

I would be called upon to say a few words. Emphasis, which I could well understand, seemed to be placed on the brevity of my remarks, and I am only too ready to comply.

I would like, in the few minutes allotted to me on the program, to congratulate the local Centennial Committee on their choice of a memorial, commemorating as it does, the early pioneer settlers of this Riverton district, who, many years ago laid the sure and solid foundation for this now prosperous community. The early pioneers came from many European lands and brought to this area many ethnic origins. The first ones to arrive here came from Iceland, in the early years of Canada's nationhood. Several decades later additional settlers came from the Ukraine, Poland, Germany and Hungary, and they, in their settlements, were truly pioneers as the first comers.

This memorial makes no distinction between races or the differing times of arrival. It is, in fact, dedicated to all the early pioneers of the Riverton district. It is an eye-catching memorial, designed by Laura Borgford, a student in Fine Arts at the Manitoba University, and the daughter of Skapti Borgford, a Winnipeg architect, who planned the park area. The memorial is a new concept, quite different from the old-fashioned shaft and column, commonly used to commemorate important events. Possibly this new idea will catch the public fancy, and may in future come into public favor. If that should happen, great credit will come to the young author of this design, and also to her father, the architect, who has given so generously of his time and talents to assist the local committee in erecting the memorial.

Our local committee is to be congratulated for recovering for public use this small park area upon which the memorial is placed. It is exceptionally well located between a main highway and the river, near to the village of Riverton, and in fact, hallowed ground as far as the early Icelandic settlement is concerned.

Here it was, within a stones' throw of where we were standing, in the month of August, ninety-one years ago, that the first settlers landed their boats that they had sailed and rowed all the way from Gimli. These ungainly awkward looking craft carried all the worldly possessions of the families. Here, on this very spot they pitched the tents that were loaned to them by the Canadian government. These tents housed their families while the fathers went further upstream to locate a homestead and erect a dwelling.

This ground was also the original homestead of Sigtryggur Jonasson, the acknowledged and outstanding leader of the Lake Winnipeg colony. He named his farm Modruvellir, by which name it is still known to local residents. Here, just a bit north of where we are standing, he built his first home. It was a story and a half building, with a peaked roof, larger and more commodious than the homes built by the other settlers. To this home he brought his bride, a young woman from an