

to incoming settlers. Other land grants existing in the early survey were of 240 acres each and called Half Breed Script. These large quarters were granted to male settlers who had been born along the Red River before 1870.

Early settlers who arrived in what was to become the R.M. of Rockwood, looked for higher land with a good timber supply and water. A furrow was usually plowed to more or less stake a claim after picking a spot and the land was applied for at the Land Titles Office in Winnipeg. If the land had already been claimed, or otherwise reserved, the settler had to look again for the next best site. These were the homesteads allotments which cost the settler \$10.00 and required him to achieve certain land improvements within a specified time.

It's interesting to note that the original R.M. of Rockwood, which was formed in 1878, was much smaller and consisted of only one township or 6 square miles. This was enlarged in 1880 to its present size.

The first order of business for the new settler was to provide shelter for his family and his animals, a supply of fuel, food for the family and animals and as quickly as possible to break land for a garden and the production of grain.

The first houses were quite primitive. The walls were usually of logs with a pitch pole roof covered with earth and straw. Lumber was at a premium since it had to be carried from Winnipeg by oxen and wagon. It was not until local sawmills were established that it became reasonably available. Many settlers walked to Winnipeg to carry back staple foods and other building necessities such as windows, nails, tarpaper etc. A stove occupied a very prominent place in the one or two room house and a bed or a sitting spot by the stove was the favored place.

The magnificent farm houses and barns so common on the Portage Plains were never so evident in Rockwood Municipality. However some big houses did exist — for example the lovely stone house just east of Stonewall built in the early 1880's by Thomas Lusted and the big rambling barn on the Moeller farm east of Teulon. Many early houses, in the south half of the municipality at least, were built of grout, a mixture of lime, sand and aggregate. The large majority, however, were of frame lumber construction — little different from today. House styles have changed from the beautiful scrolled eaves and ridges, dormers and verandahs to the often dull box-like efficient houses of today.

A 1904 house plans catalogue illustrates various frame home plans of that period. The price lists for large beautiful country frame homes ran around

\$3500 complete, without plumbing \$3300 and, without the foundation included, about \$2800. A large stock barn, complete with side extensions, large drive-in hayloft and topped with a magnificently decorated ventilator could be had for \$4655.00. The particular barn shown in the catalogue had dimensions of 90 by 100 feet and covered nearly one-fourth acre.

A housing catalogue of the 1930's lists houses from \$550 to \$2100. Gothic roof barns of that period, with dimensions of 36 by 74 ft. sold for \$1690.

House and barn construction in the municipality remained fairly static from the middle 20's until after World War II. Veterans returning to the farm started building a limited number of houses and barns and as economic conditions continued to improve in the late 50's more farm buildings were constructed. It was still possible at that time to build an excellent house for \$10,000 or less, however prices have rapidly escalated since that time to the ridiculous prices of today.

The first fields were small and represented exhausting work to clear the trees and plow the soil. Power was supplied by a team of oxen, a horse hitched with an ox or, for the lucky starters, a team of horses. The seed, wheat, oats and barley, was expensive and had to be hauled or carried from Winnipeg. This early seed was nothing like the varieties in existence today. It did not have the disease resistance and other advance qualities of today's varieties, however, this was the start of the prairie grain growing business that still produces the highest quality of wheat in the world. The first wheat was shipped from

The First Shipment of Wheat From Western Canada

Since the early days of Confederation, Steele, Briggs Seed Company have been a source of supply of high quality seed grains. In this year, 1932, our sixtieth year in business, we believe it will be of interest to our many Western customers to recall an early shipment of seed wheat made from Western Canada to the province of Ontario by the late Mr. R. C. Steele, one of the founders of Steele, Briggs Seed Company. In 1876 there was a crop failure in Ontario, and learning of the high quality wheat that settlers were producing on the virgin prairie lands of Manitoba, Mr. Steele journeyed from Toronto to Winnipeg via water, rail and lumber wagon, hoping to bring back some five thousand bushels of Manitoba wheat for distribution as seed. As Mr. Steele was seeking the best seed wheat obtainable, he was thus the first to pay tribute to the quality of Manitoba's wheat. A cargo consisting of some eight hundred and fifty-seven bushels was ultimately assembled at Winnipeg, loaded on a small Red River boat and shipped to Toronto via the Red River to Fisher's Landing, thence via rail to Duluth; from Duluth via water to Sarnia and from Sarnia to Oshawa via rail. This was the first export shipment of wheat out of Manitoba and marks the beginning of the vast stream of wheat which has since annually flowed out of Western Canada. On June 15th, 1932, (fifty-six years later) during the annual convention of the Canadian Seed Growers' Association, a large monthlet of native Manitoba granite was unveiled on the banks of the Red River, Winnipeg, to commemorate this first shipment of wheat out of Western Canada. A bronze tablet on the face of the monthlet is inscribed as shown at the right.

FROM THIS SPOT, ON OCTOBER 21st, 1876
THE FIRST SHIPMENT OF WHEAT
FROM WESTERN CANADA
STARTED BY RED RIVER STEAMER
857 1/2 BUSHELS OF RED FIFE
AT 85 CENTS PER BUSHEL
CONSIGNED BY HIGGINS & YOUNG, WPG.
TO STEELE BROS., TORONTO
FOR USE IN ONTARIO AS SEED

SHIPMENT WAS MADE BY
R. BLAIR NEIL McLEOD
J. W. CARLETON G. R. MILLER
F. DICK JOHN REIGH
D. McDONALD T. B. ROBINSON
ALEX GIBSON H. SOAR
JOHN McIVOR JOHN SPEAR

DEDICATED
1932

The first shipment of Wheat from Western Canada.

Manitoba on October 13, 1876 to Ontario where a crop loss had been sustained that year. The order was for 5000 bus. however only 857½ bushels were all that could be gathered at that time. The price received by the growers was 85¢ a bushel with the total shipment, which left by Red River steamer on Oct. 21, valued at \$728. It is significant that a Mr. John