

who, later destined to be Reeve of Blanshard, homesteaded on the farm now operated by his son James. The Stewarts also arrived the same year and have been among the most successful farmers. In 1881 from Ontario, came widow, Mrs. Mary Henry and a large family to make a new home. She was the mother of Edward Henry who later served the municipality in an official capacity for twenty-seven years. Mr. Henry relates of the hard times they passed through the fall of 1886 when a prairie fire, sweeping up from the south wiped out many stacks of feed, and buildings. Mrs. Henry lost all her feed and buildings with the exception of the house which was built of logs the same as the other buildings. This too would have been reduced to ashes had it not been for the fact it was banked with clay. Mr. Henry, who was plowing with oxen that tragic afternoon, some four miles east, on his own homestead, saw the fire coming. He threw the plow onto the wagon and started for home but oxen do not travel very fast even when they are in a hurry, and the fire was beyond control as he could not plow fire guards that would stop it. It is not necessary for me to try and show you how these people felt when they saw their homes go up in smoke. That, I am going to leave to your imagination, but it is only those who have seen disastrous fires that can really sympathize with those unfortunate settlers. That was but one of their troubles. The fires were usually preceded by hot, dry summers which was the cause of light crops, but one thing everyone can say with something akin to pride — is that Blanshard Municipality has never experienced a total crop failure. The last fire to cause damage occurred in 1889.

A fire relief fund of \$400.00 from the provincial government was disbursed at a special meeting of the council on April 25, 1887, the recipients of which were as follows:

John Henry	\$29.00
Neil McDonald	40.00
Alex. Black	18.00
John T. Crane	29.00
Mrs. Mary Henry	29.00
Geo. Dennison	29.00
Jos. Morrison	29.00
Wm. Hammond	29.00
John Hammond	29.00
Robt. Michael	29.00
Frank Chapman	16.00
J. H. Simonite	17.00
Ira McCauley	16.00
Andrew Wilson	20.00
Timothy Pangman	12.00

Not only did these farmers suffer fire losses in 1886, but there was an epidemic of gophers and they swarmed the prairies in thousands and did considerable damage to growing crops. So serious was