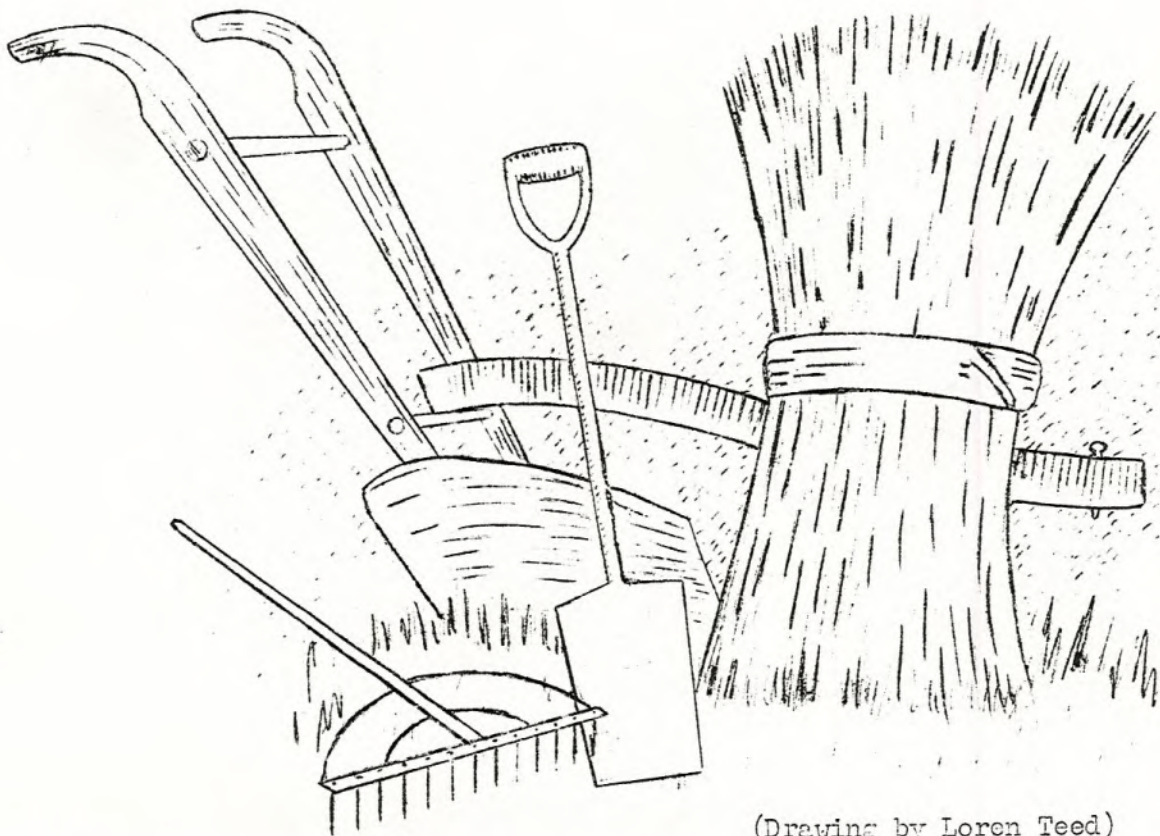


SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES QUESTIONNAIRES.

No. 6

Pioneer Farming Experiences.



(Drawing by Loren Teed)

Please print name and address in capital letters.

Your full name SAMUEL HENRY MC WILLIAMS.

Present Address 260 ATHABASCA WEST, MOOSE JAW.

Pioneer Address MOOSE JAW N.W.J.

Year you came to Saskatchewan 1884

(Throughout the questionnaire, "Saskatchewan" means the area which is now Saskatchewan)

PLEASE NOTE

This questionnaire is intended for persons who came to Saskatchewan before 1914, and most of the questions are about that early period, although in a few questions information for later years is asked for.

If you cannot answer a question, leave the space blank. We realize that any one person will not be able to answer all questions, so answer those that apply to your experience and that you can remember, and leave the others.

Use extra sheets of paper if there is not enough space on the questionnaire

Your co-operation in answering this questionnaire will be very much appreciated, and all questionnaires are preserved in the Saskatchewan Archives as part of the permanent record of our province.

Please send your completed questionnaire to:

Saskatchewan Archives Office,
University of Saskatchewan,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.



SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES QUESTIONNAIRES.

No. 6

Pioneer Farming Experiences.

1. What led you to the particular district in which you settled?

My father came West from Muskoka to Fort Garry in 1879 & returned East in winter of 1883 came out to Moose Jaw Spring of 1883 & family came to Moose Jaw Summer of 1884
Through whom was information about it obtained?

What was the extent of this information and what alternatives did you consider?

2. What was your previous experience in farming?

Spring of 85 father rented a farm North of Pasqua 1 year. Seeded land & bred east by hand & harrowed it with Oxen I was 11 years old in June that year
If none, under what circumstances did you learn? Worked at home

3. Did you homestead?

yes some day I was 18 years old 9th June 1892

If so, give description of the land (Township, range, distance from the railway).

NE 1/4 Sec 24. T1P 15. R 25 W 2nd 11 miles S.E. Pasqua

When, where, and how did you file your homestead entry?

at Moose Jaw R. I. Alexander land agent April 1892 I approached R. I. The Saig's & was not old enough to sign papers. pay 100.00 entry fee & I will scratch it if I did so. I wish you are 18 come in & sign up
How much information did you have about the land when you filed your entry? I didn't

4. Did you obtain a pre-emption?

No

5. What other land did you purchase?

Sec 25: 15: 24: Sec 30: 15: 24. W 2nd N.W. 1/4 19: 15: 24. W 2nd. S.E. 31: 14: 24 W 2nd

6. Was any of it Hudson Bay Company land, C. P. R. land, or school land?

2 1/4 of C.P.R. 1 Sec of North West Land Co. balance I bought from other farmers who wanted to quit farming

What was the purchase price per acre?

1/2 sec at \$3.00 pr acre
1/2 Sec B 33.00 1/2 S B 58.00 1/4 B 55.20 1/4 50.00 1/4 B 40.00. 18 acres at \$16.00

What was the largest amount you possessed at one time? (Give date).

1778 acres Dec 1951



7. Did you retain the original homestead?

If you moved, tell where and for what reasons.

yes until Nov 1952
Moose Jaw. Ill health &
Doctor orders quit work Old age moved to
Moose Jaw Oct 1939 son managed farm for me & went
out back worked & helped until 1951

8. You may not wish to answer questions about how you financed early farming operations. However, if you care to, answers to the following would be of general interest:

How did you finance your original purchase of land?

Worked out for others
at \$25.00 per month part time & Spring of 93 went on
my Home stead Pt. York of oxen weight 4300 lbs
Name Larry & Liron 12 in breaking plow

How long was it before you had completely paid for your land?

Was buying & paying for land from 1900 to 1951

Did you at any time mortgage your property or obtain loans?

yes had loans
on Home Stead twice

What interest rates did you pay?

don't remember

9. What were your first buildings? (Give dates).

Single Board Shack
Spring of 1903

What material was used and where was it obtained?

lumber. Moose Jaw

10. What type of farming did you engage in, originally and later? (Grain, livestock, mixed, etc.).

Always mixed Herd of Jersey cattle
chickens. pigs

11. How many acres did you break the first year?

10 acres ^{break} in 1892

The second?

30 acres

The third?

40

Did you use oxen, horses, or steam power for breaking?

oxen first then

all horses from 1900 on Pt. tractor 1916 to help out
tractor after 1928

12. What breaking crop did you grow?

Wheat Oats Barley Flax

What other grains did you grow?

as above

13. What kinds and breeds of livestock did you raise? (Give dates at which you started each. If discontinued, when?).

Ranching 1890 to 1899 with Duram cattle
done my Homesteading duties Summer of 93, 94, 95-
returned to Ranch for haying each year. Hay bank
Ranch was where Dominion fire broke & hay to us now
East 12.28, 12.24 W.N.W.

14. If you used oxen, how many did you have?

When and where did you obtain them?

Oxen 2 head Very large
Spring of 1893 from
Wm Tennant Dink Kubler

Did you have any memorable experiences with them?

No They were very ^{Sask} gentle

One day I left them tethered out on prairie
rode my Saddle Horse over to a neighbor's place
When I returned I found another Neighbor had been to visit
me he had driven 2 Buffalo Horns on the horns of the largest

15. When did you first use horses for motive power?

Where did you obtain them?

1900 had raised Ox

them while ranching during 90's

What was the largest number of horses you kept?

26

16. With what machinery did you start farming?

2 oxen, walking plow,
Disc & drag harrows Stone Boat & Water Barrel

17. What was the first tractor you used and when?

Fordson 1916

Was it used for belt power or for field power?

field

If this was not the first tractor in your district, do you remember the first? Give details.

It was

The first: Neighbors came long distances to see it

18. To what extent did other members of the family assist in farming operations?

None
What ever one was a railroader & one a lawyer

What was the first hired help you had?

1901 one man I was
traveling stallion

What wages were paid?

Not sure twenty five or \$30⁰⁰ per month

To what extent did you make use of hired help during your farming career?

Kept
hired help the year around male & female

19. Do you recall examples of informal co-operative efforts in your district, such as neighbours working together, "bees", etc.?

yes

Seeding & Summer following Bees & grain

Hauling & Building where Neighbors needed Help
a Neighbor's horses shot for glanders I got 3 or 4 Neighbors
together & done his Summer following

20. Did you follow the practice of summerfallowing to begin with?

If not, when did you begin? 1902

21. What rotation of crops did you practise?

Wheat: Oats then
Summerfallow

22. Where did you obtain your original seed?

from the government
a Lion on the Homestead

What was the variety? Red Fife

The price? don't remember

23. What was the earliest date of seeding you recall? (Give year).

The latest?

Seeded wheat 11th June don't recall year it
was in 30th it was the 2nd field to be sown reaped 11 June

What was the earliest date of harvesting you recall?

The latest?

I harvested Summerfallow on 28th February 1905. I think
did not seed until April. Some Neighbors seeded in March
but the crop was not so good as later seeding

24. What hazards or difficulties did you experience? You might give details such as dates, severity, damage, methods of control, with respect to the following: hail, frost, wind and dust, blizzards, floods, drought, prairie fires, rust, smut, grasshoppers, cutworms, sawflies, caterpillars, mosquitoes, hawks, gophers, coyotes.

We had the usual losses that other districts had
in all the items above. I remember 1939 we
seeded 12 hundred bushels of seed wheat & we
raked & scraped to save & harvest all we could
& threshed 800 bushels of wheat. 2 thirds of wheat
I seeded no Oats or Barley I built a Bunker on my
Holt swather & got down low & got the Heads
of wheat on short straw & caught forks with
many tangs loaded it on wagon backs & threshed
it with grain separator. I had the first combine 1928
a Holt in our district. The old neighbor came &
rode one round on it & tell the Neighbors oh he
will have it in the fence corner in a couple of years.
In 53 years we have only been partially Hailed
3 times. Mosquitoes very bad in early years.
We have had most of the Hazards mentioned above
I have seen a three days & nights blizzard deep
snow after storm. The old stables completely
covered over looked just like a large snow drift.
enclosed loose leaf is the experience of my Dad
in 81 or 82 in Manitoba

attach to page 4

my father came west to Manitoba from Muskoka
in 1849 after spending 2 years in west &
experiencing blizzards & what not. He came
back to Muskoka for a spell before returning
west. While at home he told a neighbor about
the blizzards out west he said it was not
safe to go out to feed your stock you might
get caught with a blizzard & Johnny
Johnson spoke up & said he'd they
would not stop me I would take my
shot gun along. He thought these blizzards
were wild animals

25. What weeds were present in your district when you first arrived and which were most common?

Hares ear mustard very bad early years
Then stink weed & wild oats then
yellow mustard in the 1890's

26. What new varieties of weeds appeared after you settled? (Give date of appearance if possible).

27. What method of harvesting and threshing grain did you first use?

Borrowed a Binder in 90's bought a Binder 1900 bought a 1/4
interest in a horse power # driven threshing
machine in 1903 all grain was stacked

How many men were required in these operations? 6 to 8

28. When did you first market grain, livestock, or other produce from your farm?

grain
in 1893 & live stock from Ranch in 1891

How did you haul grain to market?

team & waggon

Was most of your grain hauled in the fall, or did you do winter hauling with team and sleigh?

1900 & later some in fall & later through
the winter with sleighs

To what point?

Some to Pasqua & some to Drinkwater
& some to Moose Jaw

How far?

9 miles 11 miles & 18 miles or above

What prices did you receive?

Some times 24 cts per bus & ~~and~~
upwards to \$1.00 per bus

29. Was the flat warehouse ever used for loading grain in your district? (Give dates).

Flat Ware houses were used in Moose Jaw middle 80's
& 90's but not in Pasqua or Drinkwater district
One Elevator built in Drinkwater 1902 or 3 about know owner
farmers owned one at Pasqua some time

In what year was the first grain elevator constructed in your district?

By what company?

as a boy I delivered grain to these. When a car was spotted at
warehouse. 2 men used a square box with handles
extended forward & back along each side of box fill it
with grain & the 2 men carried it into car made up into
end of car & go back for more all done by Hand Labor

30. What variations do you recall in prices for your produce? the highest? the lowest?

31. Did you engage in ranching? *yes*

If so, give details as to kind and number of cattle in the early years of the ranch, number of men employed, brands, etc.

July 1888 my father J. E. McWilliams filed on Homestead E 1/2 28. 7 12. R. 24 W2 Spine of 90 He & I went down there gathered some cattle He finished his duties 92 he left me there I continued on. Sold out 1899 Durham cattle kept 100 head more & less Beef cattle driven across to Moose Jaw or Regina choice 3 1/2 year old Steers sold \$30.00 per head 2nd choice \$28.00 3rd not wanted I drove cattle into Regina Farmers for that out from Regina 7 or 8 miles south of city.

32. What was done by you or others in your district to improve crops and livestock by procuring registered seed, purebred livestock, etc.?

33. Did you participate in any exhibitions or fairs?

Indicate the nature of your exhibits and the prizes won.

1884 Father entered yoke of Oxen in ox race on main St. first prize. I entered coach stallion in spring stallion mose jaw 1901. Won the Diploma for the best light-Horse on the grounds in a class of 13

34. What agricultural organizations did you join? Tell when and for how long.

Moose Jaw Society but not until late year am still a member

35. Did you raise poultry? *yes*

Was this for household use or for market?

both

When did you first buy chicks from hatcheries?

raised our own

36. When did you commence gardening?

What garden crops were then grown?

*1901
Potatoes, turnips, parsnips
carrots, lettuce, peas, Beans, Onions & others Planted
Very deep Plenty of manure, cultivated often & produced
good crops Supplied Neighbors & Threshing crew
Come to grocery store Grocer says how do you do it? told
him. He did the same & had good garden his next neighbor
had poor garden with shallow work. (deep held water)*

Where were seeds obtained?

Wholesale Houses, Brandon & Winnipeg later all grocers had them

What were some of the varieties planted?

all varieties usually grown on farms

37. Did you have native trees about your farmstead?

yes

When did you first plant trees, if any?

1900 1901 & 2

What kinds?

Black poplar ash, Maple, Elm - Caragana

Are they still living, or did they die out after a period of time?

yes. Some

died

If so, any special cause?

neglect. let grass get in around them

38. When did you fence any significant part of your land?

1903 or 4

What was your reason for so doing?

to keep stock at home

What type of fencing was used?

Barb wire

39. Did you ever attempt to irrigate gardens or crops?

yes to small

To what extent? (Give dates).

extent: irrigated garden in dry 30's

40. How was milk kept and cream saved?

in pans in cellar. later used Cream Separator. Disher English make

When did you get a cream separator?

Hardware dealer in Moose Jaw

What kind of churn did you use?

dash churn later Banell

What quantities of butter were made?

18 to 23 lbs per week 3 cows during dry 30's we churned 70 to 72 lbs per week

41. Were butter and eggs sold for cash or taken in trade by local merchants?

for cash

peddled around city to regular customers & traded some to merchants

42. Did you keep bees, or do you remember anyone else keeping bees in your district? *no*

How were they originally procured and at what date?

43. Do you recall members of the North West Mounted Police calling at your farm to see how you were getting along? Give any details about the frequency of these visits, names of policemen, dates. *yes twice or 3 times*

a year. Sergeant Tife. Sergeant Colebrook

Paddy was part-time guard over Louis Bie after his capture during his trial of Paddy Doyle's daughter. He is still living with his wife Mrs Fred McGinn 1027. fifth ave N.W. Moose Jaw

44. Was there ever an extra large or "bonanza" farm in your district?

If so, what was its size and who was the owner?

I knew many others just now cannot recall all their names

When was it established and what was the reason for its breaking up, if it no longer exists?

45. Whom do you consider to have been the outstanding pioneer farmers of your district? Give some reasons for your choice, such as the earliest, most successful, most helpful to newcomers, contributing most to the public life and development of the community.

no outstanding. just plain farmers

46. If you have had interesting experiences in connection with early farming which have not been touched upon by the above questions, would you add them to your completed questionnaire?

Summer of 1886 was a total crop failure in & around Pasqua district. Father seeded 10 acres of Oats in June to grow sheep feed also 1 acre of turnips. As a boy 11 years of age I harrowed that acreage it was broad cast by hand it did not sprout in 1886 but in spring of 1887 grew & produced a good crop of Oats & the turnips won first prize at fall fair at Moose Jaw 1887. The large ones shown would not go down into a 12 quart wooden pail. known in those days as a Patton Pail