

land. On April 27, 1907 he obtained his passport, and leaving his wife behind, he came to Canada. He arrived in Winnipeg, and not having any relatives or friends and not being able to speak a word of English he found life extremely difficult. At that time the railroad was hiring men for gang jobs and he was able to get on with them. The work was very hard and not being able to speak English made it much more difficult. In 1910 he got a job at the Stony Mountain quarries. Here he met up with Ukrainian people, some being from his native village in Austria, thus making his life a little more meaningful. He decided he had to learn to read and write so he could correspond with his relatives back home. He overcame that handicap and looked forward to getting weekly Ukrainian newspapers for the rest of his life.



Mr. and Mrs. John Tomyk, Sr.

Some time between 1910 and 1912 he bought a house in Stony Mountain. Having a home now, he was able to send for his wife to come and join him. She arrived in 1912. That same year he also helped his brother Mike with the ship fare to come to Canada. My Uncle Mike also got a job at the quarry. His wife did not want to come to Canada, so he lived with our family. Later he built himself a little house, but had his meals with us.

In 1913 my Mother gave birth to a son, William. In order to get ahead, my Mother took in boarders, sometimes as many as 12 to 14 men. The living quarters were very cramped as their house had only 2 rooms. She worked very hard. I, John, was born in 1916. In 1918 my Dad and Uncle Mike bought the farm we still live on, six miles north of Stony Mountain. It was one half section of land. The quarters ran a mile long because the east end was nearly always flooded, and the west end was mostly bush. The only

thing on the farm was a well. In the fall of 1918, after the first snow fall, they moved their house from Stony Mountain to the farm, using four teams of horses and sleighs. They cut logs to build a barn and chicken coop. They also built an outdoor oven in which my Mother would bake many loaves of bread at one time.

In 1921, my younger brother Fred, was born. We all attended Victoria School. Bill went to Stonewall High School for one term. However he found it hard walking to school and back home every day which was five miles, so he quit. Later, he went to work for the C.N.R. in Ontario. I quit going to school in 1929 so I could help with work on the farm.

In 1928 my Dad and Uncle Mike had an auction sale and split the partnership, each one owning their own quarter section. They started shipping milk in 1924. I can remember hauling milk to the street car at Bennett Siding every morning with the horse and buggy or sleigh. Our work became a lot easier when the milk truck took over and came right to our farm. Then came the hard times! "The Dirty Thirties". We had a drought; and the grasshoppers cleaned up the rest. It was hard to make the payments on the farm, and many times we almost lost it. I can remember my Dad shipping two cows to Winnipeg and he didn't get enough money for them to pay for the freight. We depended a lot on the cows for the milk cheque was used to help buy our groceries. Times were very hard, but we always had food. My parents always welcomed the pedlars (who travelled with horses) to our table and gave them a bed for the night. Our farm got to be a regular stop over for many people.

Then the War Years came. My brother Bill got married in 1939 to Mary Skorapata from Teulon. He continued to work for the railroad. They had one daughter Anne and two sons Andy and Willy. I married Olga Hucula in 1941 and we were poor as the proverbial "Church Mouse". I tried to get a job threshing, but no farmers could afford to hire help. They just helped each other. I finally got a construction job at an air force training centre for a few months. That winter I drove a milk truck. In the spring I came back to the farm to help Dad, as the work was getting to be too much for him. My brother Fred joined the army in 1943 and was sent overseas that same winter. He was fortunate to come back after the war ended. Our first son Barry John was born in 1943. In 1945 our second son Robert Harvey was born and in 1949 we had a daughter June Marilyn.

In 1949 Barry started school so needless to say I started to take an interest in school affairs. I was elected a trustee and also accepted the secretary-treasurer position for the Victoria School district. This position I held until the school closed in 1967.