gazette, 18 February 1911, p. 25; Manitoba Gazette, 22 July 1905, p. 599.

## **BRANDON**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1882

Owner/Operator: Alexander Lang

Location: southern limits of Brandon (1882)

Related Information: employed about 15 people

Sources of Information: "Brandon Manitoba and her Industries," Steen and Boyce ed. and pub., 1882,

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1882-1890's

Owner/Operator: McVicar's Brick Yard (Dougald McVicar)

Location: 3 miles west of Brandon

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Ghost towns of Manitoba," H. Mulligan and W. Ryder, 1985 "Brandon: An Architectural Walking Tour" 1985 (Manitoba and Recreation)

#### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1904-1914

Owner/Operator: The Brandon Brick and Lumber Co. Ltd. (H. Sampson et.al)

Location: Likely in town (corner of 29<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Princess St.)

Related Information: received letters patent of incorporation, 1903; see source

Sources of Information: "The Canadian Architect and Builder", Sept. 1904

#### Operation 4

Dates of operation: 1904-1908

Owner/Operator: Brandon Sand-Lime Brick Works

Location: 1 mile west of Brandon

Related Information: see source

Sources of Information: "Preliminary Report on the Limestones and the Lime Industry of Manitoba", J. Walter Wells, Mines Branch, Ottawa, report #7, 1905

#### Operation 5

Dates of operation: 1909-1914

Owner/Operator: Silicate Brick Company

Location: west of town (possible site of Brandon Sand-Lime Brick Works)

Related Information: closed due to lack of sales

Sources of Information: "Preliminary Report on the clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces", H. Ries and J. Keele, Canada 1912, (Department of Mines)

#### Operation 6

Dates of operation: 1909

Owner/Operator: Robinson Bell

Location: E ½ 10-10-19-w1 (1 ½ miles from town)

Related Information: soft-mud bricks burned in scove kilns, also small down-draft kiln for face bricks

Sources of Information: "Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces", H. Ries and J. Keele, Canada 1912 (Department of Mines, Geological Survey Branch)

#### Operation 7

Dates of operation: 1900

Owner/Operator: Brandon Brick Works

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Henderson Northwest Directory", 1900

#### Operation 8

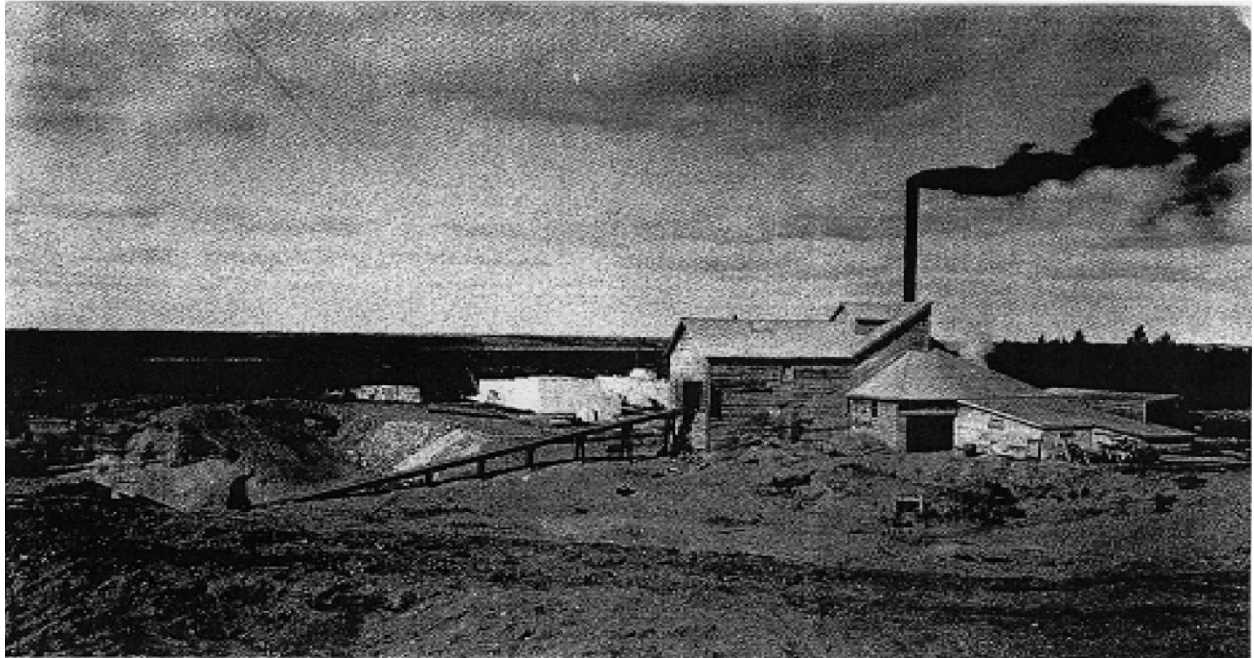
Dates of operation: 1926

Owner/Operator: Brandon Silicate Brick Co. (owned by Alsip Family)

Location:

Related Information:

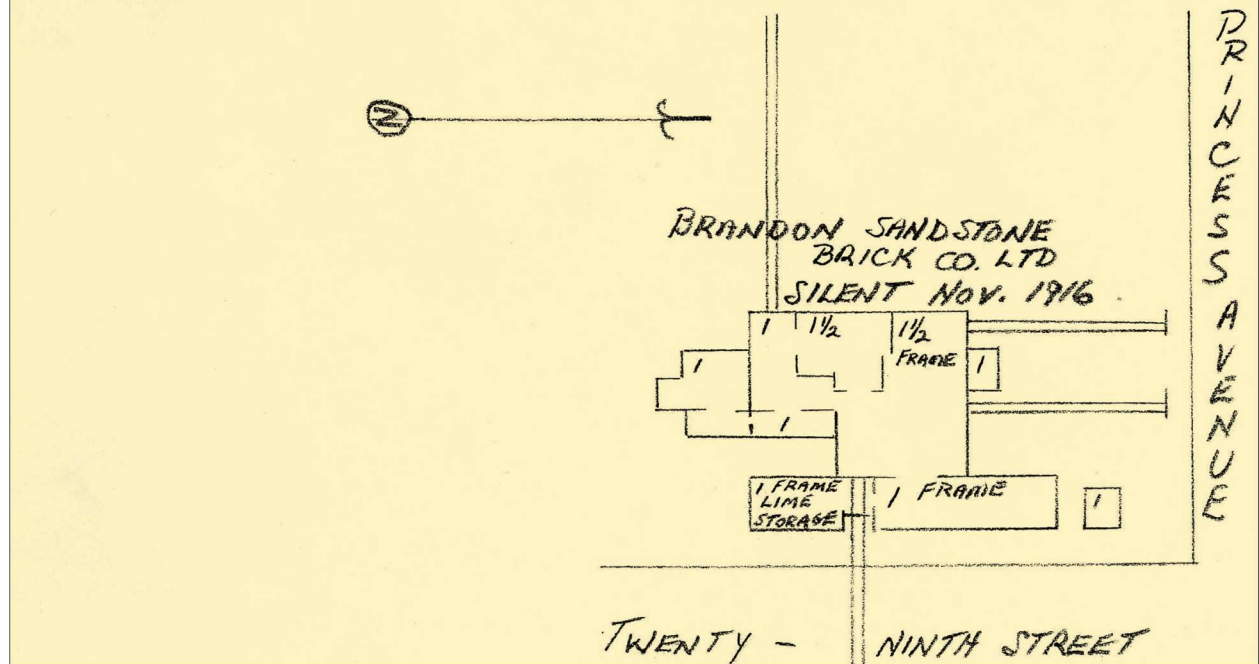
Sources of Information: "Alsip family document"



Brandon Brick and Lumber Company/Brandon Sandstone Brick Company, Ltd., Plant, sometimes known as Sampson's Brick Plant, Brandon, Manitoba. (Fred McGuinness, The Wheat City, Saskatoon: Western Producer Books, 1988, p. 74.)

WESTERN CANADA  
UNDERWRITERS  
INSURANCE PLAN  
of  
BRANDON

DECEMBER 1916  
SHEET "C"  
SCALE: 50' = 1 inch



Site Plan of Brandon Sandstone Brick Company plant, traced from original Western Canada Underwriter's Insurance Plan, 1916.

## BROOKDALE

During late August 1904, H. Johnson arrived in the 26-year old community of Brookdale to commence a brick factory on the east side of the village. By early September he reportedly had his yard in full operation, expecting to soon turn out his first lot of bricks. Unfortunately, this was the last that was heard of this yards, or its products. Later that fall, Robert Dorrell Hales and Son, Rapid City brick-makers, saw an opportunity to start a branch operation at the tiny community. Hales obtained clay samples which were analyzed and pronounced to be of the best quality for bricks. In February 1905 Hales purchased Robert Dodd's quarter section near the village. The firm planned a \$15,000 brick plant, and began hauling material to the site in the form of 500 cords of wood for fuel. By mid-May, Hales had eight men employed at the brick yard. Hales' yard began operations that summer, producing about 20,000 bricks per day.<sup>8</sup>

During 1907 Hales built a permanent kiln at the plant, along with other extensive and permanent improvements. Despite shutting down the yard early (during July), the season was pronounced successful. Early in 1908 plans were made public to form a joint stock company. The \$40,000 capital it would provide was needed to enlarge the plant and install more machinery in order to manufacture hollow brick, tile and sewer pipe. In May Hales brought in the new machinery for hollow brick and tile. By the end of June, the Brookdale Brick and Tile Company, Ltd., was producing those products. Hales wanted to produce a distinctively white and a distinctively red brick. The following year the Brookdale yard secured an order for hollow brick from Lethbridge, Alberta, while also shipping brick to Winnipeg for the Union Station. While reporting a big demand for brick, Hales also accepted an order for 100,000 bricks for the Ninette Sanatorium. In 1911, 30 men were employed at the Brookdale yard, and had settled into an annual production routine. Ultimately, it has been said by a local historian that the yards closed because of an inability to compete with other building materials. Though its charter was revived in February 1923, Brookdale Brick and Tile's charter was finally cancelled in June 1929.<sup>9</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>8</sup> Carberry News, 26 August 1904, p. 8; Carberry Express, 1 September 1904, p. 1; News, 17 February 1905, p. 8; Neepawa Register, 2 March 1905, p. 7; News, 24 February 1905, p. 8; 12 May 1905, p. 8; Brookdale Community, 1878-1967. (Carberry: News-Express, 1967), p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Neepawa Press, 4 June 1905, p. 3; 27 July 1907, p. 27 March 1908, p.1; Manitoba Gazette, 30 May 1908 p. 772; Press, 26 May 1908, p. 3; 30 June 1908, p. 3; 23 April 1909, p. 1; 4 May 1909, p. 1; 4 June 1909, p. 1 Brookdale Community, loc cit., Manitoba Gazette, 17 February 1923, p. 123; 29 June 1929, p. 621.

## **BROOKDALE**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1905-1912

Owner/Operator: R. Hales, W. Hales; Brookdale Brick and Tile Co. Ltd.

Location: NE ¼ 26-12-16-W1, east of Brookdale

Related Information: moved from Rapid City; letters patent 1908; building tiles and veneer brick produced in 1911

Sources of Information: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh, 1931 (Dept. Of Energy and Mines files; Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files, "Rapid City and District: Our Past for the Future", Brookdale Community: 1887-1967", C. Simpson

## CARBERRY

In the spring of 1890, two brick yards were started at Carberry, both producing hard, red bricks. One of these was the yard of John Shaw, who apparently built his own brick-making machine. That yard was supposedly in operation by July according to a local real estate advertisement. Nothing else is known of Shaw or his brick plant. More is known about his competitor, Dougald McVicar of McVicar Brothers, a loose partnership with his brother, Duncan, who also ran a similar yard at Brandon. McVicar purchased 30 acres of land near the CPR tracks in May 1890, which were about a half mile from the town. He found a foreman named Davis who appeared to spend as much time in the courts for assaulting workers and withholding their wages as he did making bricks. Despite kudos from the Brandon and Carberry press for his efforts, McVicar moved the brick-making plant to Sidney in April, 1891.<sup>10</sup>

## CARBERRY

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1889, 1891-1895

Owner/Operator: D. McVicar

Location:

Related Information: (moved operations to Sidney c.1895)

Sources of Information: "Carberry Plains: Century One", Carberry History Committee 1982; Henderson Northwest Directory, 1891

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>10</sup>"Brick for Barberry", Manitoba Free Press, 6 May 1890, p. 5; Carberry News, 9 May 1890, p. 5; 4 July 1890, p. 8; 27 June 1890, p. 5; 4 July 1890, p. 5; "Carberry Red Brick", MFP, 9 July 1890, p. 1; Brandon Sun, 17 July 1890, p. 8; News, 25 December 1890, p. 1; "Sidney", News, 10 April 1891, p. 5



# CARMAN

Carman brick-making was marked by a series of fits and starts over a couple of decades. In the late winter of 1897, area resident James Loblaw considered starting a brick yard. That March he arrived in Carman and spoke of expecting his brick-making machinery to arrive at any time. That was the last that was heard of the proposal. A couple of months later, Elliott and McCormick formed a partnership to make brick by hand. Elliott was said to have several years of experience in Ontario. During early June 1897 work was started on the new brick yard which was located in Clark's Grove. The yard had some output during that season, for it was stated in September that Dr. Gordon was putting in a foundation under his new house. This used brick from Elliott's Yard. Curiously, Elliott did not reappear on the brick-making scene during 1898. Instead, in April, J. Toombs purchased a brick making machine. Two months later, however, Haines and Williams had apparently revived the Elliott yard and were ready to fire a kiln of 60,000 bricks. Thomas Haines was a local builder, and sometimes a partner of Elliott. However, at least part of Clark's Grove was not used for brick-making, as a prayer meet was held there in mid-September 1898. Little is known of this yard in ensuing years. It is known that in 1900 a Mr. Robinson managed the yard and that the Carman brick yard re-opened the following year on 14 May.<sup>11</sup>

Sometime in 1900 the Carman Brick Yards were started, though little is known of its origins or relation to the above-mentioned enterprises. It was not until 1904 that some data started to emerge on this business, by now run by Percy Allen. Evidently it had been in constant operation prior to 1904. Work in the yard began during mid-May 1904, with subsequent delays because of heavy rains which made the clay sticky. The following spring (1905), Allen once again opened the yard in mid-May, but also stated that he was putting in a new drying system. He also advertised prices—veneer brick for \$11.00 per thousand; chimney brick at \$10.00 per thousand; kiln run brick, \$9.00 per thousand. Allen's yard also manufactured red brick that grew harder as it was exposed to the elements. But late in 1907 the yard was for sale. By the spring of 1908 a local paper stated that Carman had but one brick yard. Allen's yard may have met competition from a firm incorporated in April 1905 by local business types such as George Leary, Rodmond Palen Roblin and John Hume Agnew. This was the Dominion Pressed Brick Company Ltd. Nothing is known of its operation, or even if it turned out any brick, as it was never listed in any Directory. It may have been a company formed to test the stock-buying waters. Whether or not this was the one brick yard referred to in 1908 becomes a good question. In 1912 a Dominion Government expert spoke of an abandoned brick yard at Carman which still had soft red scrap bricks lying about. The expert also reported that there was too much sand and silt in the local clay to produce good brick.<sup>12</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>11</sup> Carman Standard, 4 March 1897, p. 4; 25 March 1897, p. 4; 13 May 1897, p. 4; 10 June 1897, p. 4; 2 September 1897, p. 4; 28 April 1898, p. 8; 5 June 1898, p. 5; Carman Leader, 22 September 1898, p. 5; 5 April 1900, p. 8; Standard, 5 October 1900, p. 8; 16 May 1901, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Carman Leader, 12 May 1904, p. 8; 21 July 1904, p. 5; 18 May 1905, pp. 5, 8; "Carman's Advantages to New Industries", Winnipeg Telegram, 5 December 1907, 9. 17; also, "Carman Brick Yards", (advertisement), p. 16, same

## ENDNOTES

issue; Leader, 2 April, 1908, p. 5; Ries and Keele Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces (Memoir 24E), (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912.), p. 21.

This came on the eve of Carman's greatest brick-making enterprise, a fascinating scheme that ultimately failed. In December 1912 the Canada Tile and Fire Proofing Company Ltd. was incorporated by a number of Winnipeg businessmen. During late February 1913 public meetings were held at Carman to acquaint the public with the firm's plans. Albert E. Hilder, who was to manage the enterprise, addressed the meeting. The new plant was to have two phases. The first was to cost \$100,000 and employ 40-50 men. A second phase would come when expansion warranted, in a couple of years, and would cost \$175,000 and employ 60 more men. As there was no usable clay at Carman, the firm's beds lay at Leary, some 18 miles away and would be brought to the plant over the Canadian Northern Railway's line. One suspects the guiding hand of George Leary in this business, but if it was he was definitely in the background. The firm also relied on a 20-acre site on the outskirts of Carman that had to be brought into the town's corporate limits in order to obtain town water. The Board of Trade raised the money to buy the site from W. S. Glendenning, and the town limits were soon extended to include this property.<sup>13</sup>

In May 1913, good progress on the plant was reported as several cars of brick arrived for the buildings. By mid-June the Town Council voted to extend the waterworks system to the site, and the following month a public vote on a by-law in aid of the scheme saw a 136 to 3 majority. The plant was to enjoy tax-free status for ten years, provided it gave local people employment. That summer the plant went up quickly with the huge, three storey factory building forming the centrepiece. Six large kilns arose south of this building, and to the northwest was the powerhouse with its 250 horsepower Corliss engine. The main building was to be brick-veneered once brick production started – for the time being bricks for the kilns were made at a test kiln north of the factory. The plant began manufacturing sewer pipe in late March 1914. The firm also decided to proceed with phase two of their plan.<sup>14</sup>

By early July 1914, A.E. Hilder may have broken away from Canada Tile, forming his own firm with local businessman C.A. Andrews and reportedly financed by Americans. Their plant was to have manufactured vitrified sewer pipe from clays found twenty miles from Carman, which sounded suspiciously like Leary. It was said that Hilder was formerly connected with the Sidney Brick and Tile Company. At some point Hilder's firm moved to Winnipeg, for it does not appear to have had much success or existence at Carman. Possibly, they were unable to obtain clay supplies from either Leary or La Riviere.<sup>15</sup>

Carman's clay products deal began to fall apart by mid-1915. By then the Canada Tile plant had already been closed for nearly a year, partly because of finances. It was also likely a casualty of World War I which took manpower, but the operation was also surely a victim of a downturn in construction activity after 1913. Hilder had been "at Law" with Canada Tile, coming to a settlement which put him in control of their plant. It appeared to locals that Hilder would lease or dispose of the plant to the company he had formed the previous year. It was said that he had secured a permit to build a clay plant in the south-western part of Winnipeg. This would later shift to the north-western part of the city off

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<sup>13</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 21 December 1912, pp. 2571-2573; "An Industry for Carman:", Leader, 6 March 1913, p. 1; "The New Industry", Leader, 13 March 1913, p. 1; "Town Council", Leader, 20 March 1913, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Carman Leader, 29 May 1913, p. 4; 19 June 1913, p. 4; "The Vote on the By-Law", Leader, 3 July 1913, p.1; "Progress of the New Industry", Leader, 28 August 1913, p. 1; 11 September 1913, p. 8; 2 April 1914, p.8

<sup>15</sup> "Clay Reopen Plant", Leader, 31 July 1914, pp. 1, 8; 13 August 1914, p. 8.

Inkster Boulevard in 1918 and become the so-called Reliance or Deutschmann yard. In the meantime, the Carman facility, with its unveneered factory building, remained “Silent” according to the October 1916 Fire Atlas. By the autumn the National Trust Company had entered the picture as trustees for the bond holders of Canada Tile in liquidation. By then, the town was threatening to sell the property for taxes, as the company had failed to perform according to their deal. The town got deeper into the matter when the Bank of Hamilton talked Council into assuming the note on the Canada Tile property. By the spring of 1916 the plant was \$4000 in tax arrears, and National Trust continued to cajole Town Council. Four years later National Trust was refusing to pay taxes on the non-functioning plant. Two years after that the plant property appeared in the Tax Sale lists. The real end came in the autumn of 1923 when a Judicial Sale disposed of the plant assets. The new owners, unnamed by the local press, announced their intention to knock down the 10-year old complex. The Town bought \$1000 worth of brick in order to rebuild the town power plant. Later in 1924 the Town also took plant demolition waste to fill in Carman’s streets. Thomas Kernighan, a local observer, would later blame the plant failure on too long a supply line for its clay. Poor timing in regard to a downturn in construction and loss of its labour force to the war effort were other likely factors, not to mention the squabbling between Hilder and the Tile Company, as well as the Town and National Trust. Thus ended what might have been Manitoba’s largest clay products plant at the time.<sup>16</sup>

## **CARMAN**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1895-1907

Owner/Operator: George McCormick and Company

Location: SW 1/4 -30-6-4 W1 (northeast of the old Carman Hospital; today it is Ross Place)

Related Information: sold soon after opening to William Elliott; two or three kilns operating; red and buff bricks produced

Sources of Information: “Up To Now: A Story of Dufferin and Carman”, “A review of the Heritage Resources of Boyne Planning District”, ” Karen Nicholson, Historical Resources Branch, 1994

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1895-1912

Owner/Operator: William /Elliott

Location: SW ¼-30-6-4-W1 (northeast of the old Carman Hospital; today it is Ross Place)

Related Information: two to three kilns operated on Boyne River, one firing red brick, one firing cream-coloured brick. In 1901, May also have been called Carmen Brick yard and operated under P. Allan

Sources of Information: “Walsh Survey Up to now: A story of Dufferin and Carman”, “ A Review of the Heritage Resources of Boyne Planning District”, Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1984-Walsh, 1931 (dept. Of Energy and Mines files)

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>16</sup> “May Reopen Plant”, Leader, 24 June 1915, p. 1; “Carman Town Council”, Leader, 18 November 1915, p. 5; “Carman Council”, Leader, 6 January 1916, p. 5 “Carman Town Council”, Leader, 20 January 1916, p. 5; “Tax Sale”, Leader, 4 May 1916, p. 8; “Town Council”. Leader, 15 April 1920, p. 1; “Town of Carman”, Leader, 4 May 1922, p. 5; “Judicial Sale”, Leader, 25 October 1923, p. 5’ “Brick and Tile Plant To Be Pulled Down”, Leader, 10 January 1924, p. 8; Thomas Kernighan Dufferin and Carman Manitoba. (Vancouver; 1923), p. 21.

Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1914

Owner/Operator: Canada Tile and  
Fireproofing Co.

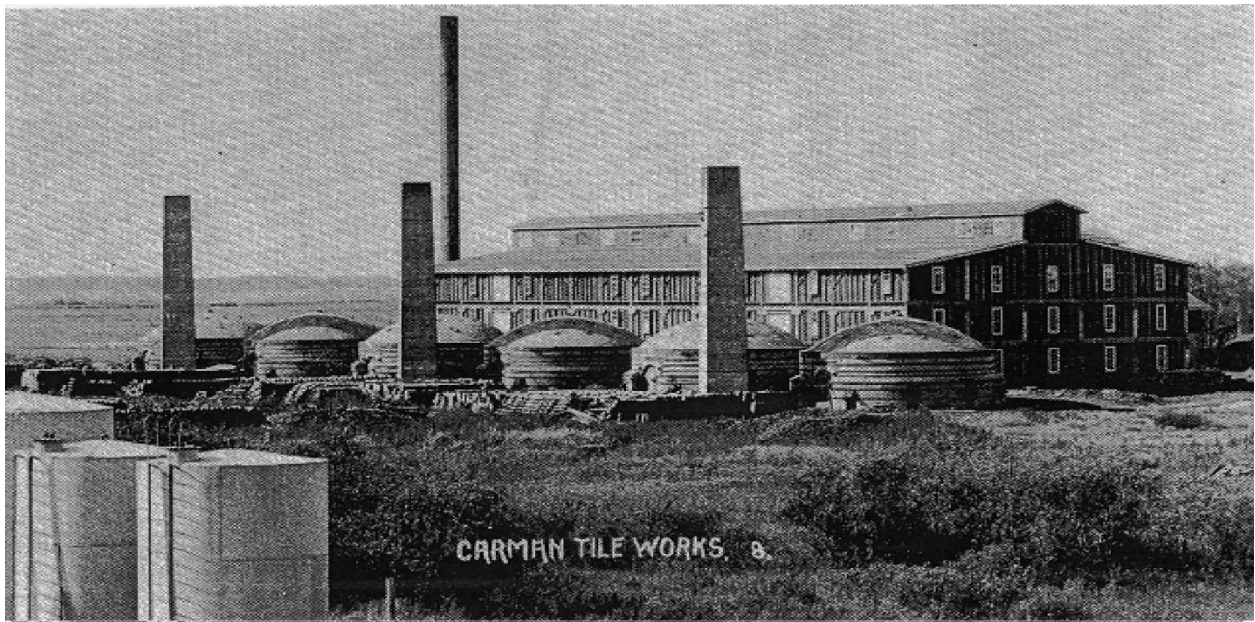
Location: Carman: E ½-25-6-5-W1; (northwest side of town, north of Canadian Northern Railroad)

Related Information: venture promoted by Carman Board of Trade; limited production; plant dismantled  
in 1924

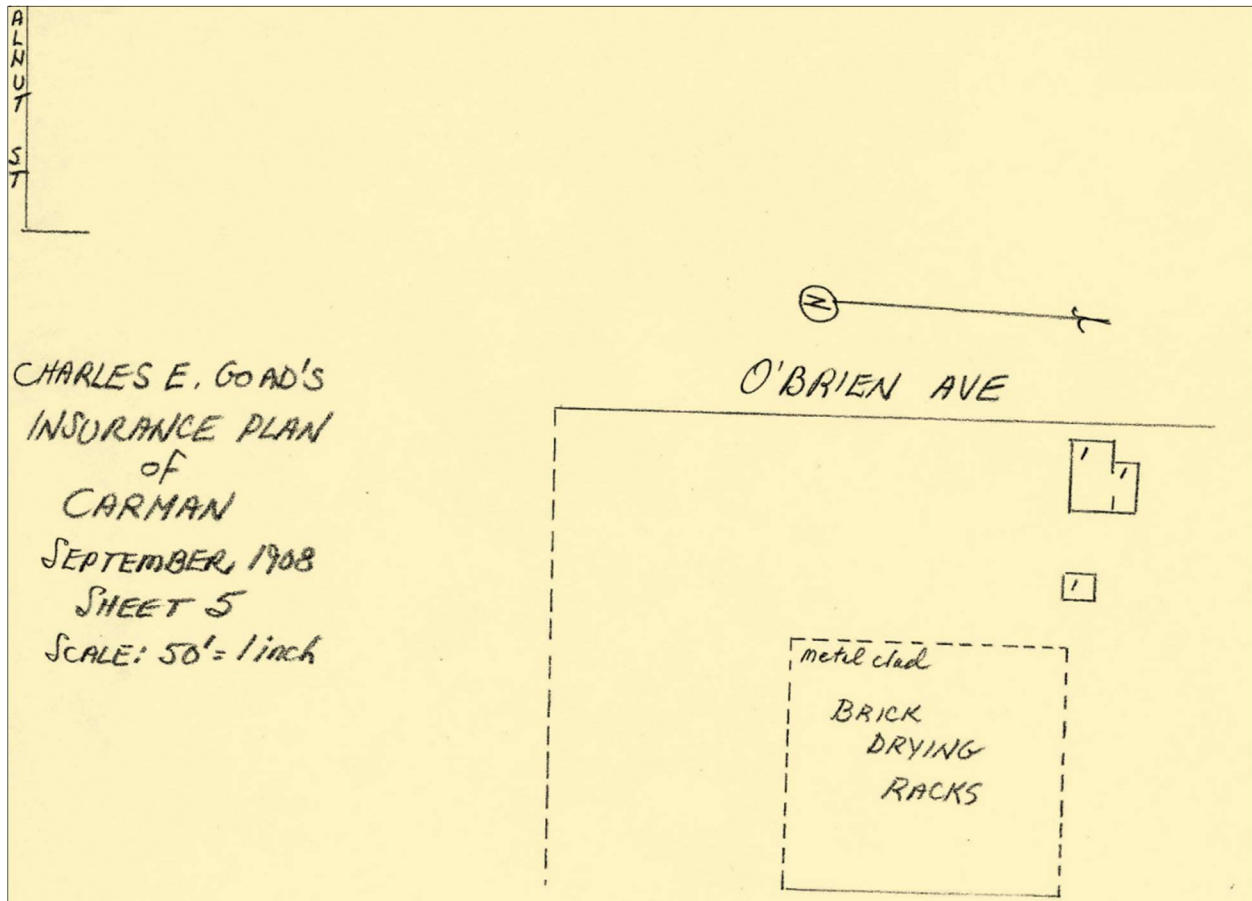
Sources of Information: "A review of the Heritage Resources of Boyne Planning District," Karen  
Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch 1984.



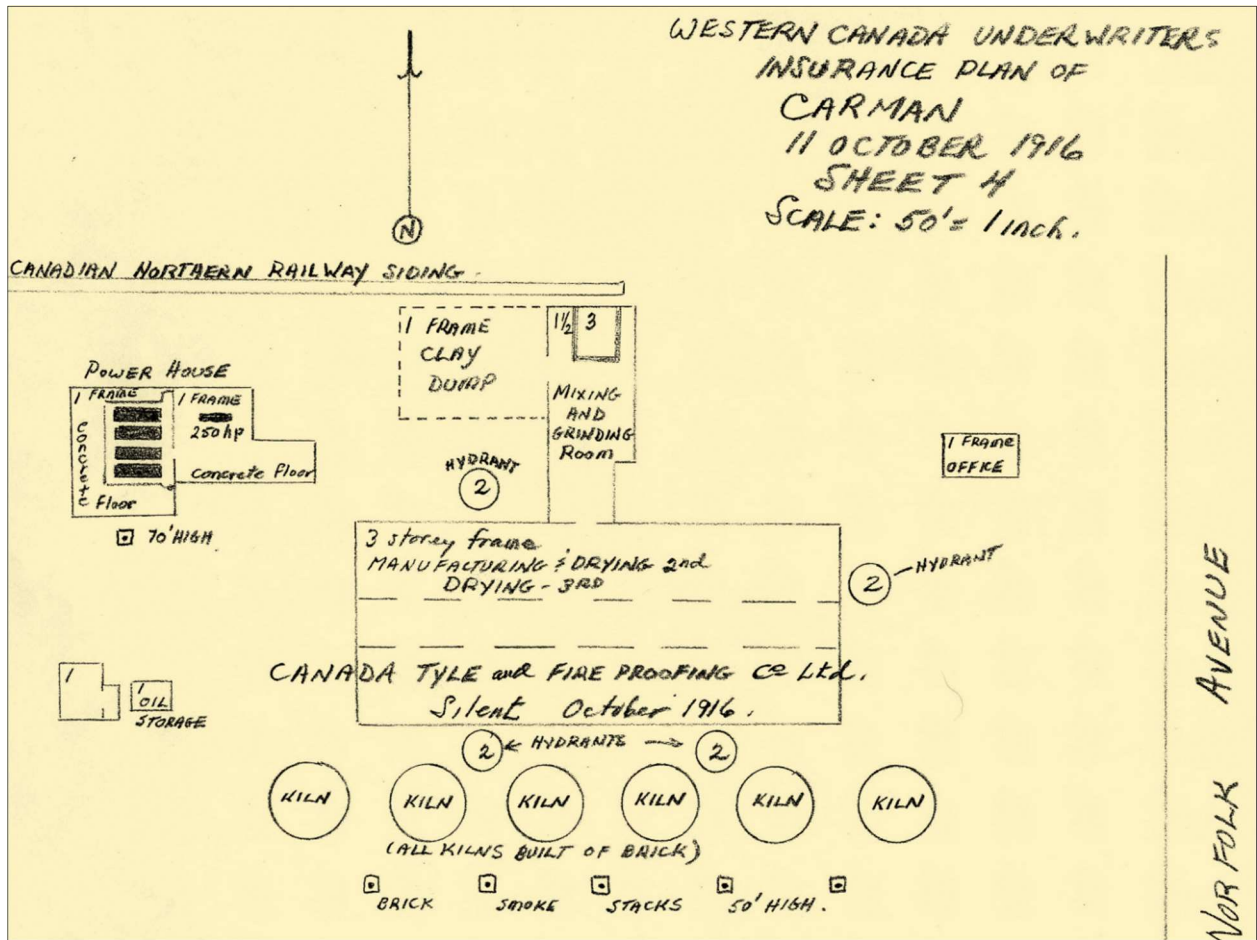
This may have been Carman's first brick plant in Clark's Gove. (Carman Centennial Book Committee, Up to Now, Altona D.W. Friesen and Sons, 1967, p. 173.)



The ill-fated Canada Tile and Fire Proofing Company Plant at Carman, c 1914. (Carman Centennial Book Committee. Up to Now. Altona: D.W. Friesen and Sons, 1967. P. 173.)



Site Plan of Charles Goad's Carman brick plant, traced from original Western Canada Underwriter's Insurance Plan, 1908.



Site Plan of Canada Type and Fire Proofing Company Carman plant, traced from original Western Canada Underwriter's Insurance Plan, 1916.

**JUDICIAL SALE OF VALUABLE  
BRICK PLANT, MACHINERY  
AND CLAY DEPOSITS**

**IN THE KING'S BENCH**

**Edfield vs. Canada Tile Co.**

**PURSUANT TO THE ORDER** of the Court of King's Bench made in this action bearing date the 15th day of June, 1923, there will be offered for sale by public auction with the approbation of the undersigned, by HENRY GRAY, Auctioneer, at his Auction Rooms, at the corner of Hargrave Street and Notre Dame Avenue, in the City of Winnipeg, in the Province of Manitoba, at Twelve o'clock noon, on Saturday, the Tenth day of November, A. D. 1923, the following property:

**PARCEL NO. 1**—All that portion of the East Half of the West Half of Section Twenty-five (25) in Township Six (6) and Range Five (5) West of the Principal Meridian in Manitoba, more particularly described as follows: Commencing at a point of intersection of the Eastern Boundary of said East Half of the West Half of Section Twenty-five (25) with the Northern Limit of the right of way of the Canadian Northern Railway across the said land, as said right of way is shown on a plan thereof filed in the Carman Land Titles Office as No. 750; thence Northerly along said Eastern Boundary Seven Hundred and Eighty-nine (789) feet; thence Westerly parallel with the Northern Boundary of said land to the Western Boundary of said East Half of the West Half of Section Twenty-five (25); thence Southerly along the said Western Boundary of the said Northern Limit of the Canadian Northern Railway right of way; thence Easterly along said Northern Limit of said right of way to the point of commencement, containing approximately Twenty (20) acres. Together with the buildings situate thereon, and being:

- 1 frame house, 16x30 and 8x12 and 14x14;
- 1 frame molding and drying house, 80x160;
- 1 frame mixing house, 30x62, together with connecting shelter, 10x20;
- 1 frame shed, 40x50;
- Power House, 9x18;
- 8 brick kilns, 30 feet diameter, fitted with ten fire places in each;
- 1 frame store house, 16x34;
- 1 frame store house, 12x12, belonging to the Canada Tile and Fireproofing Company Limited, and at or near the Town of Carman in Manitoba.

**PARCEL NO. 2**—The South-East Quarter of Section Fourteen (14) in Township Six (6) and Range Eight (8) West of the Principal Meridian in Manitoba, excepting thereout, Firstly, all that portion thereof taken for the right of way of the Canadian Northern Railway, as same is shown on a plan of said right of way filed in the Carman Land Titles Office as No. 183, and, Secondly, those portions thereof shown on a plan filed in the Carman Land Titles Office as No. 201, and more fully described in Certificate of Title No. 15880, leaving about One Hundred and Fifty-seven (157) acres, upon which land are said to be valuable clay deposits.

The following Machinery and Chattels:

**PARCEL NO. 3**—

- 1 4000 lb. Otis-Fenson freight elevator;
- 4 steam boilers;
- 1 suspension setting for boilers;
- 1 small pump for boilers;
- 1 large pump for boilers;
- 1 heater for boilers;
- 1 steam engine;
- 1 generator;
- 1 switchboard and equipment;
- 1 sewer pipe press and accessories;
- 2 wet pans;
- 1 10 foot dry pan;
- Shafting and conveyor belts;
- Piping for Engine Room;
- Quantity of piping:
- 1 Westinghouse Electric Motor, 45 h.p.;
- 2 Westinghouse Electric Motors, 40 h.p.;
- 2 Westinghouse Electric Motors, 30 h.p.;
- 1 Westinghouse Electric Motor, 25 h.p.

All of the above buildings and machinery are now upon the land first above described, where the same may be inspected at any time.

**TERMS OF SALE**: All of the above property will first be put up for sale en bloc, subject to a reserve bid. Failing the reserve bid being reached, the property will then be put up in three parcels as above indicated, and the different items in parcel No 3 will be put up separately, all subject to reserve bids. The purchaser shall pay Ten per cent. of the purchase money at the time of sale to the Vendor or his Solicitors, and the balance in thirty days thereafter into Court to the credit of this action, without interest. In other respects, the sale will be subject to the standing Conditions of Sale of this Court.

For further particulars and conditions of sale, apply to:

**MACHRAY, SHARPE, LOCKE,  
PARKER & CRAWLEY,**  
Barristers and Solicitors,  
Canadian Bank of Commerce  
Chambers,  
Main Street, Winnipeg,  
Manitoba.

Dated in the City of Winnipeg, this 16th day of October, A.D. 1923.

"GEORGE PATTERSON,"

Master.



# CLEARWATER

That the new town of Clearwater had potential as a brick-making centre was seen as early as 1880, when local correspondents praised the good clay of the area. The establishment of a brick yard, however, had to wait another 18 years, and then ran a mere three years. In the early summer of 1898, it was stated that local entrepreneurs Argue and McIntyre had purchased the plant for the brick yards. They had acquired a site a mile and a half north of the village and had secured an experienced brick-maker. By late June all the equipment was in place, except for barrows and trucks. Once completed, the yards began turning out 25,000 bricks per day, with the firing of the first kiln taking place in mid-August. So successful was this operation that the proprietors threw a party to celebrate their first kiln. The firm could produce No. 2 Northern, common building, paving, hard, selected hard, rough hard, hand-worked, Kiln ruin hard, common hard and No. 1 hard bricks.<sup>17</sup>

The following year, production was down to about 10-11,000 bricks per day. The yard employed 12 “mechanics” and it took 50 cords of wood to bake that first kiln of the 1899 season which amounted to 100,000 bricks. Their second kiln of the season was meant to fire 130,000 bricks. The yard was 150 feet long and had 12 double racks for brick. While the clay supply was termed “inexhaustible,” the operation did not last much longer. And despite these successes the yard was only reported once in the press during 1900, and by the spring of 1901, the brick yard partners were reported to be buying cattle at Mariapolis.<sup>18</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>17</sup> Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 20 November 1880, p. 6; “Clearwater”, Crystal City Courier, 17 June 1898, p. 1; “Clearwater”, Courier, 30 June 1898, p. 1; 5 August 1898, p. 1; 19 August 1898, p. 4; 26 August 1898, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Courier, 29 June 1899, p. 1; 27 July 1899, P. 8; 21 September 1899, p. 8; 11 April 1901, p. 1.

# CRYSTAL CITY

Brick-making at Crystal City lasted two seasons at the turn of the twentieth century. D. Tisdale started his yard there in the winter of 1901, putting together his work force that spring. Known employees were Mr. Park of Rainy River (he was probably the master brick-maker), as well as Frank Turk of Boissevain. By early July, workers were building the first kiln, which was fired in early August. The second kiln was completed later that month, though it was not fired until after the harvest in order to save wood supplies for the threshing machines. Brick from the 1901 season was reportedly used in a house for bachelors that was constructed by Thomas Greenway that summer.<sup>19</sup>

The 1902 season opened auspiciously with new machinery and the expert opinion of a brick-maker extolling the virtues of the area clay. It is unknown what was produced that second season. In 1903 the Parr Block was built from the local sand lime brick, though it was also said that the brick work on the new church was at a standstill owing to a lack of materials. This might possibly indicate that Tisdale's yard was then closed, and marked the end of Crystal City brick-making.<sup>20</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>19</sup> "Crystal City Bricks", Crystal City Courier, 1 February 1901, p. 1; Courier, 9 May 1901, p. 4; 30 May 1901, p. 4; 8 August 1901, p. 4 29 August 1901, 9. 4; 5 September 1901, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Courier, 26 June 1902, p. 1; Louise History Book Committee. Prairie Pride Land. (Pilot Mound: 1998), p. 24; Courier, 30 July 1903, p. 8.

# CYPRESS RIVER

This town had two episodes with brick-making ventures over a period of a decade. James Ruston had started his brick yard about 1889. Called the Pioneer Brick Yard, little is known of its operation until the following year. The yard was located a short distance south of the town, near the river from which it drew its water. Ruston's steam-driven brick machine produced seven bricks at a time, and the operation employed 11 men. By early July Ruston had produced 70,000 bricks for the season from clay which contained sufficient sand to make the mixture "Perfect." Later that summer Ruston burned a kiln of 165,000 bricks, most of which were marked for immediate delivery. Locally, 75,000 bricks were sold in order to build a new brick store for Young and Company.<sup>21</sup>

In the 1898 season Ruston acquired a manager, Mr. Joslyn, who opened the yard on 16 May. By mid-July, 150,000 bricks were ready for sale. Indeed, by October 300,000 bricks were for sale at \$8.00 to \$10.00 per thousand. Ruston even advertised that a builder could erect a "nice house" with \$150 worth of brick. That autumn, however, Joslyn sold out his share in the brick yard to J.B. Gowanlock, a local realtor and financial agent. When Joslyn left Cypress River that autumn he did not return. Joslyn's departure does not appear to have effected Ruston's operation during 1899, for J. H. Smith bought 20,000 bricks for his new Main Street residence, while Ruston himself also brick-veneered a house that fall. He also advertised that the 18,000 bricks in a house would only cost \$144.00, while with masonry charges this came up to \$310.80.<sup>22</sup>

In the 1898 season, Ruston removed his brick-making machine to a location south of town where clay for better brick could be more easily obtained. It is known that a residence was built that year from Cypress River brick for R. Owens. That autumn Ruston sent clay samples to Ottawa for testing. The following spring he sold 100,000 bricks to a party in Treherne by the time he opened the yard for the season. He also began offering a limited supply of bricks specifically made and burnt for curbing wells and cisterns at \$10.00 per thousand. In August, he burned his first kiln of 80,000 bricks during that season. This likely contributed to the two carloads of brick shipped to Treherne shortly after, making a total of four carloads to that point that year. When last heard of, in 1901, Ruston was burning another kiln of brick in September. Little is known of Ruston's yard after 1904, when he last appeared in a Directory. It was later suggested that a lack of experience and capital contribution lead to the demise of his yard.<sup>23</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>21</sup> Cypress River Western Prairie, 11 June 1897, p. 4; "Cypress River Brickyard", Western Prairie, 9 July 1897, p. 1; 20 August 1897, p. 4; 10 September 1897, p. 4; 22 October 1897, p. 4

<sup>22</sup> Western Prairie, 25 March 1898, p. 4; 20 May 1898, p. 4; 15 July 1898, p. 4; 22 October 1898, p. 5; 5 August 1898, p. 4; 24 August 1898, p. 4; 28 October 1898, p. 4; 2 June 1899, p. 4; 10 November 1899, p. 4; "Build A Brick House!", Western Prairie, 13 January 1899, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Western Prairie, 30 March 1900, p. 4; 27 July 1900, p. 1; 14 September 1900, p. 4; 31 May 1901, p. 4; 21 June 1901, p. 4; 2 August 1901, p. 4; 9 August 1901, p. 4; 6 September 1901, p. 4; "Cypress River and District", Western Prairie, 12 April 1907, p. 5; Henderson's Directory, 1904, p. 596.

The second chapter at Cypress River began in the spring of 1907, when T.A. Foster and Company purchased 40 acres from Mr. Chewings near the Methodist Church. Foster was a contractor from Stonewall and was aided in his promotion by Stenhouse and McMillan. The new yard produced a salmon-coloured brick from one clay stratum with a white brick from another. The Foster yard used a Monarch brick machine with a capacity of 45,000 bricks per day, with 16 men employed. In its first season the Foster yard made 180,000 bricks. The yard was served by a CPR spur, and had a mill, drying sheds and kilns, along with open pits near the slough. In practice, the yard produced 20-25,000 bricks per day to make up the first kiln of 100,000 bricks, which was opened in early July 1907. A major customer was J. Christie, who purchased 50,000 bricks for his new house which was built by Mr. Thyne of Belmont.<sup>24</sup>

Though the Cypress River Yard was still advertising in the local newspaper in late November 1907, some change occurred during 1908. That spring T.A. Foster returned to Cypress River after a couple of months in Stonewall cutting wood from his bush, possibly as fuel for the kilns. However, in July a car of bricks from Landry's Somerset brick yard arrived in town to be used in veneering the G.W. Harrison residence. Possibly this was an indication that the Foster yard was not operating that summer. It is known that Foster split his time between Stonewall and Cypress River. It is probable that this was connected to his building business, for he opened a Cypress River business office in May 1909. That 1907 was the last season for Cypress River brick-making is a distinct possibility.<sup>25</sup>

## **CYPRESS RIVER**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1905-1915

Owner/Operator:

Location: NE ¼-1-7-13-W1

Related Information: Assiniboine delta clay

Sources of Information: "The Clays and Shales of Manitoba", Barry Bannatyne (Department of Mines and Natural Resources, 1970) "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh 1931, (Department of Energy and Mines files

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>24</sup> Western Prairie, 19 April 1907, p. 4; Canada. Government of. 1907-1908 Mines Report, (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1908), p. 653; 'First Kiln a Grand Success', Western Prairie, 19 July 1907, p. 5; 23 August 1907, p. 4; 13 September 1907, p. 4.

<sup>25</sup> Western Prairie, 29 November 1907, p. 5; 22 May 1908, p. 4; 31 July 1908, p.; 30 October 1908, p. 4; 23 April 1909, p. 4; 14 May 1909, p. 4.

## DARLINGFORD

The brick-making history of this town began in the spring of 1882 when a promoter brought 1000 cords of wood to the area for the purpose of starting a brick yard. The following year the Darlingford Brick Company, which was run by a Mr. Carter, had a Penfold brick machine with a capacity of 20,000 bricks per day. The bricks, which had a face like glass and were pinkish in colour, were used mostly in town. Brick-making reappeared in the spring of 1900 when George Whalen began gathering materials on the ground at a site  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile west of Darlingford. By early June he had burned his first kiln of 80,000 bricks with the help of two Doukhobor employees. Reportedly, his second kiln of brick the next month was considered to be “very superior.” The following year, Whalen had fired 400,000 brick up to late September, and was preparing to fire a final kiln, whose product probably went to Morden. Despite this, Whalen sold the yard by auction in late June 1902 and moved with his family to the west coast. Two houses are known to have been built of Whalen’s brick at Darlingford – those of Ferris Bolton and Martin Nichol.

The third round of brick making at this place came in March 1910 when the Darlingford Brick and Tile Company, Ltd. was incorporated. A group of area businessmen and farmers were the principals behind this firm. Events transpired quickly, and by the end of June manager Lewis Cock and his crew were turning out 10,000 bricks per day. Cock expected to fire 115,000 bricks in his first kiln by mid-July. Early August saw 90,000 bricks on hand with further orders for 200,000 more. Indeed, Winnipeg contractors had already ordered one million bricks, while Hanbury Manufacturing of Brandon ordered 120,000. When the yard closed for the season in August, Cock had enough bricks on hand for the fall and spring trade which he advertised with considerable gusto.<sup>26</sup>

During 1911, the shareholders met to place the unsold company stock on the market. A group of men, which included the local Member of Parliament, interviewed William Whyte of the CPR about obtaining a siding into the yards. With that in place, it was felt that the firm would “be able to satisfactorily compete for the brick trade of Southern Manitoba.” W.H. Vosper of Winnipeg was brought in to manage the yard, with C.E. Martin as salesman, and agents appointed between Gretna and Deloraine. Vosper would continue to run the yard through 1912. The plant remained listed in business directories as late as 1914 but had its Letters Patent of Incorporation cancelled in 1915.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 19 March 1910, p. 321; “The Brick Company”, Darlingford Comet, 30 June 1910, p. 1; 4 August 1910, p. 1; 11 August 1910, p. 1; 8 September 1910, p. 5; 22 September 1910, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> Comet, 27 April 1911, p. 5; 28 March 1912, p. 1; Canada Business Directory, 1914; Darlingford Saga II, loc. Cit.; Manitoba Gazette, 31 July 1915, p. 851.

## **DARLINGFORD**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1898-1910

Owner/Operator: Whalen's Brick and Tile

Location: ¾ miles west of village, north of railroad

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "The Darlingford Saga: 1870-1970", Darlingford Historical Book Committee, 1972

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1910-1911

Owner/Operator: Darlingford Brick and Tile Co. Ltd.

Location: ¾ miles west of village, south of railroad

Related Information: letters patent 1910; capital stock only \$5,000.

Sources of Information: "Manitoba Gazette, 1910; Geological Survey of Canada Annual Report, 1909-1911; "The Darlingford Saga: 1870-1970", Darlingford Historical Book Committee, 1972

## DELEAU

Local knowledge states that in 1892, Alex Calleaux, Joseph Nannon (or Nonan or Noonan) and Joseph Gatin started a brick yard north of Deleau. The homes of Ed Calleaux and Joseph Turcotte were reportedly built from these bricks. Joseph Nonan was shown to still be in the brick business at Deleau according to an 1899 Business Directory. Two other brick factories were opened in subsequent years – one on what was (in 1967) the farm of Andrew Duncan on SE 33:7:23W and one near Oak Lake. Supposedly the brick in the Deleau church came from this latter yard. During 1895, advertisements were run by E. Lapham of Deleau selling “First Class Brick” at \$8.00 per thousand at the kiln. This was said to be \$2.50 less than competing Whitewater brick. Little is known of the Lapham yard or its proprietor, except that he opened a photographic studio in Deleau during 1900.<sup>28</sup>

## DELEAU

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1892

Owner/Operator: Alex Colleaux, Jos. Nannon, Jos. Gatin

Location: north of Deleau

Related Information: Bricks were used for construction of local houses, Roman Catholic Church, and schools. One other brickworks may have operated shortly after

Sources of Information: “The story of Deleau”, Bob Robson, Manitoba Pageant, Vol. 8, No. 2. (Jan. '63), “Hartney and District, 1882-1975”, 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration souvenir book 1957

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>28</sup> Irene Robson, History of Deleau-Bethel District. Centennial Project, 1967. , p. 2; Business Directory of Canada, 1899, p. 470; Boissevain Globe, 15 June 1895, p. 4; Hartney Star, 17 Mat 1895, p. 4; 24 August 1900, p. 1.

# DELORAINÉ

Brick had been available in Delorainé from at least 1888. At that time, W.J. Mathers sold brick from his Peoples' Lumber Yard. By 1892 this yard was advertising "Winnipeg Brick for Cash," and this was probably indicative of the importance played by that centre in the brick trade. A local brick industry almost began in Delorainé during 1895, when William B. Williams, who had operated a local hotel, developed an innovative brick-making process which used chemicals. He stated that 600 of his bricks would replace 1000 ordinary bricks. Though he planned to form a company to exploit this process, he probably did not find any backers. As a result, he did not pursue the matter, preferring to be engaged in immigration work for the Dominion Government at Sarnia, Ontario.<sup>29</sup>

Delorainé has to wait another year for an active, working brick yard. In the summer of 1896 a sometimes insurance agent, W. R. David, secured a tract of land near the racetrack, which had an excellent brick clay. David acquired the brick plant at Whitewater, which he removed to Delorainé. By mid-August of that year David's crew had fired its first kiln of brick, which was supposedly better than that produced at Whitewater. The bricks were split into three carloads and were immediately shipped to Killarney, Hartney and Canduff. In the spring of 1897 David moved his office to the brick yard and was soon advertising himself as a brick manufacturer. As such, his operation was faced with a short-lived strike for higher wages in August. Other than that, little is known of the brick-making scene until 1899.<sup>30</sup>

In the early spring of 1899 competition for David's yard came to the fore when a local builder, T. McGarvey, came back to Delorainé with samples of a brick made from sand and cement according to a process from Hensell, Ontario, which had been created by Robert Bell of that place. These were pressed with a force of 25 tons, and came in a dull grey stone colour. They could also be made in ornamental shapes. McGarvey formed a partnership with B. Laird and the special machinery was put on order which would turn out 10,000 bricks per day from Laird's carpentry shop. While their machinery had not yet arrived by June 1899, they had been turning out some product from some type of machine. They had made ornamental bricks for arches and these were used in Gleeson and Johnstone's stable, while John Reid planned to use them in window sills and arches in his new home at West Hall. Though Laird and McGarvey had still not received their machinery by mid-September, they were planning to brick-veneer a local hotel which they were building, using their pressed cement brick. Unfortunately for them their machines were sent to a higher bidder in Vancouver, and this was probably the end of their enterprise. There is also a good possibility that these "bricks" were some early form of concrete block, as the above descriptions also lend themselves to the medium.<sup>31</sup>

David, however, was quite active during the 1899 building season. Work had started in early May under the management of George Jeffrey, formerly of Peterborough, Ontario. David had also put in

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>29</sup> *Delorainé Times*, 25 October 1888, p. 1; 9 May 1889, p. 4; 13 October 1892, p. 1; "A New Brick"., *Times*, 11 April 1895, p. 4; also, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> *Delorainé Times*, 3 July 1896, p. 1; 14 August 1896, p.; 21 August 1896, p. 1; 23 April 1897. P. 1; 4 June 1897, p. 1; 6 August 1897, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> "Pressed Brick for Delorainé", *Times*, 24 March 1899, p. 1; "Presses Brick ", *Times*, 15 September 1899, p. 1; 2 June 1899, p. 1; "New Delorainé Hotel", *Times*, 29 September 1899, p. 1.



the “latest, improved brick making machinery” at the yard. He had also introduced the piece-work system, as he put it, “to benefit the employee as well as the employer.” David travelled extensively to market his product. Two of the places he visited that year were Killarney and Morden, both during May. To Killarney, at least, he was no stranger, for had gone there in August 1896 at the outset of the yard. David opened his first kiln of the season in July, and the two carloads thus exposed were immediately shipped west. A second kiln followed that same month, and so it went until the yard was closed for the season early in September. At the time, there was still a kiln of 250,000 bricks to burn.<sup>32</sup>

The Deloraine Brick Yard entered the new century as a smooth-running operation. In May 1901 an order from Melita took 60,000 bricks. This came at a time when the Melita brick yard had probably closed. David also spent more time in Killarney later that month, and also supplied 30,000 bricks for a new residence in Deloraine. Another 100,000 bricks went to J. Kennedy of Morden, while two carloads went to Crystal City, where the Tisdale brick yard was just being constructed. In late July David was reported to be “on business” in Winnipeg, apparently trying to crack the market there. The following year Killarney remained a good market for Deloraine brick, as David sent 175,000 bricks from his first kiln to that place, as he did with most of the second kiln. An Iowa brick-maker visited the David yard around that time, and felt that the Deloraine brick was ahead of any other clay product in Manitoba. Customers must have felt the same, as David was running the yard day and night, and, in fact, could not begin to supply brick for the orders he had in hand. This was despite the fact he had a kiln of 200,000 bricks ready to be fired, except for want of fuel.<sup>33</sup>

David had entered the Brandon market during 1903. During April he had secured large contracts there, including one for 225,000 bricks for a large building to be erected that summer. In June another order for 100,000 bricks also came from Brandon. And he had orders from other places, and had more work than he could handle. In spite of this, he also took on a position with the Deering Company, farm implements. In August, the Deloraine Times could boast that David’s firm turned out 20,000 bricks per day, employed 25 men, while supplying brick for Deloraine as well as a territory with a radius of 400 miles. He also still sold insurance and coal and wood. His active association with the Deloraine Brick Yard ended in November 1903, when he leased the yard to A.B. Laird for the next five years. Laird promised to put in more modern apparatus the following spring. David would eventually leave for Winnipeg where he joined a firm of bankruptcy trustees.<sup>34</sup>

Laird operated the yard in 1904, firing his first and last kiln of brick in June and November respectively. In addition to running the brick yard Laird also sold coal in the winter and did general contracting, tearing down some of the buildings which had been left at Old Deloraine the following year. Like David, Laird resorted to advertising his bricks in the local press. Sometime during 1907 Laird turned over the operation of the Deloraine Brick Yard to W. H. Atkinson. Atkinson would run the yard through at least the 1909 building season. News of the yard during those years became sparse, as the facility

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>32</sup> Times, 12 May 1899, p. 1; Killarney Guide, 24 May 1899, p. 1; Times, 26 May 1899, p. 1; Guide, 21 August 1896, p. 8; Times, 7 July 1899, p. 1; 14 July 1899, p. 1; 8 September 1899, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Times, 2 April 1901, p. 1 30 Ma 1901, p. 1; 6 June 1901, p. 1; 1 August 1901, p. 1; 26 June 1902, p. 1; 10 July 1902, p. 1; 17 July 1902, p. 1; 14 August 1902, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Times, 2 April 1903, p. 1; 9 April 1903, p. 1; 4 June 1903, p. 1; 11 June 1903, p. 1; ‘City of Deloraine’, Times, 13 August 1903, p. 2; 26 November 1903, p. 8; 31 March 1904, p. 1; Deloraine Advertiser, 21 April 1904, p. 8.

entered into a regular production routine. The yard's operation seems to have ended at the time of Atkinson's July 1910 death, and likely did not resume, as cheaper bricks from elsewhere were by then available at the local builders' supply houses.<sup>35</sup>

## **DELORAINÉ**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1894

Owner/Operator: W.H. Cameron and W.S. Barker

Location: near Delorainé race track

Related Information: In 1900 supplied brick to C.P.R. to build stations further up the line. 1901-02 supplied brick to Melita, Killarney, Crystal City and Morden. 200,000-250,000 bricks per kiln firing; three firings per season. Operation rented to A.B. Laird from 1903 – 1906 possibly called Delorainé Brick Yard.

Sources of Information: "A Review of the Heritage Resources of Del-Win Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1989 (unpublished) sec. III "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh, 1931, Department of Energy and Mines files

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1896-1906

Owner/Operator: W.R. David

Location: near Delorainé race track

Related Information: In 1900 supplied brick to C.P.R. to build stations further up the line. 1901-02 supplied brick to Melita, Killarney, Crystal City and Morden. 200,000 -250,000 bricks per kiln firing; three firings per season. Operation rented to A.B. Laird from 1903 –1906 possibly called Delorainé Brick Yard.

Sources of Information: "A Review of the Heritage Resources of Del-Win Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1989 (unpublished) sec. III "Henderson Northwest Directory, 1900

#### Operation 3

Dates of Operation: 1899-1906

Owner/Operator: Bert Laird and T. McGarvey

Location: Delorainé

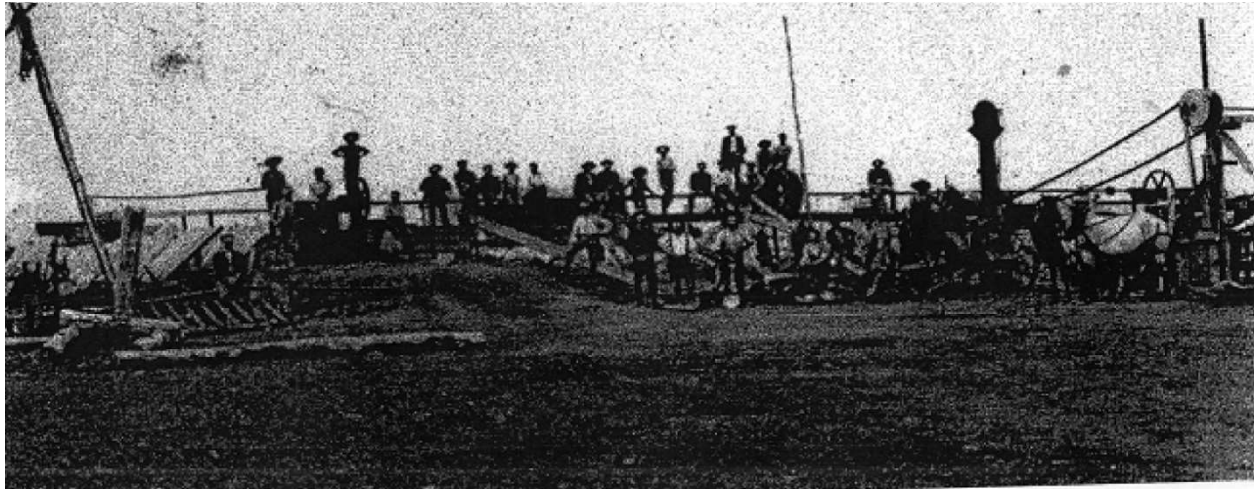
Related Information pressed brick; unsuccessful venture

Sources of Information: "A Review of the Heritage Resources of Del-Win Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1989 (unpublished) sec. III

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>35</sup> Times, 16 June 1904, p. 4; 6 October, p. 4; "Bricks! Bricks!", Times, 23 February 1905, p. 5; 14 December 1905, p. 5; Henderson's, 1907; Times, 2 April; 1808, p. 5; first Class Brick. New Kiln Just Ready.", Times, 4 June 1908, p. 5; 10 June 1909, p. 4; "W.H. Atkinson.", Times, 14 July 1910, p. 4; see William Chalmers' ad, Times, 23 July 1908, p. 1.



Some of the work crew at the Deloraine Brick yard. (Doug Morrison, *What Grandad Didn't Tell Me . . . Deloraine?: The Author*, 2004. P. 114.)

# DOMINION CITY

Two brick yards which owed their existence solely to the great boom of the early 1880s were started at this up-and-coming centre in 1882. Brick clay had been found in the Dominion City area during the summer of 1881 while entrepreneurs were seeking coal-bearing strata. That winter it was said that Martin and Balfour, the proprietors of the local Tecumseh House hotel, were negotiating on the purchase of five acres of land near the CPR spur/main line. The outcome of this venture is unknown. However it is known that by June 1882, Grange and Trull were engaged in brick-making “full blast” at their yard. They were turning out two to three carloads of brick per day. At the time it was being run by a practical brick-maker named Peter Phillippe, who had formerly operated a brick yard at Emerson. He would continue to run the Dominion City operation after it was purchased by D. and W.W.H. Creighton, Emerson dry goods merchants. In August, however, one of the Creightons spoke of establishing a brick yard at West Lynne (opposite Emerson on the Red River), and said that he would have his Dominion City brick plant set up there in two weeks. Shortly afterward, however, with the brick machinery sitting at Emerson, the Creightons gave up their Dominion City venture, probably because of competition from a better-financed rival.<sup>36</sup>

The competitor took the form of the Dominion City Brick Company, Ltd., incorporated in July 1882. The firm’s promoters consisted largely of a group of Nova Scotia businessmen, including building contractor Samuel Manners Brookfield. Brookfield was making a mark on the Winnipeg building scene along with his associate, James G. McDonald, who was sometimes known as “The King of the Contractors” because of his extensive operations. Brookfield and his associates brought a great deal of money to the Dominion City operation. When announced in May 1882, the project got the attention of the local citizenry. So enamoured were they with its prospects that they purchased 10 acres of land on the north bank of the Roseau River from the Waddell estate for \$1000, and presented it to the nascent brick company. The new firm was expected to employ 75 to 80 men and turn out 50,000 bricks per day. Buildings erected on the property included an office, stables and a large boarding house. The yard was said to be up and running by late June, with a 65-horsepower engine and two Penfold brick machines placed in the yards. In commenting on these developments, the Dominion City correspondent for the Emerson International was given to comment that “the yard will soon look like a village.” Indeed, it was also stated that the operation would eventually employ 300 men, thus giving rise to much optimism in tiny Dominion City.<sup>37</sup>

That autumn the firm shipped bags of clay to England in order to test some of that country’s brick machines. The tests came back as first class materials. This allowed the firm to increase its capitalization to \$150,000, an increase of \$50,000 over the summer of 1882. Early in 1883, contractors Gill and Mangan chopped a large quantity of wood for the firm along the Roseau River. Early in April two carloads of new machinery for the yard arrived at Dominion City. The installation of the five brick machines necessitated the sale of the older equipment. The manager, Aubrey Timothy Smith, arrived from Halifax in mid April. Smith had been one of the principals behind the incorporation of the firm. The

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>36</sup> Emerson International, 14 July 1881, p. 9; 19 January 1882, p. 5; Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 23 June 1882, p. 5; International, 15 June 1882, p. 5; 22 June 1882, p. 2; 29 June 1882, p. 5; 22 August 1882, p. 3; 25 August 1882, p. 4.

<sup>37</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 21 August 1882, p. 416; International, 8 June 1882, p. 5; 15 June 1882, p. 5; 22 June 1882, p. 2; 6 July 1882, p. 6.

CPR had run two spur tracks into the yard to allow the efficient shipment of its products. This consisted of a light red brick produced by a dry pressed method. Several samples were sent to Winnipeg newspaper offices in the summer of 1883. These produced a couple of laudatory articles at the time. By mid-August, however, work was suspended at the brickyard, supposedly for a short time. There is no known evidence that it ever reopened. In the spring of 1884 when Aubrey Smith returned from Halifax, he announced that because of the business depression which had started the previous year the brick year would be run that summer. He did state, however, that they had a large quantity of brick on hand for sale. Some of this brick apparently wound up in the Winnipeg City Hall (1883-1886), according to a Dominion City historian. The machinery was soon taken away and the brick yard site abandoned. The final chapter was written in 1887 when Waddell sued the Dominion City Brick Company to recover his land for which he had never been paid. The firm's charter was eventually cancelled in July 1911.<sup>38</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>38</sup> Emerson International, 15 November 882, p. 1; 22 December 1882, p. 2; International, 29 December 1882, p. 1; Manitoban, 13 February 1883, p. 1; International, 9 April 1883, p. 4; 17 May 1883, p. 3; 25 April 1883, p. 4; 21 June 1883, p. 4; MWFP, 8 June 1883, p. 1; :“Manitoba Brick.”, Manitoba Free Press, 8 August 1883, p. 5; “Dominion City Brick.”, Winnipeg Daily Times, 8 August 1883, p. 8; Commercial, 21 August 1883, p. 987; International, 8 May 1884, p. 3; James McKerchar Waddell. Dominion City: Facts, Fiction and Hyperbole (n.p.: 1967), p. 117; International, 14 July 1887, p. 4; Manitoba Law Reports, 1888, p. 119; Manitoba Gazette, 26 August 1911, p. 1228.

## DOUGLAS

During 1904 A.J. Selwood of Miniota and R.J. Denny of Douglas started the Riverside brick yard, nine miles south of Douglas. There they had discovered a six-foot to eight-foot deep deposit of brick clay on the bank of the Assiniboine River. The yard, which may have been operated during 1905 and produced a red brick, was apparently not in business for very long. They expected to ship their bricks to Winnipeg, Brandon and Carberry. How they intended to do this is cause for speculation, as the yard was three miles from the Canadian Northern Railway, the nearest rail line.<sup>39</sup>

## DOUGLAS

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1905

Owner/Operator: R. Dennie

Location:

Related Information: Dennie possibly landowner only

Sources of Information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>39</sup> "City and General", Manitoba Free Press, 13 February 1809, p. 16.

## EAST SELKIRK

Brick-making in these adjacent communities has been entwined since the 1870s. The two were the product of the original projected transcontinental rail line of the Canadian Pacific Railway. This was to have crossed the Red River at Selkirk, but because of various events in 1879 the crossing was moved to Winnipeg. Details of Selkirk-area brick yards are extremely sketchy, and one is often at a loss to know exactly on which side of the river the yards were located, hence the dual community listing for this section. In a September 1875 article on Selkirk the Free Press reporter made mention of a brick yard run by Wellman and Gardner in “the uncleared part of the city.” They had apparently already burned their first kiln of brick. Two more years were to pass before any further mention was made of any clay industry in the Selkirk area. In this case, this was the pottery of Sutherland and Doidge which was then turning out stone enamelled and Rockingham Ware. This was probably in East Selkirk, near Cook’s Creek, if a contemporary Bird’s Eye is correct. Doidge, who sold the business in 1905, is only mentioned because he might have engaged in brick-making toward the end, according to one directory listing.<sup>40</sup>

Loss of the rail crossing slowed Selkirk’s growth, though there was considerable activity at the time of the land boom of the early 1880s. In 1882 the brick-making industry appears to have been concentrated east of the Red River, with four yards in operation that summer. One of the firms, the Winnipeg Building and Supply Company, had a yard at Selkirk and was shipping 40-50,000 bricks per day, mostly to Winnipeg for the new CPR buildings there. Much of this was said to be used for veneering purposes. This was possibly a firm started in the spring of 1882 by speculators such as Edward Bushnell Chambers and Andrew Wylie. Chambers claimed to have “machinery of a high class on the way to Winnipeg valued at \$8000” at that time. They hoped that one machine would manufacture 40,000 bricks per day. In applying for a land grant for their operation on the west bank of Cook’s Creek, they were said by a backer to be “respectable, intelligent young men.” Unfortunately, there were other claims upon their requested site and so they were turned down. This probably did not stop them from establishing their yard elsewhere in the Selkirk area, and a promotional brochure published at East Selkirk in 1883 made mention of “extensive brick manufactories” with over \$6,000 expended for machines, etc. The brochure also mentioned that the CPR roundhouse was built from bricks made on the spot. Unfortunately, this claim may have been specious, as it was actually built of locally-quarried stone, and any brick usage must have been minimal.<sup>41</sup>

There were other, smaller brick yards in the East Selkirk/Selkirk area which included F.W. Colcleugh’s yard, started east of the river in 1879 and still listed in the 1881 Manitoba Directory. As well, during 1884, Captain G.P. Phillips was turning out 15,000 bricks daily at his yard in Selkirk. That June he fired a kiln of 250,000 bricks. The following year, William Henning and Robert Bulloch were in active preparation to manufacture red brick in the summer of 1886. Their clay supply was located on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, probably at Elk Island. There is some evidence that they fired a test kiln of 3000

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>40</sup> “Selkirk”, Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 25 September 1875, p. 3; “The Selkirk Pottery”, MWFP, 8 September 1877, p. 2; Selkirk Expositor, 19 May 1905, p. 1 Henderson’s, 1905, p. 1409; Shirley L. Herda, “Doidge’s Pottery Works”, in St. Clements Historical Committee. The East Side of the Red (Winnipeg; Intercollegiate Press, 1984), 99, 321-322.

<sup>41</sup> “The Town of Selkirk”, WMFP, 18 August 1882, p. 6; 17 November 1882, p. 5; Manitoba Archives. Manitoba Act Files, Reel C14911, Volume 149, File 2209, Selkirk Town site; East Selkirk, Manitoba (1883), p. 11.

bricks late in 1885. Their yard was established in the early summer of 1886 when the schooner Gold Seal brought a load of clay to Selkirk. While details are sketchy, it is probable that their yard continued operations into 1887. The enterprise probably closed after March 1888 when William Henning died. His partner Bulloch appears to have tried to revive the operation in 1894 when he sent clay samples to Chicago for testing. The result was "A-1 Building Brick," though there was no follow-up by Bulloch. Three final, small yards rounded out the pre-1900 brick-making scene in the area. One yard was that of Isaac Thomas, of whose East Selkirk business little is known, except his directory date - c1889-c1892. There was also James Wilson, c1890-c1893. Lastly, Hooker and Company, while chiefly a builder's supply firm, engaged in some small-scale brick-making in the 1890s. Edward T. Hooker had worked as a brick-maker and contractor in Winnipeg from 1881 until 1888, when he went to Selkirk. He had learned that craft from his father, who had a firm in Ontario. At Selkirk he engaged in the lumber business with his brother Frank. By the early 1890s they advertised "Brick Always On Hand," among their builder's supplies. Despite E.T. Hooker's death in 1897 the firm was still listed as a brick-maker in 1900.<sup>42</sup> These small operations had little hope of success or long life due to the proximity to the Winnipeg-area brick plants which dominated matters.

## **EAST SELKIRK**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1891

Owner/Operator: I. Thomas

Location:

Related Information:

Source of information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1891

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>42</sup> MWFP, 17 May 1879, p. 8; Henderson's, 1881, p. 186; Commercial, 10 June 1884, p. 725; Selkirk Record, 3 December 1885, p. 4; Record, 26 February 1886, p. 4; 11 June 1886, p. 4; 5 August 1887, p. 3; 14 October 1887, p. 3; 30 March 1888, p. 2; 31 August 1894, p. 1; Henderson's, 1889-1893; "Death of E.T. Hooker", Record, 13 August 1897, p. 1; 16 June 1891, p. 4; Lovell's Directory, 1900-1901, p. 812



# EDEN

## Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1889-1896

Owner/Operator: WILLIAM Currie and Company

Location: W ½-22-16-15-W1

Related Information: buff coloured bricks; 16 men employed during season; Currie had farm implement dealership in Neepawa as well

Source of information: "East of the Mountain" Eden-Birnie History Book, "Neepawa: An Architectural Walking Tour" Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, 1987; The Colonist (magazine), September 1896

# EDRANS

This town had only recently come into existence when J.A.C. Blackwood established a brick yard there in the summer of 1901. By September the new yard was rushed with orders, shipping its first carload of brick in early October. When it closed for the season a month later this first year was considered a success. Blackwood was back for 1902, burning his first kiln of bricks by mid-July. Regular production continued for the next two years. Late in 1904, L.J. Oakes, a Nova Scotia brick expert, made tests of the Blackwood clays, sending the samples to the Boyd Press Brick Company of Chicago where a few test bricks were made. The results were apparently of the highest standard. The tests were perhaps in anticipation of the creation of a new firm which would exploit the Edrans clays more efficiently. This took the form of the Edrans-Brandon Press Brick Company Ltd. which was incorporated at Brandon in July 1905. Members of the Blackwood family were principals in its organization. While its business office was at Brandon, the plant was built at Edrans.<sup>43</sup>

The new plant was constructed in the summer of 1905 on the 12-acre site with its “remarkable clay formation” which was a mound about 40 yards long by 180 yards wide. The yard was served by a CPR siding, and initially bricks were made on site in order to build the large, permanent kilns. A 60 horsepower engine was installed for power, along with a 60-foot high smoke stack, as well as a large shed for clay storage which was also built that summer. The main building was about 50 feet high and covered with corrugated sheet metal. The new plant, with its capacity of 20,000 pressed bricks per day, was fired up for the firm’s Board of Directors on 3 November 1905. Production started in earnest in the spring of 1906, when the first of four kilns was finished. These kilns were unique, for each had 14 chimneys. When completed the plant entered an era of regular production. During 1914, the yard was fixed up after a possible period of closure, and was once again producing “good quality bricks.” The Edrans plant was likely shut down early in World War I as part of a general closure of such enterprises in light of a dearth of buildings, as well as a shortage of labour (gone off to the war).<sup>44</sup>

The Edrans brick yard did not go into the oblivion experienced by many other brick plants of the time. In March 1924 the National Clay Products Company, Ltd. was incorporated. With its headquarters at Winnipeg the new firm was actually a creature of the Hales brick-making family, which had operated earlier plants at Rapid City and Brookdale. In this case, W. E. Hales, the son of the founder was the President of National. The motto for the firm was: “Better Bricks for Beautiful Builds and Bungalows.” Hales and his family would live at Edrans during the building season, and in fact gave a social for the plant employees when production restarted in August 1925. Some of its product went into the Nurses’ Home at the Selkirk Mental Hospital. The bricks were said to be as hard as flint, as well as uniform in size and shape. National had put much time and money into research and experimentation. The bricks came

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>43</sup> MacGregor Herald, 15 August 1901, p. 4; 26 September 1901, p. 1; 5 October 1901, p. 1; 12 October 1901, p. 1; 7 November 1901, p. 1; 17 July 1902, p. 1; Carberry Express, 1 December 1904, p.8; Manitoba Gazette, 22 July 1905, p. 599.

<sup>44</sup> “Edrans”, Herald, 7 September 1905, p. 5; “New Pressed Brick Plant”, Herald, 14 September 1905, 9. 1; 28 September 1905, p. 5; 2 November 1905, p. 5; 16 November 1905, p. 5; 24 May 1906, p. 5; 2 August 1906, p. 4; 30 April 1914, p. 5; 14 May 1914, p. 5; 21 May 1914, p. 5.

in six different colours, and the firm had sold half a million bricks between the spring of 1925 and the following November. Hales boasted that his firm could ship brick to Winnipeg (the brick capital of Manitoba) and all over Western Canada to contractors at 10 per cent less than imported brick. His aim was to shut out American competition in the Western Canadian brick market. Hales also planned to make rough texture bricks during 1923 when he expanded the plant.<sup>45</sup>

In 1926, the family patriarch, Robert D. Hales, came out of retirement to superintend the Edrans plant. The Hales family expanded the plant and it was considered quite modern by early 1928. Indeed, their brick was chosen for the new Salvation Army College at 1091 Portage Avenue in Winnipeg in 1927 (demolished). Further enlargements were in the works during 1929 when Robert Hales died. With the descent of the Depression it is not known if these plans went ahead. Edrans bricks were also used in part of Deer Lodge Hospital in Winnipeg, as well as some of the older buildings at the University of Manitoba. National became one of the last of the old time brick plants still producing until World War II.<sup>46</sup>

## **EDRANS**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1901-1903

Owner/Operator: Blackwoods

Location: west of the village

Related Information: sold to Edrans-Brandon Dry Pressed Brick Co. Ltd. In 1903

Source of information: "Carberry Plains: Century One," Carberry History Committee, 1982

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1927-1931

Owner/Operator: National Clay Products Limited

Location: in village of Edrans

Related Information: tapestry brick produced, see source

Sources of Information: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh 1931, Department of Energy and Mines files

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>45</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 1 March 1924, p. 147; Herald, 22 May 1924, p. 5; 10 July 1924, p. 5; 14 April 1925, p.5; 18 June 1925, p. 5; 30 July 1925, p. 5; 29 August 1925, p. 5; 5 November 1925, p. 5; "Brick Striding Ahead Near Winnipeg." Winnipeg Tribune, 6 November 1925, p. 17.

<sup>46</sup> "Funeral Rites For R.D. Hales This Afternoon", Winnipeg Tribune, 1 June 1929, p. 3; "Manitoba-Made Face Brick", Western Canada Contractor, February 1928, p. 32; "To Enlarge Brick Plant", Western Canada Contractor, March 1929, p. 33; Carberry History Committee. Carberry Plains – Century One. (Altona: Friesen, 1982.), p. 78.

### Operation 3

Dates of Operation: 1938-1940, 1948-1949

Owner/Operator: Western Clay Products Limited

Location: 35-12-13-W1

Related Information: Under supervision of W.E. Hales bricks also produced in 1949 Stiff-mud, wire-cut bricks. Two up-draft, two down-draft kilns

Sources of Information: "Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

### Operation 4

Dates of Operation: 1905-?

Owner/Operator: Edrans-Brandon Pressed Brick Co. Ltd.

Location: Edrans

Related Information: received letters patent of incorporation, 1905

Sources of Information: Manitoba Gazette, 1905



# EMERSON

The history of brick-making in this border town goes back to the era of the Boundary Commission having its headquarters in the area. In the summer of 1874 it was said that “sun dried bricks are being made” at Emerson. This of course was a very simple process, having more to do with ancient brick-making than with modern processes. Nothing is known for this enterprise, as the newspaper account did not elaborate. The first functioning brick yard in this town was that of Peter Phillippe. It was established in 1878, and produced some fair cream-coloured brick. Phillippe had a brick machine from London, Ontario and the yard had been started because of the high price of lumber. During 1879 Phillippe supplied the brick for the Hudson’s Bay Company store at West Lynne (on the west side of the Red River). While he did have some competition from D. Ferguson, who had invented his own brick machine and produced brick and drain tile, the Emerson Brick Yard persevered at least into 1880. That spring Phillippe went 65 miles upriver and bought 500 cords of firewood at \$2.25/cord. Returning with 70 cords he vowed to turn out a million bricks during that season.<sup>47</sup>

By the spring in 1881 Phillippe had apparently disposed of the Emerson yard. He would resurface a year later in Dominion City. In the meantime, the new Emerson proprietor was a Mr. Bryce, who brought in a new brick machine. Little is known of this operation except that by the summer of 1882 he had taken a partner named Sweet. At that time Bryce was building a brick residence at the corner of 5th and Assiniboine which cost \$4000. He also supplied bricks for a brick-veneered residence constructed for M.W. Pruyn of West Lynne. It is possible that this structure was also partly faced with Crookston (North Dakota) brick, which seemed to be enjoying popularity in the Emerson area at the time. The veneering brick in the newly-built Carney House also originated in Crookston. Bryce’s yard probably vanished with the collapse of Emerson’s fortunes in 1883. Competition was quite fierce, for there were nearby brick yards at St. Vincent, Minnesota (D.F. Brawley) and at Pembina, Dakota Territory (W.J.S. Traill), along with some red brick from Duluth in addition to the well-established Crookston yard. Crookston brick would also be used in two of the town’s most prominent buildings—both built by W.N. Fairbanks and designed by architects Wilmot and Steward in 1881—his Italianate residence on Roseau and his huge business block on the main street.<sup>48</sup>

The Phillippe-Bryce yard was not without its local competitors as well. Probably the best equipped was David Douglas’ yard east of the CPR track and north of the railway water tank. This was started in the summer of 1882 and employed between eight and 18 men. He had two Bulmer and Shepherd machines from Montréal. One of these was expected to turn out 30,000 bricks per day, and he expected to burn his first kiln of 150,000 bricks by mid-July. Interestingly, the sand for this yard came from Stony Mountain, which suggests that Douglas had some connection with James G. McDonald, who operated various brick yards, including one at the sand source. Unfortunately this is all that is known of the Douglas yard, which probably started just as an economic downturn hit Emerson. At that time Emerson had three brick yards. A fourth one may have been Douglas Creighton’s yard at West Lynne, if it had gotten started. The Creighton yard was first spoken of in the autumn of 1881, and began to come

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>47</sup> “Emerson,” Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 11 July 1874, p. 5; 15 June 1878, p. 1; 13 July 1878, p. 8; 3 August 1878, p. 5; Emerson International, 20 March 1879, p. 4; 21 August 1879, p. 5; 10 April 1879, p. 4; 6 May 1880, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> International, 7 April 1881, p. 7; 3 August 1882, p. 5; 21 August 1882, p. 3; 13 September 1882, p. A; 1 July 1880, p. 5. “new Brick Yard”, International, 30 June 1881, p. 5; 18 August 1881, p. 5; 25 August 1881, p. 7.

to fruition the following summer, when Creighton and his father bought a small brick yard at Dominion City. Faced with competition there from a well-financed operation, the Creightons closed that yard, transporting the machinery south. Though West Lynne was to have been their location, and they had been given a small lot there, the last that was heard of the machinery was that it was sitting on the platform at the Emerson railway station. The non-start of the Creighton yard was probably a reaction to the beginnings of Emerson's failing fortunes. By the summer of 1884 the Boom had departed, and so had most of Emerson's population. A listing of area amenities published at that time showed no brick yards at Emerson, and with no building taking place there was no need for them.<sup>49</sup>

## **EMERSON**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1873

Owner/Operator: Blackwoods

Location: west of the village

Related Information: sold to Edrans-Brandon Dry Pressed Brick Co. Ltd. In 1903

Source of information: "Carberry Plains: Century One," Carberry History Committee, 1982

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1878-1880

Owner/Operator: K. MacRae and D. Ferguson, later D. Ferguson and Co.

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Emerson 1875-1975: A Centennial History," Henderson Directory, 1880

#### Operation 3

Dates of Operation: 1880

Owner/Operator: Phillippe

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: Henderson Directory, 1880

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>49</sup> "Our New Brick Yard," International, 15 June 1882, p. 5; MWFP, 18 August 1881, p. 5; 6 October 1881, p. 5; 22 August 1882, p. 4; 5 June 1884, p. 4.

# GILBERT PLAINS

Prior to 1902 George and James Eastment found a bed of clay on their farm, about two miles east of Gilbert Plains. Soon, they were making white brick that sold for \$8.25 per thousand. By 1904 they were soliciting customers in surrounding communities such as Grandview. In 1907 Eastment Brothers employed 13 men, and had a Henry Martin brick machine that was driven by a gasoline engine that gave a capacity of 15,000 bricks per day, producing 315,000 brick in 1907. The United Church in Gilbert Plains was built of Eastment brick. Near to the Eastment plant was the yard of Joseph Rowlett which started in 1905. According to a Dominion Government report of 1907-1908, Rowlett had a quarter section of land, as well as a Martin brick machine with a capacity of 30,000 bricks per day. Employing 16 men, Rowlett produced 320,000 bricks in 1905. According to a local historian, the Commercial Hotel in Gilbert Plains (burned c1952) was built of Rowlett brick in 1910. Gilbert Plains had three brick yards, but two years later, both Eastment and Rowlett were gone from the business directory.<sup>50</sup>

The third brick yard listed above was the longest lasting at Gilbert Plains. A. Snyder and Co.'s yard had been started by Morley Snyder in March 1907 when he bought the Crittenden property on the north side of the railway track about two miles east of town. Charles Snyder of Portage la Prairie, the home base of the Snyder clan, visited the nascent yard in June 1907 to check its progress. By 1912 the Snyder yard had a number of scove kilns in operation, each of which could burn 250,000 bricks at a time. The burning lasted six to nine days. The bricks produced were a reddish colour in the upper reaches of the kiln because of under-burning, while the rest of the kiln produced a good, buff-coloured brick. According to a local historian, the Snyder brick was known locally as well as being shipped to many parts of Manitoba. Snyder brick was known to have been used in the Gilbert Plains and Brickburn Schools. Morley Snyder ran the brick yard until the advent of the First World War. Then it was shut down because of labour shortages and wartime restrictions in addition to a downturn in building construction operations. He reorganized the firm as the Gilbert Plains Brick Company in May 1919, and had it operating once again in July. The firm functioned until 1922 when its incorporation was cancelled. It continued to function as M. Snyder and Sons until 1929. During the Depression, the plant closed and never reopened. Snyder pursued other business interests in the Gilbert Plains area until his death at the age of 76 in July 1948.<sup>51</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>50</sup> "Gilbert Plains Manitoba," Manitoba Free Press, 31 May 1902, p. 19; O.E.A Brown, Settlers of the Plains (Gilbert Plains; Maple Leaf Press, 1959), p. 81; Grandview Exponent, 23 September 1904, p. 8; Report on the Mining and Metallurgical Industries of Canada, 1907-1908. (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1908.), pp. 652-653; "Gilbert Plains a Thriving Section.", Winnipeg Telegram, 18 June 1910, p. 11; Business Directory of Canada, 1912, p. 546.

<sup>51</sup> Portage la Prairie Weekly Review, 26 June 1907, p. 9; Settlers, loc.cit.; Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces. (Memoir 24E). (Ottawa Government Printing Bureau, 1912), pp. 30-31; Manitoba Gazette, 31 May 1919, p. 458; p September 1922, p. 1042; Gilbert Plains Maple Leaf, 4 July 1919, p. 8; "Pioneer Resident Dies Suddenly.", Maple Leaf, 29 July 1948, p. 4.

## **GILBERT PLAINS**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1902-1907

Owner/Operator: James and George Eastment

Location: east of the village

Related Information: supplied brick for Brickburn School, 1902; 315,000 bricks made in 1907

Source of information: "Gilbert Plains Historical Highlights", J.L. Parker, 1981 (weekly supplement to Gilbert Plains Maple Leaf, local newspaper)

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1905-?

Owner/Operator: Joseph Rowlett

Location: in village of Edrans

Related Information: 320,000 brick in first year

Sources of Information: "Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

#### Operation 3

Dates of Operation: 1910-1915

Owner/Operator: A. Snyder and Company

Location: 1 ½ miles east of Village on Canadian Northern Railway

Related Information: soft-mud bricks; scove kilns; 250,000 bricks per kiln; buff-coloured bricks

Sources of Information: "Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces" Canada Department of Mines, Geological Surveys Branch 1912

#### Operation 4

Dates of Operation: 1926, 1929 only-?

Owner/Operator: M. Snyder (1926), M. Snyder and Sons (1929).

Location:

Related Information:

Source of information "Annual Report of the Mineral Production of Canada", Canada Dominion Bureau of Statistics; Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Branch, 1925-1929

#### Operation 5

Dates of Operation: 1928 only

Owner/Operator: Gilbert Plains Brick

Location:

Related Information: From M. Snyder

Source of information "Annual Report of the Mineral Production of Canada", Canada Dominion Bureau of Statistics; Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Branch, 1928, 1929



# GLADSTONE

In 1897 Magnus Wilson, a blacksmith, carriage builder and pump manufacturer, arrived in this town on the Whitemud River. In February 1898, he went to Winnipeg to purchase a Henry Martin No. 1. brick machine. He was making preparations to start a brick yard on a portion of an area island where he had found clay. He hired Alex Clan of the Sidney brick yard to run the new Gladstone yard, and in general hired first-class workers. By the end of April Wilson had his brick machine set up and was ready to produce. He also hired a Mr. Seeley, also of Sidney, to work in the Gladstone yard, which began operation on 3 May 1898. Wilson had his first kiln of bricks ready for firing by late May. This produced a good quality white brick. Some of this brick went into the new school in town. By the end of his first season Wilson had fired three kilns of brick. He employed 18 workers and shipped bricks along the Manitoba and North-western Railway to Dauphin. He also shipped some carloads to Winnipeg when, according to A.T. Andrew, the contractors in that city wanted a specially good article.”<sup>52</sup>

Wilson’s island brick yard was again ready for operation by early May 1899. He had made several changes to increase production, such as increasing the capacity of the brick machines, as well as constructing a large number of brick-drying sheds. The shelving in the sheds protected the green brick from the rain, which had created a great deal of loss for him during 1898. He also added an experienced brick-maker from the east. He was constructing a new kiln with a capacity of 100,000 bricks. In July he burned a kiln of 200,000 bricks, most of which were very hard. The 1900 season was nearly a repeat of 1899, except that Wilson was selling bricks to Dauphin contractors. And so the yard continued its operation until possibly 1913, though it is possible that it was shut down in 1911. Wilson’s brick was probably used in 75% of the buildings in Gladstone, but his showcase was his house on the island. In 1905 he made a special brick mould and produced the distinctive brick for his house. Wilson ultimately turned the former brick yard into an orchard and lived in his house until his death in June 1942.<sup>53</sup>

## GLADSTONE

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1897-1913

Owner/Operator: Magnus Wilson

Location: in town, adjacent to Whitemud River

Related Information: shipped bricks to many nearby Towns; was blacksmith by trade; produced several styles of decorative brick; property owned by grandson R.D. Wilson (1992)

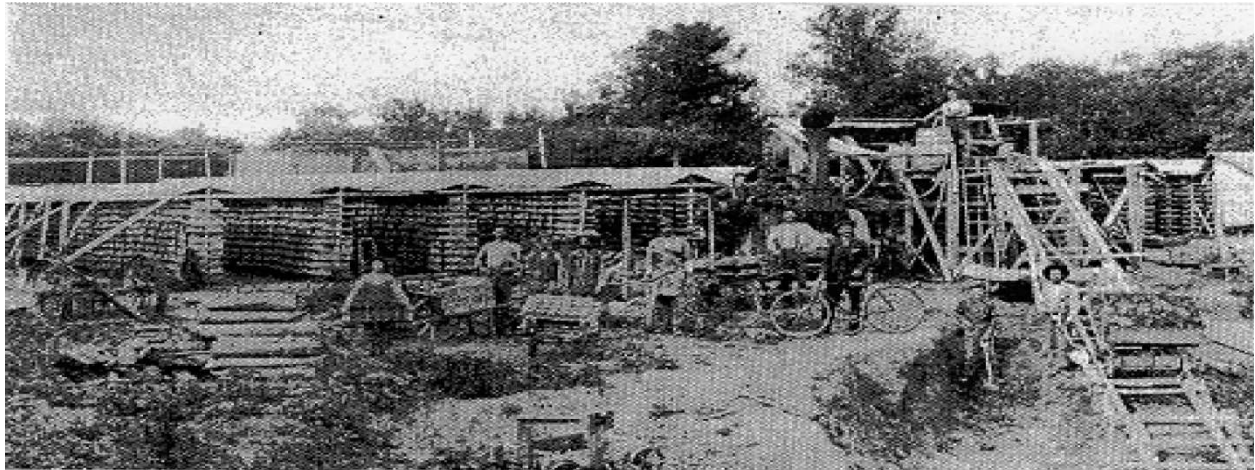
Source of information: family Documents

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>52</sup> Gladstone Age, 29 July 1897, p. 5; “Planning mill and Brick Kiln for Gladstone.”, Age, 17 February 1898, p. 8; 24 March 1898, p. 1; 11 August 1898, p. 4; 5 May 1898, p. 8; 2 June 1898, p. 8; 9 June 1898, p. 1; 11 August 1898, p. 8; 8 September 1898, p. 8; 20 October 1898, p. 1.

<sup>53</sup> Age, 11 May 1899, p. 8; 1 June 1899, p. 8; 20 July 1899, p. 8; 6 July 1899, p. 8; 27 July 1899, p. 8; 24 August 1899, p. 8; 21 June 1900, p. 8; 28 June 1900, p. 8; “Magnus Wilson, Pioneer of the ‘80s, Passes On.”, Age, 2 July 1842, p. 1; 8 June 1911, p. 8; 13 July 1905, p. 8; Manitoba Telephone Directories, March 1911; August 1911.



Magnus Wilson Brick Yard, Gladstone. Shown here are the brick drying sheds which Wilson added to the plant during 1899. (Gladstone and District History Book Committee. Gladstone—Then and Now. Altona Friesen's, 2001. P. 78).

# GLOSSOP

## Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1909

Owner/Operator: Jack and Harry Sage and Bob and Joe Partridge

Location: SE ¼-6-16-21-W1

Related Information: Mr. Partridge may have owned the land, Mr. Bull was the brickmaker

Source of information: Bruce Delgarno, Newdale, Manitoba, 849-2193 (landowner in 1992) "Newdale 1870-1970", Newdale Historical Society, 1970 (land location given in book is inaccurate)

# GRAND VALLEY

## Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1880-1882

Owner/Operator: Dougald McVicar

Location: Grand Valley townsite, east of Brandon (now part of Brandon)

Related Information: Grand Valley was abandoned 1882, with most inhabitants moving west to nearby Brandon

Source of information: "Ghost Towns of Manitoba", H. Mulligan and w. Ryder, 1985

## GRANDVIEW

John Sinnott was a pioneer Grandview businessman, selling rotary disc plows, erecting the curling and skating rink and constructing a public hall. In the spring of 1904, brick-making became another one of his projects. Little is known of his operation, except that in April 1904 he was preparing to install a brick manufacturing plant. In September 1905 the Grandview Exponent heard of a movement to set up an up-to-date brick plant in town. Whether this was a new operation or an improvement on that of Sinnott is unknown. In June 1906 a Dominion Government geologist examined the local clay and pronounced it of superior quality, of “practically unlimited quantity.” The area newspaper was not good in promoting local industry during that time, and information on the Sinnott yard is skimpy. It is known that Sinnott and his family moved to Canora, Saskatchewan in July 1909. This coincided with his disappearance from the Business Directory of that year, though his name was returned to the list of brick manufacturers in the 1912 and 1914 editions. His advertisements in the Exponent during 1908 for the lumber yard made no mention of brick, so it is possible that the yard had shut down by that time. When Sinnott returned to Grandview in May 1914 he had just sold his hotel at Kamsack, Saskatchewan. He was planning to resume building contracting, but also appears to have split his time between Grandview and his son’s home at Canora. By then, the brick yard was but a memory.<sup>54</sup>

## HAMIOTA

The brick-making experience of this community was brief. In the summer of 1895 a local mason, John Guttridge, made a test run of firing bricks in his kiln at Hamiota. Buoyed by his success, he stated that he was going to “secure the necessary machinery” to start the yard. The Rapid City Spectator considered this to be an accomplished fact. Unfortunately, this was the end of Guttridge’s efforts in this line, but he continued using his mason’s skills until 1899, when he moved a short distance out of town. There, he spent the remainder of his life farming. When he died in 1930 his obituary made no mention of his brick-making efforts. A year after Guttridge’s 1895 test run, J. H. McConnell of Hamiota’s Assiniboine Lumber Company was advertising brick (of unknown origin) for sale among his other wares.<sup>55</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>54</sup> Grandview Exponent, 5 May 1905, p. 5; 11 August 1905, p. 5; 11 May 1906, p. 6; 29 January 1904, p. 8; 8 April 1904, p. 8; 1 September 1905, p. 5; “Lots of Good Brick Clay.” Exponent, 8 June 1906, p. 1; 29 July 1909, p. 8; Business Directory of Canada, 1909, p. 445; 1912, p. 546; 1914, p. 599; Exponent, 23 July 1908, p. 8; 29 October 1909, p. 1; “John Sinnott Sells Hotel at Kamsack for \$60,000.” Exponent, 7 May 1914, p. 8; 19 November 1914, p. 8.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>55</sup> Hamiota Hustler, 18 June 1895, p. 4; Rapid City Spectator, 28 June 1895, p. 4; “Death of John Guttridge.” Hamiota Echo, 5 February 1930, p. 4; Hustler, 30 June 1896, p. 4.

# HARTNEY

Brick was available at Hartney as early as 1890, when William J. Mathers and W.H. Atkinson of Deloraine opened a branch of their lumber yard. They did not manufacture the brick, however, but acted as distributors of products of now-unknown origins. Five years later a correspondent of the Boissevain Globe mistook the Deleau brick yard as being at Hartney, saying that bricks sold at Hartney for \$8.00 per thousand, while Whitewater brick sold for four dollars more. A correction by the Globe's Whitewater correspondent a few weeks later stated there was no brick at Hartney – the Deleau brick was merely advertised in the Hartney Star. Even that statement was not entirely true, for around that time Harry Payne of Souris had bought a tract and land west of Hartney from H. Hammond. Payne planned an immediate start of a brick yard, and stated that he could sell brick for \$8.00 per thousand, a clear competitor for the Deleau yard. The yard was started that year, but in 1895 production was unknown. Harry Payne and his workers were back at Hartney in April 1896, beginning production late in the month. The yard appears to have had a capacity of 100,000 bricks per day. Late in May the Payne yard was doing a “land office business in terms of demand,” with the proprietor vowing to continue production until freeze-up in the fall. Payne wanted to stockpile the brick for the next (1897) season. He fired his first kiln of 100,000 bricks early in June, 1896. During August, however, most of the brick yard crew left to work in the yard at Deloraine, necessitating Payne’s replacement of the workers with fresh help from Souris.<sup>56</sup>

The season of 1897 saw Payne burning two kilns of brick in July, with a final kiln of 150,000 bricks in mid-November. It is known that Payne sold brick to W. Hopkins for the latter to veneer his store that year. The following year saw Payne supplying local demand, while shipping brick to towns both east and west. It also saw Payne building a couple of brick houses during the autumn. Competition also reared its head for Payne during 1898, and this possibly forced him to plan improvements to his brick plant for 1899. In the new year, Payne’s wire-cut brick machine was said to be working splendidly, making brick more cheaply, with a price reduction under consideration. Production was soon increased to 30,000 bricks per day. A commentator in the summer of 1899 stated that even with these changes, Hartney’s two brick yards were unable to supply the demand placed upon them. Payne tried to solve this the following year by installing a new wire-cut brick machine. This was less than successful, however, as the producer would not prevent the brick from cracking. He wound up discarding the new machine in favour of an older one. The Payne yard continued in business through 1901 when Harney still had two brick yards. Around that time, the Star stated that there were 30 brick houses in the town. It is not believed that the Payne yard with its reddish bricks survived into 1902, for the local competition was too strong.<sup>57</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>56</sup> Deloraine Times, 19 June 1890, p. 4; Boissevain Globe, 23 May 1895, p. 1; 15 June 1895, p. 4; Hartney Star, 14 June 1895, p. 1; 24 April 1896, p. 1; 29 May 1896, p. 1; 3 June 1896, p. 1; 10 June 1869, p. 1.

<sup>57</sup> Star, 4 June 1897, p. 1; 2 July 1897, p. 3; 23 July 1897, p. 8; 12 November 1897, p. 7; 1 July 1898, p. 7; 28 October 1898, p. 1; 11 November 1898, p. 12; 23 June 1899, p. 1; 21 July 1899, p. 1; 18 August 1899, p. 11; 4 May 1900, p.

## ENDNOTES

The remaining brick yard had gotten its start in 1898 as the Hartney Brick and Delft Company, run by George Sackville and Company. The Sackville yard was located a short distance east of Hartney and produced a white brick. Sackville burned his first kiln of brick in July and the last in November, shipping out large quantities at that time. The story in 1899 was similar to that of the previous year, with Sackville taking a partner named Little. By mid-August the firm was shipping brick over the Northern Pacific and Manitoba Railway line, and in fact had several outstanding orders on hand. William Kirkland, who had worked for Sackville since 1899, took over the yard in 1901 at a time when the area faced a brick shortage. This condition continued into 1902, especially in light of the probable closure of the Payne yard. Kirkland's first kiln of 80,000 bricks was burned in May 1902, and the lot went into the new A.E. Hill and Company building then under construction at Hartney. Indeed, that lot of brick was not enough for the large structure, as its construction was delayed in June because of the non-arrival of brick from the city. The local production shortage apparently continued into late July, when Leckie and Co. received a "car of white brick" for sale.<sup>58</sup>

Little is known of the Kirkland operation during 1903 and 1904, except that in the latter year the plant burned a kiln of 150,000 bricks. The Hartney Star, in visiting the yard in May 1905, commented on the "fine and inexhaustible deposit of clay" that was being worked by Kirkland's steam brick machine. A 1907-1908 Dominion Government report on the Kirkland yard found that it sat on 15 acres and produced 30,000 bricks per day, with 10 men employed. The 1907 output was said to be one million bricks. Another government report on the Kirkland yard in 1912 indicated that there had been some problems with quality, the bricks being soft and porous because of a silty underlay in the clay and lower temperatures in the scove kilns. During 1913 Kirkland had maintained production at around one million bricks, most of which were shipped to Regina for use in the new Legislative Building. The Kirkland yard suffered from the same problems after 1914 as other Western Canadian yards – a building downtown, and labour shortages because of the World War. Despite this, the Kirkland yard remained open, though its production dwindled until it finally closed, prior to 1920. After its closure, William Kirkland went into full-time trapping of fur-bearing animals, something he had done in the off-seasons at the brick yard.<sup>59</sup>

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8; 8 June 1900, p. 8; 10 May 1901, p. 4; 14 May 1901, p. 8; Hazel McDonald Parkinson. The Mere Living. (Altona: D.W. Friesen and Sons, 1957.), p. 1693

<sup>58</sup> Star, 17 June 1898, p. 1; 29 July 1898, p. 1; 16 September 1898, p. 1; 4 November 1898, p. 1; 11 November 1998, p. 1; 29 July 1898, p. 1; 11 August 1899, p. 1; 18 August 1899, p. 11; 12 July 1901, p. 8; 9 May 1902, p. 8; 23 May 1902, p. 8; 27 June 192, p. 8; 25 July 1902, p. 5.

<sup>59</sup> Star, 20 May 1904, p. 8; 5 May 1905, p. 8; Report on the Mining and Metallurgical Industries of Canada, 1907-1908. (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1908.), p. 653; Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces. (Memoir 24E), (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912.), pp. 24-25; Parkinson, op. cit. pp. 170-170; Business Directory of Canada, 1915, p. 615; Star, 6 December 1901, p. 7; 7 November 1902, p. 8.

## **HARTNEY**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1895-1900

Owner/Operator: H. Payne

Location: west of town, NE-1/4-16-6-23-W1;

Related Information: H. Payne moved from Souris; redbrick and white brick produced

Source of information: "The Mere living: a biography of the Hartney district", H. Parkinson, 1957

Henderson Northwest Directory, 1900; Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1897-1914

Owner/Operator: William Kirkland (Hartney Brick Works)

Location: ½ mile north of town, NE ¼-16-6-23-W1

Related Information: soft-mud bricks; drain tile and hollow blocks may have been produced after 1910;

scove kilns; 1,000,000 bricks produced in 1909 with most shipped to Regina for construction of

Legislative building; white brick; poplar for fuel brought from Pembina Hills

Sources of Information: "Preliminary Report on the clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces",

H. Ries and J. Keele, Canada Department of Mines, Geological Survey Branch, 1912, " A Century of Living:

Hartney 1882-1982, Hartney and District Historical Committee

#### Operation 3

Dates of Operation: 1900

Owner/Operator: G. Sackville

Location:

Related Information: source may not be reliable

Sources of Information: Henderson Northwest Directory 1900

# HOLLAND

Brick-making at Holland began in 1894, when Dagg and Mawhinney started their yard. By early August, one of its proprietors, Francis Henry Dagg was constructing a combined office-residence. It was being clad with bricks from his yard. It was also said that the firm had purchased a brick machine which would soon be in full running order. Later in the month, the Dagg yard turned out 8,000 bricks per day and expected to fire 150,000 bricks in the near future. Near the end of August, the Glenboro Gazette sent its representative to Holland to inspect the new industry. He reported that the machine was turning out excellent brick with the bricks being set out to dry before being put into the kiln, which would hold 70,000 bricks. The bricks were light red when burned and weighed four pounds each. Dagg expected to produce two million of these bricks during 1895.<sup>60</sup>

In April 1895 brick was in great demand, and the firm had already sold off all the bricks burned during 1894. Dagg also announced that a small kiln of brick would be burned to help those who continued building, though the firm was still waiting for the ground frost to dissipate. Mr. Fix of Portage la Prairie was running the Holland yard, which was putting out a capacity of 10,000 bricks per day. Fix apparently had 26 years of brick-making experience in both the old country and Canada. Dagg also built a brick-veneered residence with a slate roof that spring. A wet spring delayed this work, as well as the construction of the yard's kiln. A large drying shed was completed, though, and this allowed the firm to furnish builders immediately without the "delay and annoyance" of having to dry it. The first kiln of bricks was opened on 25 June 1895, and reflected "great credit" upon Fix and his employers. Coincidentally, the Rural Municipality of South Norfolk passed a by-law around that time which required brick chimneys on all buildings, a boon to such yards as that of Dagg and Mawhinney.<sup>61</sup>

The brick remaining from the 1895 season was sold in March 1896 to J.H. Herron who was building a large hotel at Cypress River. Faced with a continued good demand for brick, the yard was back in business by late May with 13 men employed. By mid-July the first kiln of 115,000 bricks was being burned. Some of this was used in a residence for John R. Mawhinney. For unknown reasons, the 1896 production season was short, with the yard closing on 8 August with only 200,000 bricks being burned in 1897 and at least 205,000 bricks in 1898. In the spring of 1898, Isaac Mawhinney left the firm and moved to MacGregor to farm. Though F.H. Dagg remained as a "brick manufacturer" into the 1904, articles about the yard in the Holland Observer had vanished. Dagg's advertisements for his lumber yard no longer mentioned brick by 1904, and it is assumed that he had closed the yard.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>60</sup> "Holland", Glenboro Gazette, 15 June 1894, p. 3; 10 August 1894, p. 3; 24 August 1894, p. 2: "The Holland Brick yard." Gazette, 31 August 1894, p.2= 2.

<sup>61</sup> Holland Observer, 12 April 1895, p. 1; 26 April 1895, pp. 1,4; 17 May 1895, p. 1; 24 May 1895, p. 1; 14 June 1895, p. 1; 28 June 1895, pp. 1, 4; 12 July 1898, p. 1.



## **HOLLAND**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1895-1897

Owner/Operator: F.H. Dagg and Mawhinney

Location:

Related Information: kiln capacity of 115,000 brick;13 men employed; brickworks supervised by Mr. Fix of Portage la Prairie

Source of information: "Holland Manitoba; 1877-1967," Holland History Committee, 1967,

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1900-1905

Owner/Operator: F.H. Dagg

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1900; Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

## KENVILLE-DURBAN

Francis Albert Thomas homesteaded on SW 25:34:28W in May 1899, and at some point discovered a good bank of clay on his land near present-day Highway 83 and between Kenville and Durban. He apparently built a kiln and made brick for his first house. The Thomas bricks were white in colour because Thomas used limestone to whiten the clay. His bricks were also marked "F.T." This was a very small operation, for Thomas could only afford a few expensive moulds for his bricks. According to local historians Frank Thomas had three workers, and the yard did not operate after 1904, possibly because of clay depletion.<sup>62</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>62</sup> 80 Years in Swan River Valley. (Swan River: Swan River Valley History Book Committee, 1978) , p. 482; Lasting Impressions. (Swan River: Swan River Valley Historical Society, 1984.), p. 332.

# KILLARNEY

Information about brick-making in the Killarney-Lena area is very hazy, and somewhat questionable. Some historians claim that Robert Church started a brick yard when he homesteaded on SW 16:1:17W in 1884. Furthermore, they also state that the Church brick yard produced the red brick for Alex David's residence in 1889. However, Church requested Patent to SW and SE 16 in 1885, having made entry in 1882. At the time he applied he made no mention of having a brick yard on his farm. Furthermore, when he made an additional application for SE 22:1:17W in 1892, he made no mention of making brick on his property. Alex David did construct a brick-veneered house about four miles west of Killarney in 1883. The source of his brick was not stated in newspaper accounts. Stone continued to be used on a large scale in the Killarney area into the early 1890s, with A.E. Fremlin of that town erecting what was believed to be the first solid brick building in Killarney in 1893. Mr. Bate, the Killarney postmaster, had earlier that year brick-veneered his block. The source of those bricks was unstated, but perhaps they came from existing yards in Brandon or Winnipeg.<sup>63</sup>

The first mention of Robert Church as a brick-maker came in April 1896, when he was preparing a kiln of 80,000 bricks. Unfortunately this was the only reference made to Church's yard near Lena. No other reference was made in the Killarney Guide to Church's bricks, the newspaper contenting itself to report upon Lena-area socials and pie-eating contests in place of industrial developments. It is believed that this yard was out of business by 1901, for W.R. David of Deloraine was in town that May making a pitch for products from his own brick yard. Furthermore, St. Boniface brick was used in the C.W. Grenby residence at Cartwright in 1902, while a carload of brick from elsewhere was used in the Holmfield Methodist Church the previous year. The Liddle Block (1902) in Killarney also received "carloads" of brick, possibly from Deloraine. Church's obituary in 1915 made no mention of this brick-making career.<sup>64</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>63</sup> Aileen Garland. Trails and Crossroads to Killarney. (Killarney: Killarney and District History Committee, 1967.), pp. 218,229; Manitoba Archives. Homestead Files, Reel 2671, re. SW16; SE22:1:17; `Killarney Locals.` Deloraine Times, 18 July 1889, p. 2; 19 September 1889, p. 2; 5 December 1889, p. 3; `Killarney.` , Times, 1 September 1893, p. 4; Boissevain Globe, 25 May 1893, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Killarney Guise, 24 April 1896, p. 8; 24 May 1901, p. 1; 3 May 1901, p. 8; 25 November 1901, p. 8; 5 September 1902, p. 8; `Robert Church Passes Great Divide.` , Guide, 22 April 1915, p. 3.

# LAC DU BONNET

The Lac du Bonnet Mining, Developing and Manufacturing Company, Ltd., was incorporated in April 1898. Its promoters consisted of a number of Winnipeg professionals and other businessmen. The proposed factory was intended to produce dry, pressed and vitrified brick, in addition to terra cotta sewer pipe, drain tiles, etc. A site was selected at Lac du Bonnet which had promising clay. During 1899 buildings were put up for men and horses, with a sawmill built to cut the lumber for the main buildings, drying sheds and engine houses. Machinery to make the brick had been ordered from Eastern Canada and the United States. By late 1899, the Company had samples of red, pink, buff and white building bricks, as well as a sample of vitrified brick. At the time, the CPR was starting the construction of a branch from near Molson up to the factory site which arrived in June 1901. A West Virginian expert in the process of dry-press brick manufacture, T.W. Carmichael, inspected the Lac du Bonnet site late in 1899. He was also a manufacturer of brick-making machinery, and had put in one of his screens at the new facility.<sup>65</sup>

By July 1902 the plant was in production, making 40-50,000 bricks per day, both of the pressed and mud varieties. The 50-ton press in use produced a hard and beautifully moulded brick. The huge, circular kilns were banded with iron straps to keep them from cracking. The brick thus produced was of an even, light buff colour, but certain other clay beds would produce other colours such as old rose, pink, and ordinary red. Firing of kilns was done with sawmill wastes. The usage of this brick was found in many parts of Manitoba. A representative of the company was also said to be visiting the La Riviere brick yard in November 1902. The following spring Lac du Bonnet white brick was being used for Wooton's new business block in Manitou. During 1905 the Winnipeg General Power Company ordered 300,000 Lac du Bonnet bricks for their power site No. 1 camp. The brick company had been bought by railway builder John D. McArthur in 1901. Despite the success of this firm, its Letters Patent of Incorporation were cancelled late in 1912. The McArthur firm survived this occurrence, however, and was still in business in 1919, employing 50 men. At the time the steam engine powering the complex was fed by a 2500-gallon water reservoir, according to area historian Eleanor Stardom. It remained one of the few Western Canadian brick yards to survive the building downturn and manpower shortages of World War I.<sup>66</sup>

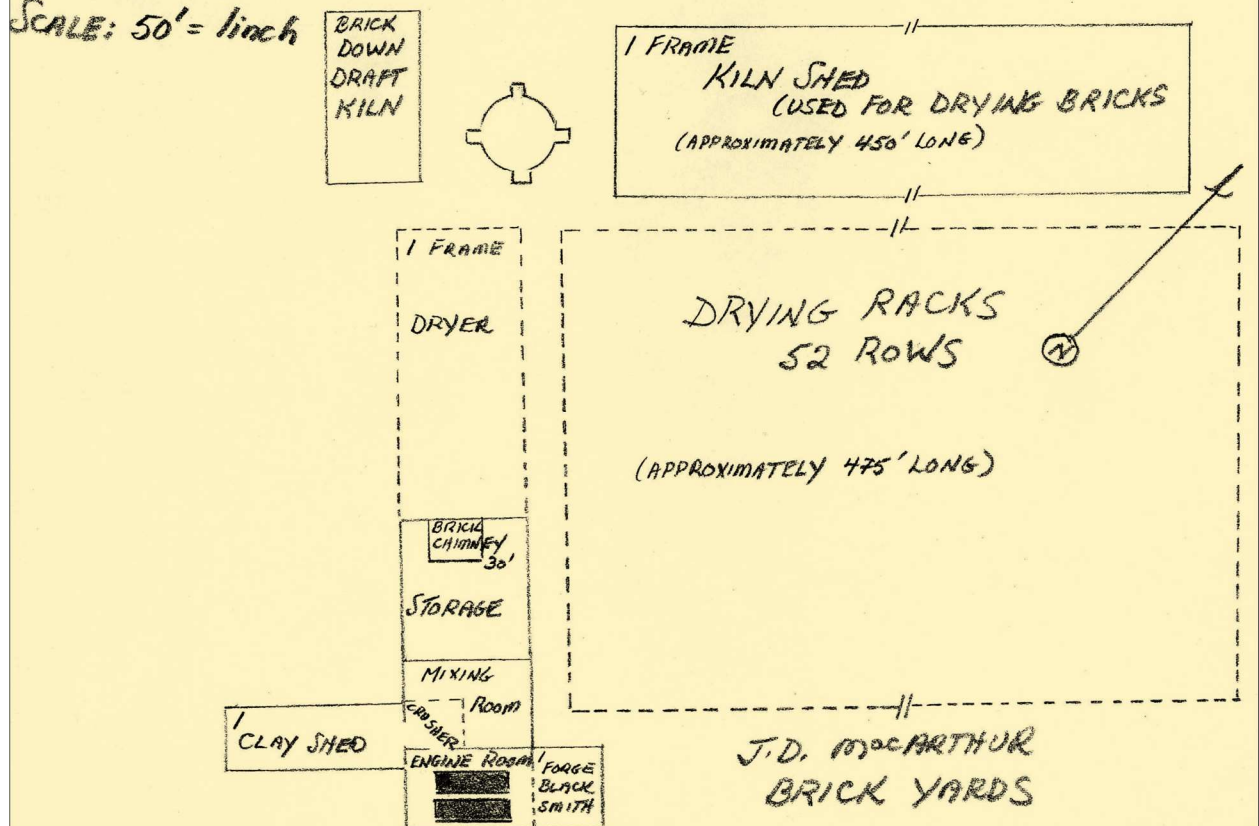
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## ENDNOTES

<sup>65</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 21 May 1898, pp. 256-257; "A New Manitoba Industry.", Commercial, 9 December 1899, p. 427; "Lac du Bonnet Brick.", Winnipeg Tribune, 15 November 1899, p. 5.

<sup>66</sup> "Pleasure Marred At Lac du Bonnet.", Manitoba Free Press, 2 July 1902, p. 3; Manitou Western Canadian, 12 November 1902, p. 1; 20 May 1903, p. 8; Selkirk Record, 21 January 1905, p. 1; Eleanor Stardom, "Some Aspects of the Economical Development in the Lac du Bonnet Area.". in Logs and Lines from the Winnipeg River. (Lac du Bonnet: Lac du Bonnet Pioneer Club, 1980.), p. 164; Manitoba Gazette, 9 November 1912, p. 2278.

WESTERN CANADA UNDERWRITERS  
 INSURANCE PLAN OF  
 LAC DU BONNET  
 10th SEPTEMBER 1919  
 SHEET 1  
 SCALE: 50' = 1 inch



Site Plan of J.D. MacArthur's Lac du Bonnet brick plant, traced from original Western Canada Underwriter's Insurance Plan, 1919.

## **LAC DU BONNET**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1901

Owner/Operator: Lac du Bonnet Mining Company (A. McIntosh) (8-15-11-E1)

Location: bank of the Winnipeg River

Related Information: dry-press common, red brick; may also have been a brickyard by W. Tallman

Source of information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1901-1923

Owner/Operator: J.D. MacArthur Company Ltd. (Lac du Bonnet Mining Development and Manufacturing Company sold to John D. MacArthur in 1901)

Location: NE ¼-17-15-11-E1

Related Information: By 1919, fifty men were employed; common and pressed brick; Walter Wardrop (Dave M. Wardrop's father) was a partner in the company; moved to Whitemouth in 1923

Sources of Information: "Logs and Lines From the Winnipeg River: A History of the Lac du Bonnet Area" Lac Du Bonnet Club, 1980," Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh 1931, Department of Energy and Mines files, Annual Report of the Mineral Production Bureau of Statistics: Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Branch) 1921-1924

# La RIVIERE

The establishment of a brick yard in this community was first made public in February 1902. Later that month, a deal was struck for land, and a clay sample sent east for testing. Early in March a Mr. Carrie received a test brick from the test laboratory. A decision was made to go ahead with the \$20,000 brick plant. A manager was found in Minneapolis during May, and by the following month local workers were being hired. The Press Brick and Tile Company, Ltd. had been incorporated in mid-February, and its principals included a number of well-known Winnipeg businessmen, as well as businessman/politician Hugh Armstrong of Portage la Prairie. The president of the firm was Elisha Frederick Hutchings, a Winnipeg entrepreneur who owned Great West Saddlery, and modestly (!) claimed to have discovered the La Riviere clay bed. Hutchings came to the small community in mid-July to check on the progress of the work. Already, men had repaired the brick yard dam, and a railway spur to the site was nearly complete.<sup>67</sup>

Early in September the plant made its first brick. The American manager, J.W. Carmichael, had the plant running "full blast" by mid-month, with a kiln of 250,000 bricks being burned and another 250,000 awaiting the fires. Before the plant was shut down for the winter, Mr. Tallman of the Lac du Bonnet brick plant visited the La Riviere facility. Carmichael went back to his home in West Virginia in December, after attending the Board of Directors meeting in Winnipeg. He would return to La Riviere the following March after a shareholder's meeting had decided to spend \$10,000 in erecting kilns and other improvements. That spring, under Carmichael's supervision, four new down-draught kilns were constructed. As well, 11 cars of machinery were ordered, including an engine, numerous castings, a blower, 100 dryer cars, and other equipment. By late May, the "immense kilns" were nearly complete, including an arched subterranean passage linking all four kilns. The large dryer with its numerous brick divisional walls only lacked a roof at the time, but had a 40-foot high stack to adorn the landscape. Four more kilns were under construction by mid-June. Later that month the newly-installed machinery was tested. During mid-July shale was being taken from the hillside source by night blasting, and then put on a carrier that took it down to the crusher where it was pulverized into clay. By mid-August contractors Ward and McConkey were completing the last of the kilns, and by that time the plant was already selling bricks.<sup>68</sup>

Carmichael went back to West Virginia for the last time in early September 1903. He was replaced by G.W. Deller as manager. Later that month, another of the company's principals, Winnipeg contractor William Brydon, came to inspect the facility's workings, including the new brick office blower house. A while later Hutchings returned to inspect his investment. The plant was run late that season, which meant still supplying coal to the kiln in late November, with closure expected in December. It was said before Christmas that year that the Pressed Brick and Tile Company was preparing work on a new

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>67</sup> Manitou Western Canadian, 19 February 1902, p. 5; 5 March 1902, p. 5; 19 March 1902, p. 5; 14 May 1902, p. 5; 28 May 1902, p. 5; 11 June 1902, p. 4; Manitoba Gazette, 24 May 1902, p. 413; "New Brick Industry.", Winnipeg Telegram, 15 May 1902, p. 5; 26 July 1902, p. 4; 6 August 1902, p. 4.

<sup>68</sup> Western Canadian, 3 September 1902, p. 4; 17 September 1902, p. 1; 22 October 1902, p. 1; 12 November 1902, p. 1 (one wonders if J.W. Carmichael, who had been at Lac du Bonnet in 1899 were related. Both were from West Virginia); 18 February 1903, p. 5; 4 March 1903, p. 5; 15 April 1903, p. 5; 27 May 1903, p. 5; 10 June 1903, p. 4; 24 June 1903, p. 5; 22 July 1903, p. 5; 12 August 1903, p. 5.

kiln – indeed the 1903 plan had been to eventually build 16 kilns. That large figure was never achieved, though in January 1904 a foundation for a new kiln was completed. The following spring most of the old employees were back, and improvements included a remodelling of the oldest kilns and the construction of a “lofty and strong” trestle from the mill across the creek to the shale ledge. Brick from this plant was used in the construction of the Kempsey House Hotel in La Riviere that summer. In mid-August the plant was shut down because of a breakdown in machinery after a successful test of a new method of treating brick.<sup>69</sup>

In January 1905, a number of men were at work at the brick yard, sorting out and shipping the one million bricks on hand at the plant in preparation for the coming season. Little is known of the 1905 season at the La Riviere plant. Something happened in the firm’s financing which culminated in the forced sale of the facility on 20 July 1906. William Brydon appears to have acquired control of the plant. The next few years of the plant’s existence have become somewhat shadowy. In July 1909 tests of the brick kilns were being made. A year later samples of brick “of a beautiful colour and finish” were on display locally. Indeed, an advertisement in July 1910 showed that the plant had acquired a new manager—James Johnstone, as well as a new name—The Phoenix Brick-works. In April 1911 it was noted that the plant machinery was being fitted up, and a kiln was filled. In June Dominion Government geologists visited the plant. It was noted that the brick-making process then included a disintegrator along with two short pug mills and a Bradley and Craven semi-plastic brick machine. The original equipment had been changed, having proven a failure. Evidently some type of production was happening that summer, for it was also noted that salmon-coloured to dark red “bricklets” were being produced.<sup>70</sup>

In April 1912 it was unknown whether or not the yard would open for the season. William Brydon was unable to say anything until the Board of Directors met. Evidently a decision to sell the plant was made and this was affected in April 1913 when a Mr. Martin purchased the works. He intended to renovate the complex, install new machinery, and place it on a sound footing. It is probably that this was the swan song for the La Riviere plant. A downturn in building was already being felt in Western Canada, and this would worsen into 1914. The advent of World War I that year was the finish of this large facility which eventually vanished from the local scene.<sup>71</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>69</sup> Western Canadian, 2 September 1903, p. 5; 30 September 1903, p. 5; 14 October 1903, p. 5; 25 November 1903, p. 5; 23 December 1903, p. 5; “LaRiviere Brick Works.” Manitoba Free Press, 15 April 1903, p.; 7 January 1904, p. 5; 21 April 1904, p. 5; 5 May 1904, p. 5; 4 August 1904, p. 1; 18 August 1904, p. 1.

<sup>70</sup> Western Canadian, 19 January 1905, p. 1; Manitoba Free Press, 3 July 1906, p. 2; Western Canadian, 29 July 1909, p. 5; 7 July 1910, p. 8; 13 April 1911, p. 8; 20 April 1911, p. 8; Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces (Part II). (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1913.), p. 209.

<sup>71</sup> Western Canadian, 11 April 1912, p. 8; 24 April 1913, p. 4.



## **La RIVIERE**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1900-1905

Owner/Operator: F.H. Dagg

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1900; Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

# Auction Sale

—OF—

## VALUABLE BRICK YARD AND PLANT

### AT LA RIVIERE

Under and by virtue of the powers contained in certain mortgages, which will be produced at the time of sale, there will be offered for sale by public auction on

**Friday, the Twentieth Day  
of July, A.D. 1906**

AT THE HOUR OF 2:30 O'CLOCK IN  
THE AFTERNOON

at the offices of the Pressed Brick and  
Tile Company, Limited, at

LA RIVIERE, IN THE PROVINCE  
OF MANITOBA,

by MICHAEL CONWAY, Auctioneer, the  
following property, namely:

**THE WORKS OF THE PRESSED  
BRICK AND TILE COMPANY,  
LIMITED, AT LA RIVIERE,**

Aforesaid, being:

**FIRST:** The whole of Legal Subdivision Three (3) and the East Half of Legal Subdivision Six (6) of Section Thirty (30) in Township Three (3) in Range Nine (9) West of the Principal Meridian in Manitoba.

**SECOND:** in the Townsite of La Riviere in the Province of Manitoba and being composed of that portion of Legal Subdivision Four (4) of Section Thirty (30) in Township Three (3) Range Nine (9) West of the Principal Meridian, described as follows: Commencing at a point on the Easterly limit of said legal subdivision Four (4) distant two hundred and eighty-seven and two-tenths (287.2) feet from the Northeast corner thereof; thence West sixty-one and eight-tenths (61.8) feet, said Easterly limit of legal subdivision Four (4) being assumed due North; thence fifty-one degrees and fifteen minutes (51° 15' W) West to a point distant perpendicularly Southerly Sixty-six feet from the Southerly limit of "Station Grounds" as same are shown on a plan of subdivision of part of said Section and other lands registered in the Registry Office for the County of Rock Lake as No. 61; thence South-westerly parallel with said Southerly limit of "Station Grounds" to a point distant perpendicularly Westerly three hundred (300) feet from the Easterly limit of legal subdivision Four (4) aforesaid; thence South parallel with said Easterly limit of legal subdivision Four to the Southerly limit thereof; thence easterly along the Southerly limit of legal subdivision Four to the Southeast corner thereof; thence North along the Easterly limit of legal subdivision Four to the place of beginning, containing eight and three-tenths acres, more or less; together with all buildings and erections thereon, and the

Plant, Machinery, Tools and Other  
Chattels of the Said Company.

The vendors are informed that the lands of the said Company comprise about Sixty (60) acres and include a very large supply of shale suitable for making blue and red pressed brick, and that there is a spur track on the said property leading from the Canadian Pacific Railway, and that there are the following buildings on the said property, namely: Frame engine and boiler room and extension, 1 large brick drier, frame engine and blower room, 9 circular brick kilns, 1 large dwelling house and 1 small dwelling house.

The premises of the said Company are situated close to the C. P. R. Railway Station at La Riviere.

The Vendors are informed that the machinery consists of 1 Boyd Press, 1 Williams Pulverizer, 1 Jeffries Conveyor, 1 Screen (Dunlap Perfect), 1 Extra Set Plates, 1 Set Fine Screws, 1 Blower and Engine, 1 Compound Engine, 1 Boiler, 1 Fan, 1 Steam Pump and Heater, 1 Grinding Machine, 4 Emery Wheels, 1 Screw Press and Dies. The tools are said to form a complete complement requisite for the operation of machinery and brick yard. There is also said to be a stock of about twenty-five tons of coal on the premises.

The Vendors are informed that all buildings, machinery and tools, etc., are comparatively new and in good condition.

The above property and chattels will be offered for sale en bloc, subject to a reserve bid.

**TERMS:** Twenty per cent. of the purchase money to be paid down at the time of sale, balance to be paid in thirty days.

For further particulars apply to  
**NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, Limited,**  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Vendors.

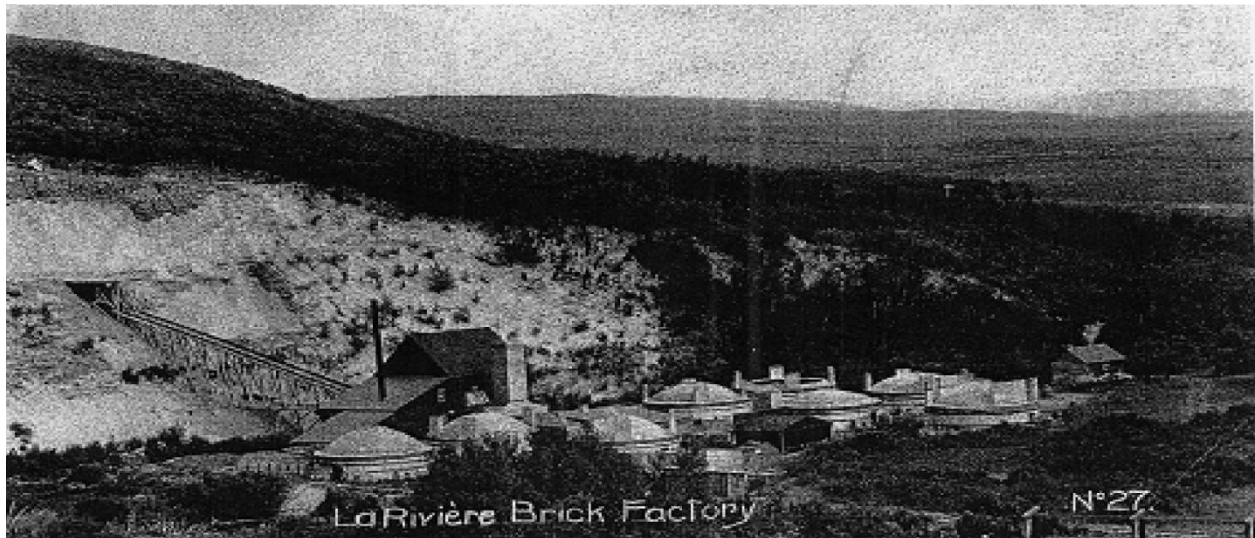
Or to **MESSRS. TUPPER, PHIPPEN,  
TUPPER, MINTY & McTAVISH,**  
Solicitors, Winnipeg, Solicitors for the  
Vendors.

Dated at Winnipeg this 26th day of  
June, A.D. 1906.

(Manitoba Free Press,  
3 July 1906, p. 2.)



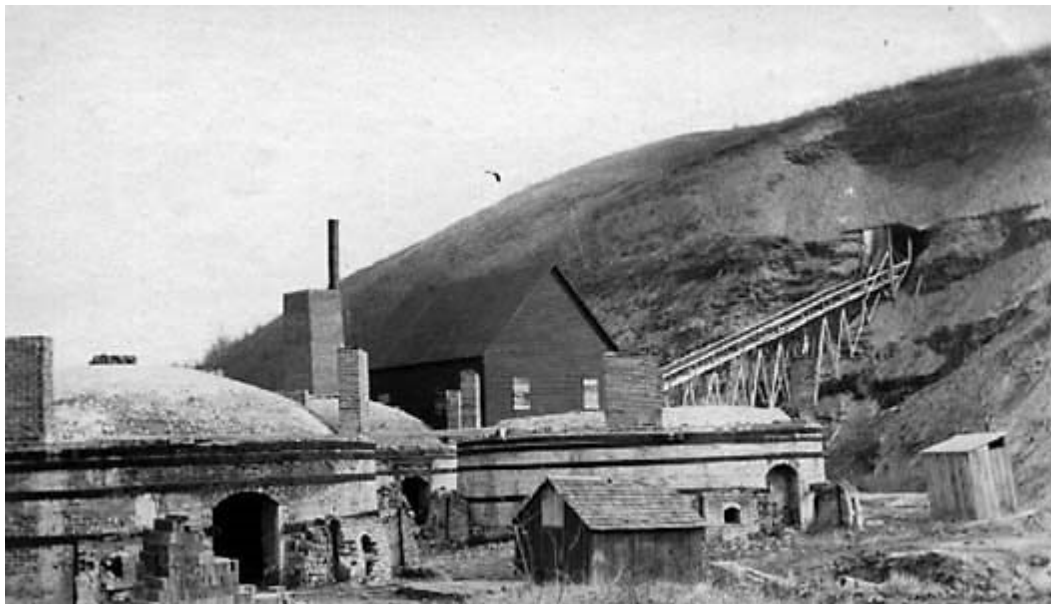
LaRivière Brick Plant, c1903. The large kilns are very prominent in this view, along the crusher building at the left. (LaRivière historical Book Society. Turning Leaves, A History of LaRivière and District. Altona: Friesen, 1979. Front endpapers.)



LaRivière Brick Plant, c1905. This was the final form of this facility. (LaRivière Historical Book Society. Turning Leaves, A History of LaRivière and District. Altona: Friesen, 1979. P. 19.)



Pressed brick and Tile Company, Ltd. Shale Bank, LaRiviere, 1912. (Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces. Part II. Memoir 25 (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1913. P. 20, PLATE VI.)



LaRiviere Brickworks, 1908. (Archives of Manitoba, G.T. Barber Collection)

# LAVENHAM

Portage la Prairie-area contractor Andrew Dykeman established this yard in the autumn of 1907. He does not appear to have been able to fire a kiln of brick that year as he expected, for he got busy building grain elevators. He got the yard going in July 1908 and burned his first kiln of brick late in August. The following year was a short season for the Dykeman yard, for he burned his first kiln of red brick in late September before he closed the yard in mid-October. During 1910 the area railway spur was extended to this yard, and there were four single- and two double-brick houses being constructed at Lavenham. That year Dykeman had orders for 2/3 of his year's production, with the largest portion going to Regina for some of its new government buildings.<sup>72</sup>

Details of the remaining years of the Lavenham yard are somewhat hazy. The yard is known to have started up for the 1912 season during late May. By September Dykeman's kiln could not keep pace with the rest of the brick works. This necessitated closing down the brick-makers until the driers could catch up. The final season of full operation probably came in 1913, though the business was still mentioned in the 1915, 1917 and 1919 Business Directories. In the spring and summer of 1915 Dykeman was supplementing his income by selling oats and shipping grain.<sup>73</sup>

## LAVENHAM

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1912-1914

Owner/Operator: M. McLean

Location: SW ¼-6-10-10-W1 (2 ½ miles N.E. of village)

Related Information: soft mud, common, buff-coloured brick

Source of information: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh 1931, Department of Energy and Mines files

# La BROQUERIE

Virtually nothing is known of this brick yard, which was operated by Joseph Pion about 1890. It is assumed that this was the same man who had a partnership with a man named Chartier in St. Boniface in 1882.<sup>74</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>72</sup> "Lavenham." Treherne Times, 20 September 1907, p. 8; 22 November 1907, p. 4; 28 August 1908, p. 8; 1 October 1909, p. 8; 15 October 1909, p. 8; 15 April 1910, p. 8; 20 May 1910, p. 8.

<sup>73</sup> Times, 24 May 1912, p. 8; 6 September 1912, p. 8; 12 June 1913, p. 8; 3 April 1915, p. 8; 2 July 1915, p. 8; Business Directory of Canada, 1915, p. 612; 1917, p. 551; 1919, p. 582.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>74</sup> Dominion Business Directory, 1890, p. 310; Manitoba Free Press, 10 June 1882, p. 2.

## LEARY'S

The brick plant at Leary, or Leary Siding as it was sometimes known, is the most intact of the old-time brick factories left in Manitoba. Part of this is dependent upon the isolation of the site, but its survival had chiefly come about because of the dogged determination of the Leary family. The founder, George Leary, was well-known throughout south-central Manitoba many years prior to his involvement with brick-making. He had apparently come to the Pembina Mountain/Nelson area about 1875, for a newspaper reference that fall said that he had logs cut and hewn for a two storey house, 20' x 25' in size. He did not seem to be content just to farm, and he soon became involved in the life of the community, sending in crop reports to a Winnipeg newspaper, running for political office (and losing), as well as being appointed one of the provisional directors of the Manitoba and South-Western Colonization Railway. Indeed, prior to all this he had been so busy on his farm that when he went into Emerson in the spring of 1879 he had not been there for three years. The International commented that he "owned a fine farm near Nelsonville." Over the ensuing years George Leary became well-known in farming circles and as a grain buyer. During the 1890s he spent some time in Ireland as a Dominion Government immigration agent, even writing a very articulate article about Canadian-Irish relations for a Morden newspaper in 1895. In the late 1890s he owned property in Morden, but also lived in Winnipeg. There, in partnership with a relative by marriage, Rodmond P. Roblin, he pursued a career as a grain dealer at the Grain Exchange.<sup>75</sup>

George Leary appears to have become interested in building materials in the fall of 1900 when the Manitou newspaper reported that he planned to start a large brick and cement business on three sections of land which he had bought six miles north of Altamont. Located on Boyne Creek, Leary claimed the land was valuable for fire brick and cement. In March 1901 the Boyne Valley Brick Works Company, Ltd. was incorporated. Its principals included a number of Winnipeg business and professional men, as well as George Leary, grain buyer, and his father-in-law, John Ager, listed as a Roseisle-area farmer. In April Mrs. Leary and their family came out to Altamont to join him, and by the middle of May, it was reported that the brick works was nearly complete. A month later all the machinery was said to be in place with brick ready to burn. At one point, there was even a rumour that Leary was also looking for coal on the property, though John Ager laid that to rest by saying that 209-foot deep test boring had shown no coal being present. During 1902 a Canadian Northern Railway spur track was mooted to run from Altamont over to the Boyne Valley Brick Works. Leary had samples of miniature sewer pipe and crockery made from this clay. He hoped to sell his brick for \$8.00 per thousand from his two varieties of clay. He also hoped to keep out the fire bricks imported from St. Louis, Missouri and Red Wing, Minnesota, which had 35% duty added as well as freight charges of 17 ½ cents per hundred pounds. In 1903 more brick machinery was shipped to Leary's factory to be operated by Snowdon and Carmichael. With this the yard operators hoped to make a half million bricks that summer.<sup>76</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>75</sup> "Pembina Mountains.", Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 23 October 1875, p. 2; 25 August 1877, p. 2; "Local Political Matters.", Emerson International, 24 July 1879, p. 5; 21 August 1879, p. 1; 8 January 1880, p. 5; 15 May 1879, p. 5; Morden Herald, 19 July 1895, p. 4; "Canada and Ireland.", Morden Monitor, 22 August 1895, p. 4; Morden Chronicles, 9 June 1898, p. 1; 31 August 1899, p. 1; Henderson's, 1898; 1899.

### ENDNOTES

By February 1904 one of the Carman newspapers was referring to this as “Leary town” which Roseisle claimed, perhaps facetiously, “as a suburb.” At the time the brick works had supposedly been at a standstill for the last season, but it was planned to start up again in the spring. George Leary was involved in the incorporation of the Carman-based Dominion Pressed Brick Company, Ltd. in March 1905. This new firm may have superseded the Boyne Valley firm, and featured Roblin ownership. This operation lasted only a few years, using the Leary plant and clay, though little else is known of its details. A 1907 article referred to the area as Leary Station, and complemented the firm on its large-scale operation and high grade pressed brick. A visit to the Dominion plant by federal government geologists that year stated that the plant turned out red dry pressed brick from an 1897 Boyd dry press machine. The 1907 output was 1.7 million bricks, and the operation employed 25 men whose wages averaged \$2.00 per day. Perhaps Dominion’s operations were inseparable from the Boyne Valley, but certainly the Leary plant had quickly become a big producer. Additional Ottawa reports in 1912 and 1915 spoke of the technical aspects of Leary’s supply, as well as describing tests upon the same shale at the Ontario Sewer Pipe Company plant at Mimico. According to later accounts, George Leary was not content with others having control of his creation, and regained it in 1910. After that time he and his sons operated it as Leary’s Brick Company. He was also involved, tangentially, in the debacle of the Carman-based Canada Tile and Fireproofing Company in 1913-1914. This evidently purchased Leary clay, which it transported the 18 miles to Carman for processing. Though floated as a brick plant the Carman business quickly evolved into a sewer pipe factory, ran for a few months, and then shut down, never to reopen. One suspects that the deal to use Leary clay involved the Carman firm staying clear of brick production so as not to compete with Leary’s bricks. A downturn in building in general, plus the exigencies produced by the First World War in the form of restrictions and manpower shortages killed many Western Canadian clay products plants at that time. Leary’s tried to carry on, but shut down in 1917, and once again the Leary family lost control of the property. It is not known when George Leary died.<sup>77</sup>

A son, William Allen Leary, would by the late 1930s regain control of the family plant. As a veteran he operated as a farmer under the Soldier Settlement Plant after World War I. He also ran an area sawmill between the wars. By those means he slowly regained ownership of the family’s beloved valley. He was apparently on the verge of restarting the plant in 1939 when the Second World broke out, and William Leary went back into the armed forces. After the war, however, matters were different. Leary and relative Rod Ager worked through most of the summer of 1947 putting the plant and its machinery back in order after 30 years. That November the fires in the 80,000-brick kiln was ignited once again, and Leary’s went back into small-scale production. William Leary still farmed and ran his sawmill, but in the summer of 1948 he had hopes of building more kilns to increase production, as well as replace some of the now-aging equipment. Some 7000 bricks from his first kiln were delivered to Carman that summer to be used in the new vault extension to the Bank of Commerce. Leary’s brick

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<sup>76</sup> Manitou Western Canadian, 10 October 1900, p. 1; Manitoba Gazette, 30 March 1901, pp. 162-163; Western Canadian, 17 April 1901, p. 1; 8 May 1901, p. 1; 19 June 1901, p. 1; 7 August 1901, p. 1; Carman Leader, 23 May 1901, p. 8; Western Canadian, 5 February 1902, p. 1; 6 May 1903, p. 1; “A Canadian Enterprise.”, Winnipeg Tribune, 6 February 1902, p. 8.

<sup>77</sup> “Roseisle Records.”, Dufferin Leader, 18 February 1904, p. 1; Manitoba Gazette, 8 April 1905, pp. 267-268; “Building Material.” Winnipeg Telegram, 5 December 1907, p. 15; Report on the Mining and Metallurgical Industries of Canada, 1907-1908. (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1908.), p. 652; Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces (Memoir 24E) (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912.), pp. 46-48; J. Keele, Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces (Part V), (Memoir 66) (Ottawa Government Printing Office 1915.), p. 5; “Bricks From the Roseisle Hills.”, Dufferin Leader, 8 July 1948, p. 2.

plant operated on a part-time basis for the next several years, and became the last of the old-time brick plants to do so. Rod Ager died in June 1952, and with that Leary lost his right-hand man. William Leary himself died in March 1953 at the age of 58. The family was unable or unwilling to carry on the brick plant, and so it was sold to Ervan Tallman, with the provision that the family could buy it back if he did not wish to continue making brick. He made one batch of bricks that ended in disaster, and so he sold back the plant and left. William Leary's son Donald, returned to the area in 1975, refurbishing the family's now-vandalized former home across the road from the plant. While the plant has not operated since 1953 it has remained relatively intact, and is viewed as an asset of the Leary family heritage.

## **LEARY'S**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1900-1904

Owner/Operator: Boyne Valley Brick Company (George Leary)

Location: SW ¼-13-6-8-W1

Related Information: Common and presses brick, light red in colour; scove kiln and circular down-draft kiln

Source of information: "Pembina Country: Land of Promise", Miami Museum Inc., 1974, The Times (newspaper) Treherne, Jan.19, 1987 family papers; " The Clays and Shales of Manitoba", Barry Bannatynne Department of Mines and Natural Resources, 1970,

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1904-1910

Owner/Operator: Dominion Pressed Brick Company Limited

Location: SW ¼-13-6-8W1

Related Information: financial difficulties forced initial investors to sell; Hon. R.P. Roblin was one of new owners; letters patent 1905

Sources of Information: "Pembina Country; Land of Promise", Miami Museum Inc., 1974 The Times (newspaper) Treherne, Jan/19, 1987, family papers; "The Clays and Shales of Manitoba" Barry Bannatyne, Department of Mines and Natural Resources 1970,

#### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1910-1917

Owner/Operator: George Leary (Leary Brick Works)

Location: SW ¼-13-6-8-W1

Related Information: poor demand for brick during W.W. I one factor in closing

Sources of Information: "Pembina Country ;Land of Promise", Miami Musuem Inc., 1974, The Times (newspaper) Treherne, Jan.19 1987 family papers;" The Clays and Shales of Manitoba", Barry Bannatyne Daprtment of Mines and Natural Resources, 1970



#### Operation 4

Dates of operation: 1947-1952

Owner/Operator: William Leary

Location: SW ¼-13-6-8W1

Related Information: William was son of George Leary. Machinery re-conditioned and building re-built. Production ceased with William's death in 1953. Site purchased by E. Tallman in 1962 but sold back to Mrs. Leary after unsuccessful test firing.

Sources of Information: "Pembina Country: Land of Promise" Miami Museum Inc., 1974, The Times (newspaper) Treherne, Jan. 19, 1987, family papers; "The Clays and Shales of Manitoba", Barry Bannatyne, Department of Mines and Natural Resources, 1970

#### Operation 5

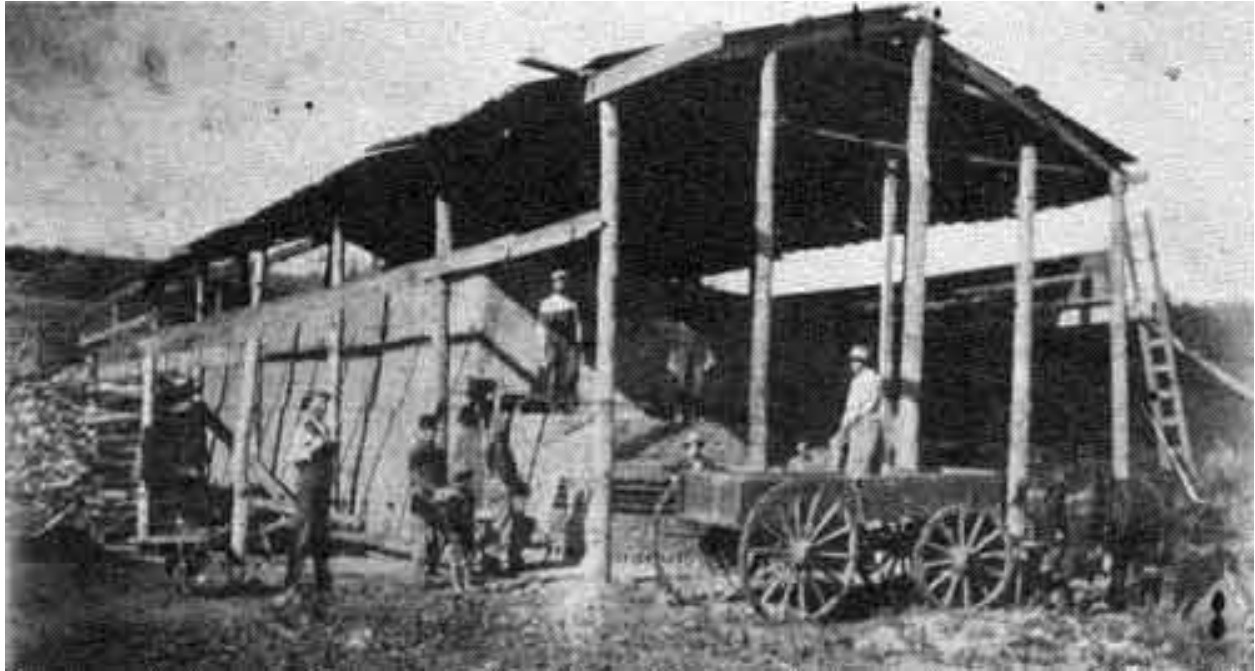
Dates of operation: 1962

Owner/Operator: E. Tallman (Tallclay Products)

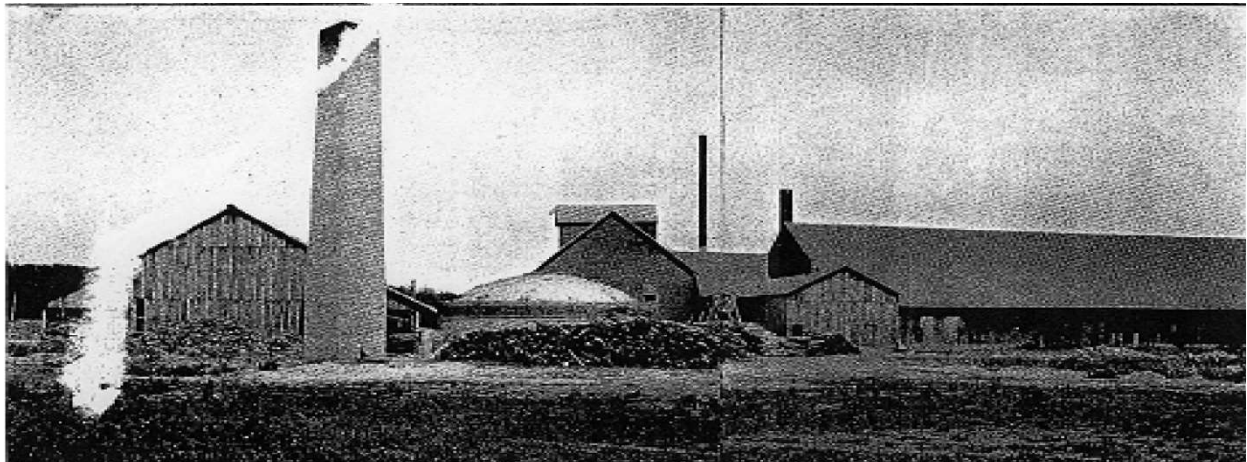
Location: SW ¼-13-6-8W1

Related Information: 1000,000 bricks fired in test; unsuccessful; property sold back to Mrs. Leary

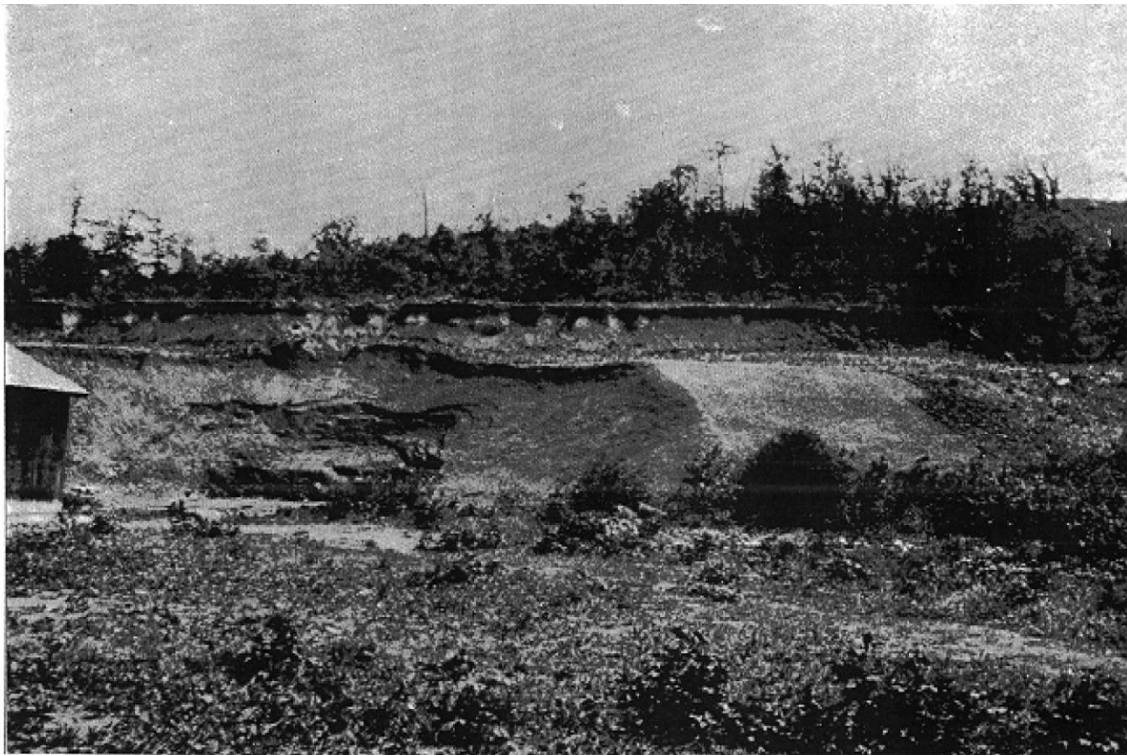
Sources of Information: Manitoba Department of Energy Mines files; Leary family documents



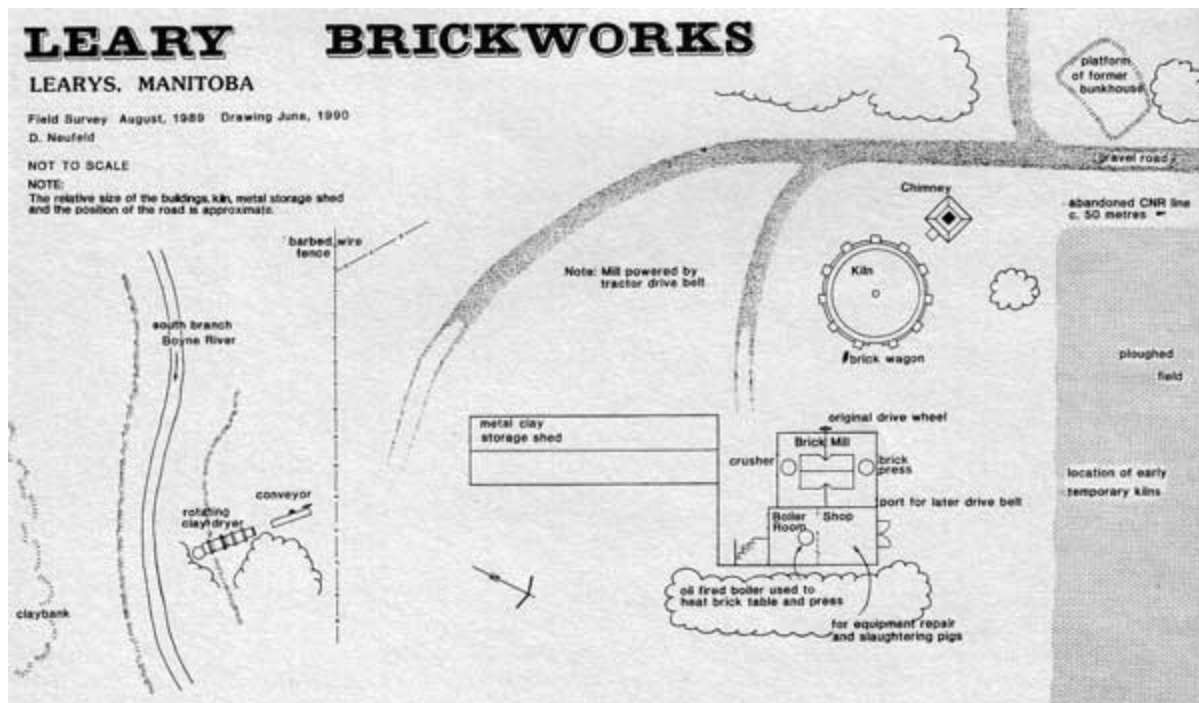
George Leary (left) supervising the dismantling of a kiln (Ina Brabant). This important photograph suggests the typical scove kiln practice that defined many brick operations in Manitoba in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.



Pressed Brick Plant Leary, Manitoba, 1911. (Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele, Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces. (Memoir 24E) (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912.), p. 48, Plate XVI.)



Shale Bank, Leary, Manitoba 1911. (Heinrich Rises and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces. (Memoir 24E) (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912.), p. 46, PLATE XVI.)



Site Plan of Leary's



A Letter head from the hey-day of the Leary Brick Plant. (E d Ledohowski.)



Brick plant at Leary's, 1989 (David Neufeld)

# LOCKPORT

## Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1971-1990

Owner/Operator: Red River Brick and Tile Company (parent company was 1-XL Industries Ltd., Medicine Hat, Alberta)

Location: Lockport

Related Information: Quarry at Ste. Rose du Lac provided most of the clay for production. Clay and sand also quarried northeast of Beausejour (Ladywood) and at 1.s.d. 15-4-23-15-W1. Capacity was 15 million bricks per year. Operated below capacity; employed 30 people for nine months; bricks in three sizes and twelve shades: also two sizes of paving brick. Manitoba was primary market, but also sold in Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

Source of information: "Industrial Mineral in Manitoba", Manitoba Energy and Mines, 1989, company brochures; "The Clays and Shales of Manitoba", Barry Bannatyne, Department of Mines and Natural Resources, 1970, interview with Bob Hurley, General Production Manager, Red River Brick and Tile Company, May 1992

# MACGREGOR

In April 1899 it was announced in the MacGregor Herald that D. Maclean (or McLean) would begin making brick as soon as his crops were in the ground: "This will be a great convenience for those in town who intend building this season." He engaged Walter Smith in manufacturing his bricks and the machinery for the yard arrived in late June. By mid-August Maclean had fired his first kiln of brick, though an accident to the machinery shut the yard down for a few days. When the yard closed for the season at the end of September 1899 the project was deemed very successful in spite of the lateness of the machinery installation.<sup>78</sup>

The MacGregor yard resumed operation in early May 1900 under the management of S. Winterbottom. By mid-June a sample of his brick was in the Herald office, which proclaimed it to be of "excellent quality." Unfortunately nothing else is presently known about the Maclean yard after that time. By May 1903 it was said that W. McLeod of Beaver was unloading a car of brick for his foundation, (source unstated), though the tone of the article does not suggest a MacGregor origin. Lastly, that autumn, P.W. Martin of MacGregor was veneering his store with a carload of brick that had been shipped to him. This would indicate that the Maclean yard was probably closed by 1903.<sup>79</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>78</sup> Macgregor Herald, 28 April 1899, p. 8; 5 May 1899, p. 8; 2 June 1899, p. 8; 30 June 1899, p. 8; July 1899, p. 8; 18 August 1899, p. 8; 29 September 1899, p. 8.

<sup>79</sup> Herald, 18 May 1900, p. 8; 22 June 1900, p. 8; 28 May 1903, p. 4; 12 November 1903, p. 8.

# MANIGOTAGAN

## Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1909-1913

Owner/Operator:

Location: Manigotagan River settlement

Related Information:

Source of information: "The Clays and Shales of Manitoba" Barry Bannatyne, Department of Mines and Natural Resources, 1970", Holland History Committee, 1967,

# MANITOU

In December of 1881 it was rumoured that "a brick maker has promised to give us (the Archibald area) brick by the million . . ." Archibald was 1½ miles northwest of Manitou, and it is unknown if the "promise" was kept. Manitou is not known to have had its own brick yard after that time, as is evidenced by the fact that it got its brick from Morden in 1887, and in the Wooton Block being built from Lac du Bonnet brick in 1903.<sup>80</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>80</sup> "Archibald", Emerson International, 22 December 1881, p. 7; Morden Monitor, 11 August 1887, p. 3; Manitou Western Canadian, 20 May 1903, p. 8.

# MELITA

In the late winter of 1905 local entrepreneur John Dobbyn announced that he would be starting a brick yard on a recently discovered source of brick clay near the town. The octogenarian Mr. Dobbyn was in the process of ordering a brick plant and would be forming a joint stock company for the exploitation of the site. In mid-April 1905, the Melita Lumber and Manufacturing Company, Ltd. was formed. This took over the operations of local pump manufacturers Badgley, Moorby and Wood, as well as the Melita lumber yard of Gauden, Dewitt and company. In the spring, Dobbyn and his sons Richard, John and Charles brought in a Winnipeg brick expert named McDonald to run the yard. McDonald had been in charge of one of the St. Boniface brick yards, and had been around the business since he was a boy. The brick machinery arrived by mid-May and the first bricks were made by mid-June, although a kiln was still being built. That summer the Dobbyn yard burned at least two kilns of brick.<sup>81</sup>

Little is known of the 1906 season at this yard, except that D. Morrison of Sudbury, Ontario was now managing the place. The following year, 1907, appears to have marked the peak of this yard's fortunes. When it opened that spring Dobbyn already had orders for one million bricks to go to Regina. Under Morrison's direction, the Melita yard was turning out 20,000 bricks per day and had an additional order for a half million bricks by late May. The product apparently had good colour and was nicely finished, being selected also for its durability. The colour was bright red, and supposedly Regina proved to be a steady market for Melita's wares. The first kiln totalled 200,000 bricks, and it is known that the Melita I.O.O.F. Hall (1907) used the local brick in its walls. The yard continued to function in 1908 and 1909. In the latter year Ted Skyes was the yard foreman and it was said that Melita brick was fast coming into demand. The yard had orders for a large number of brick and had a supply on hand to fill the demand until new bricks were manufactured. Unfortunately, the clay bed ran out by 1910, and area historians observe that the operation had not proven to be financially successful.<sup>82</sup>

## MELITA

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1905-1910

Owner/Operator: Melita Brick and Tile Company (J. Dobbyn et.al)

Location: NW ¼-30-3-26-W1

Related Information: soft-mud, common bricks, red in colour most production used locally; some shipped to Regina

Source of information: Melita History Book

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>81</sup> Melita Western Progress, 9 March 1905, p. 4; 16 March 1905, P. 1; "Joint Stock Company." Western Progress, 30 March 1905, pp. 4,5; Manitoba Gazette, 29 April 1905, pp. 347-348; Western Progress, 6 April 1905, p. 5; 11 May 1905, p. 1; 8 June 1905, p. 5; 15 June 1905, p. 5; 10 August 1905, p. 1.

<sup>82</sup> Western Progress, 7 June 1906, p. 4; 9 August 1906, p. 4; 18 April 1907, p. 4; 30 May 1907, p. 4; "Melita Brick go to Regina." Melita Enterprise, 30 May 1907, p. 1; Western Progress, 18 July 1907, p. 4; Enterprise, 21 May 1908, p. 5; 8 April 1909, p. 5; 10 June 1909, p. 4; Melita-Arthur History Committee, Our First Century, 1884-1984. (Altona: D.W. Friesen and Sons, 1983.), p. 337.

# Melita Brick



We have now on hand a large  
stock of

## FRESH BURNED BRICK

of the best quality ever turned out of  
the Melita yard. If you contemplate  
building let us quote you a price.  
Just as cheap and better than lumber.

For information enquire at the  
office of the Melita Lumber and Man-  
ufacturing Co., who will in future  
handle our brick.

**Melita Brick & Tile Company,**

MELITA, MAN.



## MILLWOOD

In the spring of 1904 Robert Myers installed a brick-making machine on a half section of land, three or four miles from Millwood. He expected his first output in early June. In the summer of 1905 Myers built a kiln to burn the thousands of bricks his machinery was producing. These would eventually be carried away on the CPR spur track which he still anticipated by late September. During the early autumn of 1907 a serious mishap injured a young Englishman when a kiln under construction suddenly collapsed. The yard proved a failure later that year. It had apparently been taken over by Charles H. Farrand, whose machinery and equipment were subsequently auctioned at a couple of distress sales in November and December 1907.<sup>83</sup>

W.B. Davis took up the cudgel of Millwood brick-making in 1908. He secured the services of Harry Safe, a well-known and experienced Manitoba brick-maker. A steam traction engine provided the motive power for the yard. A strike to protest an unpopular foreman took place in mid-June, but did not last for very long. Davis found a new site with superior clay on Hugh Farthing's farms. He transferred his machinery to that locale in early July, 1908. By mid-August, David was building a second kiln at the Farthing farm. The yard closed in mid-September, probably because of financial problems. A meeting of Davis' creditors in mid-December made arrangements that were satisfactory to all claimants. At the end of July 1909, Davis's brick-making plant was sold by auction. Thus ended brick making at Millwood.<sup>84</sup>

## MILLWOOD

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1904-1906

Owner/Operator: Robert Myers

Location: 1 ½ miles south of Millwood, near railway tracks

Related Information:

Source of information: "A Review of the Heritage Resources of Russel-Binscarth Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1987 (unpublished)

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1907

Owner/Operator: Farrand and Sage

Location: south of Northern elevator, Millwood

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "A Review of the Heritage Resources of Russell-Binscarth Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1987 (unpublished)

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>83</sup> "Millwood." Russell Banner, 9 June 1904 p. 1; 20 July 1905, p. 1; 28 September 1905, p. 1; 12 September 1907, p. 1; 21 November 1907, p. 1; 27 November 1907, pp. 1, 4; 12 December 1907, p. 1; 26 September 1907, p. 1.

<sup>84</sup> Banner, 27 February 1908, p. 1; 26 March 1908, p. 1; 23 April 1908, p. 1; 7 May 1908, p. 1; 18 June 1908, p. 1; 2 July 1908, p. 1; 13 August 1908, p. 1; 10 September 1908, p. 1; 3 December 1908, p. 8; 17 December 1908, p. 1; 21 January 1909, p. 1; 15 July 1909, p. 1.

### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1908

Owner/Operator: W.B. Davis

Location: north of Millwood; also NW ¼-14-20-29-W1

Related Information: two sites

Sources of Information: "A Review of the Heritage Resources of Russell-Binscarth Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1987 (unpublished)

## MINITONAS

What little is known of brick making in Minitonas appears to have happened chiefly in 1905. In August of that year Rutherford and Pogue burned a kiln of brick. They disposed of most of this product by early September. During mid-October it was noted that Winnipeg brick manufacturer Albert McCutcheon was in Minitonas "on business." The Rutherford and Pogue yard was last listed in the Business Directory during 1907-1908.<sup>85</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>85</sup> "Minitonas." Swan River Star, 4 August 1905, p. 4; 18 August 1905, p. 8; 13 October 1905, p. 8; Business Directory of Canada, 1907-1908, p. 470.

# MINNEDOSA

Brick-making in this community began in the autumn of 1882, when the entrepreneurs McDonald and Cuddy began to organize the Minnedosa Brick Company. Around December 1882 or January 1883 the duo issued a contract to cut fuel wood for the coming brick yard. That contract ran into problems because the brick company failed to take out the necessary timber permits. It would eventually wind up in court. Early in May McDonald and Cuddy disposed of their interest in the firm to John Crerar and Dr. J. B. Hunter of Minnedosa. For a brick-maker, the new owner hired a Mr. Bull of Salt Lake who had several years' experience in the Winnipeg brick yards. The yard was put into shape late in May, and a boarding house for the workers was erected. Brick-making started during the last days of May 1883. At the time, a stable was being constructed and the yard was being levelled. Soon, the operation was turning out 12,000 bricks per day. The approach of the Manitoba and North-Western Railway that summer sparked a building boom in Minnedosa. This included more substantial brick structures whose material source was the local yard. These were exemplified by G.W. Beynon's block on Minnedosa Street, as well as the local school, and possibly also the Town Hall. Unfortunately, the yard does not appear to have functioned in 1884. Instead, the brick company was successfully sued by its wood supplier, McGillivray. The end of this chapter was written in 1888 when A.S. Walker purchased the brick plant and moved it to Neepawa where he was starting a new yard.<sup>86</sup>

Minnedosa's second and final brick-making chapter began in March 1895, when it was announced that Major S. Fairbairn had purchased the right to make and sell a patent brick in the county of Minnedosa and the town of Neepawa. It is possible that his product was an early form of concrete block or artificial stone, based on a description of its various usages. This moulded product could be made up as cornices, arches, and keystone sills, in addition to brick shapes. The bricks were used that summer in the upper portion of A.C. Sewell's house on 1<sup>st</sup> Street, as well as in the addition to Fairbairn's own house. The Fairbairn brick sold at about the same price as the common variety. During 1896 Fairbairn brick sold at about the same price as the common variety. His bricks were also suitable for chimneys, and the plant also turned out sills, coping, borders for roadways, paths and flowerbeds. His product could be ordered in various colours, but generally resembled the finer quality of sandstone. Fairbairn's brick works was last mentioned in 1897, when he constructed a large addition to E.J Heppell's house on Minnedosa Avenue. While the lower part was built of stone, the upper part was built of patent brick.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>86</sup> "Minnedosa." Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 19 January 1883, p. 6; 16 February 1883, p. 5; 11 May 1883, p. 5; Commercial, 29 May 1883, p. 725; 12 June 1883, p. 763; 10 July 1883, p. 859; MWFP, 8 June 1883, p. 10; 16 August 1883, p. 11; 23 August 1883, p. 11; 30 August 1883, p. 7; 6 September 1883, p. 9; "The Spring Assizes." Manitoba Free Press, 2 April 1884, p. 1; "Legal Intelligence.", MFP, 3 April 1884, p. 4; Neepawa Register, 8 June 1888, p. 3.

## **MINNEDOSA**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1912

Owner/Operator: S. Fairbairn

Location: in Minnedosa, nest to river; clay also brought in from SE ¼-15-17-W1 (near Franklin) and Clanwilliam area

Related Information: serviced local demand only; one other brickyard may have been in operation at Minnedosa, but no information has been gathered; Fairbairn was furniture dealer, undertaker, and building contractor, and was ordering bricks from Gladstone in 1909

Source of information: "Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files; "Minnedosa Memories: A History of Minnedosa, 1958; interview with Bob Mummery, Minnedosa; "Minnedosa Valley Views," Minnedosa Centennial Committee, 1982, M. Wilson (Gladstone brickmaker) account book

## A NEW INDUSTRY.

### Bricks without Fire. Mr. Fairbairn's factory described.

Last Friday while in Minnedosa a representative of THE SPECTATOR visited the brickmaking establishment of Mayor Fairbairn to see the new brick which is being turned out by a patent process of which Mr. Fairbairn holds the exclusive right for this territory. Last year while on a visit east Mr. Fairbairn saw the brick being made at Sagua and at once became convinced of the suitability of the process for making bricks in this country. In fact he realized that here was the brick of the future and he showed his faith by investing a considerable sum in purchasing the patent right covering a large territory. This spring he set about making the brick here.

And this is what we saw. In a large shed two men and two boys were engaged turning out the bricks. The bulkiest ingredient is fine sharp flint sand, well sifted. With this is mixed portland cement, and this, owing to cost of importation proves to be a rather expensive ingredient. The cement is thoroughly mixed by one man, in a box, much the same as mortar is made. This is done dry and then the mixture is wet with water in which is dissolved certain chemicals and other substances and this is where the patent process comes in. The mixture is not made very damp, in fact it was remarkable that the mass seemed almost too dry to stick together. However the cement and chemicals act as a bond. While one man is mixing a lot of the raw material another man and the two boys are working the machine which is a very small iron press, into which a quantity of the preparation is put, and then by means of a lever, is pressed to the right size and shape. This work is done so quickly that after the man who is mixing has a lot prepared and takes a hand at the machine, it takes the two boys lively to carry the bricks and stand them on drying racks.

Here is another important difference in the making of the brick. The only further operation necessary to complete the brick is to spray it with water at intervals for two weeks or more, which is done with a hose attached to a force pump.

The bricks are of the color of sandstone though they can be made of any color. They can also be made any size or shape, and Mr. Fairbairn is turning out a nice shape for veneering, having a rounded rough face. For building he makes a brick one third large than the ordinary burned clay brick, and he also has the ordinary size which he sells for chimney brick. The new brick stands the test of fire almost like fire-brick. Mr. Fairbairn has experimented with the ordinary lime, instead of the Portland cement and he showed us some bricks made in this way, which were quite a bit better than clay bricks though not as good as the cement brick. One immense advantage is that there are no broken bricks. There is no fire used so none are cracked in making and they stand handling without a chip coming off. This we saw at Mr. Sewell's large new house in which the brick is being used. No broken pieces lay round except those cut by the mason's trowel. The enterprise of Mr. Fairbairn in introducing this new building material is meeting with success for the brick finds favor with all who see it.

Rapid City Spectator,

19 September 1895, p. 3.

## MORDEN

The brick yard in this community led an almost furtive, secretive existence. At least, that is how the matter appears on the surface. D. McGregor started a brick yard at Morden in April 1887. He burned his first kiln of brick in late July. Much of this product was deemed as “No. 1” in quality and was of handsome colour. McGregor’s first shipment was sent to Manitou, but the local newspaper was given to speculate that the wooden town of Morden would soon be “built up with handsome brick structures.” With the building of the new land office in 1889, the capacity of this yard was taxed, with some horse teams waiting their turn to haul brick. In the 1890s boulder stone became the material of choice for builders in Morden, and this gave the town the bulk of its handsome buildings for which it is well-known. It is probable that McGregor’s yard operated on a part-time basis. During 1895 local businessman Jacob Heiman purchased all the bricks in stock at McGregor’s yard. These amounted to about 40,000 in total. He also gave orders for a large umber to be manufactured that season. However, the McGregor yard seems to have been impaired that year, as brick was brought into town for Heiman’s new Manitoba Hotel (Hugh, McCowan, architect), though Heiman’s operations were hampered for a short time by non-arrival of brick.<sup>87</sup>

McGregor’s yard was still in operation in 1896 when the local newspaper made the observation that the bricks must have been dipped in some solution that gave them “a much darker appearance.” This was seen in Lyon’s new brick-veneered house. The yard was still in operation in 1897 when a human skeleton was discovered while workers were taking out clay at the yard. Boulder stone continued in demand in ensuing years, however, and it is assumed that this factor kept McGregor’s yard on a small scale. Also, what brick was being used seems to have come from outside sources, such as W.R. David’s yard at Deloraine, which supplied 100,000 bricks for John Kennedy’s new Arlington House hotel in 1901, or St. Boniface yard which had sold local businessmen Schmitz 45,000 bricks two years earlier. In 1902 a Winnipeg newspaper barely made reference to McGregor’s yard, stating that “a small brick yard is also operated within a short distance of Morden.” McGregor’s yard apparently faded from the scene, and in November 1909 a Daniel McGregor, aged 48, died in Morden. He was termed a pioneer of the area, though the newspaper made no mention of his occupation, and one is left to wonder if this was the brick-maker.<sup>88</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>87</sup> Morden Monitor, 14 April 1887, p. 3; 28 July 1887, p. 3; 11 August 1887, p. 3; 4 July 189, p. 1; 18 April 1895, p. 1, 27 June 1895, p. 1; 18 July 1895, p. 1; 25 July 1895, p. 1; Nor’Wester, 13 May 1895, p. 5.

<sup>88</sup> Monitor, 15 October 1897, p. 1; 19 August 1897, p. 5; Morden Chronicle, 21 July 1898, p. 5; 30 March 1899, p. 1; Deloraine Times, 26 May 1899, p. 1; 6 June 1901, p. 1; Chronicle, 28 September 1899, p. 5; “Pembina Mountain Country.” Winnipeg Telegram, 19 April 1902, p. 1(3); “Death of Daniel McGregor.” Morden Empire, 25 November 1909, p. 5.

## **MORDEN**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1890-1915

Owner/Operator: D. MacGregor

Location: South of town

Related Information:

Source of information: "Architectural Heritage; The MSTW Planning Heritage and recreation, 1984,  
"Morden, Mort Cheval, Pinancewaywinning, Lake Agassiz" Morden Centennial Committee, 1981

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1937-1938

Owner/Operator: E.H. Spencer

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Annual Report of the Mineral Production of Canada," Canada Dominion Bureau  
of Statistics: Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Branch 1973.

# MORRIS

Brick-making in this town had an on-going, off-going relationship that was probably created by the ups and downs of the local economy. As Scratching River became Morris in the early summer of 1875 the place had ambitions as a railway centre, as well as a prominent spot for the river traffic. That summer “an enterprising young man” named William A. Russell started what was seen as an “extensive brick yard.” During early June he expected to have fired his first kiln of 100,000 bricks by Dominion Day. During 1876 he was described as manufacturing bricks of a “superior quality” which sold for \$10.00 per thousand. His bricks were being used in buildings erected by himself, William Gallie and in the new school-house. That autumn 12 of Russell’s bricks won a prize at the Provincial Exhibition. By 1877 Morris had two brick yards, the other one started by Gallie who had witnessed Russell’s success. Two yards were still in existence at Morris in 1879, and brick remained at about the same price as in 1876. In 1880 Gallie and Russell had probably combined their efforts. George Glines, a local real estate speculator, advertised a “brickyard to let” that summer. This was probably the Gallie and Russell yard, for another entity, Weight (Wait?) brothers joined the brick-making fraternity at Morris. By September 1880 this firm and its foreman, A. Ross, had burned 70,000 bricks, and these were being used in the new school erected that year. By August 1882, when a promotional booklet about Morris was issued, brick-making was not mentioned as a local industry.<sup>89</sup> Like that of Emerson to the south, at around the same time, Morris’ star was beginning to set for the time being

Brick-making at this place was revived in 1907, when tests were made on clay found on the property of John Wilton and others at the north end of town. Plans were announced that a 40,000 brick per day factory was to be established under the supervision of a Winnipeg brick expert, Mr. Windsor. Around the time the Morris Brick Manufacturing Company Ltd. was incorporated in mid-June, the firm had all its equipment in place, including 1400 feet of brick racks. Mr. Windsor was also off to Estevan, Saskatchewan to investigate the possible use of soft coal in place of wood as fuel in the kilns. In July, however, the place was at a standstill because the brick moulds had been lost in transit after leaving the Ohio factory. This was very serious loss, and may have motivated the firm to sell its equipment to a Medicine Hat, Alberta firm that fall.<sup>90</sup>

The Morris Brick Company began production in the spring of 1908, completing its first kiln of brick in late June. The product was said to be of a clean, rich colour, with a metallic hardness. By early August the firm was burning another kiln of 250,000 bricks under the supervision of a new burner, a Mr. Dubreuil of St. Boniface. A major project which used this firm’s bricks was the new Morris School, built during 1908 (W.M. Blair, architect). By early 1909 there seemed to be trouble on the horizon, for the firm was reorganized, with 51% of the shares being sold to a group of “practical” men headed by Winnipeg brick-maker Albert N. McCutcheon. The group planned to install an “up to date” brick plant worth \$7000 that featured two machines – one of ordinary brick and the other hollow brick (tile). The

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>89</sup> “Scratching River (Morris)”, Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 5 June 1875, p. 5; 22 July 1876, p. 3; “The Provincial Show”, MWFP, 7 October 1876, p. 5; 1 December 1877, p. 5; “Morris”, Emerson International, 24 July 1879, p. 1; 11 September 1879, p. 5; Henderson’s, 1880, p. 128; “Morris”, Morris Herald, 18 June 1880, p. 1; International, 2 September 1880, p. 2; Morris, Manitoba-Growth and Progress (Morris; Herald, 1882).

<sup>90</sup> “Morris to have Brickyard.” Herald, 16 May 1907, p. 1; Manitoba Gazette, 29 June 1907, pp. 803-804; Herald, 13 June 1907, pp. 4, 8; 18 July 1907, p. 4; 21 September 1907, p. 4.



yard did not produce anything that summer while this work was being done. By November workers were taking down the brick racks for reinstallation the next spring. Samples produced at a Winnipeg plant gave bricks of a rich cream colour. Some alarm was produced in February 1910 among the original shareholders, whose share values had fallen from \$50 to \$30 in the reorganization, with an offer from the new shareholders to buy them out. When some type of agreement was made between the old and the new shareholders in mid-April, it was found that no preparation had been made to install the \$7000 worth of new equipment. Within a week, however, work had begun on a CPR spur track into the facility, and by mid-May workers were reinstalling the 40 rows of brick racks, with their 405,000 unit capacity. The mill equipment had also arrived. The kilns were 320' x 36' in size, with a capacity of 1.8 million bricks from an output of 45 to 50,000 bricks per day. The yard was to employ 40 to 45 workers. By September 1910 the yard had shipped 50 cars of brick to various points, and appeared to be a success.<sup>91</sup>

In 1912, the battle of the shareholders once more reared its head, but was, perhaps, finally settled. After that time, the Morris Herald seemed to lose interest in this important industrial plant. It is known that the brick yard operated at full capacity in 1912, as the firm had a contract with the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway for three million bricks. After that time operation becomes a mystery. Probably the plant was shut down during World War I for the same reasons that plagued other brick plants in Western Canada at that time. It reopened sometime in the spring of 1920, when it was said that there was now an urgent demand for brick. The firm was reorganized that summer as the Western Brick Company, Ltd. by a group of Winnipeg businessmen, but only ran at half capacity. The burning was in the charge of McCutcheon. Its final year seems to have been 1921.<sup>92</sup>

## **MORRIS**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1876-1881

Owner/Operator: Mr. Russell, Later Russell and Gallie

Location: on river bank, between the two railway

Related Information: bricks sold for \$ 10.00 per 1000

Source of information: "Winnipeg Free Press," July 15, 1876, "Furrows in the Valley," R.M. of Morris, Manitoba, 1980.

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>91</sup> Herald, 28 June 1908, p. 8; 23 July 1908, p. 1; 6 August 1908, p. 1; "Morris Brick Company Reorganized." Herald 3 June 1909, p. 1; "Morris Brick Samples of Highest Quality." Herald, 16 September 1909, p. 1; 18 November 1909, p. 8; "The Morris Brick Company." Herald, 17 February 1910, p. 1; 3 March 1910, p. 1; 21 April 1910, p. 1; 19 May 1910, p. 1; "Morris Brickyard Largest in Manitoba." Herald, 26 May 1910, p. 1; 8 September 1910, p. 8.

<sup>92</sup> "The Brick Yard." Herald, 21 September 1911, p. 4; 5 October 1911, p. 8; 8 February 1912, p. 5; 23 May 1912, p. 1; 8 July 1920, p. 1; Manitoba Gazette, 14 August 1920, p. 1023; Herald, 15 July 1920, p. 8; 26 August 1920, p.; 25 August 1921, p. 5.

### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1881

Owner/Operator: Wright Brothers

Location:

Related Information: possibly bought from Russell

Sources of Information: "Annual Report of the Mineral Production of Canada," Canada Dominion Bureau of Statistics: Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Branch 1973.

### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1904-1907

Owner/Operator: A. Chisholm et al

Location:

Related Information: possibly former Wright brothers operation

Source of information:

### Operation 4

Dates of operation: late 1800's

Owner/Operator: Wilton et al

Location: north end of town, west side of C>P>R> tracks

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Furrows in the Valley," R.M. of Morris, Manitoba, 1980

### Operation 5

Dates of operation: 1908-1914

Owner/Operator: A. McCutcheon (Morris Brick Manufacturing Co. Ltd. – letters patent, 1907)

Location: ½ mile southeast of town, along the Canadian Northern railway, (NW ¼-33-4-1-E1)

Related Information: McCutcheon formerly owned brickyard in Winnipeg, May have bought out A. Chisholm operation.

Source of information: "Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces", H. Ries and J. Keele, Canada Department of Mines, (Geological Survey Branch), 1912

# NEEPAWA

In January 1888 local contractor A.S. Walker announced that he planned to establish a 15,000 brick-per-day plant in Neepawa. He may have had Winnipeg backing in his enterprise. That March Walker hauled 70 cords of four-foot cordwood into town for his new brick yard. A month later he brought in a practical brick-maker from Winnipeg to sample the local clay and select a site. Walker's intended site did not work out, and as a result he and his expert were casting about for a site with suitable clay. It would appear that the clay around the Whitemud River area had too many pebbles, and for that reason good brick clay in the Neepawa area was then in short supply. Walker found good clay some 11 miles north of town in the Eden area. He was so confident that this was the right spot that he went to Minnedosa to purchase the discussed brick plant there which had not operated since 1883. He soon bought the farm where the good clay was found, and by late July Walker was building his first kiln, and showing early samples to the local newspaper. A second kiln of bricks followed that October. Walker probably did not have a second season of brick-making.<sup>93</sup>

It is believed that Walker sold his brick yard to Neepawa entrepreneur William Currie, probably in the spring of 1889. In May the Neepawa Register reported that a gang of men had gone up from Neepawa to work on the brick yard, expecting the first kiln of bricks in six weeks. The tone of the article would indicate that Currie had taken over an established operation. By late May Currie's workers were moulding brick at the rate of 10,000 per day, and were getting ready to fire a kiln of 120,000 bricks. Currie delivered his first load of bricks—still warm—to a customer in Neepawa on 2 July 1889. By the middle of the month a second kiln of 175,000 bricks had been burned, and a still larger kiln was under construction. While Currie sold brick to the general community it is known that he personally built four brick houses in Neepawa that summer and autumn. Also, Neepawa brick carried off a prize at the Carberry Fair that year, Currie having produced about 475,000 bricks, most of which had been sold.<sup>94</sup>

The early 1890s were good years for Currie's yard. He could run 100,000 bricks at a time through his kilns, and by mid-August 1890 he had moulded 530,000 bricks for the season, expecting to double that number by the end of the season if the weather held. By the same time in 1891 Currie expected to make 600,000 bricks. It had been said that spring that in the past two years "two thirds of the private residences and business stands . . . [in Neepawa] have been [built] of brick." Much of this was due, of course, to Currie's efforts. By the end of the 1891 season he was burning a final kiln of 250,000 bricks, and had orders for the following spring for three blocks in Neepawa. There were also a number of area farmers who had become interested in building in brick. Little is known of the 1892 season at this yard, except that its operations began late, in mid-June. Near year's end it was also announced that a new brick Methodist Church to hold 100 was to be erected at Currie's corner, 12 miles north of Neepawa where his family had a farm. One is of little doubt as to the origin of the brick in this case. Currie's yard entered into a regular period of production for the next several years. In addition to running the brick yard Currie also followed his other pursuits as a builder, businessman, and Neepawa Town Clerk. In the summer of 1896 the Currie yard was still producing 500,000 white and pink bricks per year which sold at

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>93</sup> Neepawa Register, 30 December 1887, p. 2; 27 January 1888, p. 3; 30 March 1888, p.3; 27 April 1888, p. 3; 18 May 1888, p. 3; 8 June 1888, p. 3; 15 June 1888, p. 3; 25 July 1888, p. 3; 5 October 1888, p. 3.

<sup>94</sup> Register, 10 May 1889, p. 8; 24 May 1889, p. 8; 5 July 1889, p. 8; 19 July 1889, p. 8; 30 August 1889, p. 8; 3 October 1889, p. 8; 10 October 1889, p. 8; 13 December 1889, p. 8.

\$10.00 per thousand, with many shipments to Minnedosa, Shoal Lake, Birtle and other places. Currie kept up this pace until the spring of 1897 when he contracted a severe cold in the brick yard. This eventually worsened into tuberculosis, which killed him at age 41 on 17 May 1898. It is not believed that the brick yard operated that year. Indeed, Currie's affairs were put into the hands of a business associate, James A. Roberts, after the former's death. That autumn Roberts put the brick yard and plant up for sale. It is not known if he was successful at selling it, as Henderson's listed Roberts among its "brick manufacturers" in its editions from 1900 to 1905.<sup>95</sup>

That latter year proved to be the birth of Neepawa's second brick yard, located a mile south of town, on the farm of Stephen Benson, next to the Canadian Northern Railway track. Benson was one of the partners in this venture, which included local businessman J.H. Howden, as well as W.S. Partridge and Harry Sage of the Strathclair and Newdale yards. In fact, the brick plant from Strathclair was being used in the new Neepawa yard. It was set up in good time, the yard burning its first kiln of 100,000 bricks by mid-June 1905. At that time the Neepawa Brick Company was turning out 15,000 bricks per day, and it was believed that local use would take up all of these. While a spur track into this facility was being surveyed the firm delivered its first bricks to John McKane, who was veneering a new house in the north end of Neepawa. The brick was a brown-red in colour, heavy and firm in form. A carload was shipped to Elphinstone at the same time for the residence of H. T. Morton. Neepawa bricks were said, that fall, to have been used in the largest blocks. The yard's second year found a second kiln under construction that would hold 200,000 bricks in mid-July, with a 20 horsepower traction engine providing motive power for the brick mill.<sup>96</sup>

An October 1908 article in the Neepawa Press extolled the virtues of this local industry. The 100-foot long brick racks were covered to keep the green bricks dry and had a capacity of 350,000 bricks. As well, the yard had produced 1.2 million bricks between 15 May and 1 September that year. Of those, a quarter million were used in the Neepawa Post office, and another 600,000 in the Provincial Government Telephone Exchange in Winnipeg (probably the Garry Exchange, 474 Hargrave Street). Smaller quantities were sent to Battleford, Moose Jaw, Dauphin and Cypress River, while 300,000 had gone to Minnedosa. In total, the yard had fired 9 kilns that season, which consumed 500 cords of wood for the firings, the plant being run by George Giesel. It had two wells, 18 experienced workers and paid \$3000 in wages during 1908. It was in its regular period of production that year, and that situation would last several more years. A 1911 visit to the yard by Dominion Government geologists noted that the bricks were of a fairly good red colour, but that the surfaces were disfigured by moulding sand marks. They also noticed the prevalence of pebbles in the clay which necessitated their screening or crushing. The pebble situation, of course, had plagued Walker in his search for a site two decades earlier. The yard continued to enjoy good times until a building downturn began, which culminated in World War I labour shortages. The yard was still in production in June 1915, and employed 16 hands with management considering a plant enlargement to include a pressed brick plant. Curiously, they cited

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>95</sup> Register, 27 June 1890, p. 8; 16 August 1890, p. 8; 28 August 1891, p. 8; "The Building Boom", Register, 3 April 1891, p. 1; 20 November 1891, p. 8; 17 June 1892, p. 8; 25 November 1892, p. 1; "Neepawa." Brandon Mill, 30 January 1890, p. 1; "Neepawa.", Portage la Prairie Review, 10 May 1893, p. 1; "Neepawa's Business Establishments." Colonist, September 1896, p. 86; Register, 20 May 1898, p. 1; "death of William Currie." Neepawa Press, 19 May 1898, p. 5; "Brick Plant for Sale." Press, 26 October 1898, p. 8.

<sup>96</sup> Register, 30 March 1905, p. 1; 13 April 1905, p. 1; 4 May 1905, p. 1; 15 June 1905, p. 1; 29 June 1905, p. 8; 19 October 1905, p. 1; 19 July 1906, p. 3.

a “brisk demand” for brick, even though little building was taking place. That fall the yard probably shut down for good, never to reopen. Up to the 1980s the ruins of the brick plant proved to be a constant source of adventure for area children.<sup>97</sup>

## **NEEPAWA**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1905-1912

Owner/Operator: Neepawa Brick Company

Location: 1 mile south of town, beside Canadian Northern railway, NW ¼-21-14-15-W!

Related Information: Two down-draft kilns with capacity of 1000,000 bricks each. Bricks are red in colour; NBC in frog. Roberts may have had brickworks as early as 1900.

Source of information: “Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces”, H. Ries, and J. Keele, Canada Department of Mines (Geological Survey Branch), 1912; Neepawa Heritage Book

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>97</sup> “The Neepawa Brick Yard/”, Neepawa Press, 9 October 1908, p. 4; Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces. (Memoir 24 E) (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912), p. 27; “Neepawa.” Winnipeg Telegram, 26 June 1915, p. 5(2); Manitoba Telephone Directory, February 1915; February 1916; “The Old Brick Yard.” In History Book Committee. Heritage - A History of the Town of Neepawa and District. (Neepawa: n.p., 1983.) p. 42.

## BRICK PLANT FOR SALE.

Offers will be received by the undersigned for a brickyard and a complete outfit for making brick situated on the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec 26, Tp. 16, Rng. 15; separate offers for the plant or land alone will receive consideration. For all information respecting the same apply at once to

Jas. A. Roberts, Neepawa.

Was this the last gasp of William Currie's brick yard? (Neepawa Press, 26 October 1898, p. 8.)

## NELSONVILLE (NELSON)

In the history of most community brick yards in Manitoba, the operation most often ended before the community died. The case was reversed in the matter of Nelsonville, a town that literally moved away from its yard. The town had placed great hopes in the late 1870s that the Manitoba South-Western Colonization Railway (later the CPR) would come to its neighbourhood, thereby providing the impetus for the land boom that would make Nelsonville into the metropolis of its area. The future boom town attracted its first scattered settlers, such as future brick-maker George Leary, in the early 1870s. Talk of a railway connection during the latter part of the decade caused the place to grow. In the early summer of 1879 there was no brick yard at Nelsonville, though it was felt by some that there was an opening for brick-making. Almost by coincidence, within a month stage coach driver Joe Rinn was preparing the ground for a brick yard two miles west of the town. It was hoped that brick production would start in six weeks, and sell at reasonable rates. The success of Rinn's venture is uncertain, for no further mention was made of his efforts. Instead, the following year, Thomas Moran set up a yard, possibly at the Rinn site. Moran fired his first kiln of brick during late October 1880 and sold his product directly at the kiln. By early November he stated that most of his brick had already been ordered. However, later that month the Nelsonville Brick Yard was selling brick only every Wednesday. Moran's advertisement ran through the middle of January 1881, after which time Moran vanished from the Nelsonville scene.<sup>98</sup>

Some brick, though not enough, was available for the building of St. Thomas Anglican Church in the summer of 1881. It is probable that this was 1880 production from the Moran plant. For the Anglican Church it was believed that Joe Rinn could supply some, giving rise to the thought that he had resumed operation of his yard. In November 1881 Rinn advertised tenders for the manufacture of 100,000 bricks. Later in the season it was thought to be necessary to team the necessary brick from the yard at Emerson. A couple of "rescuers" came to the aid of the Nelsonville brick shortage in the fall of 1881. In October, Winnipeg entrepreneur George Young announced that he would start a brick yard at Nelsonville in the spring of 1882. This proposal, as promising as it sounded, fell though, probably as the result of another brick yard proposal around the same time. This was the Nelsonville Brick and Tile Company, formed by local businessman Henry McKay. McKay did not wait for the spring of 1882 to begin this yard – indeed he was advertising in mid-October for 50 cords of hard wood to be delivered to his yard. He hired L. S. Sims of Snowflake to run the yard, planning to make two million bricks. By early summer 1882 the Nelsonville yard began operations, expecting to fill brick orders by mid-August of that year. This was accomplished, and it is known that Dr. D.H. Wilson's residence was probably veneered with the local product. At present nothing is known of the remainder of the 1882 season, and the same is true of most of the 1883 season. The town had been incorporated as "Nelson" during 1882. Nelson citizens began to move to the rail point which was beginning to be called "Morden." With them went some of the more portable buildings, and Nelson died. In early September 1883 McKay advertised 30,000 bricks for sale. The advertisement ran until mid-July of the following year, obviously with few takers in an area with no rail connection to carry the bricks. By then McKay was enlarging his hotel at Morden, his new place of business.<sup>99</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>98</sup> "Nelsonville", Emerson International, 5 June 1879, p. 1; 3 July 1879, p. 1; 26 August 1880, p. 2; Manitoba Mountaineer, 27 October 1880, p. 1; 3 November 1880, p. 1; 24 November 1880, p. 5; 19 January 1881, p. 5.

**BRICKS!**

**30 000** First Class Hard Bricks for sale by the  
 Nelson Brick and Tile Manufacturing  
 Company. Also a large quantity of Soft Bricks, at  
 \$10 per thousand.

Days of delivery Mondays and Saturdays.

HENRI MCKAY,  
 Manager

Nelson, Sept. 7th, 1883.

The end of McKay's brick yard. *Manitoba Mountaineer*, 15 September 1889, p. 5.)

<sup>99</sup> *Mountaineer*, 13 September 1881, p. 1; *International*, 3 November 1881, p. 6; *Mountaineer*, 4 October 1881, p. 1; 11 October 1881, pp. 1,3; 24 January 1881, p. 1; "Nelsonville.", *International*, 26 January 1882, p. 3; *Mountaineer*, 11 July 1882, p. 1; 22 August 1882, p.; 5 September 1882, p. 1; 15 September 1883, p. 5; 19 July 1884, p. 3; 27 September 1884, p. 1.



# NEWDALE

The Newdale brick yard was actually situated some miles away, in the Marney District (22:15:21W). It was begun about 1903 by Jack and Harry Sage and Bob and Joe Partridge, who fired their first kiln of brick on 23 June of that year. Around that time their bricks were used in the new Anglican Church and in Dr. Rutherford's house at Strathclair. The Sage-Partridge yard, which was located on SE 6:16:21W, operated for two summers under brick-maker/manager George Bull. The clay was "played out" by September 1904 in spite of the yard having been seen as "a place of hustle" a few months earlier. According to the area history, the bricks were not uniform in colour, ranging from yellowish to red, depending on where they had been in the kiln. The Strathclair Town (now community) Hall (1904-1905, S.F. Peter, architect) was supposedly built from this brick, as was a house on SW 32:15:21W, in 1906. During 1909, John and Harry Sage bought a brick machine and started a yard on NW 5:15:21W near Cardale. Its clay soon "played out" at the new location, ending brick-making in the Newdale area.<sup>100</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>100</sup> "Marney," Shoal Lake Star, 4 June 1903, p. 1; 9 July 1903, p. 1; "Strathclair", Star, 27 August 1903, p. 1; 29 October 1903, p. 1; 15 September 1904, p. 1; 30 June 1904, p. 1; Newdale Community Historical Society. Newdale-1870-200. (Brandon: Leech Printing, 2000.), pp. 113, 443.



Staff, Sage-Partridge Brick Yard, Near Marney, 1904. (Newdale Community Historical Society. Newsdale-1870-2000. Brandon: Leech Printing, 2000. p. 113)

# NINGA

Almost nothing is known of a brick yard which was run at or near this place by William Maloney between 1895 and 1899.<sup>101</sup>

## NINGA

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1895-1899

Owner/Operator: W. Maloney

Location:

Related Information:

Source of information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1895-1899

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>101</sup> Henderson's Directory, 1895, pp. 557, x; 1896, p. 66, xi; 1897, p. Xi; 1898, p. Xi; 1899, p. Xi.

# OAK LAKE

This town, situated southeast of Virden, had at least three encounters with the clay products industry. The first was that of the American Pottery Company which operated about 1884. It made crocks and bowls, but went out of business quickly, according to local historians. The second episode came in 1892 when Lemon Cook started a brick yard four miles south of the town. That spring he had seven men working, and by late May had several thousand bricks ready for firing. His first kiln was apparently a success, and he prepared another 140,000 of his sun-dried bricks for firing in late June. The advent of Cook's competition that summer, however, ended Cook's efforts and introduced Oak Lake to its third, and probably the last encounter with brick-making. Amable Marion was a local farmer who was part of the Marion family of St. Boniface brick-makers. In July 1892 he started a brick yard down by the lake. According to local historian, Mr. Berard built the brick yard machinery. The Marion yard was in full production in 1893, and by early August he had 100,000 pure white bricks of "a good colour" made and burned. Some of those brick were used in the Oakwood School, Oak Lake, which was built that year. The Marion yard was in business until about 1899-1900 when the lakeshore clay ran out.<sup>102</sup>

## OAK LAKE

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1894-1897

Owner/Operator: Amable and Roger Marion

Location: On Eastern shore of Oak Lake, at level area north of the island

Related Information: listed in Henderson Northwest Directories from 1898-1900, but may not be reliable information

Source of information: "A Review of the Heritage Resources of Virden – Wallace Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1986

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>102</sup> Oak Lake History Committee. Ox Tails to Blacktop. (Altona: D.W. Friesen and Sons, 1982.) p. 36; "Oak Lake", Virden Chronicle, 26 May 1892, p. 2; 23 June 1892, p. 3; "Oak Lake." Virden Advance, 2 June 1892, p. 1; 23 June 1892, p. 1; 3 August 1893, p. 1; Business Directory of Canada and Newfoundland, 1899, pp. 470-471; Henderson's, 1900, p. 910.

# PILOT MOUND

Brick-making in this community began in the summer of 1881 when Robert Snowball started a yard in the area. Though all of his year's production had been bargained for by early July, and despite a short production season, his efforts were considered a success. Snowball did not return the following year. By September 1882, however, his place had been taken by Harry Steadman of Winnipeg who was then firing a kiln of brick. Like Snowball's efforts, Steadman's operation of the yard was short lived. By 1890, the Pilot Mound Sentinel was boosting the area as a good one for brick yard businesses, stating that there was good brick clay, a good supply of water, an unlimited supply of wood at \$2.00 per cord, and a large geographic area as a market. At the time, Davis Brothers, formerly of Brandon, were on the lookout for a good situation for their brick-making efforts. Eventually, Hiram and Elwin Davis would start a brick yard at Sidney.<sup>103</sup>

Brick-making at Pilot Mound resumed in the spring of 1897 on Donald Frazer's property near the old Steadman yard site. Thomas Dearlove started this yard with the services of two practical brick-makers from the United States. By mid-June Dearlove's yard had buildings in place, and was awaiting the brick machinery. According to the Sentinel the plant would produce 10 to 12,000 bricks per day. Dearlove's first kiln in July was 50,000 bricks, followed by another 100,000. That year, the Kemp house on NW 36:3:11W was built from Dearlove's bricks. These appeared to be a buff or red brick, though the house used white bricks in its quoins and windows labels. Dearlove's yard would later produce the brick for Pilot Mound Public School (1904, J.H.G. Russell, architect). At that time Pilot Mound brick could be had at the kiln for \$9.00 per thousand, or at the job site for \$10.00. The brick in the school appeared lighter in colour than that found at the Kemp house, and so it was assumed that the Dearlove yard produced various colours of brick. According to directory sources Thomas Dearlove was in the brick business until about 1912.<sup>104</sup>

## PILOT MOUND

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1881-1915

Owner/Operator: 1. Carson, 2. H. Steadman, 3. T. Dearlove

Location: SW ¼-21-3-11 W!

Related Information: soft mud bricks

Source of information: "Memories of Pioneer Days at Pilot Mound", William Reid, 1930: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh 1931, Department of Energy and Mines files

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>103</sup> Emerson International, 7 July 1881, p. 3; "Pilot Mound." Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 22 July 1881, p. 3; International; 24 November 1881, p. 3; Winnipeg Sun, 7 September 1882, p. 8; William Reid. Memories of Pioneer Days at Pilot Mound. (Pilot Mound: Sentential Print, 1930.), p. 15; "Good Opening for A Brickyard." Pilot Mound Sentinel, 23 October 1890, p. 1.

<sup>104</sup> "It Ought to Pay", Sentinel, 14 May 1897, p. 1; "A New Industry.", Sentinel, 11 June 1897, p. 1; "Bricks.", Sentinel, 23 July 1897, p. 1; "Some New Dwellings.", Sentinel, 6 August 1897, p. 1; Pilot Mound Museum Inc. Captured Memories, (Altona: Friesen's Corporation, 2000.), p. 26; "Tenders", Sentinel, 8 July 1901, p. 8.

## PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

Brick-making at “The Portage” dates to 1879-1880 when a William Turber was listed in the Henderson’s Directory for 1880 and 1881. Unfortunately nothing else is presently known of his operation or products. Indeed, the Free Press in November 1880 failed to recognize his existence when they advised that “A brick yard is much needed for the Portage. Will some enterprising individual go into the business? There’s wealth in it.” The “enterprising individual” made himself apparent the following spring in the form of W. Lockey. That gentleman probably took over the Turber brick yard, making some 400,000 bricks between the spring and autumn of 1881. The Portage Brick Yards also assumed a partner, William Patterson Smith, who joined the firm that fall. His contribution to the operation came because he owned a farm in the east end of Portage la Prairie that had a superior bed of brick clay which produced brick of a yellow-grey colour and possessed an unusual strength and toughness. They planned to acquire steam-powered brick machines for the 1882 season in order to produce three million bricks while employing 30 to 35 men. By the time the 1882 season had started in June, the steam brick machine was producing 4000 bricks per day. Also it would appear that Lockey had departed from the firm, leaving Smith as sole proprietor.<sup>105</sup>

It is doubtful that the Smith yard turned out the planned number of bricks that summer, as the bottom fell out of the land boom which had been pumping up the fortunes of Portage la Prairie and other places. As construction also fell off, and many people experienced financial problems, so too went the fortunes of the brick yard. Smith was fortunate in owning the land, and possibly did not owe much money on the machinery. It is believed that the Smith yard was “moth-balled” or closed up for several years. In the spring of 1889, the Manitoba Liberal asked a rather impatient-sounding question –“We would like to know if there is such a thing as a brick yard in Portage la Prairie, and, if so, if it is the intention to manufacture brick this season.” It would seem that a great deal of building was projected for the summer, and if the bricks were to be brought any distance, then it would add considerably to the cost of a building, not to mention the money paid for the brick, which would leave the community. It was found however that W.P. Smith was planning to reopen the long-dormant yard and had equipped it with the most improved machinery of large capacity. Smith contracted to deliver new brick from his yard by mid-June. He used Penfield machines for old style and stock pressed brick. He also intended to make ornamental brick, red and white in colour. By mid-June Smith had two kilns of white to bright pink brick, which were delivered to the anxious local market. It is known that some of Smith’s bricks went into the Garland Block as well as into a new home being built that year for Reverend William Halstead on the north side of town.<sup>106</sup>

Little is known of the remaining years of Smith’s ownership. While his 1912 biography claims that he sold the brickery to John R. McDonald in 1889, it had been seen that Smith was still making brick in 1890. Henderson’s Directories kept him in their list of brick-makers until 1893. In July 1893 The Liberal referred to grey brick being delivered from “McDonald’s brick yard” for the new fire hall. Furthermore

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>105</sup> Henderson’s Directory, 1880, p. 128; 1887, p. 186; Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 20 November 1880, p. 2; “Portage Paragraphs.” MWFP, 7 October 1881m, p. 3; Steen and Boyce, Portage la Prairie and Her Industries. (Winnipeg: Steen and Boyce, 1882.), p. 30; MWFP, 7 October 1881, p. 3; 12 June 1882, p. 3.

<sup>106</sup> Manitoba Liberal, 5 April 1889, p. 8; 1 February 1889, p. 8; he Central Metropolis.”, Liberal, 5 April 189, p. 5. 189; 19 April 1889, p. 8; 4 May 1889, pp. 4, 8; 15 June 1889, p. 8.

Smith had moved to a farm near St. Eustache the previous December, and so one assumes McDonald bought the brick yard from Smith in the fall of 1892, or as late as the spring of 1893. According to directory listings McDonald remained in the brick-making business until about 1906, when, according to the Smith biography, he sold out his interests to Harry Stephens, another local brick-maker who had started his Portage la Prairie Brickyard Company about 1899. Between 1902 and 1904 the capacity of Stephen's yard was trebled to meet the demands of the Western Canadian boom. By 1906 Stephens had 12 furnaces for burning brick, with each one holding 100,000 white bricks. He employed 80 workers and even had his own CPR spur track.<sup>107</sup>

In the spring of 1908 the firm was converted to a joint stock operation known as the Stephens Brick Company, Ltd. It remained largely family owned. A 1911 visit by a Dominion Government geologist found this to be "one of the largest and best managed (brick companies) in Manitoba." The Stephens plant was about a quarter mile east of the train station, and had a capacity of 40,000 bricks per day with two soft mud machines in use. At the time the yard had ten down-draught kilns of 20,000 brick capacity each, with burnings lasting 7½ to 8 days. Their season ran from the beginning of May to the end of September, with 8.5 million bricks being produced in the 1909 season. Much of Stephens' brick was shipped to Saskatoon and Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. During 1912 Stephens acquired a new yard, having produced 10 million bricks during 1911, now the two yards had a combined capacity of 14 million brick annually. This, of course, was stated at the beginning of the end of the boom, which proved to mark the end for many western brick yards. Stephens Brick carried on in a reduced form until 1928, when its charter was cancelled.<sup>108</sup>

A capable competitor for Stephens was John Alexander Snyder and his family-operated brick yard. Indeed, the Snyder name would outlive that of Stephens in local building supply circles until its affairs were taken over by Alsip Brick and Tile about 1945. In turn Alsip would remain on the Portage la Prairie scene until 1971-1972 when it appears to have ceased manufacturing brick. If this was the case, then the former Snyder yard at Portage was the longest-running brick plant from the outset of that yard. The Snyders had opened their yard about 1904, according to Directory sources. Initially known as Snyder Brothers, by 1907 it was renamed A. Snyder and Company, with 201 acres of land. Its Martin press was capable of producing 40,000 white bricks per day, and the place employed 35 workers. Its output that year was 3,250,000 bricks. This did not take into account their second yard at Gilbert Plains, which produced 30,000 bricks per day. In February the firm went joint stock, adding "Ltd." to its name. Two years later their new plant was producing five million bricks per year. The firm was renamed the Snyder Brick Yards, Ltd. in 1930, and the 1910 charter cancelled later that year. During most of its existence the

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>107</sup> "William Patterson Smith.", in F.H. Schofield, The Story of Manitoba, Volume II, (Winnipeg: S.J. Clarke, 1912), p. 624; Liberal, 14 June 1890, p. 8; Henderson's, 1890, p. 1092| 1891, p. 1032; 1892, p. 316; 1893, pp. Vii-viii; Liberal, 8 Jul 1893, p. 8; 14 December 1892, p. 8; Henderson's, 1906, p. 1409; 1900, p. 910; "Portage La Prairie." Manitoba Free Press, 11 June 1904, p. 17; "The Portage la Prairie Brickyard Co.", MFP, 14v July 1906, p. 22; "Portage la Prairie Brick.", Winnipeg Telegram, 21 February 1903, p. 2 (2).

<sup>108</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 18 April 1908, pp. 468-470; Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces (Memoir 24E), (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912.), pp. 21-23; "Portage la Prairie—City of the Plains." MFP, 9 March 1912, p. 29; "Portage La Prairie—Railway Centre for Manitoba." Winnipeg Saturday Post, 21 September 21912, p. 10; Manitoba Gazette, 7 July 1928, p. 1099.

firm's president was J.A. "Alex" Snyder, who served in that capacity until his death in June 1937 at the age of 76. The end of the Snyder ownership came four years later with the sale to Alsip's.<sup>109</sup>

Other Portage la Prairie area firms which existed after 1900 included The Portage la Prairie Brick and Tile Company, incorporated in 1911, with George Gilt as brick-maker. It remained in the Directories until 1914, though it is not known what the firm produced. Even less is known of the Pinto Coal and Brick Company, Ltd, chartered in 1909. It never appeared in the Directories, and may have had more to do with coal than brick.<sup>110</sup>

## **PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1873

Owner/Operator:

Location:

Source of information:

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1880

Owner/Operator: W. Turber

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: Henderson Directory, 1880; "Manitoba and the Great Northwest", John Macoun,

#### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1888-1894

Owner/Operator: Smith Brick Plant (W.P. Smith)

Location: east of town

Related Information:

Source of information: "Early Architecture of Portage la Prairie", Manitoba Department of Cultural Affairs and Cultural Affairs and Historic Resources, 1983 Henderson Directory, 1891

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>109</sup> Manitoba Telephone Directories, December 1944; December 1945; November 1971; Henderson's 1905, pp. 1304; Report on the Mining and Metallurgical Industries of Canada, 1907-1908. (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1908.), pp. 653-654; Manitoba Gazette, 12 March 1910, pp. 276-277; "Portage La Prairie-City of the Plains.", MFP, 9 March 1912, p. 29; Manitoba Gazette, 26 July 1930, p. 660; 18 October 1930, p. 956; "Alex Snyder, Brick Company President Died.", Daily Graphic, 12 June 1937, p. 1.

<sup>110</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 11 November 1911, p. 1711; Canada Business Directory, 1914, p. 599; Manitoba Gazette, 28 August 1909, pp. 1073-1074.



#### Operation 4

Dates of operation: 1892-1908

Owner/Operator: H.S. Stephens

Location: east of town, most southerly 7 acres of Parish lot 70, north of C.P.R. tracks

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Report on Manitoba Clays," Walsh, 1931, (Department of Energy and Mines files)

#### Operation 5

Dates of operation: 1900-1905

Owner/Operator: J.R. McDonald

Location: South of town

Related Information:

Source of information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1900

#### Operation 6

Dates of operation: 1903-1910

Owner/Operator: Snyder Brothers Brick Yard

Location: corner of Lee St. and Pacific Ave.

Related Information:

Sources of Information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

#### Operation 7

Dates of operation: 1910-1930

Owner/Operator: A. Snyder and Company Limited

Location: south of town

Related Information: received letters patent of incorporation, 1910; most likely a re-organization of Snyder Brothers Brick Co.

Source of information: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh, 1931, Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files; "Annual Report of the Mineral Production of Canada", Canada Dominion Bureau of Statistics: Mining Metallurgical and Chemical Branch

#### Operation 8

Dates of operation: 1908-1915

Owner/Operator: Whimster's Brick Plant (J. Whimster)

Location: 10 acres in lot 120, immediately south of C.N.R. tracks

Related Information:

Sources of Information: Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh, 1931, (Department of Energy and Mines files)

#### Operation 9

Dates of operation: 1909-1922

Owner/Operator: Stephens Brick Company Limited

Location: old plant on lot 70, north of Canadian Pacific Railway, ¼ mile east of the station. New plant on lot 119, south of C.N.R. (most northerly 12 acres)

Related Information: evolved from H. Stephens; two soft-mud brick machines; ten down-draft, continuous since 1914; see source

Source of information: "Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces", H. Ries and J. Keele, Canada Department of Mines, Geological Survey Branch, 1912 " Report on Manitoba Clays", of Energy and Mines files

#### Operation 10

Dates of operation: 1930-1940

Owner/Operator: Snyder Brickyard Limited

Location: A. Snyder and Co. Site getting as Snyder brothers were getting old:

Related Information: Closed as Snyder brothers were getting old; also, economic down-turn with World War II; common, soft-mud brick; electric power, coal fuel

Source of information: Annual Report – Mines, 1930

#### Operation 11

Dates of operation: 1945-1960

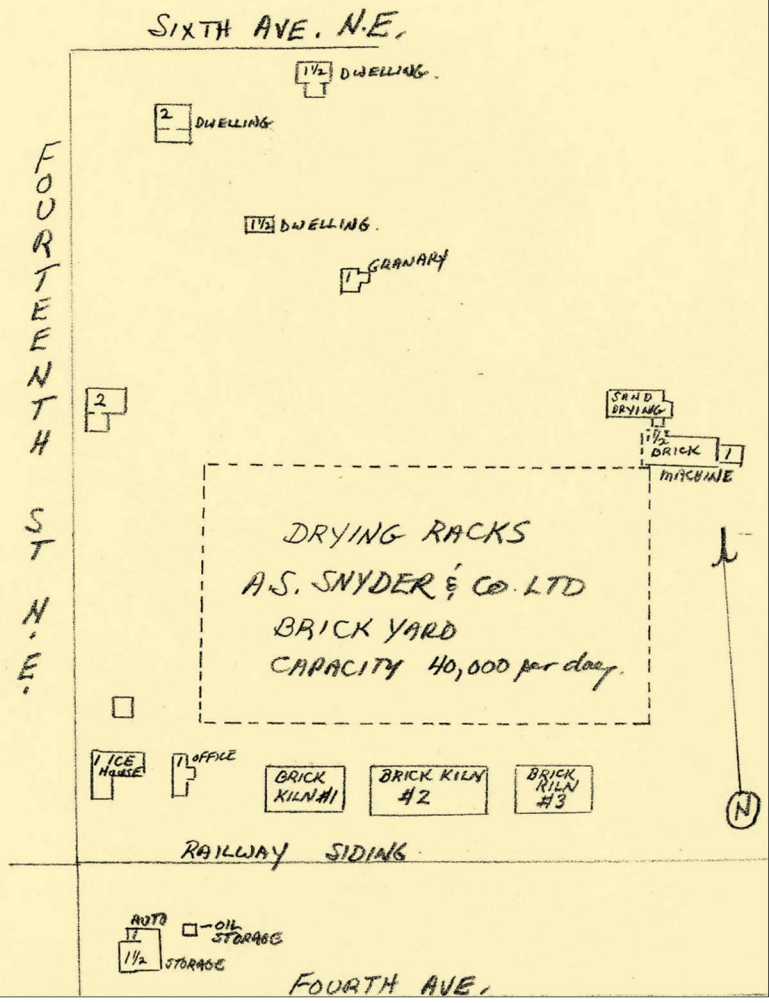
Owner/Operator: Alsip Brick, Tile and Lumber Company Limited

Location: Snyder plant

Related Information: Purchased from Snyder family after sitting adle

Sources of Information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files; interview with Wayne Alsip, April 1992

WESTERN CANADA  
 UNDERWRITERS  
 INSURANCE PLAN  
 of  
 PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE  
 JUNE 1920  
 SHEET 56  
 SCALE: 100' = 1 inch



Site Plan of A.S Snyder's Portage la Prairie brick plant, traced from original Western Canada Underwriter's Insurance Plan, 1920.

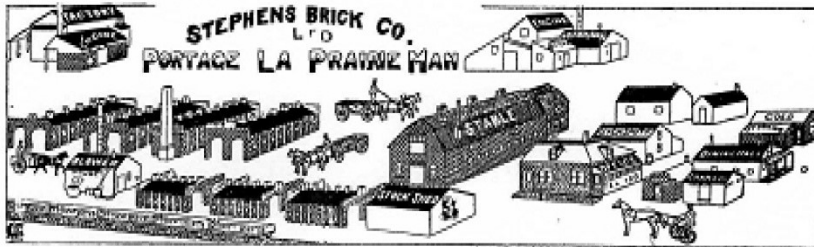
H. STEPHENS, Pres. and Man. Director

GEO. CARTER, Sec.-Treas.

# Stephens Brick Co.

Limited

MANUFACTURERS OF  
**BUILDERS' BRICK**



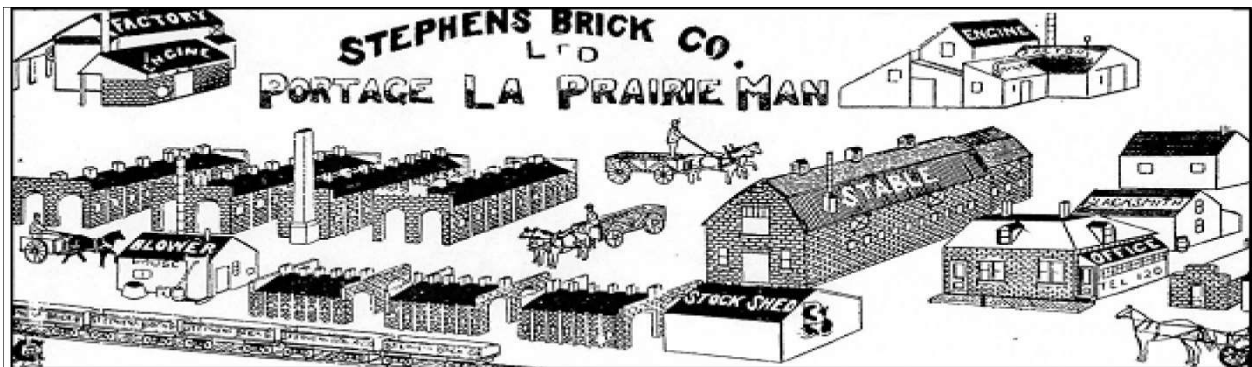
WE CARRY STOCKS OF KELLEY  
ISLAND LIME, VULCAN PORTLAND  
CEMENT, WOOD FIBRE, HARDWALL  
PLASTER, PLASTER PARIS, EMPIRE  
FINISH, BEST QUALITY RUBBER  
ROOFING, GOLD DUST FINISH, IN  
STRAIGHT OR MIXED CARS. . . .

**BRICK** Veneer, Chimney, Kiln Run and  
Fire Brick. Capacity 8,000,000

Office and Yards: LEE STREET, north of C.P.R. Track  
PHONE 120

City Office: Room 2, NEWMAN BLOCK (EAST) Phone 360

(Henderson's Portage La Prairie Directory, 1909, p. 3.)



Stephen's Brick Company, Portage la Prairie, artistically depicted, 1909. (Henderson's Portage la Prairie Directory, 1909, p. 3.)

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE ADVERTISEMENTS

# **A. SNYDER & CO.**

## **BRICK MANUFACTURERS**

*And Dealers in*

## **BUILDERS' MATERIALS**

**Lee St., North of C.P.R. Tracks Phone 222**

**And at GILBERT PLAINS**

(Henderson's Portage la Prairie Directory, 1909, p. 7.)

## RAPID CITY

The history of brick-making in this community began almost simultaneously with the town itself. It was noted in the summer of 1878 that there was “a newly-burned kiln of lime” on a nearby hillside. That event was followed nearly three years later by the announcement that Sinclair and Company was about to start a brick yard at the nearby Ralston Colony. It was some two and one-half miles from Rapid City. Buildings were apparently under construction to house the workers, and brick-making was to start as soon as the frost was out of the ground. Nothing further was heard of this effort, and the Free Press correspondent did not mention any brick yard among the area’s industries early in 1882. That summer, however, a more successful start was made by area businessman Creasy J. Whellems, who was employing 14 men under the superintendence of Thomas Hockel, formerly of Ottawa. Whellems’ first kiln of brick was burned and ready by the first week of September 1882 and consisted of 160,000 bricks. A second kiln of 200,000 was expected in early October. Furthermore Whellems had sent nine of his bricks to an exhibition at Kingston, Ontario. Of those three were deep red in colour. The other three were a pale pink, and the remainder a cream white – all from the same clay. The owner had hopes of making two million bricks in 1883, which he expected to retail at Winnipeg prices of \$20.00 to \$25.00 per thousand. Brick was the big topic in Rapid City of 1882, and it was said by a Winnipeg Times correspondent that “If you can’t talk brick in this town, you are in about as bad a fix as an American who can’t talk horse or tell stories on a race track.”<sup>111</sup>

Victorian quips aside, Whellems’ yard continued with a fair degree of success through 1883, when the fortunes of other places, such as Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, had begun to falter after the Boom. This despite having no railway connection, and having to team the brick to Brandon. A slacking economy that autumn caused Whellems to reduce his prices to \$14.00 per thousand for kiln run brick and to \$20.00 for veneer and face brick. Very little was heard of Whellems’ brick during 1884. The only known structure in town to use the material was the veneering of Mrs. Payne’s house that October. This was accomplished by three bricklayers from Winnipeg who were obviously out of work otherwise. By the following spring Whellems had joined the crusade against Riel in Saskatchewan, and his brick was offered for sale by D. McNaught in Rapid City at a blanket price of \$15.00 per thousand. An adjunct to the products of the Rapid City Works was the pottery that John Ralston was establishing that spring. Little is known of Ralston’s efforts that year.<sup>112</sup>

While brick-making would lie dormant at Rapid City for the next several years, its sister craft of pottery did not. In late September 1889, D.H. Gover quit Ralston Pottery and began his own business in Rapid City. He and others began the construction of a large building to house the pottery operations. He planned to run the factory all winter in order to have wares to sell the following spring. These included glazed ware, jars, jugs, milk pans and ornamental pottery for lawns and conservatories. Though Glover Pottery seems to have been completed and in operation, his career was cut short that December by a

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>111</sup> “A Word From the West.”, Manitoba Weekly Free Press, 24 August 1878, p. 6; “Rapid City Ripples.”, MWFP, 29 April 1881, p. 2; 20 January 1882, p. 5; 29 September 1882, p. 3; “Rapid City.”, Winnipeg Times, 19 August 1882, p. 3.

<sup>112</sup> “Rapid City.”, Commercial, 3 July 1883, p. 846; “Rapid City Brick Works.”, Rapid City Standard, 9 November 1883, p. 1; 3 October 1884, p. 2; 16 April 1885, p. 4; 21 May 1885, p. 4.

skating accident which killed him. By February 1890 C.J. Whellems had once more entered the clay products picture, possibly taking over Glover's factory, as he was attending to brick and pottery company matters before returning to his home at Newdale. Whellems claimed at that time that he had orders for 200,000 bricks. Late in March a brick, tile and pottery company was formed which intended to purchase Whellems' brick plant and 25 acres of land. Its directors/incorporators included Whellems and four other Rapid City entrepreneurs. Unfortunately this combination fell apart four days after it was formed. Undaunted, Whellems carried on alone with his revived brick yard, which was now named the Saskatchewan Brick and Pottery Works. Work at Whellems' yard began early in May 1890, getting all his machinery in place, and advertising for 200/300 or 500 cords of wood, half green. Unfortunately, this effort appears to have petered out, but also had readied the scene for brick-making's next phase at Rapid City.<sup>113</sup>

In early April 1891 Edmond Cecil Gosset-Jackson of Strathclair came to Rapid City to revive the Whellems brick yard. Gosset-Jackson acquired the brick plant and 75 to 80 acres for his works. Brick-making began in early June with the burning of his first kiln of bricks a month later. Gosset-Jackson had begun taking orders in April. While his operation was probably a success, his interests began to wander and in the spring of 1892 he formed a partnership with Alexander McKellar to sell farm implements which later added lumber and building supplies to its repertoire. The building season appears to have been the last for the Gosset-Jackson yard. It saw Rapid City brick being used in two new Brandon buildings – the Asylum and the Beaubier House Hotel. Indeed, Rourke and Cass, the Asylum contractors who were then operating their own Winnipeg brick yard, seemed to prefer the Rapid City product as did Mr. Beaubier, who paid a dollar more per thousand for the Gosset-Jackson brick. Despite this, however, the Rapid City yard seems to have closed, and by July 1894 banker D. A. Hopper's house in that town was being brick veneered with brick brought from Brandon. Three years later McKellar and Gosset-Jackson were advertising "1<sup>st</sup> Class Brick for Sale," though no production was evident at the yard.<sup>114</sup>

In January 1900 an announcement was made that a "practical brick-maker from Winnipeg had purchased from McKellar and Gosset-Jackson the Rapid City brick yard property." That news caused several people in Rapid City and surrounding farms to consider building in brick. The purchaser turned out to be Robert Dorrell Hales, fresh from acting as the manager of the Lac du Bonnet brick plant. Hales was a brick-making veteran who had learned his craft in his native England, coming to Manitoba in February 1887. He worked in the St. Boniface brick yards for a period of time. Evidently, he had connections, for he was starting his Rapid City yard by securing favourable right rates from the various railways now serving that place. He even went to Brandon in late February in order to solicit orders for 200,000 bricks. He also brought in new machinery. Hales' family arrived in mid-March, while by early April he expected to employ 30 hands. By early June the Hales yard shipped out several cars of brick to fulfil his orders. Soon his yard was taxed to capacity, and by mid-month he shipped two carloads to

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>113</sup> Rapid City Spectator, 27 September 1889, p. 1; 25 October 1889, p. 4; North West Vindicator, 19 October 1889, p. 1; Spectator, 6 December 1889, p. 4; 8 February 1890, p. 4; Vindicator, 27 March 1890, p. 1; 5 April 1890, p. 1; 3 May 1890, p. 1; 10 May 1890, p. 1; Spectator, 23 May 1890, p. 4; 30 May 1890, p. 4.

<sup>114</sup> "The Brick Works to be Revived.", Spectator, 3 April 1891, p. 1; 8 June 1891, p. 4; 8 July 1891, p. 4; Minnedosa Tribune, 23 April 1891, p. 3; Rapid City Spectator Reporter, 27 January 1898, p. 6; Spectator, 5 May 1893, p. 4; Marquette Reporter, 4 May 1893, p. 7; 19 July 1894, p. 1; Spectator-Reporter, 1 July 1897, p. 1.

Basswood. When the 1900 brick-making season closed in early September, Hales considered the operation a success and planned to double the plant capacity the next year.<sup>115</sup>

Part of these improvements included a new team of heavy horses which he bought for \$400 from Trotter and Trotter of Brandon. He also put up a new windmill for the purpose of pumping water. In July Hales burned a kiln of bricks using spruce and Tamarac wood as fuel. This saved more heat for brick while saving 50% to 60% in fuel. By late August the Rapid City Brick Works had produced one million bricks. With that in mind, Hales planned more improvements to double or treble its capacity. Indeed, in August 1902 it was noted that Hales had orders for 1.4 million brick, also stating that this was more than he will be able to supply . . . .” During the 1903 season the Hales yard turned out 500,000 bricks, producing 87,000 in one week alone. In 1904 Robert Hales and Son made 1,148,500 bricks, while Hales built a large brick dwelling in Rapid City. That autumn, however, Hales began taking an interest in starting a branch brick yard at Brookdale. This began operations in the summer of 1905. Eventually the Brookdale yard would close because of its inability to compete with other building materials. The Hales family would revive the Edrans brick plant in the 1920s, and even drew R. D. Hales out of retirement to manage it in 1926. In the meantime, the Rapid City brick yard property had been sold early in 1906 and machinery moved to Brookdale. This was not the end of brick-making at Rapid City, however, as there as one last chapter to write.<sup>116</sup>

In the early autumn of 1912 entrepreneurs Clarence J. Gregory and Joseph O. Cloutier made a deal for tax exemptions from the town for a brick plant they wished to start at Rapid City. Their part of the deal was to produce 30,000 bricks per day and be in operation by 20 June 1913. The plant was also to be in operation for at least three months of the year for 15 years. Gregory and Cloutier expected to employ 15 hands. By-law 256 passed by a vote of 40 to 1 on 20 September 1912. By early March the duo expected to ship their brick machinery from Brandon. In May the work of constructing the necessary support buildings for the brick yard began, as all their machinery was now on site. With S. Wagstaffe in charge of burning brick, the first kiln amounted to 75,000 bricks, with a second one of 125,000 bricks. The first 5,000 bricks were sold for the new creamery building project at Rapid City. The George-Cloutier yard, however, seems to have vanished abruptly from the local scene. Possibly the downturn in building construction after 1912 contributed to this, or perhaps they could not fulfill the terms of the deal in By-law 256. Neither was it good for brick veteran R.D. Hales, who shipped a fourth car of shale to a company which planned to establish a plant at Rapid City in the spring of 1914. This did not take place.<sup>117</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>115</sup> “A New industry for Rapid City//”, Marquette Reporter, 18 January 1900, p. 1; 25 January 1900, p. 1; 15 February 1900, p. 1; “Robert D. Hales.”, in F.H. Schofield, The Story of Manitoba, Volume III (Winnipeg: S.J. Clarke, 1912.), pp. 695-693; Reporter, 22 February 1900, p. 1; 1 March 1900, p. 1; 15 March 1900, p. 1; 5 April 1900, p. 1; 7 June 1900, p. 1; 12 July 1900, p. 1; 13 September 1900, p. 1.

<sup>116</sup> Reporter, 18 April 1901, p. 1; 25 April 1901, p. 1; 4 July 1901, p.; 29 August 1901, p. 1; 14 August 1902, p. 1; 11 June 1903, p. 1; 22 September 1904, p. 4; 4 August 1904, p. 1; 18 January 1906, p. 4.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>117</sup> “Brick By-Law. ”, Rapid City Reporter, 12 September 1912, p. 8; 26 September 1912, p. 4; 6 March 1913, p. 4; 1 May 1913, p. 5; 22 May 1913, p. 5; “New Brickyard Product Proves A-1.”, Reporter, 7 August 1913, p. 5; 16 October, p. 5.



## **RAPID CITY**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1873

Owner/Operator:

Location:

Related Information: one other brickyard indicated at this time

Source of information:

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1880

Owner/Operator: McLean

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: Henderson Directory, 1880

#### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1881-1883

Owner/Operator: C. Whellams

Location:

Related Information:

Source of information: Rapid City and District; "Our Past for the Future", Rapid City Historical Book Society, 1978

#### Operation 4

Dates of operation: 1891-1895

Owner/Operator: E. Jackson (E. Gossett-Jackson)

Location:

Related Information: may have been building products retailer only

Sources of Information: Henderson Northwest Directory 1891-1895; "Rapid City and District: Our Past for the Future", Rapid City Historical Book Society, 1978

#### Operation 5

Dates of operation: 1895-1905

Owner/Operator: Hales Brick Yard

Location: South of town

Related Information: sold brick for Mental Hospital and Beaubier Hotel; in Brandon; moved to Brookdale in 1906

Source of information: Rapid City and District; "Our Past for the Future", Rapid City Historical Book Society, 1978

### Operation 6

Dates of operation: 1914

Owner/Operator: Cloutier and George

Location:

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Rapid City and District: Our Past for the Future", Rapid City Historical Book Society 1978

### Operation 7

Dates of operation: 1921

Owner/Operator: Soldiers' Settlement Board

Location: SE ¼-18-13-19-W1

Related Information: soft mud bricks

Source of information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

### Operation 8

Dates of operation: 1921

Owner/Operator:

Location: NW ¼- 20-13-19-W1

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh, 1931, Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

# Rapid City Brick Works

## BRICKS.

59° below zero. A Prairie fire. Who cares  
that have brick houses.

### PRICES REDUCED

to enable all to enjoy the comfort of a brick  
house.

#### PRICES AT THE YARD:

Kiln Run, ..... \$14 per thousand, cash  
Veeneer and Face, 20 " " " "

Lots for sale in the most eligible part of  
the city.

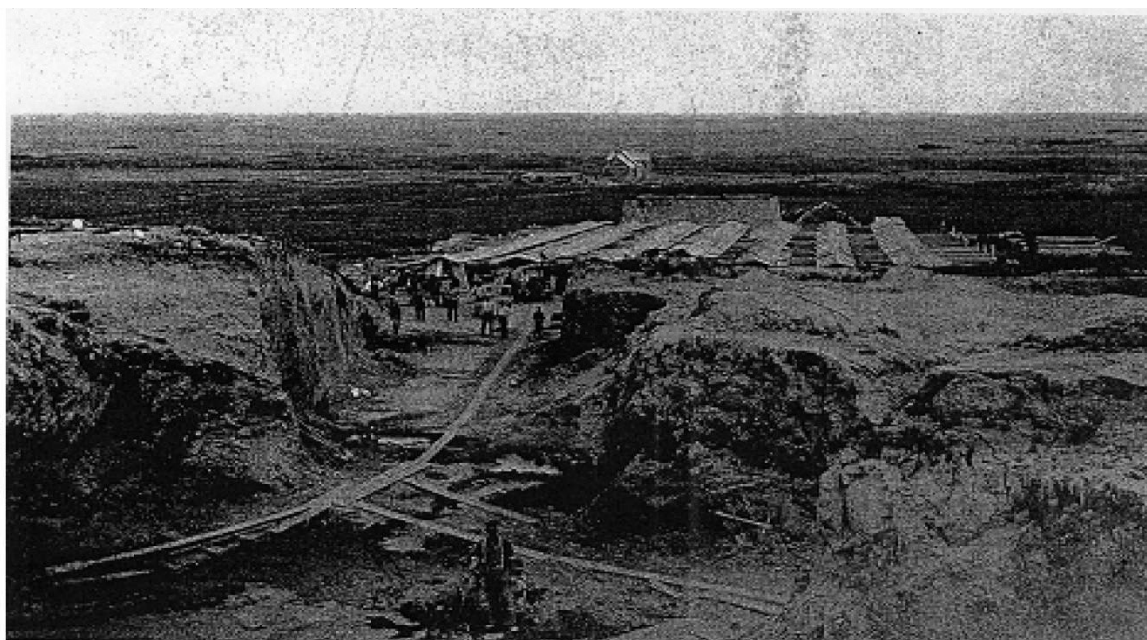
Apply to

C. J. WHELLAMS,

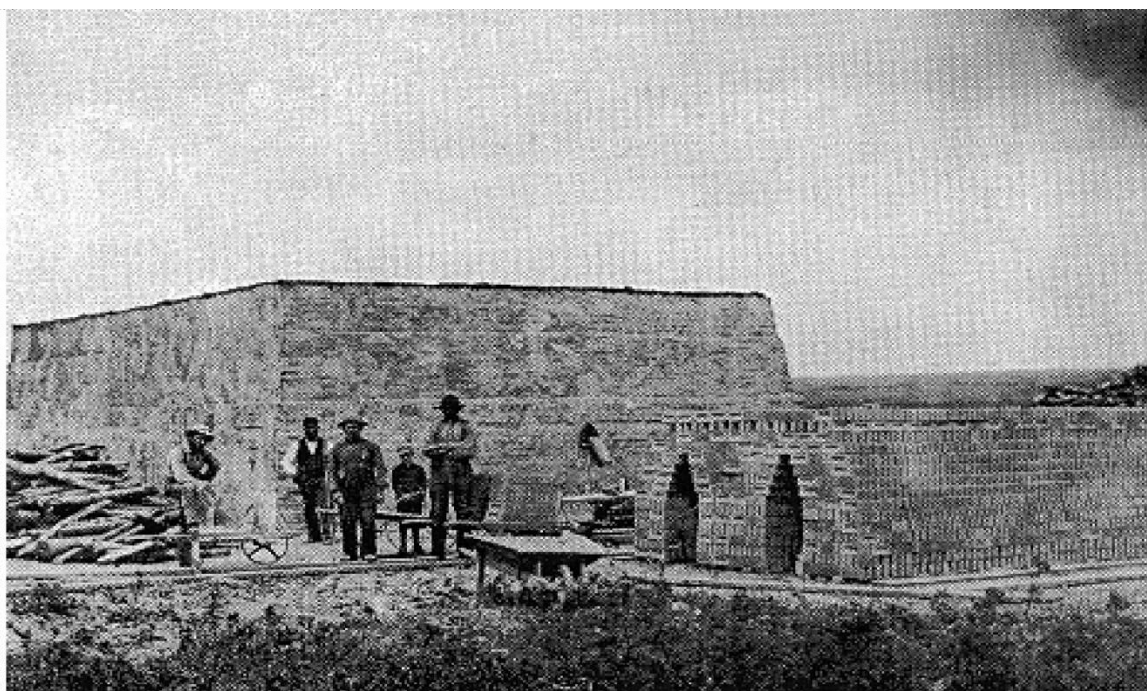
31-11

P. O. Drawer 2, Rapid City.

Brick houses made sense! (Rapid City Standard, 9  
November 1883, p. 1.)



Rapid City Brick Yard. Rapid City Historical Book Society. Our Past For the Future Altona: Friesen Printers, 1978. P. 14.)



Kilns at Rapid City Brick yard. Rapid City Historical Book Society. Our Past For the Future. Altona: Friesen Printers, 1978. p. 15.)

## RUSSELL

A small, farm-based brick-making venture took place near this town in 1900. Jacob and Lydia Edel are said by local historians to have made as many as 500 bricks per day. The Edels appear to have been jacks of many trades, including running a lumber mill, stone masonry and cement making. Their production was supposedly large enough to garner them a spot in directory lists of Manitoba brick makers between 1900 and 1904.<sup>118</sup>

## RUSSELL

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 190

Owner/Operator: J. Edel

Location:

Related Information:

Source of information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files; Henderson Northwest Directory, 1900

## ST. ALPHONSE

This yard was in operation c1887-1890 under the ownership of Sabin F. Fecteau. In July 1887, Fecteau fired a kiln of 30,000 bricks which he immediately sold to a merchant in Cypress River. Fecteau was listed in two directory sources as a brick manufacturer in 1890.<sup>119</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>118</sup> Rural Municipality of Brandon. Once Upon A Century, 1884-1899, (Altona: D. W. Friesen and Sons, 1986.) , p. 118; Canada Business Directory, 1899, p. 471; Henderson's Northwest Directory, 1900, p. 910; 1904, p. 596; Lovell's Directory, 1900-1901, p. 812.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>119</sup> "Chronique de la Province.", Le Manitoba, 7 Juillet 1887, p. 3; translated in New Horizon Committee. Tapestry of Faith—Roman Catholic Parish of St. Alphonse. (Winnipeg Intercollegiate Press. 1983.), p. 69; Dominion Business Directory, 1890, p. 310; Henderson's Northwest Directory, 1890, p. 1092.

## SHOAL LAKE

In the autumn of 1902, the Shoal Lake Star found it noteworthy that D. C. Fleming had constructed the first brick residence in the town. It also bemoaned the lack of a local brick yard, as “the scarcity of bricks was the only reason more buildings of this class were not erected.” Earlier in the year, the Star had forecast that a brick and tile plant with a capacity of 20,000 bricks per day and 200,000 tiles per day would be established that year. Needless to say, the editor was disappointed, for such a facility would not be established for another three years. And even with that, it does not appear to have been a brick yard, but rather a cement block and brick factory. In the summer of 1905 it was announced that John Thomas Dandridge was planning to bring in a cement block machine. As soon as it was set up by an out-of-town expert Dandridge would manufacture some samples for display at the local fair. Dandridge started the production of cement blocks during early September 1905, showing off his wares at Findlay’s lumber yard. He called his firm the Shoal Lake Cement Block and Pressed Brick Works. He had a display wall erected which displayed his firm’s wares. An existing photograph of that wall gives no evidence of brick. Despite this visual evidence he had a product called “Dandridge’s Guaranteed Bricks—they are better than clay bricks to withstand fire, frost and weather.” One suspects that these bricks were made of cement, like the blocks. Dandridge’s firm was listed under Brick Manufacturers in the Henderson’s Directories for 1906 and 1907. At the time of his October 1937 death no mention was made of his cement block and brick plant efforts.<sup>120</sup>

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>120</sup> Own Improvements.”, Shoal Lake Star, 23 October 1902, p. 1; “shoal Lake’s Future.”, Star, 23 January 1902, p. 5; 3 August 1905, p. 5; 14 September 1905, p. 8; 5 July 1906, p. 10; Henderson’s Northwest Directory, 1906, p. 1409, 1907, p. 2094; “John Thomas Dandridge.” Star, 7 October 1937, p. 1.

# The Shoal Lake CEMENT BLOCK and PRESSED BRICK WORKS

JOHN DANDRIDGE,  
Proprietor.

To the Public,

I wish to call your attention to the fact that I have installed up-to-date machinery for the manufacture of cement in its various forms. With this modern equipment, I am prepared to turn out work which I can guarantee

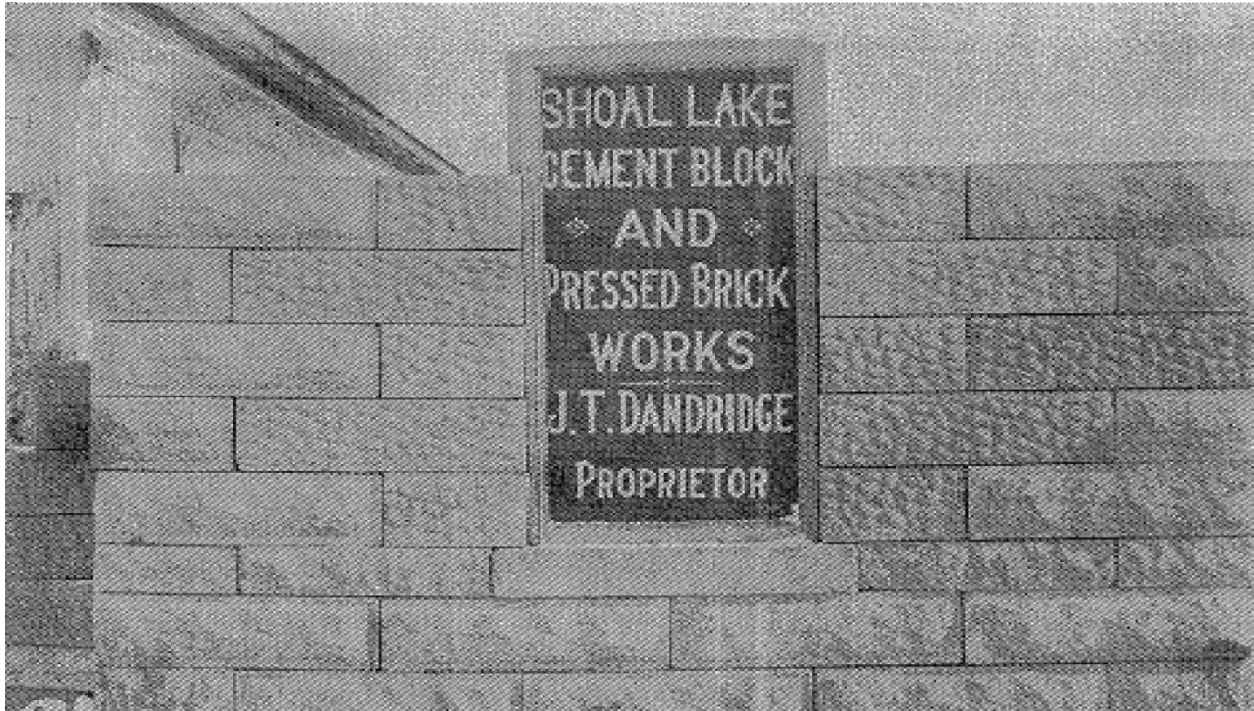
Building construction out of hollow Cement Blocks is fast becoming a most important factor in this age of engineering progress. Like cement sidewalks the hollow block is invading every section of the United States and is rapidly coming into general use in Canada. Owing to the growing scarcity and consequent high price of lumber, the many economic advantages of Cement Block construction are plainly apparent, since the cost of the erection of this material is much less than stone or even frame houses in certain localities. These Cement Block buildings are **Fire, Frost and Water Proof**, and by the use of the hollow air chambers render a building cooler in summer and warmer in winter than any other style of construction.

I have had considerable experience in the mixing and the manufacture of cement, both in England and Manitoba; and will be glad to give any information regarding the cost and manufacture of cement block to any one desiring such information.

Call and see samples for yourself.

Yours respectfully,  
JOHN DANDRIDGE.

The Shoal Lake Brick yard favoured cement blocks over actual bricks! (Shoal Lake Star, 15 February 1906, p. 8.)



Dandridge's Sign and Sample Wall, Shoal Lake, 1906. ([Shoal Lake Star](#), 3 May 1906, p. 8.)



# SIDNEY

Brick-making at this place began in the spring of 1891 when Dougald McVicar moved his brick plant from Carberry to a farm in this area. Here, despite the destruction of a hundred cords of his fuel wood by a prairie fire in May, McVicar was doing a “rushing business” by mid-June. Little else is known of that first season’s operation, except that McVicar donated the brick that went into the walls of the Sidney Methodist (now United) Church which was dedicated that November. The following spring, in spite of a smooth start to the brick-making season, and the fact that McVicar was planning to build a brick house, disaster struck. Dougald McVicar died in Brandon on 23 May 1892, leaving the operation of the yard at Sidney to his widow. The first kiln of brick was produced by mid-June, and by late August, when the yard closed for the season, they had produced a “million good brick” which were offered for sale.<sup>121</sup>

While farming formed an adjunct to the McVicar’s brick-making, given the loss of her husband, Mrs. McVicar carried on quite well until a second loss took place in January 1893. Early in the month Elwin Davis, who was probably employed as a brick-maker/yard manager, severed his connection with the McVicar yard and moved onto his farm. It was said at the time that Mrs. McVicar had lost “a good, trust-worthy man in him.” Elwin was one of several brothers living in the Sidney area who had learned brick-making from their father Daniel, who had been a brick-maker in London, Ontario. The two brothers, in particular, who followed their father’s line of work, were Elwin and Hiram. The pair had been in Brandon prior to 1890, but that fall they were mentioned in connection with their looking for a situation in the Pilot Mound district. At least one of them wound up working for Dougald McVicar, himself a veteran of Brandon and Carberry. Early in April it was said that Mrs. McVicar had begun to ship out her large stock of brick. At the end of the month Elwin announced his intention to move to Virden in order to superintend John A. Saul’s new yard. His entrepreneurial instinct got the better of this plan, and a month later it was announced that he was starting his own yard on his farm near Sidney. By late June Davis was burning his first kiln of brick, while Mrs. McVicar’s brick machine was laid up for repairs. She would shut down the yard for the season by mid-August 1893, but never seems to have reopened. Meanwhile, Elwin Davis had produced a good quantity of hard, deep red-coloured brick which were much in demand. He was reported as “loading them into cars as fast as he can haul them.”<sup>122</sup>

Eventually McVicar’s brick yard farm was sold in 1896 to a farmer, Uriel Cann. A few months earlier Elwin Davis bought McVicar’s steam engine for use in his brick yard. By then his yard had made great strides since its inception in 1893. His biggest sale to date appears to have been 200,000 bricks that went into Carberry School in 1895, as well as eight to 10 carloads sent to Alexander the previous April. Even brother Hiram had gotten into the act when he began making bricks at his farm in June 1895.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>121</sup> “Sidney.” Carberry News, 10 April 1891, p. 5; 8 May 1891, p. 1; 29 May 1891, p. 1; 12 June 1891, p. 5; “New Church at Sidney.”, News, 27 November 1891, p. 1; Carberry History Committee. Carberry Plains—Century Ones. (Altona: Friesen Printers. 1982.), p. 185; News, 29 April 1892, p. 1; 13 May 1892, p. 4; Brandon Mail, 26 May 1892, p. 8; News, 10 June 1892, p. 1; 25 August 1892, p. 1.

<sup>122</sup> “Sidney.”, News, 20 January 1893, p. 1; “Sidney Squibs.” News, 6 January 1893, p. 8; 6 December 1901, p. 8; “Good Opening for a Brickyard.”, Pilot Mound Sentinel, 23 October 1890, p. 1; News, 7 April 1893, p. 1; 28 April 1893, p. 1; 2 June 1893, p. 1; 23 June 1893, p. 1; 30 June 1893, p. 1; 18 August 183, p. 1.

Sidney now had two working brick yards, though given the relation of the two operators, one can only think that theirs was a friendly rivalry. Hiram's yard does not appear to have been as active as that of his brothers, and he eventually sold his farm in April 1900, possibly to another brick-maker named John Peterson. The only known building that can be definitely linked to brick from Hiram's yard was the Elk Park School (1896). In the meantime, Elwin's yard prospered, with a kiln of 100,000 bricks being fired in August, 1896, and with new machinery installed the next spring.<sup>123</sup>

Elwin Davis' operation kept growing in the new century, reaching fine proportions for a farm-based brick yard. Late in 1901 both Hiram and Elwin purchased houses in Sidney, possibly an indication that the farm would no longer be the latter's residence. As well, some of Elwin's bricks went into the walls of the new Union Bank in Carberry which opened in April 1902. This triumph was tempered somewhat, however, by the fact that most of the red brick in architect George Browne's design came from Minneapolis. Late in 1902 it was estimated that the Davis yard produced one million red bricks per year. By 1903 it was known as the Sidney Brick Works, advertising its wares as high grade building brick, with base and octagon finishing brick a specialty. His yard would also make "all kinds of finishing brick to order." By then Davis was distributing his products from different points along the Glenboro and Wellwood railway branches. Two years later Elwin Davis was considering fielding another company to produce red bricks. Accordingly he had sample test bricks made at the Boyd Brick Press of Chicago. These were displayed in Winnipeg in mid-February 1905, and it was clear that he intended to compete with the red, ornamental brick from St. Louis, Missouri which had been a mainstay at Winnipeg for twenty-five years. He intended to install new machinery, and so sold off all his equipment to a Moose Jaw Saskatchewan contractor.<sup>124</sup>

Elwin Davis would operate his brick yard another five years. He was still shipping bricks in April 1910, though he had probably quit the business by the autumn. He would eventually retire to Brandon. His place on the local brick-making scene had been taken over by an aggressive, well-financed competitor in the spring of 1909. This was the Sidney Brick and Tile Company, Ltd. One of its managers was Albert Edward Hilder, who would later figure prominently in the Canada Tile and Fireproofing plant at Carman (1913-1914) and the Reliance Brick Plant (later Winnipeg Clay Products) at Winnipeg (1918-1929). At the time of the Sidney incorporation, Hilder was known as a "lumber agent." A brick-maker, George Stenhouse, was involved with the new firm in 1909. Work on the new plant began in April, with a well being dug, and several cars of lumber that arrived shortly afterward. It took 10-12 men to build the brick racks, while the yard machinery arrived in late April. Sidney Brick and Tile began operations in early June. Indeed, a siding was built into the yard by mid-August, and by that time the firm had burnt its first kiln of 140,000 bricks, while its machine produced 25,000 more bricks every day. So successful was its first year that early in January 1910 Sidney Brick and Tile was able to declare a 10 per cent dividend that was equal to 20 per cent of the money invested. All the while Hilder was kept mostly on the road, travelling to Winnipeg, Brandon and Carberry on business. In the spring of 1910 a large order from a

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>123</sup> News, 13 August 1896, p. 1; 9 April 1896, p. 1; Carberry Express, 3 October 1895m p. 1; 11 April 1895, p. 1; 20 June 1895, p. 1; 12 April 1900, p. 1; News, 13 March 1896, p. 8; 21 August 1896, p. 8; 21 May 1897, p. 8.

<sup>124</sup> Express, 10 October 1901, p.1; "Union Bank of Canada", Express, 10 April 1902, p. 4; "Union Bank Building.", News, 1 April 1902, p. 1; Carberry News Holiday Number; Winnipeg Telegram, 14 March 1903, pp. 4(2), 2(2); "Clay For Pressed Brick.", Manitoba Free Press, 16 February 1905, p. 4; Macgregor Herald, 23 February 1905, p. 7; 13 April 1905, p. 5.

Winnipeg firm came in—500,000 bricks—that took everything the firm had on hand. A new boarding house for the employees was one of the features of the 1910 season at this yard, and by late May it was reported to be in “perfect running order.”<sup>125</sup>

Sidney Brick and Tile consolidated its hold on its segment of the market until 1914, when a levelling took place in the brick-making industry of Western Canada. The boom had ended after 1912, and this took much of the new construction with it. After the summer of 1914 the mustering of men for World War I stripped manpower from operations such as brick plants. That August, Sidney Brick and Tile President James A. Devine directed a letter to Winnipeg’s Board of Control, submitting brick samples in order to capture the contracts for the new Cornish Library and adjacent Baths building. He pointed out that Sidney brick was to be seen in Winnipeg at St. Edward’s Church, Arlington Street and Adele Avenue; in the Merchants Bank, Main Street and Bannerman Avenue, and in the Smart-Woods Bag Factory, Alexander Avenue and Lilly Street. Devine reported employing 50 men, though the “dearth of work” made it necessary for the firm to develop as many outlets for its products as possible. Despite these efforts, Sidney Brick and Tile shut down in the spring of 1915, joining the other former efforts, thriving operations that had dotted the landscape in pre-war Western Canada.<sup>126</sup>

That was not the last to be heard of Sidney Brick. An English firm, Sidney Brick and Clay Works, Ltd. was formed and subsequently licensed in Manitoba late in 1919. This brought new capital to the plant as it entered the 1920s. In August 1920 the charter of the Sidney Brick and Tile Company, Ltd. was cancelled, formally ending its existence. The new firm existed for another six years, manufacturing red, rustic and repressed brick, face brick and wire-cut common brick. Their motto was “Sidney Brick looks well—wears well.” Though their licence was revoked in May 1926 it was revived the following November. This did not help matters, and by June 1927 the firm’s affairs were given to a local man, George F. Goulding, who assumed power of attorney. The following year Alsip Brick, Tile and Lumber Company, Ltd. purchased the Sidney plant. At the time, it had eight large kilns and a complete line of the best, up-to-date machinery. Some hope was entertained that work would resume at the plant, and it is believed that Alsip operated this for a few years as a branch of its Winnipeg plant. Sidney Brick and Clay remained in the telephone directory until the March 1932 issue, but was gone by December 1933. In the end, Alsip demolished the plant but continued to remove 75 cars of clay per year out of the Sidney area to be manufactured into brick at the Winnipeg plant.<sup>127</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>125</sup> Sidney Spectator, 29 April 1910, p. 1; Manitoba Telephone Directory (MTS), February 1910; March 1911; “Sidney Old-Timer Dies Suddenly.” (Dennis Davis), Carberry News-Express, 16 July 1931, p. 1; Manitoba Gazette, 13 March 1809, p. 257; Spectator, 1 April 1909, p. 1; 15 April 1909, p. 1; 22 April 1909, p. 1; 29 April 1909, p. 1; 3 June 1909, p. 1; 19 August 1909, p. 1; 6 January 1910, p. 1; 1 April 1910, p. 1; 8 April 1910, p. 1; 22 April 1910, p. 1; 27 May 1910, p. 1.

<sup>126</sup> City of Winnipeg Archives. Board of Control Correspondence, 10501(1); MTS, February 1915; February 1916; Winnipeg Telephone Directory, December 1914; June 1915.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>127</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 8 November 1919, p. 1267; 28 August 1920, p. 1097; Western Canada Contractor, June 1920, p. 2; Manitoba Gazette, 5 June 1926, p. 604; 27 November 1926, p. 1167; 18 June 1927, p. 729; “Sidney Brick Factory Bought by Alsip Company.”, MFP, 12 May 1928, p. 18; MTS, March 1932; December 1933; Carberry Plains—Century One, op. Cit., p. 189.

## **SIDNEY**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1895-1899

Owner/Operator: M. McVicar (possibly Dougald McVicar)

Location: ½ mile south of town

Related Information:

Source of information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1895-1899

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1892-1900

Owner/Operator: Davis Brothers Brick Yard

Location: NE ¼-6-11-12-W1

Related Information: "Carberry Plains: Century One", Carberry History Committee, 1982

Sources of Information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1900

#### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1909-1920

Owner/Operator: Sidney Brick and Tile Company Limited

Location: west of town

Related Information: letters patent of incorporation, 1909; investors from England; 12 beehive kilns, bricks shipped to Ontario, west and into U.S.A.; operation sold to Alsip

Source of information: "Carberry Plains: Century One", Carberry History Committee, 1982; also Alsip papers and documents

#### Operation 4

Dates of operation: 1921-1927

Owner/Operator: Sidney Brick and Clay Works Limited

Location:

Related Information: may have been building products retailer only

Sources of Information: Annual Report of the Mineral Production of Canada (Canada Dominion Bureau of Statistics: Mining, Metallurgical and Chemical Branch),

#### Operation 5

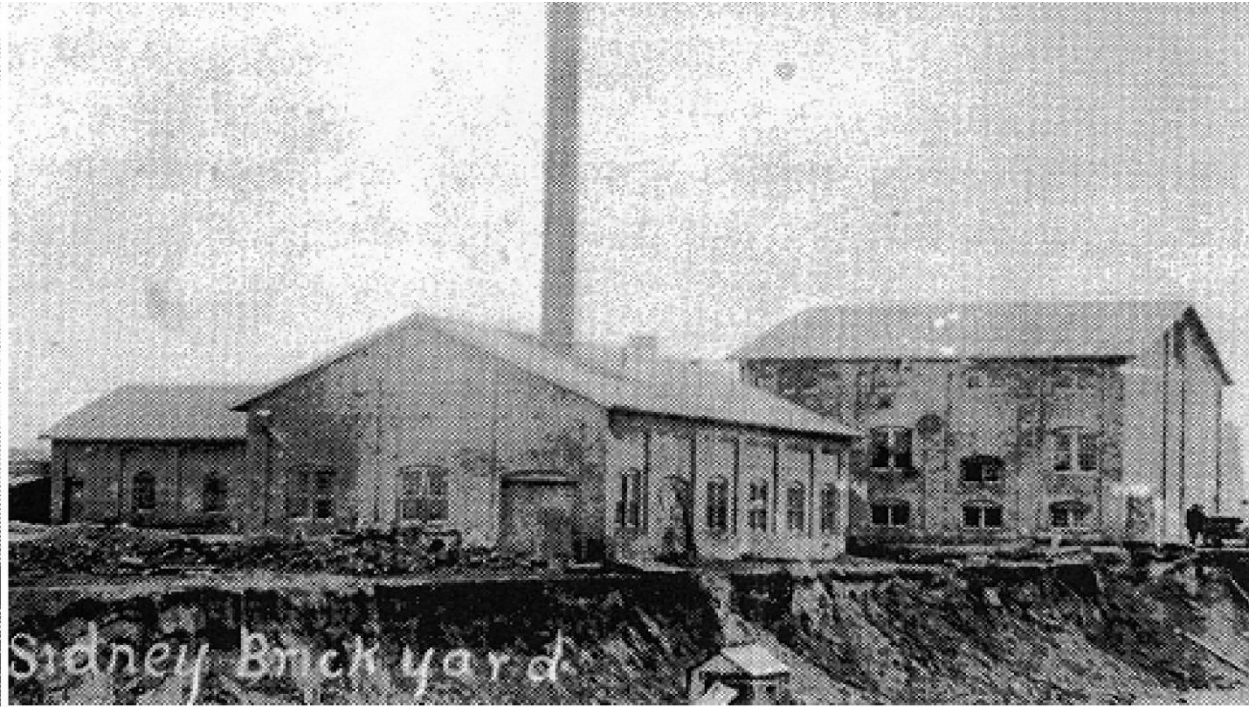
Dates of operation: 1927-1931

Owner/Operator: Alsip Brick, Tile and Lumber Company Limited

Location: SW ¼-6-12-12-W1

Related Information: No brick production on site; clay shipped to Winnipeg?

Source of information: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh, 1931, Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines Files



Sidney Brick Yard, probably the Sidney Brick and Tile version. (Carberry History Committee. Carberry Plains—Century One. Altona: Friesen Printers, 1982. P. 186.)

# Sidney Brick & Clay Works

Limited

*Manufacturers of*

## Red, Rustic<sup>a<sup>n</sup>d</sup> Repressed

## Face

## Wire Cut Common

# **BRICK**

*“ Sidney Brick looks well—wears well ”*

W. P. Sloane, Manager, Winnipeg Office  
S. B. Stedham, Operating Manager of Plant

Phone Main 832

**Winnipeg Office:**  
**706 Merchants Bank Building**

Works—————Sidney, Manitoba

(Western Canada Contractor, June 1920, p. 2.)

JAMES A. DEVINE  
PRESIDENT

R. G. GRAHAM  
SALES MANAGER

A. D. McLE  
SECRETARY-TREA

## THE SIDNEY BRICK & TILE CO., LTD.

MANUFACTURERS OF  
RED RUSTIC AND REPRESSED FACE BRICK AND WIRE CUT COMMON BRICK

WORKS: SIDNEY, MAN.

OFFICES & SHOWROOMS:  
303 TRIBUNE BUILDING, WINNIPEG

TELEPHONE MAIN

WINNIPEG, 13th Aug., 1914.

010501  
The Board of Control,  
City Hall, Winnipeg.

Gentlemen,--

With regard to the application of this Company, yesterday, in order that brick made in the Province may be used for the face brick to be supplied in the new Public Library and Baths, we submit samples as directed by you, and further direct your attention to the following buildings, which are built of our brick in Winnipeg:

St. Edwards Church, Arlington and Notre Dame; Merchants Bank, corner of Bannerman and Main and the Smart Woods Bag Factory Alexander Avenue.

We again remind you that we are a Manitoba concern, employing some fifty men, capable of working and affording employment both winter and summer and most desirous of providing work at present for that class of labor which will find it hardest of all to exist under the present conditions.

With the dearth of work being done it is necessary for us to strain every nerve to obtain a market for our product. We need not point to you the crying necessity of this Province for Industrial enterprise and unless we get every help and encouragement we will have a hard time to keep operating so as to be able to afford employment at the present time.

JAMES A. DEVINE  
PRESIDENT

R. G. GRAHAM  
SALES MANAGER

A. D. MCLEAN  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

## THE SIDNEY BRICK & TILE CO., LTD.

MANUFACTURERS OF  
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WORKS: SIDNEY, MAN.

OFFICES & SHOWROOMS:  
303 TRIBUNE BUILDING, WINNIPEG

TELEPHONE MAIN 632

WINNIPEG.

It is our desire to do our little bit in helping out in this time of stress, and we are hoping that with the closest attention to our selling end, of which this application is an evidence, to continue operating all through the winter.

Thanking you for the courtesy with which our President and Sales Manager were received at yesterday's meeting, We are,

Yours very truly,

THE SIDNEY BRICK & TILE CO. LIMITED,

Per

*James A. Devine*

PRES.

(City of Winnipeg Achieves. Board of Control Correspondence, 10501(1).)



# SOMERSET

A brick yard was started in this area around 1900, when Murdoch McLean manufactured a quantity of bricks, most of which appeared to have gone into an elaborate looking house for himself. In 1901 an unknown party, either McLean or George E. Longbottom, started the Somerset Brick Yard. It is known that this yard's first kiln consisted of 110,000 bricks, which was opened in mid-August. Much of the kiln's output was sold to Joseph Labossiere of the Somerset House and were either salmon or terra cotta in colour. The event was so significant in the district that the Treherne Times copied the story for its own pages. Unfortunately the name of the brick yard operator was not noted. This situation was corrected the following year when George Longbottom fired his last kiln of the season in late August. Nothing else is known of the 1902 production year. The next year was better covered in the local press, with Longbottom getting the yard in order early in May. By mid-June the yard was producing 1300 bricks per hour. A month later, one of the kilns caught fire, destroying 1000 feet of lumber and two cords of wood, for total damages of \$40.00. Around the time of the fire Longbottom fired his first kiln of the season with 175,000 bricks. He was able to advertise his products by mid-August 1903.<sup>128</sup>

One of the notable events of 1904 in regard to the Somerset Brick Yard was the incorporation of the Somerset Brick Company, Ltd. Work began at the yard in early June after new machinery had been installed. While a windstorm destroyed a part of the kiln shed in mid-August, this did not stop Longbottom from burning a kiln of 150,000 bricks by early September, with another being fired immediately after. During 1905 brick-making was delayed because of rain, though an order for 200,000 bricks was received in late May. A machine from the brick works near Altamont (Leary's?) was installed to keep up with the pace of ordering. A new windmill and a railway spur track were also built in the yard. This allowed Longbottom to fire at least four kilns of brick numbering 110,000; 200,000; 160,000; and 22,000 bricks being produced one Saturday by his crew of 20 workers. A connection with Leary's—for firewood—was also noted in early September. The P. E. Bourque house of that year is known to have been built from Somerset brick.<sup>129</sup>

Longbottom's yard got new machinery in March 1906 – this included a mixer and a couple of cable cars for the hauling of clay from the pits to the plant. That spring Longbottom announced that he intended to make 1.5 million bricks that season, having turned out a million during 1905. The success of the Somerset yard was hampered somewhat, however, by the new building of the Northern Bank at Somerset. This used white brick from Drayton, North Dakota for veneering purposes. Possibly the local product was not suitable enough for that small structure which had a rather distinctive appearance. As well, Longbottom did not burn his first kiln of brick until late June, so there might have been a supply

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>128</sup> Somerset History Book Committee. Reflection-Reflects-Somerset. (Altona: Friesens Corporation, 2000.), p. 446; "Bonanza Brick Nuggets.", Sommerset Century, 22 August 1901, p. 1; quoted in Reflections, op. Cit., p. 203; "Bonanza Brick Works.", Treherne Times, 30 August 1901, p. 4; Century, 4 September 1902, p. 4; 1 May 1903, p. 3; 15 May 1903, p. 5; 19 June 1903m, p. 5; 31 July 1903, pp. 1.4; 7 August 1903, p. 4; 14 August 1903, p. 8.

<sup>129</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 31 December 1904, pp. 930-931; Century, 29 April 1904, p. 4; 3 June 1904, p. 5; 5 August 1904, p. 6; 19 August 1904, p. 6; 26 August 1904, p. 6; 2 September 1904, p. 6; 26 June 1905, p. 6; 9 June 1905, p. 6; 16 June 1905, p. 6; 30 June 1905, p. 6; 21 July 1905, p. 6; 4 August 1905, p. 6; 1 September 1905, p. 1; 13 October 1905, p. 6.

problem locally. In all, Longbottom fell short of his 1906 goal, producing only 350,000 bricks for the period. Perhaps the shortfall was partially the cause of Longbottom forming a partnership with Fred Pevert to sell real estate in the spring of 1907. The plant was burning a kiln of bricks made in late May, there having been additions made to the plant. A kiln was built in August, with George Longbottom, Jr. working alongside his Uncle Jim Longbottom at the yard. Somerset Brick had expected to turn out 300,000 bricks in 1907, and probably achieved that. However, Longbottom, Sr. may have been distracted by his real estate machinations. As a result a mortgage holder, Moise Landry, put the brick yard up for sale in November 1907. There were no buyers and so Landry assumed operation of the Somerset Brick yard in 1908. His lease on the land on which the brick yard sat was set to run out on 1 December 1913.<sup>130</sup>

Landry began putting the brick yard in order during late April 1908. He hoped to turn out three million cream-coloured bricks, which he expected to sell at \$7.00; \$8.00; or \$10.00 per thousand for various types. Interestingly, it was stated that seven of Landry's bricks took up one square foot for veneering purposes, with double that figure for solid brick walls. It was said by August 1908 that it was all that Landry could "do to keep up with the demand for his product." Nothing is known of Landry's operations for 1909. Whatever they were, however, probably affected what took place in April 1910. Late in that month Landry sold the Somerset Brick Yard to Couture and Marion of St. Boniface. Apparently their St. Boniface yard had exhausted its clay. Moise Landry eventually moved to Rainy River, Ontario in 1911. The Somerset Year temporarily closed in July 1910 to accommodate the building of a new kiln and other changes. A 1911 visit by Dominion Government geologists noted that the new Couture and Marion yard produced only soft mud brick that were red in colour. They used scove kilns that burned half a cord of wood to product 1000 bricks. During 1910, using the above methods, Couture and Marion supposedly produced two million bricks. Much of their production was shipped west of Somerset. Despite these successes the charter of the Somerset Brick Company, Ltd. was cancelled in October 1913. By then the plant may have been in operation as a clay source only for Couture and Marion, which still had a functioning plant at St. Boniface. The fate of the Somerset plant is uncertain.<sup>131</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>130</sup> Century, 30 March 1906, p. 6; 6 April 1906, p. 8; 13 April 1906, p. 4; 27 April 1906, p. 1; 22 June 1906, p. 5; 20 July 1906, p. 3; 7 September 1906, p. 4; 12 April 1907, p. 4; 24 May 1907, p. 4; 31 May 1907, p. 4; 27 June 1907, p. 4; 5 July 1907, p. 4; 30 August 1907, p. 4; 29 November 1907, p. 4; 6 December 1907, p. 4.

<sup>131</sup> Swan Lack Echo, 24 April 1908, p. 8; 8 May 1908, p. 8; 26 June 1908, p. 6; 14 August 1908, p. 5; 29 April 1910, p. 3; 30 August 1912, p. 3; Manitoba Telephone Directory, March 1911; August 1911; Echo, 15 July 1910, p. 3; Heinrich Ries and Joseph Keele. Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces. (Memoir 24E). Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1912.), pp. 21.26; Manitoba Gazette, 11 October 1913, p. 1359.

## **SOMERSET**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1903-1905

Owner/Operator: George Longbottom and Company

Location: N ½ -20-5-9-W1, ½ mile east of town, near the railway

Related Information:

Source of information: "Memories of Lorne 1880-1980", Municipality of Lorne, 1980

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1905-1912

Owner/Operator: Somerset Brick Company Limited

Location: N ½-20-5-9-W1

Related Information: soft mud-bricks; letters patent 1904

Sources of Information: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh, 1931-, Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

#### Operation 3

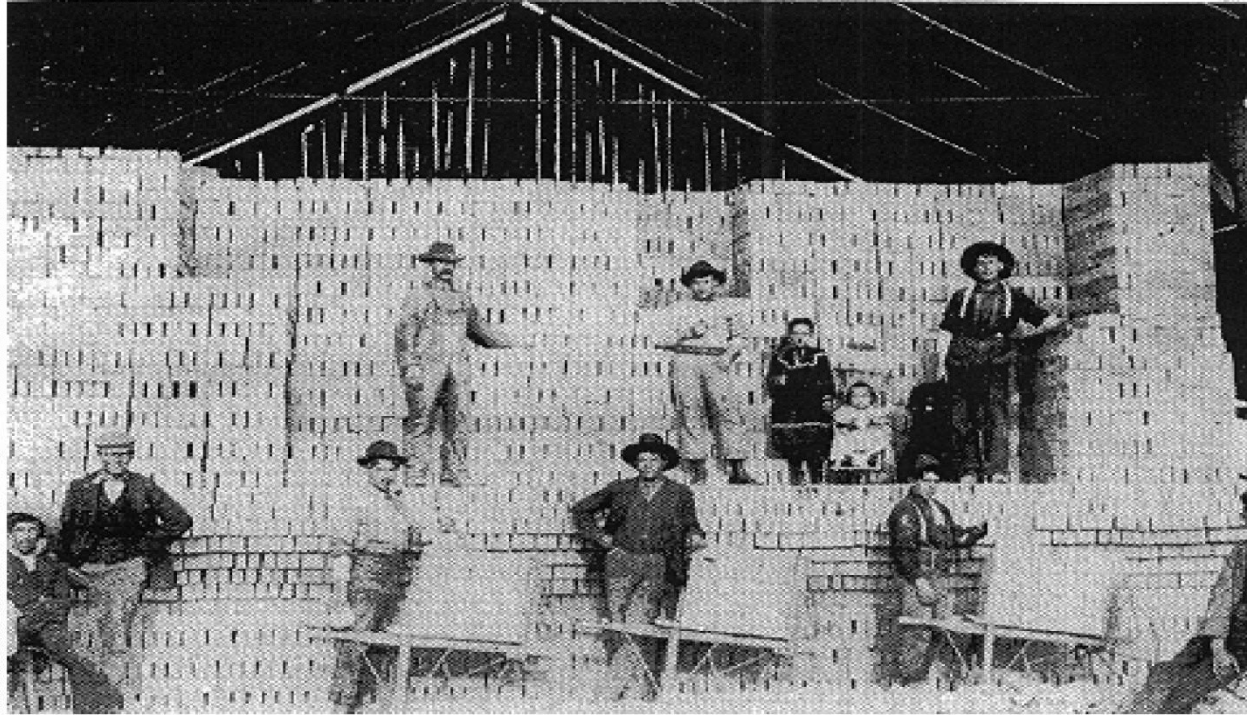
Dates of operation: 1910-1917

Owner/Operator: Coture and Marion (also spelled Couture)

Location: east of village on Canadian Northern Railway

Related Information: moved plant from St. Boniface; soft mud bricks in scove kiln; red or buff in colour; 2 million bricks annual capacity; shipped west

Source of information: "Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces" H. Ries and J. Keele, Canada Department of Mines (Geological Survey Branch) 1912



Somerset Brick Yard, date unknown. (Somerset History Book Committee. Reflections-Reflets-Somerset. Altona: Friesens Corporation, 2000. P 163.) Original in Manitoba Archives, Somerset-Businesses.



Somerset Brick Yard after the windstorm 1904. (Somerset History Book Committee. Reflections-Reflets-Somerset. Altona: Friesens Corporation, 2000. P. 163.) Original in Manitoba Archives, Somerset-Businesses.

# SOURIS

The community was founded by an Ontarian, William H. "Squire" Sowden during 1881-1882. Initially known as the Sowden or Plum Creek Colony, this hamlet enjoyed rapid growth in its early years. In late January 1882 Sowden had returned from a recruiting trip to his former home province. At the time he spoke of "bringing out with him two brick making machines . . ." It is unknown if Sowden did bring out these machines, but in 1883 a newcomer to the area, lawyer-entrepreneur John Nesbitt Kirchoffer erected what was probably the first brick building in Souris. It was said in January 1884 that "the dwellings of Messrs. Sowden, J. N. and R.B. Kirchoffer [were] among the best [in town and would] compare favourably with the best in Brandon." Historian G. A. McMorran noted in 1956 that the Kirchoffer house was "the most elaborate" of the lot in Souris. Where Kirchoffer derived his bricks is a mystery, as their origin is presently unknown. Souris is some 25 mile from Brandon, then the nearest supply of brick, and at the time had no rail connection. It would have been a long, expensive haul in 1883 to bring in the necessary brick to create this large house. It is also probable that Sowden did have some functioning brick machines as he had indicated the previous year. Descriptions of Souris in 1883 and 1884 gave no evidence of brick-making. Indeed, the Brandon Mail correspondent stated in June 1884 that "a brick-maker would do well here." And so, it remained without this industry for the next eight years.<sup>132</sup>

In January 1892 Souris still did not have a brick yard. That spring, however, a man named G. Vaughan began preparations to begin manufacturing brick. Vaughan's activity appears to have been stillborn, as nothing further was heard of it. Instead, at the beginning of June 1892, Squire Sowden had once again come to the fore. Machinery had arrived and was put in positions on the west side of town on land owned by Sowden. To run the yard he found Harry Payne (later at Hartney) and Harry Withers. Payne had been in the brick business in Ontario, and like Vaughan before him was known as a first class practical man. Their first kiln of brick was fired in early to mid-July and produced bricks of a yellowish or cream colour. By then orders were reported to be "coming in thick and fast." A second kiln followed in late August, and that was followed by a third in September. Much of this production went into structures built in downtown Souris, such as Sowden's Opera House and the Bambridge Block, the latter structure taking much of the second kiln of 1892. Throughout its existence the Sowden yard appears to have mainly supplied the local market, and as such the bulk of the brick buildings in the town which were erected during the yard's first decade boasted Sowden brick in their walls.<sup>133</sup>

Payne and Withers were back in the Sowden yard in 1893. By mid-August, the operation was producing 10,000 bricks per day, with the first kiln totalling 190,000 bricks, while a second kiln burned 200,000 and a third was expected at 172,000. The pair planned to produce one million bricks that year,

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>132</sup> "Souris District." Winnipeg Times, 2 February 1882, p. 1; "John Nesbitt Kirchoffer." Manitoba Sun, 2 December 1886, p. 1; "Plum Creel." Brandon Mail, 31 December 1884, p. 5; G. AS. McMorran(ed) The Souris Plains, 1881-1946, From Pemmican To Wheat. (Souris: Plaindealer, 1956. ), p. 25; "Plum Creek." Mail, 13 February 1883, p. 1; 26 June 1884, p. 1.

<sup>133</sup> "The Town of Souris." Mail, 21 January 1892, p. 1; Commercial, 25 April 1892, p. 835; "Brick for Souris." Souris Plaindealer, 14 April 1892, p. 4; "Souris Brick Yard." Plaindealer, 9 June 1892, p. 4; 7 July 1892, p. 4; 21 July 1892, p. 4; 25 August 1892, p. 4; 4 August 1892, p. 4; 18 August 1892, p. 4.

though they may have fallen short of that mark. Again, much of this production went into local buildings, including a larger block that Sowden was building that year. That was the Public School, designed by Brandon architect W. H. Shillinglaw. It was reported in July that H. Cook was draying Brandon brick from the station to the school site. It was later said that “the light uniform color of the Brandon brick used on the outside had much to do with the appearance which, it must be conceded, is plainly superior to that of any other brick walls in town.” Nothing is known of the yard operations in 1895, except that Harry Payne went to Hartney to start his own yard. The following year work began in mid-May, and soon, Sowden’s yard was back at supplying the home demand once again. The yard employed eight men, but the firm had two or three others on call when demand peaked. By mid-July they had burned a kiln of 100,000 bricks with another of similar size being prepared. The large burns continued into 1897 when Richard Thompson was managing the Souris yard, having kilns of 160,000 and 150,000 bricks. Sowden’s yard had new managers during 1898 in the form of “two young men, recently from Ontario with experience in brick making.” At the time (May) they were putting out 8,000 bricks per day, down in number somewhat from 1893. The last that was heard of the Sowden yard came in 1899, when William Collier’s local residence was built from “brick supplies from a choice kiln from Sowden’s brick yard.” As well, Sowden himself built yet another business block that year using his own brick.<sup>134</sup>

Any mention of a brick yard was dropped from the Souris Plaindealer during 1900 and 1901. Captain A.L Young built his new block in 1901 which he subsequently leased to the Merchants Bank of Canada. It was built of St. Boniface brick and red hydraulic pressed brick from Menomonee, Wisconsin. This was a clear indication that the Sowden yard was shut down by 1901. Two years later, however, it was the same Captain Young, who in possibly responding to a “corner” on the brick market by Winnipeg builders, started a new yard with his partner, architect Carter H. Brindle. They had samples of clay analyzed and had found a bed of “excellent clay.” Young and Brindle had purchased modern brick-making machinery which would be operated by either steam or gasoline. They also planned to engage an expert brick-maker to build and run an up-to-date plant. Their machinery arrived in June, and by late July they had burned their first kiln of 100,000 bricks. The colouring of this supposedly white brick was not quite right, however, as they found that their sand gave the product a reddish tinge. When the yard closed for the season in mid-September they had burned 450,000 bricks. In 1904 Young and Brindle faced competition from a local cement block factory which was started by two Englishmen. It also faced competition from brick yards in surrounding towns such as the Kirkland yard at Hartney, or the Davis yard at Deloraine. The Souris yard went ahead, however, with some of the machinery being of Brindle’s design. They had settled upon steam for their motive power, and employed 16 men. They had a capacity of 20,000 bricks per day under the guidance of Mr. Thomas, a brick-maker of 30 years’ experience who had worked in the St. Boniface yards. Young and Brindle had opened a new pit in 1904 and solved the sand problem by hauling in sand from the Red River at Winnipeg. That sand was also used in the brick yards at Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie.<sup>135</sup>

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>134</sup> Plaindealer, 11 May 1893, p. 4; 17 August 1893, p. 4; 7 June 1893, p. 8; 19 July 1894, p. 4; 20 September 1894, p. 4; Hartney Star, 14 June 1895, p. 1; Plaindealer, 21 May 1896, p. 8; 30 July 1896, p. 8; 2 September 1897, p. 8; 27 May 1898, p. 8; 6 October 1899, p. 8; 10 November 1899, p. 8.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>135</sup> “New Block Occupied.”, Plaindealer, 12 July 1901, p. 4; 20 March 1903, p. 8; “Will Manufacture Brick.”, Plaindealer, 29 May 1903, p. 1; 12 June 1903, p. 8; 31 July 1903, p. 8; 18 September 1903, p. 8; 13 May 1904, p. 8; “The Souris Brickyard.”, Plaindealer, 10 June 1904, p. 1.

That year the bricks on one of the Sowden Blocks were painted over, thus indicating some dissatisfaction with the appearance of the old product. This had little effect on the Young and Brindle operation, which may have sold brick to Squire Sowden who erected a concrete block and brick building that year. That autumn the firm began advertising its wares at \$11.00 per thousand. Those ads would run until mid-January 1906. Nothing is known of this yard in 1905, or if it was in operation at all. By April it was faced with an additional influx of bricks, this time from Estevan, Saskatchewan. The Estevan bricks were said to offer a boon to builders in the Souris area. Perhaps the Young and Brindle yard had already ceased production and was selling off its manufactured brick. After January 1906 nothing further was heard of Souris Bricks.<sup>136</sup>

## **SOURIS**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1894-1904

Owner/Operator: Squire Sowden, Souris Brick Yard

Location: W ½-35-7-21-W1

Related Information: soft-mud, common bricks "Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces", H. Ries and J. Keele, Canada Department of Mines (Geological Survey Branch) 1912- documents from Hillcrest Museum, Souris

Source of information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1895-1899

## **SOURIS CITY**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1881-1890

Owner/Operator: Young's Brick Yard

Location:

Related Information:

Source of information: Wells Report, Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

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<sup>136</sup> Plaindealer, 15 April 1904, p. 8; 23 September 1904, p. 8; 14 October 1904, p. 4; 19 January 1906, p. 3; 14 April 1905, p.12.

# STONY MOUNTAIN

Though known today as the home of Manitoba's federal penitentiary, Stony Mountain was once known as a place of quarries, as well as brick yards. Of the latter category, three brick yards once operated at "Stony," all during the early 1880s. A July 1881 article in the Manitoba Free Press, after describing the jail on the hill, went on to describe the quarry belonging to Winnipeg contractor Major. F. J. Bowles. As yet there was no brick yard in this community. This changed by the following spring when building contractors McDonald and Holley began to establish a brick yard there in addition to their existing yards at Point Douglas and St. Boniface. Indeed, the Stony Mountain brick yard was opened in addition to a quarry and lime kilns that J. G. McDonald had earlier established. By the summer of 1882 the Point Douglas yard had closed, and with the remaining two yards McDonald and Holley would have 18 manufacturing machines. Unfortunately their yard was destroyed by fire at the end of September 1882. With a \$2500 loss it is unknown if the plant was rebuilt<sup>137</sup>

A second yard was operated by Kelly Brothers of Winnipeg starting in June 1882. Little is known of this operation except that in August 1882 it had already produced 900,000 bricks using slop machines. One of those machines, operated by four men over a nine hour period, turned out 17,000 bricks, "a feat said to be without parallel in the manufacture of brick." At the time, 10-12,000 bricks from one machine in a day was considered to be quite good. What became of the Kelly yard is presently unknown. Similarly, nothing is known of the third Stony Mountain brick yard mentioned in an August 1882 article in the Winnipeg Times. Perhaps it was run by Major Bowles. At least one of the above operations survived until the summer of 1884, for it was said that in June a total of 43 rail cars of stone, lime and sundry building materials shipped out of Stony Mountain also contained five cars of brick. By late August "considerable stone and brick was being shipped to satisfy the demand in Winnipeg." A year later, only lime and stone were being shipped out, perhaps being indicative of the collapse of Winnipeg's building boom during 1885.<sup>138</sup>

## STONY MOUNTAIN

### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1903-1906, 01908-1913

Owner/Operator: Corrections Canada

Location: Penitentiary

Related Information:

Source of information: Sessional Papers of Canada, Reports of the Inspectors of Penitentiaries, Annual Report of the Warden, Stony Mountain Penitentiary, 1903-1913

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>137</sup> "A Visit to Stone Mountain.", Winnipeg Times, 9 August 1882, p. 4; "A Day's Ramble." Manitoba Free Press, 1 July 1881; Steen and Boyce. Winnipeg, Manitoba and Her Industries. (Winnipeg; Steen and Boyce, 1882.), p. 62; "Round Town," Times, 29 April 1882, p. 1; Winnipeg Sun, 30 September 1882, p. 8.

<sup>138</sup> Times, 15 August 1882, p. 4; "Stony Mountain.", Stonewall News, 7 June 1884, p. 8; 30 August 1884, p. 1; 17 October 1885, p. 1.



## STRATHCLAIR

In March 1903 it was announced that Partridge and Sons were about to start a brick yard a few miles south of this town. For some unknown reason that site did not work out, and the brick yard was established some miles east in the Marney District (see Newdale). By mid-September the Marney Brick Company was supplying brick for Dr. Rutherford's new house in Strathclair, as well as for the new Anglican Church. A year later the clay at the Marney site was "played out," and Partridge and Sage closed the plant from Strathclair over to Neepawa, according to the town's newspaper, The Register. Perhaps the Neepawa reporter had the wrong locality and meant Marney instead. Whatever locality, however, this ended brick-making in the two districts.<sup>139</sup>

## SWAN RIVER

In June 1909 an advertisement in the Swan River Star offered bricks for sale, with 65,000 bricks located at Swan River and 200,000 at Benito. The vendor was Nicholas Massoles, with contracts at both places. The source of these bricks is presently unknown – perhaps they were the remainder of the Thomas yard at Kenville-Durban or those of the Rutherford and Pogue yard of Minitonas. Benito is not known to have had a brick yard. Similarly, Swan River is not known to have fostered a brick-making operation until 1951, when Swan River Clay Products came into existence. When the plant opened in 1952, it used the machinery from the Hales operations at Edrans. The Edrans brick factory was one of the few Manitoba yards that managed to survive until World War II, when it closed. Swan River had earlier drawn some of its supply of bricks from the so-called Doukhobor Brick Yard at Thunderhill, some three miles into Saskatchewan.<sup>140</sup>

### SWAN RIVER

#### Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):

##### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1953-1955, 1959

Owner/Operator: Swan River Clay Products Limited

Location: quarry at SW ¼-10-37-26-W1; plant one miles north of town, next to C>N>R. tracks

Related Information: three up-draft kilns; wood for fuel; face brick

Source of information: "The Clays and Shales of Manitoba of Mines and Natural Resources, 1970, and 31 Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>139</sup> "Strathclair.", Shoal Lake Star, 12 March 1903, p. 1; "Marney," Star, 4 June 1903, p. 1; 27 August 1903, p. 1; Hamiota Echo, 10 September 1903, p. 1; Star, 15 September 1904, p. 1; Neepawa Register, 30 March 1905, p. 1.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>140</sup> Swan River Star, 3 June 1909, p. 1; "Swan River Clay Products.", in Swan Valley Historical Society, Lasting Impressions. (Altona: Friesen Printers, 1984.), pp. 332-335; 132-133.

# THE PAS

What might have been Manitoba's most northerly brick yard probably never got beyond the stage of incorporation. It became a very good example of the results of poor timing in the brick industry, while not being as costly as the failure of the Canada Tile and Fireproofing Company at Carman in the same period. In March 1914 The Pas Herald announced that a company was being formed to manufacture brick at that place. A suitable clay deposit had been found near The Pas, and samples had been analyzed at the School of Mining at Grand Forks, North Dakota. The analysis showed the clay would produce an excellent face brick. The Pas Clay Products, Mining and Development Company. Ltd. was incorporated during early May, and featured among its promoters some of the leaders of that community, including lumberman Herman Finger and architect George Nelson Taylor. The necessity for such a plant was obvious to local builders – ordinary brick cost \$19.00 per thousand put down at The Pas, while face brick stood at \$72.00 per thousand. The Pas, for that reason alone, remained a wooden town, subject to devastating fires.<sup>141</sup>

Unfortunately, this was the last that was heard of this proposal. A downturn in Western Canadian building construction had begun to come effective by the early summer of 1914. To add to this was the start of World War I in August, an event that would eventually tap the manpower of business such as brick plants. With that one-two punch, The Pas Clay Products never got off the ground. The first two brick buildings in that town—Central School (1915-1916) and the Community Building (1916-1917)—both used imported brick. The School used Saskatoon brick in its walls and was built by a Regina firm. The Community Building was constructed by Snyder Brothers of Portage la Prairie using Sidney brick. This latter situation is of some interest: though the Sidney yard had closed in 1915 it is possible that it reopened for a short periods for special orders; it is also possible that the Snyders were using up already manufactured stock; or it could be that the Snyder's, who had their own yards at Portage and Gilbert Plains, had acquired the Sidney operation. At any rate The Pas remained an importer of brick during World War I, and the charter of The Pas Clay Products was cancelled in August 1920.<sup>142</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>141</sup> "Company Formed to Manufacture Brick.", The Pas Herald, 19 march 1914, p. 1; Manitoba Gazette, 9 May 1914, pp. 742-743.

<sup>142</sup> Herald, 8 October 1915, p. 1; "Community Building Contract Given Out.", Herald, 8 September 1916, p. 4; Manitoba Gazette, 28 August 1920, p. 1097.

# THUNDER HILL

## **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

### Operation 1

Dates of operation: BEFORE 1905

Owner/Operator: M. McVicar (possibly Dougald McVicar)

Location: ½ mile south of town

Related Information:

Source of information: Manitoba Department of Energy Mines files

# VIRDEN

The brick-making industry in this western Manitoba town was off to an inauspicious start in 1889 when local entrepreneur W. F. Scarth discovered a bed of brick clay on his farm near Virden. Scarth had his sample analyzed by an Ontario expert, and this gave him encouragement to plan the start of a brick yard for the spring of 1890. The following spring, perhaps coincidentally, J. A. Fraser found a bed of “fire clay” on his property north of Gopher Creek, while digging three wells. His clay was tested in the Virden Mills. Unfortunately, nothing came of these two discoveries except to show that brick clay existed in the area. Merchants in Virden had been importing Winnipeg brick into their community since at least 1885, but they would have to wait another three years before their dream of a local yard was fulfilled. A major fire on 28 October 1891 wiped out much of Virden’s business district, with only a few more substantial survivors among the lot. The Brandon Times was given to observe that “a number of the buildings are of brick and stone, some of solid stone, and the remainder of wood.” Clearly, more substantial buildings were needed, if a repeat of the destruction of 28 October was to be avoided. It was the work on two new stone buildings the following summer that would give rise to Virden’s first brick yard.<sup>143</sup>

The construction of Architect Walter Chesterton’s stone Public School and St. Mary’s Anglican Church building drew Winnipeg contractor John Saul to Virden in the spring of 1892. He was the younger brother of David Saul, a Winnipeg contractor who had operated his own brick yards there in the early 1880s. Having been a partner in some of his brother’s enterprises, John was familiar with most forms of building by 1892. Undoubtedly he heard the stories of brick clay around Virden and probably investigated the possibilities of starting his own yard. In October he announced that he had tested the clay, and purchased the machinery to start his yard in the spring of 1893. Saul acquired a site near the town and his machinery probably arrived in Virden during November while he was working on Swanson’s new hotel. It was planned that the hotel would be brick-veneered the following season, once the new yard began production. The Virden Chronicle proclaimed the pending yard “A boon to the town.” True to his word John Saul returned by mid-April 1893 with a large gang of men who moved his machinery out to the brick yard, which was a mile east of town, across Gopher Creek and next to the CPR tracks. By late May Saul and his partner, William A. Irish, were getting ready to burn their first kiln of 85,000 bricks. The supposed capacity of the yard machinery was 30,000 bricks per day under the expert guidance of Sidney-area brick-maker Elwin Davis. Davis was soon to leave Saul and Irish in order to establish his own yard at Sidney. Saul carried on without Davis’s talents, and by early August was burning his third kiln of brick. Up to that point, the Saul and Irish yard had produced 350,000 bricks. The bulk of this was sold on the local market.<sup>144</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>143</sup> Virden Advance, 20 June 1889, p. 3; 6 March 1890, p. 3; 31 December 1885, p. 3; “The Town of Virden.”, Brandon Times, 3 December 1894, p. 1.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>144</sup> Virden Chronicle, 6 October 1892, p. 3; Carberry News, 14 October 1892, p. 5; Chronicle, 3 November 1892, p. 3; 13 April 1893, p. 8; 4 May 1893, p. 5; 1 June 1893, p. 8; Carberry News, 28vApril 1893, p. 1; 2 June 1893, p. 1; Chronicle, 8 June 1893, p. 8; 3 August 1893, p. 8; “Progress Virden.”, Chronicle, 14 September 1893, p. 1.

The Saul and Irish yard entered into a routine period of production in the ensuing years. During 1894 the yard was open for about a month and a half, opening in mid-June and closing during early August. In 1895 production was up, with John Saul shipping three carloads of brick by late June, with an order for a carload to go to Kemnay once the brick was produced. He estimated that the yard would produce about 300,000 bricks in 1895. Some of these went into the new municipal/fire hall building constructed by Saul that year. According to Directory sources, the Saul yard was in business up to about 1897. By that time the Virden brick yard operators were turning out first class bricks. However, local merchants such as Pineo and Merrick, W. F. Carefoot, and contractor Joseph Jarrett were also advertising brick for sale. In the case of Jarrett, he sold Winnipeg white brick, probably made in one of the St. Boniface yards. In the spring of 1898 James Sheriff and a man named Neden began operating the brick yard. They planned to turn out half a million bricks, as well as producing curved brick for lining wells. It is unknown how long Sheriff and Neden operated the Virden yard, though they advertised their wares from May until mid-August 1898. What ended their operation is also unknown, though it is relatively certain that it was no longer functioning by 1900.<sup>145</sup>

A Manitoba Free Press article on Virden in June 1902 made no mention of brick yards when listing the town's industries. But among the captains of industry located in this community and listed in the account were Cecil Wogan-Wainwright, a machinist and engineer, as well as a gentleman farmer, William John Gyles. In the spring of 1904, Wainwright and Gyles, along with their partner, William H Kennedy, announced the re-opening of the brick yard. The new firm was known as The Virden Brick and Tile Company, and work at the yard began in early May. By mid-month they were in production, claiming a capacity of 50,000 bricks per day. They offered veneer brick at \$12.00 per thousand and kiln run at \$11.00. The yard even provoked a laudatory article in the Advance, complete with Biblical allusions. Little is known of the destination of Virden brick in 1904, except that quite a number were used by contractor A.C. McDougall in R.B. Ramsey's new hotel at Griswold. More is known about production in 1905 – with McDougall taking 100,000 bricks to Moosomin, Saskatchewan for a new hotel, as well as a large quantity for the V.W. Horwood-designed Virden Public School. During 1906 Virden Brick and Tile shipped 25 cars of brick to Regina, Saskatchewan and other points. A 1907 visit from Dominion Government geologists found that the firm used a Freese and Company brick machine which produced buff brick on the company's half section of land.<sup>146</sup>

In July 1909 the firm incorporated as The Virden Brick and Tile Company, Ltd., with largely the same principals involved who had revived the yard five years earlier. Evidently, this allowed the operators to better finance the business, allowing for expansion and improvements such as new machinery. By December Virden Brick and Tile issued its stock prospectus in the Empire-Advance. Late in the year the same journal had printed an article about a Winnipegger named D. Williams who was in

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<sup>145</sup> Virden Advance, 14 June 1894, p. 8; 2 August 1894, p. 8; Virden Banner, 27 June 1895, p. 8; 11 September 1895, p. 1; Henderson's, 1897, p. Xi; Advance, 22 July 1897, p. 4; 20 May 1897, p. 8; 18 August 1889, p. 8; 2 June 1898, p. 8; 5 May 1898, p. 7; 21 May 1898, p. 12; 11 August 1898, p. 6.

<sup>146</sup> "Virden: A Western Metropolis.", Manitoba Free Press, 21 June 1902, p. 17; "Brick! Brick! Brick!", Advance, 4 February 1904, p. 8; 24 March 1904, p. 5; 31 March 1901, pp. 1. 8; 19 May 1904, p. 1; 23 June 1904, p. ; "Virden's Infant Industry.", Advance, 21 July 1904, p. 4; 30 June 1904, p. 8; 6 April 1905, p. 8; 38 July 1905, p. 1; 31 August

ENDNOTES  
1905, p. 1; Virden Empire, 17 May 1906, p. 5; Report on the Mining and Metallurgical Industries of Canada, 1907-1908. (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1908.), p. 654.

Virden to introduce a new process for making brick from sand, cement and a chemical preparation. The brick could be had in any colour, and could be made cheaply in winter when labour costs were lower. Evidently it was no competition for Virden Brick and Tile, as nothing more was heard of it. The Wainwright-Gyles brick plant continued in operation until the post-1912 slow down in the Western Canadian Boom. The advent of World War I in the summer of 1914 likely put the finishing touches to the operation of this plant. Sometime during 1915 the Virden brick plant closed, joining many other Western Canadian brick producers in oblivion. The shuttered plant on SW 14:10:26W sat for the next four years. Early in 1920 salvation of a sort came to the brick plant. A new Winnipeg firm with a Dominion charter—Manitoba Clays and Building Supplies, Ltd.—purchased the Virden plant. Manitoba Clays was largely a distributor for equipment and for the ELK Fire Brick Company of Hamilton, Ontario. Its president, architect-engineer John Lewis Thomas, wrote an open letter to the people of Virden stating the need for reviving the yard by his firm. Manitoba Clays intended “developing to the fullest extent” the plant at Virden. Despite these good intentions some misfortune overtook Manitoba Clays, possibly in the summer of 1920. By early 1921 the firm had vanished from the Winnipeg telephone directories, and by then, J. L. Thomas was the managing director of another development company. In terms of Virden, it is evident that the brick plant was severely affected by the failure of Manitoba Clays. Unintentionally, it would seem, brick making at Virden had ended.<sup>147</sup>

## **VIRDEN**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1890

Owner/Operator: Sherif and Neden

Location: one mile east of Virden (Gopher Creek settlement) SW ¼-14-10-26-W1

Related Information: no marks in frog; coarse, re-orange bricks; sold to Saul and Irish

Source of information: “A Review of the Heritage Resources of Virden”, Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1986, “The Virden Story”, I. Clingan, Virden, 1957

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1893-1902

Owner/Operator: Saul and Irish, later Saul only (1899)

Location: one mile east of Virden (Gopher Creek settlement)

Related Information: from Sherif and Neden

Sources of Information: “A Review of the Heritage Resources of Virden – Wallace Planning District”, Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1986

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<sup>147</sup> Manitoba Gazette, 31 July 1909, pp. 956-958; Empire-Advance, 23 December 1909, p. 7; A New Industry for Virden.”, Empire-Advance, 3 November 1910, p. 1; Manitoba Telephone Directory, February 1916; Henderson’s 1920; City Life, 10 January 1920, p. 9; “Virden Brick and Tile Works.”, Empire-Advance, 27 January 1920, p. 1; Western Telephone Directory, August 1920; January 1921; Henderson’s, 1921.

### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1905-1915

Owner/Operator: Virden Brick and Tile Company Ltd. (Wainwright was manager for some years)

Location: SW 14-14-10-26-W1

Related Information: cream-coloured brick, used locally and shipped west; annual production capacity of 3 million brick; letters patent 1909; scove kilns, poplar from Riding Mountain

Source of information: "Review of the Heritage Resources of Virden – Wallace Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1986 "The Virden Story", I. Clingan, Virden, 1957 "Anecdotes and Updates", Empire Publishing Company Ltd., "Preliminary Report on the Clay and Shale Deposits of the Western Provinces" H. Ries and J. Keele, Canada Department of Branch

### Operation 4

Dates of operation: 1923-

Owner/Operator: Manitoba Clays and Building Supplies

Location:

Related Information: acquires property in 1920

Source of Information "A Review of the Heritage Resources of Virden-Wallace Planning District", Karen Nicholson, Historic Resources Branch, 1986



Brick drying racks, Virden Brick Yard. (*Anecdotes and Upgrade, 1882-1982, Virden Centennial Souvenir.* Virden: Empire Publishing Company, 1982. p. 29.)



**Brick! Brick! Brick!**

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Contractors and others requiring Brick during the coming season would do well to bear in mind that a company composed of Messrs. **WAINWRIGHT, GYLES & KENNEDY** propose re-opening the old brickyard again with all up-to-date machinery. Capacity of 50,000 brick a day. All old-timers know that the clay is of the first quality and makes the best of brick.

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**Prices will be right.**

(Viriden Advance, 25 February 1904, p. 5.)

# Sheriff & Neden

Brick Manufacturers,  
VIRDEN, - MANITOBA.

We are going to start work at the  
VIRDEN BRICK YARD in a few  
days and expect to have a kiln of

**First-Class Brick**  
ready for sale the first week in June.

This year we will have a brick  
made especially for use in a wall.

Any person who contemplates  
building this season will do well to  
call, examine brick and get prices.

**Sheriff & Neden,**  
**Virден, Man.**

(Virден Advance, 5 May 1898, p. 7.)

# The Virден Brick and Tile Co.

# BRICK

FOR SALE  
\$12 PER THOUSAND.

We are now making brick  
with our new and up-to-date  
machinery.

Capacity 50,000  
per day

under the charge of an Expert  
of Experience. We have for  
sale building and fancy brick of  
excellent quality both as regards  
material and workmanship.

Prompt and careful attention  
given by the manager to all  
orders. Any information cheer-  
fully given to all enquiries.  
Correspondence and orders  
solicited.

Apply to

C. W. Wainwright,  
—or—  
W. J. Gyles.

(Virден Advance, 19 May 1904, p. 1.)

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### VIRDEN'S INFANT INDUSTRY.

There are men of great ideas in and around Virden. One has a pet scheme to dam the Gopher creek below Mr. Ramsay's farm and secure water power sufficient to provide electric energy to light the town and drive street cars. Another would dam the Assiniboine at Brandon and form a long navigable lake to Qu'Appelle. Still another has visions of rich coal mines in the river valley. A fourth sees indications of a limitless supply of oil and is only waiting for sufficient capital to destroy the reign of the oil king forever. But amidst the manifold visionary schemes we must not fail to ascribe honour to the three gentlemen who have put their ideas into practical shape and made the first serious effort in our district to establish a useful and necessary industry. Messrs. Wainwright, Gyles and Kennedy are nothing if not practical. No one who has visited the new brick work and seen the costly plant installed there and witnessed the careful attention provided for every detail of the process of brick making can fail to realize that these gentlemen are leaving nothing to chance. There is no happy-go-lucky effort like the last essay at brick making there, but one in which a large capital is involved and to secure the success of which there must be no lack of appreciation by this community. All three gentlemen are quite alive to the importance of their venture and to the disastrous consequences of any failure on their part to satisfy the public. And withal they are ambitious, for they are not resting content with an ordinary brick but are laying themselves out to produce one with characteristics of its own. A brick which they hope will be hard enough to stand the rigors and extremes of this variable climate of ours for a hundred years. A brick with a color pleasing to the eye which will give tone to any building it is used upon and moreover a brick so shapely and symmetrical and with such a surface finish that it will tend to elevate the taste of any community

amongst whom it is largely used. Brick making is one of the oldest industries we have track of in this world's history. The tower of Babel which the people of the earliest ages started to raise on the plain of Shinar the top of which was to reach to Heaven was of brick and in the language of sacred writ it was brick "burned thoroughly." We learn from the same source that the Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, kept the children of Israel in bondage making brick. All through the ages brick making has been a laborious occupation. The brick requires handling in all stages of its manufacture and machinery does comparatively little to lighten the task. What the engineering science has effected has been fully taken advantage of in the Virden brick yards. The machine which mixes the material to the proper consistency drives it out in an oblong slab and then cuts it to the required size is a triumph of engineering skill. It is the very latest machine and is, we understand, the only one of the kind at work in the province.

Virden citizens may well be proud of their infant industry and the Advance wishes the enterprising promoters good luck in their venture.

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(Virden Advance, 21 July 1904, p. 4.)

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The Virden Brick  
and Tile Co.

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DO YOU INTEND TO

**BRICK  
VENEER**

your house this summer? We  
would like to sell you the

**BRICK.**

We are turning out many  
thousands of them daily, of  
the very best quality.

VENEER BRICK \$12 PER THOUSAND.

KILN RUN BRICK \$11 PER THOUSAND.

We have some of the best  
material in the province, and  
our process is an up-to-date  
one. Nothing but skilled  
labor engaged. Call on us  
when next you are in Virden  
and inspect for yourself.

Any information cheerfully  
given to all enquiries. Cor-  
respondence and orders  
solicited.

Apply to

C. W. Wainwright,

—or—  
W. J. Gyles.

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(Virden Advance, 23 June 1904, p. 1.)

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The Virden Brick  
and Tile Co.

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**Time Is On  
The Move**

SO ARE OUR

**BRICKS**

But we still have a few  
hundred thousand left—well  
burnt and of the best quality.

The season is getting late  
and those intending to make  
their buildings warm and  
comfortable by brick veneer-  
ing should call on us at once.

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C. W. Wainwright,  
W. J. Gyles.

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(Virden Advance, 22 September 1904, p.1.)

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**The Virden Brick  
and Tile Co.**

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**VENEER BRICK**

**\$12 Per Thousand**

**KILN BRICK**

**\$11 Per Thousand**

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Our supply for this season is getting limited. Those wanting brick this fall should place their orders at once.

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**C. W. Wainwright,**

**W. J. Gyles.**

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( Virden Advance, 17 November  
1904, p. 1.)

# MANITOBA CLAYS AND BUILDING SUPPLIES LTD.

803-804 Electric Rly. Chambers      Phone Garry 4113      WINNIPEG

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We have acquired and intend developing to the fullest extent the Virden Brick and Tile Plant at Virden, Man., and are considering the purchase of an additional plant, also



We are consequently preparing to fill all the orders at the present time on our books, but it must be understood this will be done in the order of their receipt.

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We are now prepared to take orders for Hollow Tile but advise early booking of same

Well-intentioned, but no in business long enough to accomplish all of the above. (*Western Canada Contractor*, March 1920, Back Cover.)

# WAWANESA

Local historians claim that the first manufactory of this type was Britton's Brick Yard, which was prior to 1880. It is also claimed that several houses in the Wawanesa area were built of this brick. The plant is said to have been located on present Highway 2, south of the town, and produced bricks that were flat on all sides, which supposedly made it difficult to construct a building. This story-line does not take several factors into consideration. First is the timeline: Wawanesa did not exist prior to August-October 1889, when several buildings were moved in from Souris City to be near the railway. Second, written descriptions of the fledgling town written from 1890-1892 made no mention of Britton nor of his brick yard. Third, there is no mention of Britton in Henderson's Directories issued between 1890 and 1895. The story may well be local legend. What little that is known of bricks in Wawanesa began in October 1892, when Thomas Booker began advertising "bricks for Sale." That ad ran for nearly two years. Booker was a local mason and building contractor. He obtained his brick supply from an unknown yard at Brandon, where, he said, "they can obtained very favourably."<sup>148</sup>

The following year, 1893, appears to have been prosperous one for Booker's contracting business at Wawanesa. This had taken place partly because of a fire which destroyed a large part of the wooden town on the morning of 3 March. As a precaution, a good number of surviving businesses rebuilt their premises in the more substantial brick, which seems to have been supplied by Booker in almost unlimited quantities. As well, this marked a real air of improvement in the community, for it was felt by the editor of the Wawanesa Enterprise that "the effect of brick and stone buildings going up is having a good effect on values – guaranteeing permanency." A number of brick houses were also built by Booker that summer, which lent an air of substance to the hamlet. "The brick buildings Mr. Booker has put up this summer in Wawanesa are equal to the best in the province. He is now putting up a good substantial house for himself on 5<sup>th</sup> street." Among his projects that year was a new block for druggist Mr. Arkell, which took four carloads of brick.<sup>149</sup>

Building appears to have slowed in Wawanesa during 1894, though his did not stop Booker from making trips to Brandon. On one of these trips he brought back enough brick to complete an addition to his still-new residence on 5<sup>th</sup>. In 1895, Thomas Booker showed the editor of the Enterprise sample bricks made by him from clay taken from the riverbank. That summer he stated that he intended to get into large-scale brick-making. Indeed, two years earlier the Enterprise had noted the fact that there was a "good brick clay quite near to Wawanesa. Cannot a good practical brick maker be got to start a brick yard? He could make money and it would be a good thing for the town." Though the need was evident, it is unknown if Booker ever started his yard, as newspaper coverage was non-existent in Wawanesa for over a year. It is known that at least one carload of bricks came into town for the new mill in the

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>148</sup> Wawanesa and District History Committee. Sipiweske—Light Through the Trees. (Altona: Friesen Printers, 1988.), p. 23; "Wawanesa is Centre of Greatest White-Growing Belt in Manitoba.", Winnipeg Telegram, 15 September 1904, p. 5(2); "Wawanesa.", Brandon Mail, 23 January 1890, p. 8; 18 December 1890, p. 6; "Wawanesa.", Commercial, 17 November 1890, p. 210; "Rising Town of Wawanesa.", Winnipeg Tribune, 7 January 1892, p. 1; Wawanesa Enterprise, 6 October 1892, p. 3; 7 September 1894, p. 8; 24 March 1893, "The Fire Fiend.", Enterprise, 3 March 1893, p. 4; 31 March 1893, p. 4; 8 September 1893, p. 3; 2 June 1893, p. 4.

<sup>149</sup> "The Fire Fiend.", Enterprise, 3 March 1893, p. 4; 31 March 1893, p. 4; 8 September 1893, p. 3; 2 June 1893, p. 3.

summer of 1895, and these were presumably from Brandon. The editor of the successor to the Enterprise, the short-lived Wawanesa World appeared more interested in selling advertising than covering local industries. It was merged into that Brandon Western Sun in 1897, and no mention was subsequently made in the sporadic offerings of church socials and ploughing matches that now made up the Wawanesa news. A brick yard existed, nonetheless, and the evidence has survived in Henderson's Directory sources. Charles Town seems to have started his yard in 1896, taking on Robert Naismith as a partner the following year. That arrangement appears to have lasted through 1899 and possibly into 1900. By the time of the 1904 Henderson's Directory, there was no longer a listing among brick-makers for Naismith and Town. What became of this operation or the nature of its products is unknown, and nothing is mentioned in the local history of the town.<sup>150</sup>

## **WAWANESA**

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1897-1900

Owner/Operator: Chas Town, later, Naismith & Town (1899)

Location:

Related Information:

Source of information: Henderson Northwest Directory, 1900

#### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1890-1900

Owner/Operator: Britton's Brickyard

Location: NE ¼-14-7-17-W1, south of town

Related Information: soft mud bricks

Sources of Information: "Sipiweske: Light Through the Trees:, Wawanesa and District History Book Committee, 1988; Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>150</sup> Enterprise, 9 march 1894, p. 3; 4 May 1894, p. 4; 12 July 1895, p. 4; 9 August 1895, p. 4; Henderson's, 1897, p. Xi; 1898, p. Xii; 1899, p. Xi; 1900; Lovell's Directory, 1900-1901, p. 812; Henderson's, 1904, p. 596.



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# BRICKS

## FOR SALE.

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### THOS. BOOKER,

WAWANESA, MAN.

#### Contractor, & Bricklayer

Has constantly on hand a supply of

### *HARD PRESSED BRICKS*

which he will sell in large or small quantities  
at the lowest prices. Apply to

### THOS. BOOKER,

Wawanesa.

---

Booker's Brandon Bricks. (Wawanesa  
Enterprise, 6 October 1893, p. 3.)

# WHITEMOUTH

This eastern Manitoba town fostered an on-again, off-again brick yard operation that proved to be a rare survivor of an industry that lost most of its members by 1930. The Whitemouth industry centred around the pioneer Wardrop family, which had made a mark in local lumbering by 1910. Around 1914 John Wardrop started a brick yard, and by the early autumn was offering bricks to the City of Winnipeg for their new Cornish and St. John's branch libraries. Unfortunately, he was not successful, as the City had already contracted for their brick supplies. Like many other operators it is probable that the Wardrop yard shut down for the duration of World War I, having started at a precarious time for such businesses. Around 1917 another brick yard was started by veteran manufacturer Albert N. McCutcheon. It was incorporated as the Whitemouth Brick Company, Ltd. It is not known if this yard ever entered production or what it made. In the spring of 1920, however, John Wardrop started yet another brick yard, incorporated as John Wardrop Brick and Tile Company, Ltd. He made his first shipments of brick by late July or early August of that year. That carload of 75,000 white bricks went to Clayton Brothers, contractors in Fort Frances, Ontario. John Wardrop sold out his interest in the brick business in mid-August to Winnipeg contractors John Gunn and Company. It is not known if Gunn continued the business as a private source for its operations, or shut it down.

In June 1922, a brother, Walter Wardrop, purchased the McCutcheon brick yard just west of town. This would prove more successful than the earlier attempts, and was run as a family business. While Wardrop planned to open an up-to-date brick yard, the purchase came too late to do any meaningful production. The opening was left until the spring of 1913. When it did reopen it had been the subject of "extensive overhauling." At start-up in early June it was producing 26,000 bricks per day, but, it was said, that would soon be increased to 40,000. This Wardrop yard seemed to defy the odds at a time when new brick companies were not being successful in Manitoba. Indeed the Wardrop yard is still looked upon with considerable local admiration, for it remained open throughout most of the Depression, providing work for otherwise unemployed local citizens. The Wardrop family continued to run the yard until its sale to Alsip Brick, Tile and Lumber in 1945. Under Alsip, production increased to 1.25 and 1.5 million bricks per year, while employing 52 men. The yard closed in 1957, and the plant was dismantled the following year, with machinery going to Alsip's Elmwood factory. There they were put to use in the production of the cheaper and easier-to-make concrete blocks.<sup>151</sup>

## WHITEMOUTH

### **Manitoba Museum Information (Hugh Henry, 1992):**

#### Operation 1

Dates of operation: 1923-1925

Owner/Operator: D. Wardrop and Sons

Location: ½ mile south of town, along railway

Related Information: moved from Lac du Bonnet

Source of information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

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#### ENDNOTES

<sup>151</sup> News, 16 June 1922, p. 3; 28 July 1922, p. 8; 18 May 1923, p. 8; 25 May 1923, p. 1; 8 June 1923, p. 8; Tails to Rails, op. cit., pp. 100,226.

### Operation 2

Dates of operation: 1926

Owner/Operator: McCutcheon

Location:

Related Information: Remains idle until 1929, then sold to Reliance Brick Co.

Sources of Information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

### Operation 3

Dates of operation: 1929 only

Owner/Operator: Reliance Brick Company

Location:

Related Information: sold to Wardrop in 1930

Source of information: Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

### Operation 4

Dates of operation: 1930-1945

Owner/Operator: D.M. Wardrop

Location: N ½-35-11-11-E1, beside C.P.R. tracks

Related Information:

Sources of Information: "Report on Manitoba Clays", Walsh, 1931, Manitoba Department of Energy and Mines files

### Operation 5

Dates of operation: 1945-1957

Owner/Operator: Alsip Brick, Tile and Lumber Company

Location: 1 ¼-1 ½ million brick

Related Information: made each summer with a high of 52 men working ; bricks have ALSIP name in frog; buildings and machinery moved to Winnipeg, 1958

Source of information: "Trails to Rails to Highways, A History of the Rural Municipality of Whitemouth",

Whittemouth - Sept 30<sup>th</sup> / 1914  
Man

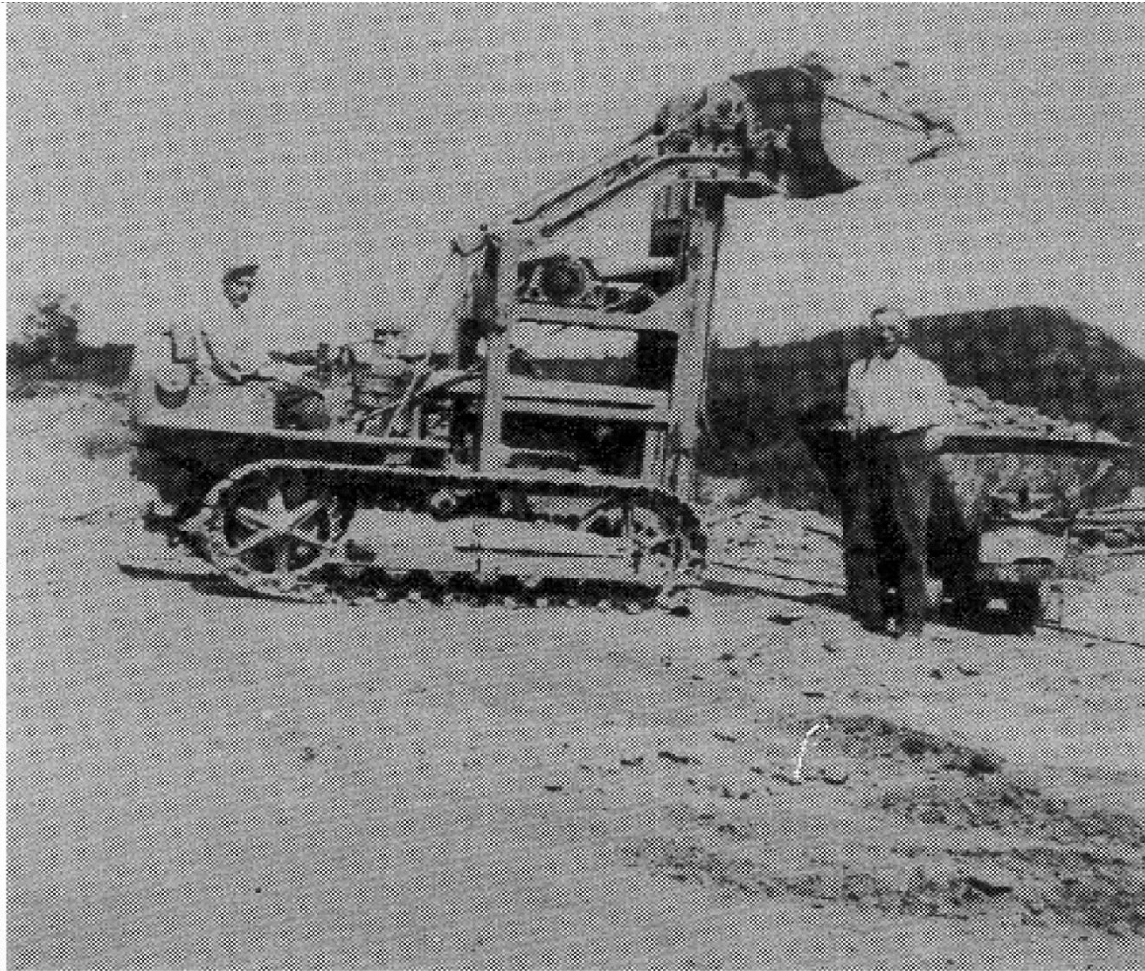
To The Controller  
Wpg -



Gentlemen  
We have a quantity of brick  
for sale and if you are adopting  
any would send you samples  
and the prices.  
I see where you are buying for the  
Carnegie Library.

Yours Truly  
John Wardrop.

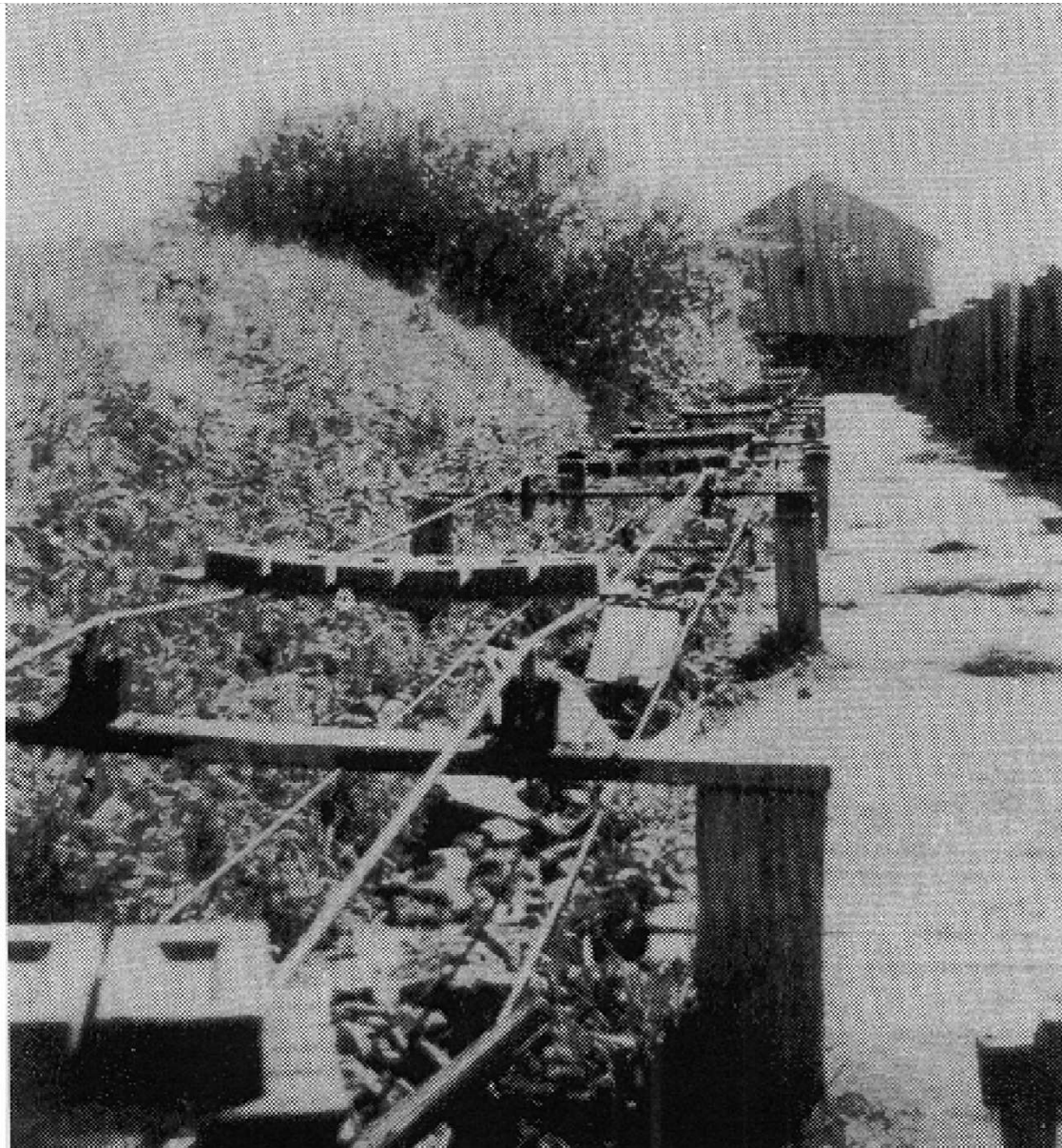
Brick for Sale, but no takers. (City of Winnipeg Archives. Board of Control Correspondence, 010923.)



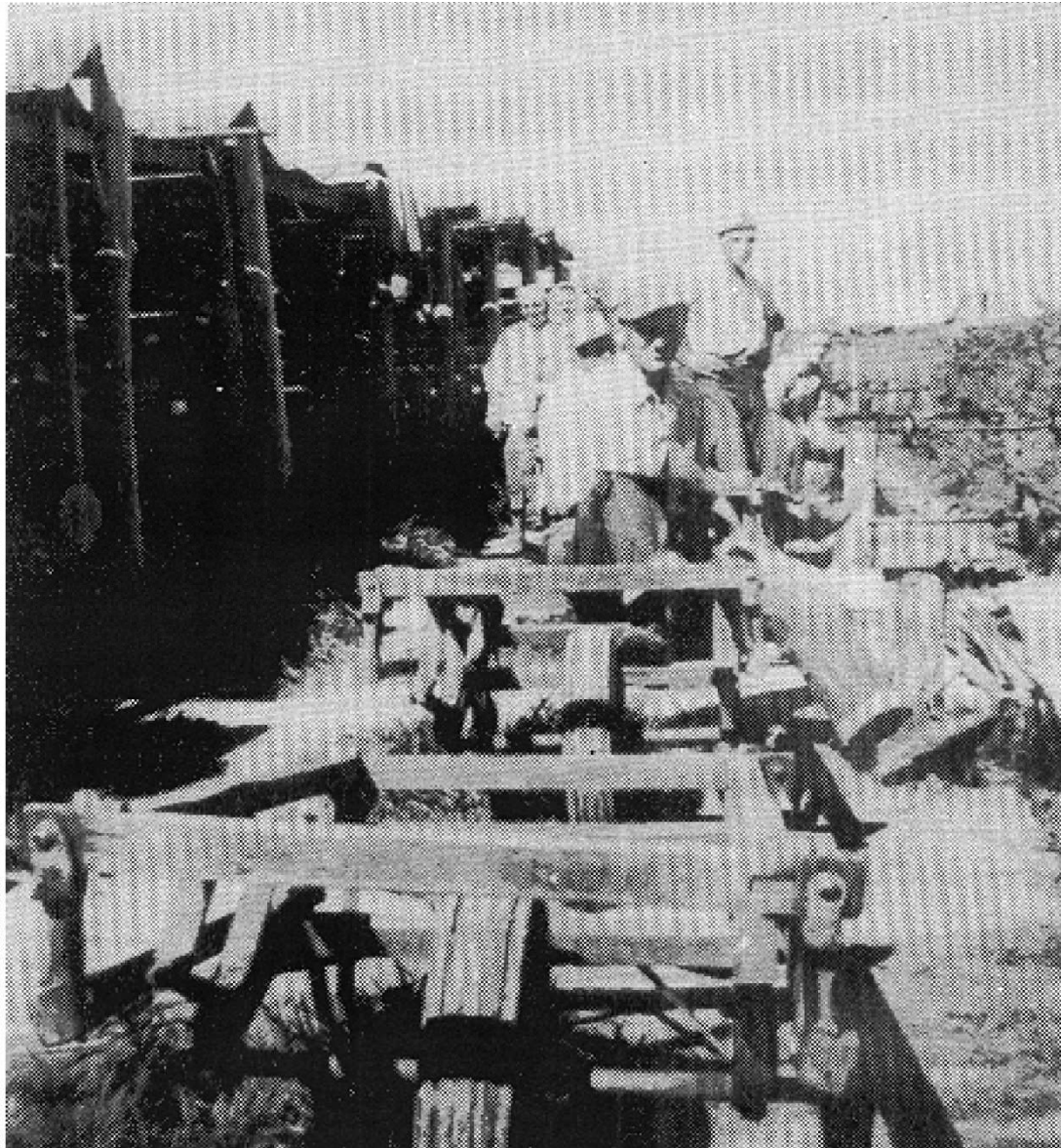
Loading clay into a hopper with a front-end loader, Whitemouth Brick Yard. (Bob Porth and Craig Mackenzie, eds. Trails to Rails to Highways. N.P.: Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society, 1979. p. 102.)



Main Building and portion of brick conveyer, Whitemouth Brick Yard. (Bob Porth and Craig Mackenzie, eds. Trails to Rails to Highways. N.P.: Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society, 1979. P. 101.)



Brick Conveyer system, showing brick pallets in use, Whitemouth Brick Yard. (Bob Porth and Craig Mackenzie, eds. Trails to Rails to Highways. N.P.: Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society, 1979. P. 102.)



Brick Drying sheds, shelves with roofs to keep out the sun and rain. Also visible are the brick barrows used at the Whitemouth Brick Yard. (Bob Porth and Craig Mackenzie, eds. Trails to Rails to Highways. N.P.: Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society, 1979. P. 102.)





Kiln shed with kiln in rear, along with open roof, Whitemouth Brick Yard. (Bob Porth and Craig Mackenzie, eds. *Tails to Rails to Highways*. N.P.: Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society, 1979. P. 102.)



Brick Shed, Whitemouth Brick Yard. (Bob Porth and Craig Mackenzie, eds. Trails to Rails to Highways. N.P.: Whitemouth Municipal Museum Society, 1979. P. 10.)

# WHITEWATER

A short-lived brick yard ran briefly at this small place that is located between Boissevain and Deloraine. In 1890 an attempt was made by Hyde and Hyndman to start a brick yard at Whitewater. It is known that they built a stable and were hauling lumber for a house and other proposes. It is unknown if their business ever got beyond those activities. Brick-making had to wait another four years, when W. H. Cameron and W. S. Barker purchased a plot of land that had first-class brick clay. They acquired new brick-making machinery and planned to produce 125,000 bricks, with a target market at Deloraine. By late July 1894 Cameron and Barker brick was being advertised in the Deloraine Times at half the price of Winnipeg brick, and “of bright, clean colour.” By early August, the pair were building a fine residence with their brick, possibly at Deloraine.<sup>152</sup>

The following year saw Cameron and Barker getting an early start in late April. They had taken a partner, W.R. David, of Deloraine into their operation. They began selling their product at \$12.00 per thousand, though Hartney brick sold at \$8.00. As well, David went to Morden and probably other places to put the Whitewater brick on the market. The yard was turning out 8,000 bricks per day, with 20 men at work, and by early June they had a kiln of 60,000 bricks ready for firing. All of these had been pre-sold to eager customers. Despite this healthy production the Whitewater yard closed “temporarily” during late August, when its workers were drawn away by the higher wages found at harvesting. It probably did not reopen, and David apparently gained control of the operation. Late in June 1896 he moved the machinery to Deloraine to start up his own yard at that place. Thus ended the saga of the Whitewater Brick Manufacturing Company.<sup>153</sup>

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>152</sup> “Whitewater.”, Delorain Times, 24 April 1890, p. 4; 24 May 1894, p. 4; 26 July 1894, p. 1; 2 August 1894, p. 4.

<sup>153</sup> “Whitewater Gulls.”, Boissevain Globe, 2 May 1895, p. 1; Times, 2 May 1895, p. 1; Globe, 23 may 1885, p. 1; Times, 23 May 1895, p. 1; 6 June 1895, p. 1; 29 August 1895, p. 1.; 3 July 1896, p. 1.

**NEW ENTERPRISE!**

**BRICK** <sup>Immense Success!</sup> **BRICK**

**CAMERON AND BARKER**

Have placed on Sale in Deloraine the first kiln of

**W**HITEWATER **B**BRICK, 

OF BRIGHT CLEAN COLOR, equal in quality to any produce  
in the Province, at half the price of Winnipeg Brick.

CAR OF FRESH LIME.

**Cameron & Barker, - - Deloraine.**

Deloraine Times, 26 July 1894, p. 1.

**FRESH  
LIME AND BRICK,**

IN ANY QUANTITY, on application to the

**Whitewater Brick  
MANUFACTURING CO.,**

**BOX 570, DELORAINE, MAN.**

Deloraine Times, 20 June 1895, p. 1.

**SEE THIS  
SPACE  
NEXT WEEK.**

**FOR WHITEWATER  
BRICK.**

Deloraine Times, 2 May 1895, p. 1.