

Willow Bottom', or 'Willow Prairie with Burnt Poplar'. In some places the bush must have been very heavy and filled with windfalls, through which the surveyors would have had to chop their way. In the district north of Beausejour itself we see several areas marked 'Poplar, Willows and Windfalls', 'Poplars and Windfalls', or 'Heavy Woods of Spruce and Poplar with Great Windfalls'. Several varieties of pine are noted as making up the forests of the part, Norway Pine, Red Pine, and Jack Pine, and even Pitch Pine, and in addition to the spruce, tamaracks and junipers, there were stands of ash, birch, elm and oak (along the river) and even alder.

Hacking their way through miles of such bush and windfalls, and slogging across swamp after swamp, all the time fighting off clouds of mosquitoes, these men must have envied those who had been assigned to survey the flat open prairies. They certainly earned whatever they were paid. Upon the completion of his survey of 14-8, Mr. Johnson concluded the last pages of his field book with the following summary:

"Report, Township 14, Range 8 East, 3 July, 1873, Col. Dennis, Surveyor General, Dominion Land Survey.  
Sir,

I have the honour of reporting that in the survey of this township we experienced many difficulties in consequence of the swamps and marshes and also in crossing the Broken Head River so many times with our lines. This river running nearly through the center of this township, discharges a large volume of water into Lake Winnipeg; the stream is very crooked and its banks for some distance back are timbered with a heavy growth of large oak and spruce. The land along the river is well suited to settlement. The remainder of the township is composed of large marshes and tamarack swamp which might be drained at a great expense, and render it fit for hayland and stock raising, but at the present time they are too wet and boggy to be of any service to the settler..."

The general description of the land given by these surveyors was the basis for the notations found in *Henderson's Directory and Gazeteer of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories for 1878-1879*. Townships 12 and 13 in Ranges 7 and 8 are not mentioned, possibly because they were totally within the Half-Breed Reserve,

but 14-6, south of Libau, is described in these words:

"This township is traversed by numerous roads which are used for lumbering purposes. The best of the timber has been cut off, though there is still considerable fit for building and fencing purposes. Were a channel cut through the swamps to the Devil's Creek it would, by draining them, make good farmland, the soil being dark loam and very deep. It is a fractional township in the Half-Breed and Railway Reserves. Unsettled."

The next township to the west, 14-7 is described thus: "The westerly part is covered with small pitch pine and burnt woods. The soil is sand and gravel and unfit for any agricultural purpose. The remainder of the township is burnt woods, with a second growth of spruce and poplar. The soil is good with some good hay marshes and swamps. The west half of the township is in the Half-Breed reserve and the whole in the Railway reserve. Unsettled."

Township 14-8 is spoken of in these terms: "The land is chiefly of an inferior quality, except on the banks of the Broken Head River, where it is rich and loamy. The remainder of the township is composed principally of spruce swamp and hay land, with a large extent of heavy poplar. It is in the Railway reserve. Unsettled."

The description of 15-6, in which Libau is located is: "This is one of the most favourable townships in this section of the country for the purpose of settlement, the land throughout is rolling and covered for the most part with poplar, spruce, and tamarack of the best quality. There is also good oak and ash. It is dotted with numerous small good hay marshes. The soil is black loam with a substratum of white clay. A fractional township in the Railway reserve. Unsettled."

Township 15-7, in which Greenwald is located, is described: "The soil is generally of an inferior quality, being sandy or swampy, with burnt woods except on the Broken Head River, which flows through the north-easterly part of the township where the land is of an excellent quality, thickly wooded with fine oak, pine, poplar and ash. The north-westerly portion is in an Indian reserve and the whole of the township is in the Railway reserve. Unsettled."

Township 15-8 "Is one large muskeg with small tamaracks and willows, except a narrow strip along the Broken Head River, from two to five chains in depth where the soil is good and contains some good sized spruce, elm, and poplar. Is in the Railway Reserve. Unsettled."

The next townships to the north, 16-7, "For the greater part consists of an elevated sandy ridge running from north to south, wooded with timber of small size and dense brush. The south-west quarter of the township forms part of the Broken Head Indian Reserve, and the south-eastern part is in the Railway reserve. Unsettled."

Finally 16-8 in which Thalberg is located, is described: "The easterly part is all muskeg. The remainder is tamarack and spruce swamp. The trees average from six to seven inches in diameter. The south-western portion is in the Railway reserve. Unsettled."



Campsite for the survey crew in the early 1900's.