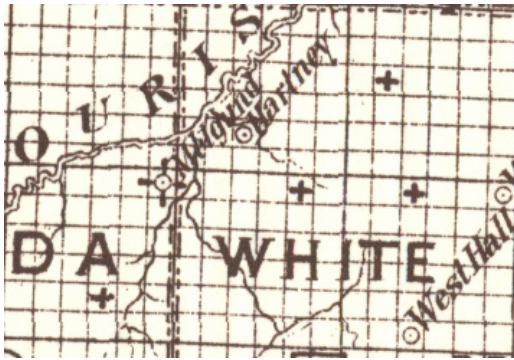# Melgund

Southwest of Hartney on Melgund Road, there is a small cemetery at a crossroads. Established in 1887, it was the first graveyard in the region. Across the road, a cairn helps to mark the spot that was home for many people over many years.

Early in 1881 Samuel Long and John Fee came from Ontario to this area. The sod shack they erected that first season, soon known as "The Shanty" or "The Orphan's Home", was a stopping place and temporary home to many settlers over the next two years.

Both Melgund and Hartney appear on this map from 1887. There were no towns as yet – the map shows post office locations.

It would be nine years before the railway entered the district and the town of Hartney would be created.

In the meantime it was Melgund that seemed to be where things were happening.

The name Melgund first appears as a Post Office opened in 1882 in the home of W.J. Higgins. Rose School opened in, 1884, one of the first in the area. It was also used as a church before the Melgund Methodist Church was built across the road.

This small building served as the Melgund Post Office – and likely as a residence for a time as well.

Melgund Methodist Church, taken in 1946

When the first settlers arrived they had to build some shelter, break some sod, and plant some grain and vegetables.

Before long they would get together and build a school. They might build a church, and then, perhaps, a general store or a blacksmith shop might open for business. But most such settlements never did become towns as we know them, with rows of houses and a main street for stores and shops.