

## THE PRAIRIE PIONEERS

by **A. H.** Sutherland

We have luxury and leisure,  
They had danger, toil and tears,

And we reverence the memory  
Of the prairie pioneers.

Let not their purse proud followers forget  
The daring wills to whom their wealth is owed.  
Our easy road is smoothened by the burden  
of their load.

Virtue and honour crowned their lives with care.  
Their names are written not in marble fair,  
But graven deep in grateful hearts they dwell,  
To linger in the land they loved so well.

## NARROW ESCAPE

(This item was taken from the Deloraine Times of January 28, 1888, and concerned a former pioneer of the Hartney district.)

It was feared for some days that Mr. William Roper, of 4-6-23, who was on the road to Deloraine the night of the storm had fallen a victim of the elements. He left home about eighteen miles north about 10:30 a.m. on the morning of Wednesday, driving two teams, loaded with wheat. One team belonged to a neighbor named Ed Briggs. He was spoken to on the way in. by passing teams, and was last seen about five or six miles from town, not far from Coombs. Nothing more was seen of him by his friends, and on Saturday his loads and sleighs were found, but no sign of the man or horses. He was almost given up as having frozen to death in the storm, but when the train drew in to Deloraine on Monday morning a kindly section hand was observed helping a passenger along the platform, which turned out to be the lost Mr. Roper. The following is Mr. Roper's narrative:

"When the storm became bad I thought to make Coombs, but when the night came on the horses lost the trail, and I tried to find it for a long time but could not and in the deep snow it was very hard on me and the horses. Then I unhooked the horses, and letting one team go tried to make toward Deloraine, or where I thought it was, with the other, but it was no use, I had to let them go too. I passed the night walking and shouting. At times I would get almost played out, then I would make a hole in the snow, and lie down on my stomach with my hand in front of my mouth to keep breathing space. At times I would fall asleep, but would awaken again and start to rub myself and move again. Between lying down and walking I passed the night and when I could see the sun, I took my bearings and struck the railway track about noon, and thinking it ran a few miles west of Deloraine, I turned east, thinking to reach that place. By this time I was exhausted and could scarcely see, and when I got to deep snow I had to lie down and rest. I could feel the cramp coming on but struggled on and, at last. saw a section house, which proved to be Whitewater. I had not the strength to get over the deep snow there, but fell down and rolled over it. The section men treated me kindly and dressed my frozen parts with coal oil and snow and put me on the first train that went by."

Mr. Roper got to Whitewater about four o'clock on Thursday afternoon being lost about twenty-four hours in the worst and coldest storm we have seen in the country. He is badly frozen on the ears, neck, nose, hands and feet, but is now under the care of Dr. Thornton doing very well, and will recover the use of all his frozen parts. Mr. Roper came to Manitoba about seven years ago from Lancashire, and his neighbors give him credit for being a hard-working temperate man; he has a family and is fifty-six years of age, and it is claimed by some that it is owing to his own courage and good constitution that he is alive today.

William Roper was Mrs. Harry Mills' grand- father.