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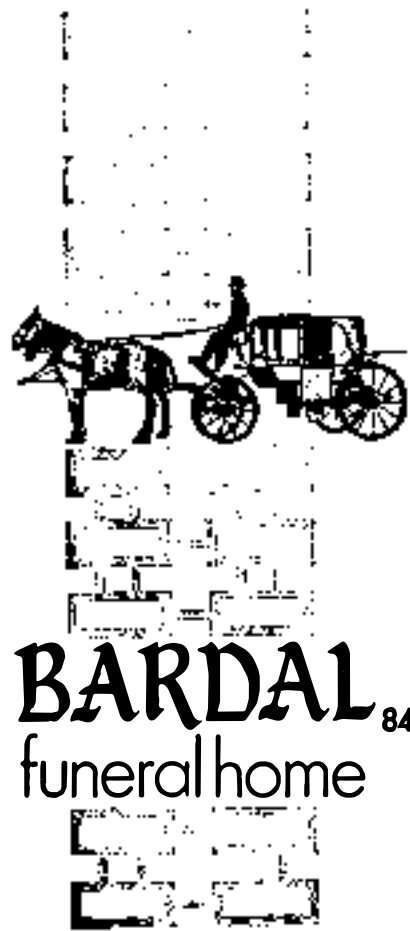
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The Icelandic Canadian

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EDITORIAL:

Salute to British Columbia



With deep-seated pride in its inherent Canadianism British Columbia celebrates this year its Centennial as a province of the Canadian nation to draw inspiration from its historic past, to assess its position in the stirring but challenging present, and to endeavour to re-dedicate itself to meet wisely and courageously the challenges of an uncertain future.

This year British Columbians along with their fellow countrymen in other provinces walk in the light of history. We are a part of all that we have met, and all that our ancestors have met. The guiding light of former years and past events casts an illuminating glow upon our present, and guides and assists whenever our footsteps falter or fail, especially now when raucous voices advocating strife and disunity are heard in the land.

British Columbia's Centennial reminds us, as Manitoba's did last year, that our inheritance is, indeed, rich, varied, and inspiring. We think of our adventurous ancestors, ever seeking with a questioning mind, pushing onward across the stormy North Atlantic, beyond the rim of their Heimskringla (world-circle) into a region Oðinn never knew. How can we forget our ancestors leaving the poverty that was their lot, lack of opportunities! People came to the misty shores of the turbulent Atlantic, men and women of many races, many creeds, their dream a new land where peace, harmony, and justice would prevail, where the lamp of liberty would forever burn undiminished. Can we fail to draw inspiration from their self-reliance and fortitude in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, their long, toilsome, heart-breaking struggle with the grinding poverty of an adverse though bounteous environment?

What have they transmitted to us? This vast land! This land of freedom and opportunity! This land so bountifully endowed by nature! This heaven-blest land! "This land is our land"

We may choose to live amidst the misty greenness of the Atlantic provinces, where men go to sea in ships to claim the wealth of the briny deep, where life goes on unhurriedly, and men maintain placidly and contentedly the even tenor of their ways; where in many places the forest primaeval still stands, and secluded trout streams entice man away from his daily cares.

Perhaps we may prefer the rural, old-country orderliness of storied, old Quebec.

It could be that we will heed the call of that other Eden, the garden spot that is southern Ontario with its rich growth.

But the vast, fertile, grain-growing prairies too have their appeal. Here the horizons are wide; here the traditional friendliness and hospitality of the West persists.

Beyond the majestic Rockies raising their towering, snow-capped peaks to meet the blue of the sky lies an integral part of Canada, a vast and beautiful land, a land richly endowed by nature. From time immemorial man has found the lure of the West, the land of the setting sun, hard to resist, and as a result the eternal roar of the Pacific along British Columbia's coastline like a Lorelei, is enticing more and more people to its balmy shores. **IN THIS YEAR OF OUR LORD, 1971, ALL CANADIANS UNITE IN SALUTING BRITISH COLUMBIA.**

Truly we are to be envied, living in a country that offers us all this!

This favored land! This land of infinite variety; This land of the future! **THIS CANADA!**

Though much has been accomplished, much remains to be done. "From falling hands an older generation throws the torch to the younger. Be theirs to hold it high". The vision of its founders gave birth to this nation. The character of our predecessors sustained it through difficult and troubled times. Today dark clouds loom on our national horizon, today the world is beset with grievous problems.

British Columbians are convinced, as are all true Canadians, that our country has a rendezvous with history. Our stirring past, our friendly relations with other countries of the world, our inheritance of self-reliance and unbounded optimism, all combine to enable us to heed the summons of courageously undertaking the task of setting our own house in order, and of providing effective leadership in a troubled world.

Across the years, the frustrating, back-breaking years, the dynamic years, the heroic years, as crystal clear as the dulcet tones of a church bell, wafted across the snow on a cold, clear winter's evening, comes the comforting, reassuring answer to that summons:

WE MUST NOT, WE WILL NOT, FAIL THAT RENDEZVOUS.

—Axel Vopnfjord



AT THE EDITOR'S DESK



THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

The International Centre located at 280 William Avenue has over the past fourteen months become "the home away from home" for more than 3,000 New Canadians in the Winnipeg area, says Brian McWatter in The Winnipeg Free Press. This expresses very well the basic function of the International Centre in Winnipeg, and other International Centres in Canada, as in Toronto.

The International Centre, a long-cherished idea of the Citizenship Council of Manitoba for an International House in Winnipeg, was in operation in October, 1969. Financial support is provided by the Federal and Provincial governments; the City of Winnipeg provided the building, and the United Way gives it substantial support.

The purpose of the Centre, generally stated, is to provide a meeting place where

- a) people of all nationalities, regardless of race, creed or color may meet together and through pursuing common interests, develop a better understanding of each other,
- b) through counselling services immigrants may be assisted to meet their educational, health, employment, welfare and social needs.
- c) the newcomer, if he/she needs it, can learn English and French.

If the question is asked, what is the need for such a centre in 1971, the answer is, more than three million

newcomers have arrived in Canada since the end of World War II. There are some ten thousand newly arrived Italians in Winnipeg. Immigration recorded 34 points of origin for immigrants during the first five months of 1970, while those counselled were from 21 countries. "In an average month nearly 3,000 people use the facilities and services offered by the Centre", says Mrs. Mary Panaro, executive secretary of the Centre.

The program at the Centre includes counselling service for newcomers, Welcome coffee parties each week, International Youth Group programs, Literary and cultural evenings, and other special activities. The Winnipeg School Division supplies teachers for English classes held Tuesdays and Thursdays, in the afternoons and evenings. Conversational classes are featured. Commencing in January 1971, a series of ten weekly lectures will be given on matters including government, voting, taxes, laws, legal services, human rights, consumer affairs buying and selling procedures, labor regulations and social and recreational services. On the social and cultural levels, Saturday morning Welcome parties sponsored by various ethnic groups are held every week to meet new fellow Canadians. A representative of the host organization for that Saturday lights "a candle of friendship" and the newcomer lights "a candle of hope" for a new life in a new country.

Some 50 to 60 organizations are associated through the International

Centre, as well as 300 individual members and supporters. Furnishings for "Nation" rooms are contributed by organizations. There is an East Indian, a Hungarian, a Filipino, a Spanish, and other rooms. In 1970, the British Wives Club of Winnipeg organized a social afternoon program and presented pictures of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip.

Would the Icelandic Canadian Clubs in Winnipeg and Toronto and other cities where International Centres have been established, be interested in welcoming some of our three million newcomers to help to make a home away from home for them?

★

STUDENT EXCHANGE WITH QUEBEC

In the summer of 1970, some 91 high school students from Winnipeg, Brandon, Dauphin, Regina, and Thunderbay exchanged visits with 91 French Canadian students from Quebec under the auspices of the Council of Christians and Jews. Across Canada 3,000 students participated in the program. Students went to Quebec July 1st and lived there with their French partners until July 16. Then they brought their Quebec partners home with them for a fortnight return visit.

Nearly all of the Westerners reported that they had received a very warm welcome in Quebec. Before their visit nearly all the students had only a vague idea of what the people of Quebec were like because they had had no

contact with them. In many cases French became alive as a language for them. Lasting friendships developed between the exchange students and the families.

Lois Egilson of Ashville, Manitoba, was one of the 1970 exchange students. She is not the first student of Icelandic origin to take part in this exchange.

This account brings to mind the thought that people are people wherever we go.

A MISSING LINE IN PAUL SIGURDSON'S TRANSLATION OF "SANDY BAR"

"A poet can survive everything but a misprint" said Oscar Wilde. By the same token we will understand Paul Sigurdson's chagrin when he saw that a line had been omitted from his translation of "Sandy Bar", carried in the Winter issue of The Icelandic Canadian. The last stanza (on page 19) should begin

Now I knew the storm was failing
Thunderheads were northward sailing;
Dark and heavy clouds were trailing,
Heaven-opening star by star;
There I saw a highway streaming,
Bright with constellation-gleaming;
Clean and true as men had dreamed it,
Soaring over Sandy Bar;
Heaven, homestead of the settler,
Shining over Sandy Bar!

A misprint occurs on p. 19, col. 1, stanza 2: For "guilding" read "guiding".

Our regrets, Paul!

—Ed.

Kristine Kristofferson

Who Burned The Ballot Box from Gimli?

Politics before the turn of the century were rough, tough and unruly, but an incident that occurred in the election of 1886 shocked the entire province. The ballot box from Gimli was burned and all the votes contained therein destroyed. Two parties were seeking election, the Conservatives, led by John Norquay, and the Reform party led by Thomas Greenway with 35 seats being contested.

The election was held Thursday, December 9th, 1886. When the votes were counted, the Conservatives had elected 18, the Reformers 14 and 2 Independents had also been elected. This left one seat unaccounted for—the constituency of Rockwood which included the poll at Gimli. In the Rockwood Riding—when all the other polls except Gimli had been heard from, the Conservative N. F. Hagel was found to be in the lead with 21 votes over his Reformer opponent, Samuel Jacob Jackson. With such a slim majority, the poll at Gimli could prove to be the deciding factor as to whether the seat went to the Conservatives or to the Reform Party.

The poll Clerk at Gimli was the Reeve, Gudni Thorsteinsson. Present were two scrutineers from Stonewall, Charles Sibbald for Hagel, and Colin McLean for Jackson. The Icelanders had worked hard to promote their candidate, and feelings ran high. The polling booth was crowded with people, eagerly awaiting the election results.

When the votes had been counted, (numbering 40 all told) it was found that Samuel Jackson of the Reform party had been given 37 votes, and Hagel of the Conservatives only 3. The Icelanders were jubilant over their victory, and though 7 of the votes were declared invalid due to faulty marking of the ballot, Jackson still had a good majority over Hagel.

The Poll Clerk asked Sibbald to read the results aloud so that all assembled could hear as was then required by law. Sibbald, scowling darkly, flatly refused to do so. The other scrutineer, McLean, read the results instead, declaring for all to hear, that Samuel Jacob Jackson had won the poll by 34 votes. This decided the Rockwood seat. Jackson was now the elected representative for the Rockwood Riding, having defeated his opponent Hagel by a majority of 6 votes. The Gimli vote had given the seat to the Reformers.

The ballots were locked in the ballot box and given into the keeping of the scrutineer, Sibbald, who was instructed to deliver it to the Recording Clerk, J. B. Rutherford, at the District Polling Headquarters in Stonewall.

Sibbald and McLean set off in a sleigh driven by Jon Julius. Late in the day they arrived at Selkirk where Sibbald instructed Jon to drive on to Winnipeg. In his place he hired a driver named Wilson to take them across the prairie to Stonewall. A farm-

er from Stonewall, a man named Neary, set off just before dark.

Sibbald produced a bottle which he generously shared with the others. It was cold travelling in an open sleigh in winter across the wind-swept prairie.

They travelled for several hours before the driver Wilson feeling somewhat befuddled, admitted that he was lost. Ahead of them loomed a farmhouse, and Wilson suggested they stop there to warm up and ask directions.

The farmer invited them in and set about stoking the fires and brewing them some tea.

Wilson and McLean were warming themselves by the fire, when they saw with some surprise that Sibbald and Neary headed for the door and went out into the cold night. Shortly after their departure, Wilson left to check on his horses. When he approached the barn, he saw two men appear from behind a haystack, one carrying a load of hay, the other holding something in his arms. As Wilson watched them, the men put the hay on the snow-covered ground, and set the object on top of the hay. One of them struck a match, and though he could not distinguish their faces in the faint glow of the flame, he could see what they were doing. They set fire to the hay and ran back behind the haystack.

Suddenly it dawned on him that the object that lay on top of the burning hay was the ballot box. They had set fire to the ballot box.

Wilson ran to the house to call McLean. The two men dashed out of the house toward the blazing fire. McLean kicked the box from the burning hay to the snowbank where it hissed and smoked ominously. McLean picked it up as soon as it was cooled enough to do so and peered into the interior. He had been too late. The ballots were burned to a crisp.

When news of what had happened reached Samuel Jackson, he hired a lawyer to investigate. Wilson was asked to give his version of what had transpired and his testimony to the lawyer McKenzie was the above account. Later he changed his testimony and said that the lawyer was lying. He had not seen anyone set fire to the ballot box. The lawyer promptly sued Wilson for bearing false witness.

When the Recording Poll Clerk at Stonewall, J. B. Rutherford, was informed that the ballots from Gimli had been destroyed, he refused to decide whether or not Jackson was the victor, in spite of the testimony given him by McLean that Jackson had received the most votes. Rutherford put the entire matter of the Rockwood Riding into the hands of the government.

Hagel, meanwhile, refused to accept defeat, especially in circumstances such as these, where the deciding votes had never been recorded by the Recording Officer. He maintained that the votes from Gimli could not and should not be counted as they were never delivered or examined by the Recording Clerk at Stonewall.

Samuel Jackson made a trip to Gimli with Jonas Bergman and returned with the written testimony of several men who had been present at the poll when the votes were counted, and swore under oath that Jackson had received 37 votes, 7 had been declared invalid, and Hagel had received only 3 votes. Their sworn testimony was published in the Free Press.

No one linked Hagel with the disgraceful affair of the burning of the ballots, but strange stories began floating around. The night before the election, Hagel had been heard inquiring as to the whereabouts of Neary, so the two men must have been acquainted, and Neary was the man who had

been with Sibbald on the sleigh enroute to Stonewall, and he had gone outside with Sibbald just before the ballot box was burned. Wilson, the driver, had previously testified that he had seen Neary in Selkirk and Neary had appeared to be trying to hide his presence, but this testimony he later changed.

In spite of the sworn testimony of witnesses from New Iceland, Jackson was not allowed to take his seat in the legislature. The Conservatives maintained that Hagel had been leading by 13 votes before the Gimli vote was counted, and was therefore the elected member for Rockwood, the Gimli votes being invalid, due to the fact that they had never been delivered to Headquarters.

The matter of the missing member should have been the first consideration on the agenda when parliament assembled, but other matters, considered more pressing by the Conservatives, were given precedence. Norquay had squeaked in by a small majority, and Greenway and Brown of the Reform party, would doubtless make the most out of the Rockwood affair, in hopes of embarrassing the government.

The Rockwood seat was vacant all winter before the government finally consented to deal with the matter. A committee was duly appointed to investigate the matter of the burned ballots.

The committee sent for four Icelanders who had been present at the poll at Gimli to appear before them and give their sworn testimony. This the Icelanders thought was most unnecessary as their signed testimony had already been given to Jackson and was already in the hands of the committee. Nevertheless, four men came to Winnipeg to be questioned, Gudni Thorsteinsson (the Poll Clerk), Jonas

Stefansson, Sigurbjorn Stefansson and Sigurgeir Einarsson, all having been present at the Gimli poll when the results of the voting was read by McLean.

Others were questioned: Colin McLean, Charles Sibbald, Jon Julius, the driver, Johanness Jonsson, Neary the farmer, and Wilson the other driver.

The committee members were not favourably impressed with the testimony given by Sibbald. He stoutly maintained that Jackson had received only 6 votes, Hagel 3, and all the other ballots had been invalid. Two ballots did not have the initials of the Poll Clerk, 3 had been marked in such a way one knew whose they were, 29 ballots had been marked so indistinctly one could not tell for whom they had voted, and he had declared 17 of these spoiled and had discarded them. As to what had occurred that fateful night when the ballot box burned he would gladly give his account:

'On the evening of December 10th, I set off from Selkirk enroute to Stonewall with the ballot box intact. During the night I reached the house of the farmer Smith, went in to get warm, leaving the ballot box in the care of the driver. I was indoors about two hours. When I went outside, the box was gone along with the horse's bit. I began searching for the ballot box, and found it on a heap of rubbish that had been burned along with the ballots. I have no idea who set fire to the ballot box.'

Other witnesses did not agree with any of his testimony.

Finally in May, the Committee reported to Parliament that after due consideration, it was the finding of the committee that Samuel Jacob Jackson should be accepted as the elected member for Rockwood. Premier Norquay suggested their findings be sec-

onded and Jackson be allowed to take his seat in the House. Three members voted against the Premier's motion.

Samuel Jackson was led into the House with pomp and ceremony, escorted by Thomas Greenway and Thomas from Portage la Prairie, both members of the Reform Party. He was led before the Premier who bade him welcome, then, amid a standing ovation, he took his seat behind Mr. Thomas.

Jackson's first task was to ask Judge Hamilton to appoint another committee to investigate the matter of the burning of the ballot box, and try to apprehend those guilty of the crime. This committee should be instructed to call forth all witnesses who might

be able to throw some light on the matter. He assured his listeners that he could personally give some pertinent information and if he did so, some high-ranking individuals would not be in an enviable position.

Judge Hamilton assured Jackson that he had already given the matter into the hands of the police who had uncovered some incriminating evidence, though not sufficient to warrant an arrest as yet. He assured Mr. Jackson that no one was more anxious than he that the guilty party should be brought to justice and punished, but first one must have proof of guilt.

But strange to relate, to this day, no one has ever been arrested for burning the ballot box from Gimli.

ERIKSDALE COMMUNITY HONORS DR. PAULSON

An Appreciation Day dinner at six o'clock and a program at eight o'clock in the banquet hall of the recreation centre at Eriksdale, was the form in which a grateful community in Nov., paid tribute to Dr. Gudmundur Paulson of Lundar who for over 30 years had served the health needs of the area.

Son of Manitoba pioneers Pall and Sigrun Pallsson, Dr. Paulson graduated in medicine from the University of Manitoba in 1928 and subsequently pursued post-graduate studies. He established his medical practice at Lundar in 1938 and in following years served a large area which included Eriksdale and the hospital there. The arrival of Dr. Fayyaz from Arborg in September to begin practice in Eriksdale enabled Dr. Paulson to cut down his widespread practice which was already taxing his physical capacities.

Indicative of the high esteem in which Dr. Paulson was held was the attendance of some 250 persons at the dinner and between 400 to 450 at the reception program which followed. At

the banquet Dr. Paul H. T. Thorlakson of Winnipeg brought greetings from the medical profession and noted that he had attended the opening of the new Eriksdale Hospital seven years previously. Of Dr. Paulson he said "for 32 years Doc Paulson has lived the strenuous life in the service of this community."

Nadine Swan, a little girl from the Lake Manitoba reserve, presented a bouquet of roses to Mrs. Paulson and the hospital matron pinned a carnation on Dr. Paulson. Speaker after speaker paid tribute to Dr. Paulson, Reeve Gordon Smith of Eriksdale municipality presented a plaque to be installed in the hospital engraved with a message of gratitude for his years of service. Margaret Smith on behalf of the hospital staff presented Dr. Paulson with a Memory Book.

Rison Pool presented Dr. and Mrs. Paulson with a framed painting by Clarence Tillenius, an eminent artist who calls the Interlake his home. A program of song and dance followed.

Great Moments in Manitoba Sport

STORMY JUNIOR FALCONS OF 1921

by Vince Leah

Junior hockey always has been big in Manitoba.

Between 1930 and the late 1940s, it was the major drawing card on the winter sports scene. Its popularity and success pushed everything else into the background and as a box office money-maker it was in a class by itself.

Prior to The Second World War in this period, Manitoba teams won the Memorial Cup, emblematic of the national championship, eight times. Altogether Manitoba representatives have won the title 11 times, not forgetting seven other clubs that bowed out in the last round.

This province competed for the national crown for the first time in 1919. A good Selkirk Fishermen team lost to Toronto Canoe Club in the Canadian final in 1920, but the juniors still were to have their big moment. One year later, Winnipeg Falcons, little brothers to the great senior team that won Olympic honors in 1920, were to bring the West its first Memorial Cup.

Senior hockey had a firm grasp on the hockey-loving public in those days, but the juniors were making long strides. The Tribune of the day commented on the brilliant play of the juniors and increasing crowd interest. The era would come when tickets for a junior hockey playoff were worth their weight in gold. The 1921 Falcons had a lot to do with creating junior hockey enthusiasm. They were small in stature but when they went East to win in

Toronto, newspapers could not quite get over their speed and skating ability.

There were 10 teams in junior hockey here in 1921, a sharp answer to present-day critics who feel six teams, including three from rural points, are too many in the modern Manitoba Junior Hockey League.

Falcons, Tigers, Canadiens, Selkirk and Winnipeggers campaigned in A Division; Portage la Prairie, Canoe Club, Weston, Crescentwood and Victorias in B group. Falcons stormed through their section undefeated. Portage won the other division but was outclassed by the Icelandic outfit, 10-0 in the sudden-death final for the provincial title. Connie Neil coached Falcons. He had Freddie Comfort in goal, Harry Neil and Sam McCallum on defence, Wally Fridfinnson, Harold and Herb McMunn, Frank Woodall was regarded as the team's No. 1 forward but it was the diminutive Somers who made his mark as a professional, toiling with New York Rangers in the National Hockey League for many seasons.

Assists Grads

Harold McMunn later was chosen to assist Toronto Varsity Grads win the Olympic championship in 1928. Several turned to coaching when their playing days were done. Harry Neil led Monarchs to Memorial Cup finals in 1932, 1935 and 1937, winning in '35 and '37.

The 1921 team repulsed Regina Vics in the Western semi-final, 5-3 and 3-1 here for the right to travel to Fort William. Fort William YMCA was no match, even on slushy ice, for Falcons, going down 9-3 and 11-4. Falcons kept moving East to meet the vaunted Stratford Midgets, champions of the East, led by Howie Morenz, who was to become one of hockey's immortals with Montreal Canadiens.

First Game

The Easterners were highly favored on Toronto ice. Perhaps they were too confident. But the smaller Winnipeggers roared all over them to win the first game of the total-goal series 9-2. The Toronto papers, full of praise, for Falcons, also were a little distressed with Morenz who kept drawing penalties.

The Stratford goalkeeper, Rushton, also had an unhappy evening for The Falcons kept beating him on long shots from outside of the defence. The Easterners also noted that "body checking had become almost obsolete in the West" and Falcons were uncanny stick checkers.

But in the second game, the Stratford squad pounded the smaller Falcons unmercifully hard. Falcons hung on and only trailed 4-2 at the end of the second period. Morenz sparked the Stratford team which scored three more goals in the final 20 minutes but time ran out for the East and Falcons won the total goal playoff, 11-9.

The tiny McCallum, still hale and

hearty and not an ounce over his playing weight, remembers there were several peculiarities about the second game.

"I think they tried to steal it off us", he recalled. "They put us on soft ice, so soft we were skating on the concrete or whatever it was beneath the ice, at times. It was Cully Wilson (an old-time player) who saved us. Cully came over to our bench and said to Connie Neil, "This game should have been over a half-hour ago, Connie.' Connie agreed that it did seem rather long and rushed over to the time keeper and suggested the game had gone into considerable overtime. With that, the timekeeper grabbed his hand-bell and rang it to end the game.'

The Falcons' first line of Fridfinnson, Woodall and Harold McMunn has passed on. Herb McMunn, who was dropped from the team before the playoffs, also is dead as is Harry Neil.

Such distinguished clubs as University of Manitoba, Elmwood Millionaires, Kenora Thistles, Monarchs, Rangers, Portage Terriers, St. Boniface Seals and Brandon were to share junior hockey's glory in the season that followed. But first on the list and first in the hearts of old-time junior fans are The Falcons of 1921.
—Free Press

FOOTNOTES —

The following laudatory comments on the Junior Falcons are from the Press at the time of the championship games.

The Falcon Juniors are practically a miniature edition of the famous

senior aggregation of last year.
(Free Press, March 26, 1921)

They are fast and tricky and have not a weak spot.
(The World, Toronto, Mar. 1921)

The Falcons are undoubtedly the best junior team that have come out of the West in quest of the Memorial Cup
(Free Press, Mar. 16, 1921)

The Falcons are one of the niftiest aggregation of players I have seen in junior hockey for some time. Their speed, combination and checking is really wonderful for boys of their size."
Billy Hewitt, Sec., O. H.

The Falcons won the first game of the two-game total point series against the East and the championship. However, the Eastern team won the second game. What happened to the Falcons?

"The second night the ice was sloppy, says Johnny Austman, trainer of the team. The fast-skating Falcons were at a disadvantage there."

Trainer of the Junior Falcons in 1921 was Johnny Austmann and assistant trainer was Ted Swainson. Fred Thordarson was Secretary-Treasurer of the Club. —W.K.

HISTORIC MILESTONE

This year the University of Manitoba recognized the twentieth anniversary of its chair in Icelandic language and literature with an announcement that University Press would publish an Icelandic saga in English translation.

The President, Dr. E. Sirluk, marked the occasion with a gala dinner and reception on the campus February 24, on the eve of the annual midwinter convention of the Icelandic National League. Distinguished guests introduced to the gathering by the president and Professor Haraldur Bessason, head of the chair in Icelandic, were Dr. W. M. Sibley, the university's vice president of planning and special assignments, and Mr. Andres Bjornson, chairman of the Icelandic Broadcasting system in Reykjavik, in Winnipeg with his wife to address the convention. The dinner was followed with a lively and informative seminar by Mr.

Bjornson on modern Icelandic literature.

During the dinner, Dr. Sirluk made his historic announcement that this year University Press would publish Landnámabók, —the Book of Settlement— in English translation by two eminent scholars and professors at the University of Edinburgh, Dr. Hermann Palsson and Dr. Paul Edwards, who have recently collaborated on such saga classics as Njals Saga, The Saga of Burnt Njal, and won plaudits among literary scholars.

The dinner guests included the students of Icelandic at the university. They now number about 40, many of them not of Icelandic origin. The ever growing student body attests to the quality of Professor Bessason's leadership, as does the signal achievement of the saga's publication by University Press and the hearty recognition of the chair in Icelandic by the university's president. —C.G.

KRISTJAN SVEINSON: TRADITIONAL RIVERBOAT CAPTAIN

by Lynne Schankerman-Eade

Kristjan Sveinson is a riverboat captain in the tradition and style of Mark Twain. The resemblance is probably coincidental. But it's hard to be sure about any specifics with Capt. Sveinson.

He's piloting one of the entertainment paddlewheel boats this summer, but doesn't seem to take the pomp of plush decorations too seriously.

His boat docks at a section of the city where green parks slope down the waters edge. The first contact made was over with an older man in baggy pants and a battered fedora hauling what appeared to be a lawn hose from here to there.

Half an hour later, he strolled aboard his sister ship and swirled a cup of black coffee in a cup.

"Yes, I've been on these waters since 1934, and tried to leave a hundred times. But, you know, once a sailor, always a sailor." The statement was punctuated with an almost-smile.

Capt. Sveinson was born 60 years ago in Arborg, Man., and took to piloting the waters he had grown up fishing. "In those days, there was better pay." Fishing to him meant a crew of two or three after white pickerel, in 40-foot boats out on Lake Winnipeg.

His first boat work was on a hauling barge, taking heavy machinery into Grand Rapids. After "six or seven years" as a mate, he passed the tests and became captain of Luanna III.

He is a man who knows his territory. "Well, the water's about, oh, four feet above normal now . . . the river itself

hasn't changed much, just a bank or two fallen in here and there."

A piece of information which appeared in the course of the interview — Mrs. Sveinson is as much a part of the riverman's life style as her husband. She cooked on his boats for as long as he captained, and now that he stays in the city, she goes out on her brother-in-law's boats for two-week hauls to the top of Lake Winnipeg.

The barges, the very life style, of which Capt. Sveinson is a facet, ran on the fishing economy of the area bringing in supplies and bringing out the fish.

"Fishing went to hell these last years and now they have closed off the lake completely. Well, it's been coming a long time. It's not as bad as they claim, should be cleaned up in a year or two, and those who leave the lake, well, there are always new faces to fill in. Not that they want as many as in the before, well, I guess they will find their own level."

Last winter, for the first time in almost two decades, Capt. Sveinson wasn't repairing his boat for the coming season. He spent eight weeks in the bush as a mechanic instead. "Yes, I guess I can do practically anything, but if nobody asks, I won't say."

"I keep to myself, not like some people I know who string a line. I may walk among the passengers nowadays, and they sometimes talk to me, sometimes not. Most of the time I'm busy with other things.

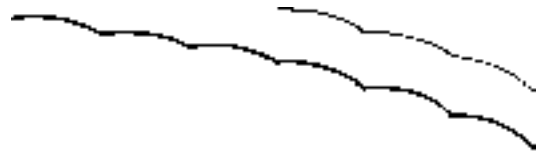
For a man who took his captain's papers on the Great Lakes, with tests in charting currents, courses and a hundred intricacies which are unknown to Manitoba river water, these "things" include watching the city lights, and travelling down the river "light almost bright as day" by reflections from the street.

Despite his repeated statements, tinged with truth and humor, that "I'm just waiting to die", Capt. Svein-

son reminisced that he never "got into any serious trouble on the big lake . . . guess I was to damn cautious.

From the foregoing conversation, it appears Capt. Sveinsson had refused point blank to sail when he suspected there might be a squall coming. And this, despite assurances of reports to the contrary. It also seems he was usually correct.

—Winnipeg Free Press



ICELANDIC CULTURAL PLAN LAUNCHED AT GIMLI

Members of the Gimli Women's Institute heard details of a five-year Icelandic cultural plan for Gimli at their meeting in February when Mrs. Fred Rankin, originator of the plan and chairman of the Viking ship steering committee, told them of the corporation which is to be set up to proceed with plans to embark on a many-sided project designed to make Gimli the Icelandic cultural centre of North America.

The plan includes a museum, primarily Icelandic but also to contain a section for Ukrainian and Polish artifacts, an authentic reproduction of a 60-foot Viking ship to complement the Viking statue, restoration of the oldest Icelandic cemetery in North America, a summer school for teaching of the Icelandic language, and second-

dary projects to support a drive to have public washroom facilities and a tourist information centre in Gimli, an access route to Highway 8 on Centre Street, and later rebuilding of the lighthouse on the pier.

Mrs. Rankin asked the group to consider if the Women's Institute would support the plan, and in what way they could do so.

New directors and officers were formally installed by Miss Sigridur Hjartarson as follows: President Mrs. N. M. Greenberg, first vice-president Mrs. David Walker, second vice-president Mrs. Fred Rankin, secretary Mrs. Mary Shebeski, treasurer Mrs. Frank Cronshaw, and directors Mrs. George Arnold, Mrs. J. S. Gendur, Mrs. R. Howard, Mrs. G. MacDonald and Mrs. N. K. Stevens.

Visit to Demark's Ugly Duckling's Home

AND A LOOK AT HAMLET'S CASTLE

by Jo-Ann Stefansson

One hears much about the famous historic spots in Denmark, especially Hans Christian Andersen's home and Hamlet's castle. To quench my curiosity about these two places, I visited them.

With the memories of the fairy tales written by H. C. Andersen imprinted in my mind, I travelled 140 kilometers north west from Copenhagen to the little island of Fyn, where Odense, H. C. Andersen's home town lies. In Odense, in the year 1805, H. C. Andersen was born. As I wandered down the picturesque, cobblestone streets to Hans Jensens Stræde where the cottage lies, I began to construct my impression of how H. C. Andersen must have been. I imagined he was a very jolly man who had grown up in harmonious surroundings, and who was inspired to write his fairy tales out of the desire to bring happiness to others. That turned out to be my fairy tale, because the truth was far from my idea.

Arriving at a little story book cottage on a narrow street, one stops and peers curiously in the windows. There is no furniture inside, and one enters through a huge building to one side of the cottage. To enter the cottage itself, one must bow one's head, and it is hard to picture a tall thin man like Andersen being at ease in a low ceilinged house. Inside are long glass boxes in which H. C. Andersen's papers are displayed. There one can see his poems and stories in their planning

form. Otherwise there is no furniture, until one enters the huge building attached to the cottage. In that special museum is Hans' furniture, protected by glass walls. The story goes that it was moved from the original house because the bed was cracked once by Danny Kaye, who had been invited to visit. He became so exuberant in his adoption of the role of Hans that he sprang on the bed and it cracked.

With a close study of the papers and books displayed on H. C. Andersen, I discovered with a shock, that his life had been far from my optimistic imaginings. Hans, the son of a shoemaker, as a boy had been closely bound to his father since the other children refused to play with him, instead mocking him for his ungainly appearance. Therefore, when Hans' father died, he sought comfort from his mother, who unfortunately was unable to be of much help since she was highly neurotic. Hans became more of a loner, and spent his time writing poetry and playing with puppets. He attended the "poor school" until he turned 14, at which time he heeded the prophecy of a fortune teller who told him he would be famous. Instead of taking an apprenticeship in leather work as had been expected of him, he was employed as a singer in the King's Theatre until he lost his voice. He then transferred over to ballet, but was fired from that job. Once again Hans began to write poetry, and soon won the support of a sympathetic man who

encouraged him to return to school, this time in Slagelse. Hans graduated from Slagelse in 1828. His poetry by this time, beginning to be well known. At that point in his life, Hans began to travel extensively and on his journeys he stored up the impressions and experiences he encountered in order to use them in stories. In the collection in Odense, one sees many sketches he had made of the places where he had been, just as we would take pictures with our cameras.

Although Hans Christian Andersen's stories bring happiness to people all over the world, Hans never attained happiness for himself. He is described as a bitter man, a hypochondriac, and often depressed. Three times in his life, he fell in love, but these were times of sorrow for him since the ladies in question did not return his affections. How did this homely, bitter man manage to produce joy for others? The answer seems to be that he used situations and characters to poke fun at those who had humiliated him, but that he did it in a highly disguised way so people could laugh at the fairy tale characters without realizing that there was truth behind the words. Thus, while children gleefully enjoy the antics and plight of "The Ugly Duckling", a closer look reveals to adults the parallel between the ugly duckling's troubles and Hans' own.

From this visit to the fairy-tale land of Hans Christian Andersen, and the discovery of the unhappy man behind the facade, it is easy to understand the meaning behind the Danish saying "Uden modstand, ingen fremgang" (without opposition, no progress). Hans' life of struggle and opposition resulted in a rich collection of stories and poems for others, and although he had been shunned most of his lifetime,

he was honoured just before his death in 1875 by the erection of a huge statue in the king's garden in Copenhagen.

Leaving the island of Fyn, I travelled back to the main island of Sealand, where the castle claimed to be Hamlet's, lies. There, in Helsingor, 50 kilometers north of Copenhagen, lies a renaissance castle overlooking Halsingborg, Sweden. It is strategically placed on a peninsula of land with only a narrow stretch of water separating Denmark from Sweden. Thus as ships tried to sail through those waters, they were obliged to pay toll, or risk being shot at from the castle battlements.

This picturesque castle is rumoured to be linked with Shakespeare's Hamlet, but with closer investigation, it was found that this connection was only a myth. The closest connection there has been, was when the Earl of Leicester players came to Helsingor in 1586-1587, and possibly collected ideas about how this castle could be used in a play.

Even though Kronborg castle is not Hamlet's, it is still a very mysterious and interesting place to roam in. As one approaches the castle over the moat bridge, one receives an impression of majestic stone walls towering over one's head. Entering into the courtyard, you enter the church with its marble floors, and elegantly carved pews. The church is the only part of the castle left standing when the castle burned in 1629. Otherwise the castle dates back to 1425, when the first small building was erected on that site. That building burned and the larger castle was started in 1577 by King Frederick the second.

An intriguing place to visit in the castle is the underground cell system. One follows a shadowy guide down

into the earth's innards, and becomes completely immersed in the darkness. It is therefore a shock to come upon an enormous statue in the blackness. It is a statue of Holger the Dane, about whom it is rumoured that he fought in France in the 8th century, and was such a brave man that he couldn't be killed, but fell asleep with his head on his hands. There he sits sleeping until Denmark is at war and needs his help, at which time he will arise and help in the fighting. Further along in the underground tunnels, one comes to a small triangular cell, which is only one of many of that kind under the castle. It is explained that the method used to torture the prisoners was to set an iron gate up at the opening, and each day to move the gate until finally the prisoner stood with his back to the wall in the point of

the triangle and couldn't move an inch. Once again it is rumoured that one man stood in that position for 3 months, at the end of which time, he was released, and was invited to a Christmas dinner. He got a chicken bone stuck in his throat at this dinner, and died. Of course, it is said, this is only a story.

After a visit in the dark, dank underground system with its statues, cells, low ceilings, and huge rooms where the soldiers have lived, it is a relief to come up in the sunshine. There one can take a walk on the walls where Hamlet is supposed to have walked. From the walls with their mounted cannon, one can look over to the coast of Sweden, and enjoy a panorama of natural beauty. The impact of nature's glory was a fitting closing scene to my historic tour.



THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY

There was an air of gay informality about the annual Christmas party held by the Icelandic Canadian Club in the First Lutheran Church last December 18. Guests were received at the door by members of the club and taken to the lower auditorium, where they were grouped around small tables and entertained over old-fashioned hot chocolate, coffee and Christmas foods. Mr. and Mrs. Len Vopnfjord sang several numbers in an engaging style of their own and Gus Kristjanson

led a lively sing-song, accompanied by Mrs. Will Kristjanson at the piano and Neil Bardal on the banjo. Mrs. Lara Sigurdson greeted the guests on behalf of the club and Rev. J. V. Arvidson on behalf of First Lutheran Church. In traditional yuletide weather, the journey to this gathering was made pleasant and comfortable by volunteer drivers who called for some of the guests at their homes under the guidance of Mrs. Ninna Stephenson.

—C.G.

THE LAUNDRY GIRL

(Stína í Þvottahúsinu)

by Einar Pall Jonsson

transl. by Thorvaldur Johnson

Of her family I knew nothing at all . . .
In the settlement's early day
She immigrated to Winnipeg
Where she worked for little pay
As a housemaid; then as a laundry girl
For years she slaved away.

For many a nationality
She washed, and washed for me.
Over the tub old hymns she sang
To counter adversity.
In her lowly calling she found that peace
That leaves the spirit free.

For papers from Iceland she often asked,
For her homeland to her was dear.
And if I could give her a printed sheet
Her furrowed brow would cheer,
And her eyes would shine as if hidden love
Within burned bright and clear.

At length, one Sunday it came to pass,
As summer approached its end,
That she lay on her bed and breathed her last
With her hymn book in her hand,
And released to her Lord the earth-freed soul
She had taken at His command.

And now, past the cross-roads of life and death
She, who had washed so well,
In her coffin was laid in a foreign grave
To rest her worn-out shell.
And she, who had loved Icelandic speech,
In English was bid farewell.

KRISTINE KRISTOFFERSON: Icelandic Canadian Novelist

by Sigurbjörg Stefansson

Among the many questions of our questioning age is that of the place occupied in the Canadian nation by those of other origins than French or English. How are the courage, toil and suffering, and also the cultural gifts of these pioneers of fifty or more ethnic groups to become known as a part of the Canadian heritage, to become accepted as a share in the founding of our nation, and to become part of the Canadian mosaic, rather than be completely lost?

For this we need interpreters, and we seek them among those of the second and third generation in Canada who have command of both English and their maternal language, combined with the literary talent to create an accurate, sympathetic and understanding portrayal.

Our own Icelandic group has been fortunate in having such interpreters; for instance, Mr. W. Kristjanson and Judge W. J. Lindal in Icelandic-Canadian history. In the field of the novel and autobiography Laura Goodman Salverson was a pioneer. Another recognized novelist is Kristine Benson Kristofferson, well known for her one published novel "Tanya", but not yet so well for her most significant work which is still in manuscript and deals with Icelandic-Canadian pioneer history.

Kristine Benson Kristofferson was born at Gimli, Manitoba. Her father, Gisli Benson, was born in Skagafjörður, Iceland, and came with his parents, Benedikt Bjarnason and his wife Guðrún Gísladóttir, in 1888 to Gimli where

they became pioneer settlers of New Iceland. Her mother, Ólína Ingveldur Kristjansdóttir Benson came with her mother to New Iceland in 1900.

The author is the second of their four children, the eldest of whom, Bennetta, died at the age of twenty but had already shown a strong bent for acting and writing. The third, Mrs. Alice Pascoe, has a talent for sculpture. The youngest, Mr. Harvey Benson, is a principal of Gimli Composite High School.

Both parents have an interest in reading and literature, and even today, at age ninety, her mother readily recites pages of Icelandic poetry from memory. From them and from her grandmothers Kristine Benson gained a knowledge, appreciation and understanding of the Icelandic language and culture, and vivid impressions of pioneer life in New Iceland.

She attended public and high school at Gimli, and even then showed a marked talent for short story writing, which at that stage showed a rich vein of humor. Later she attended Normal School and has been a public school teacher almost exclusively at Gimli, where her work in this field is well known. One of the prime objectives of today's educational revolution, a breakthrough from stultifying formality and mere memorizing, she has achieved by her very nature, having a lively sympathy for the young and a gift for imaginative presentation. A visit to her classroom shows no boredom nor restraint, but instead happy, interested, active children. Here again her gift of

writing has appeared in the creation of plays for classroom presentation.

On August 4, 1946, she married Harry Kristofferson, a Manitoban of Norwegian-Swedish parentage and veteran of World War II, who is a civilian mobile equipment technician at CFB Gimli. He was for several years a member of the Gimli school board and later of the Gimli town council, and is presently justice of the peace.

Their three sons are all attending the University of Manitoba: Harold Keith and Kenneth Murray in Arts and Allan Herbert in Science. Their daughter, Judith (Judy) Bennetta, in Grade XI, has a strong interest in acting.

Kristine Benson Kristofferson's main published work, "Tanya", was originally written for pastime on scraps of paper and then laid aside till years later it was entered in a fiction contest where, although no prize was awarded in that year, it tied with a professional writer's work as top entry. It was then revised, published in 1951 by Ryerson Press, and serialized in 1952 in the "Country Guide". In the serial form it was illustrated by Clarence Tillenius.

It recounts the story of a nurse who returns to a Lake Winnipeg settlement after World War II. While this work is essentially a romantic novel and became popular in that field, it is also a decided attack on racial prejudice and reveals the author's deep concern with it. It has a theme then rare in writing, the treatment of the Indian on a level with the white, and also gives a fresh authentic portrayal of the Lake Winnipeg background.

"Tanya" was reviewed in papers all over Canada. A Toronto Telegram reviewer commented, "At every point it touches on the very core of Canadian living." Arthur W. Deacon, liter-

ary editor of the Globe and Mail, said, "The author does not preach, she demonstrates. Characters and scenes are thoroughly Canadian, and the precise balancing of moods and motives shows good craftsmanship." The author was recognized by the Canadian Authors Association, and the book was listed during Canadian Book Week and in *Canadiana* for 1951. It was also given as a prize on the radio show "Court of Opinion".

Since then the author has written two other novels which are still in manuscript. One of these is "Jórunn" which is fictional but based on the life of her paternal grandmother, Guðrún Benson, first as a child and then as a young girl in Iceland in the stirring period that centred on the winning of home rule in 1874, and later as an immigrant in Canada. The vivid accounts of life in Iceland show how avidly the writer as a child absorbed and visualized even the minute detail of her grandmother's life there.

Her third work, "The Rugged Oak", whose title refers to the character of the Icelandic immigrants in Canada, is a historical novel whose fictional characters pass through the experiences of the Icelandic settlers at Kinmount and later in New Iceland, through the smallpox epidemic and the flood of 1881. Besides the knowledge gained from personal accounts of this period, the writer has gone into detailed research, extending to the Manitoba Provincial Archives and other sources, to ensure the accuracy of her material. To it she has added vivid imagination to take the reader right into the homes of the settlers amid the most harrowing trials of their first years of colonization. She also gives glimpses of the New Iceland government and the dissension in the colony.

One of the professional reviewers of this manuscript commented on the brutal impact of the description of the smallpox epidemic and the almost overpowering effect of the background.

Guttormur J. Guttormsson, who was better qualified to judge than most, as he was himself a gifted writer and moreover knew both the Lake Winnipeg region and the pioneer period thoroughly, from personal experience, was greatly impressed with this novel and confident that it would eventually gain recognition. Through his keen interest in it there developed a lasting friendship with its author, and a correspondence that was sustained till the poet's death.

Since writing "The Rugged Oak", the author has been so occupied with her double career of homemaking and teaching, to which have been added various community activities, notably in connection with the Unitarian Church, that she has not engaged in any other major work of writing. For two years, however, she assisted the Ottawa folklorist Kenneth Peacock in his research on behalf of the National Museum of Canada into what is still to be found of Icelandic artifacts, folk songs and traditions in New Iceland. She is also engaged in the study of university courses leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree, including three years of study of Icelandic. Incidentally, her son Kenneth is now in his second year of study of Icelandic at the university.

She has, however, written some short pieces, notable among which is an account of Betsey Ramsay's grave, printed in 1966 in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, which led to a centennial project

centering in Riverton for preserving the grave. Though brief, this sketch shows her interest in the relation of the friendly Indian, John Ramsay, to the Icelandic settlers. It also reveals another facet, her interest in the occult.

One may hope that when her everyday duties become less onerous she may return to sustained writing and continue to develop her talent, and also that her portrayals of Icelandic-Canadian pioneers may eventually reach the public. They were written when the interest of Canadians in their historic heritage was low. The centennial years and other events have now made the nation keenly conscious of it, and there are strong stirrings among its ethnic groups for recognition. Publication of such a novel as "The Rugged Oak" would certainly give ample evidence of the unrelenting struggle and human sacrifice of the Icelandic immigrants as part of their share in founding the Canadian nation.

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The Icelanders On Vancouver Island

A HISTORICAL SKETCH

by Dr. Richard Beck

When it is borne in mind that Icelanders have been on Vancouver Island, more specifically in Victoria, B.C., for nearly 90 years, it is highly proper that they and their contribution should receive some attention in this historic year, when the Province of British Columbia commemorates the Centennial of its entrance into the Confederation of Canada.

At this point, a reference to what has been written in English on the subject before is in order.

In their article "The Icelanders in British Columbia" (in the Centennial number of *The Icelandic Canadian*, Summer 1967) Gustav Tryggvason and Nina Tobin deal briefly with the Icelanders in Victoria and on Vancouver Island, but in greater detail with the Icelanders on the mainland.

In his extensive and informative work *The Icelanders in Canada (Canadian Ethnica II*, Ottawa and Winnipeg 1967) Judge Walter J. Lindal devotes a special chapter to the Icelandic Settlement in British Columbia, drawing to some extent on the Tryggvason and Tobin article referred to above. Judge Lindal, however, has a more developed account of the Icelanders in Victoria, with special reference to several of the earliest Icelandic families that settled there, which will be dealt with below.

The writer of this article has considered it practical to divide it into

two parts, the first one dealing with early settlers in Victoria, the second part with Icelanders elsewhere on Vancouver Island, and with the descendants of the Icelandic pioneers, and others of Icelandic origin in the area, who have, as far as available information reveals, gained prominence in various fields of activities.

Someone has observed that the reasons for emigration are as varied as the emigrants themselves. While that observation may contain a good deal of truth, the fact remains that basic common factors enter in as the principal causes of emigration. No doubt, in the case of many of the Icelanders who settled in Victoria and elsewhere on Vancouver Island, the mild climate was an attraction, although economic considerations were a basic factor, the prospect of a better future for the settlers themselves and their families. Encouragement by relatives and friends, who had preceded them, doubtless influenced many to follow in their footsteps.

The first Icelander, as far as is known, to settle in Victoria and on Vancouver Island was Olafur (Oliver) Johnson, who had emigrated from Iceland to Winnipeg in 1881, and came to Victoria in 1883. Some years later he married Guðrún Arnfinnsdóttir (Finnsen), who had come to Victoria with her family in 1887. Among their four children was Björn (Byron) Ingi-

mar Johnson, who later became Premier of British Columbia, and whose notable career will be with later in this

The traditional Nordic spirit of adventure ran strong in the blood of this first Icelandic pioneer in Victoria and on Vancouver Island. His passing was duly noted in both the Victoria dailies the *Times* and the *Colonist*. In the latter (February 25, 1941), his character is vividly portrayed and his colorful career summarized under the heading "Active Life Reaches End". This obituary, which is here largely reprinted, reads as follows:

"Oliver Johnson, a man who never spared himself even in the last years of a long and more than usually active life, died suddenly on his farm at Grande Prairie, Alta, Saturday.

Lean, wiry and hard, despite his seventy-seven years, Mr. Johnson virtually died in harness. For more than twenty years he had been farming and freighting with horse team and sled at Grande Prairie, and only four years ago he drove a load and freight through several hundred miles north of Fort St. John. Of true pioneering stock, he was a man who loved the outdoors and the north country, and took life the hard way by preference rather than by necessity. In his last days he even learned to drive a truck, to keep pace with the times, though his heart was always with his horses.

Born in Iceland, Mr. Johnson came to Manitoba in 1881 and worked for a short time on Canadian Pacific Railway construction. In 1883 he journeyed through to Victoria, making the long trip by way of Portland and Tacoma. In those days Seattle was little more than a mill site. For some time he was in the teaming and general supply business.

In that business he moved a large number of old homes from one location to another, including some of Victoria's historic buildings.

Lured by reports of gold, in 1898 Mr. Johnson went to the Yukon, walking over the famous White Pass and travelling by barge down the river to Dawson. Returning from the Yukon in 1889, he went into the Interior and worked for a year on the telephone line from Quesnel to Altin. In 1900 he returned to Victoria to resume the teaming and general supply business. In 1915 he went to Southern Alberta, and in 1918 took up the farm and freighting business at Grande Prairie, in which he was engaged when death came suddenly on Saturday.

Just before Christmas he came out to the Coast to visit his sons and daughters, and had spent two months in Victoria and Vancouver, leaving Vancouver to return home only ten days ago."

Oliver Johnson, who met with a tragic death in a blizzard near his home, was, as indicated above, 77 years of age. His wife had died in 1915. Besides their son Byron, he was survived by another son John V. (Valdimar) a wellknown athlete in his day, and by two daughters.

According to available information the next Icelander who settled in Victoria was John B. Johnson, who arrived there in 1884 or 1885. He was the brother of two well-known Icelandic Canadians, Arngrímur Johnson, who, as noted later, was also one of the earliest Icelandic settlers in Victoria, and Thomas H. Johnson, in his day an Attorney-General of Manitoba. John B. Johnson's wife was Elizabeth Arnfinnsen (Finnsen), a sister of Mrs. Olafur Johnson. Known among the

early Icelanders in Victoria as "Jón kaupmaður" (John the merchant), John B. Johnson for many years operated a retail grocery store as well as a bakery shop on the corner of Humboldt and McClure Streets in the heart of downtown Victoria, where a multi-story high-rise now towers against the sky, indicative of the changing face of Victoria in the course of the years.

John B. Johnson died in an accident in Smithers, B.C., in 1917. His son Björn (Byron) lives in the vicinity of Victoria.

Olafur Johnson's brother, Jón Hrafnald, came from Iceland to Victoria in 1887, very likely at the urging of his brother. In 1905 he went back to Iceland for a seven year stay there, then returning to British Columbia, making his home again for some time in Victoria, but spending his last years in the Icelandic settlement in Osland, B. C., where he met with his death through drowning in 1916.

In the account of the Osland Settlement in his book **The Icelanders in Canada** Judge Lindal notes that the Icelandic Library there originally consisted mainly of books owned by Jón Hrafnald, which is not surprising in view of the fact that he was for a number of years an active member of the Icelandic Literature Society in Victoria.

A number of Icelanders arrived in Victoria in 1887. Among these were Sigurður and Valgerður Mýrdal and their family of four children, and Einar and Sigríður Brandson, all of whom came from North Dakota.

Sigurður Mýrdal's leadership in church affairs among the early Icelanders in Victoria, as well as his active participation in their other activities will be further discussed below. His daughter, Mrs. Valgerður (Vala)

Miller still resides in Victoria, and his son, Sigurjón (John), in Blaine, Wash. Sigurður Mýrdal's son, Árni Mýrdal, a notable example of the self-educated Icelander, will receive further attention in the latter part of this article.

Einar Brandson was well-known among his contemporaries in Victoria, and respected for his long-time and significant community service, consisting of over 30 years as Superintendent of Victoria's historic and beautiful Ross Bay Cemetery, where many of the Icelandic pioneers have their last resting place. His only daughter Margaret, Mrs. Richard Beck, now again resides in her native Victoria, after a long teaching career in California.

Helgi and Dagbjört Thorsteinsson, along with Páll Thorsteinsson, came to Victoria directly from Iceland in 1887, as did Guðmundur and Helga Samúelsson. His brother Jónas, and latter's wife, Thórun Björnsdóttir, also were among the early Icelandic settlers in Victoria. Sigurður Pálsson Scheving arrived from Iceland in 1888.

In his vividly written and informative "Recollections" (**Heimskringla**, December 23. and 30, 1935, and Jan. 4, 1954, also in **Lögberg-Heimskringla**, in February, 1968) Árni Mýrdal recalls several of the earliest Icelandic pioneers in Victoria referred to above, as well as Jóhann (John) Breidfjord, whose wife Anna Mýrdal, was Árni's aunt. Their daughter, Mrs. Sigríður (Sigrid) Peden (now Mrs. Tyrell), still resides in Victoria. Her sons, William (Torchie) and Douglas Peden, were renowned bicyclists whose athletic achievements will be noted later.

Other early Icelandic settlers in Victoria mentioned in Árni Mýrdal's article are Steingrímur Norman and Thorkell (Kelly) Johnson, both of whom were carpenters by trade; the

first-named, however, worked for a long time at assaying ore.

Sigfús Guðmundsson (Goodman) and his wife Guðrún were also among the earliest settlers, as were Ólafur and Helga Sæmundsson.

Jón Sigurðsson was also among these. His wife was Oddný Samúelsson, a sister of the wife of Christian Sivertz (see below). Jón Sigurðsson had for some years been the successful Superintendent of Ross Bay Cemetery, when he died in the prime of life.

Sigurgeir and Björg (Sigurðsson) Sivertz, as well as their sons Bent Gestur, Thorólfur and Christian, likewise were among the earliest settlers in Victoria, the last-named arriving there in 1889.

In 1892 Christian Sivertz was married there to Elinborg Samúelsson. They became the parents of six sons, one of them, Henry George, a highly promising young man, was killed in the First World War. The notable careers of the others, up to that time, were recorded in Halldór J. Stefánsson's article "The Sivertz Family—A Success Story" (**The Icelandic Canadian**, Summer 1949), but will be brought up to date in the latter section of this survey. Two of them, Gustav and Bent Gestur, are now retired and live in Victoria.

In his article Halldór Stefánsson graphically portrays the eventful life of Christian Sivertz, basing the account on biographical notes borrowed from him. The career of this self-educated farm boy from Western Iceland was indeed a remarkable one. For 30 years his daily work in Victoria was that of a mail carrier. But as Stefánsson observes correctly: "Here he soon won the confidence and respect of his fellow workers. Through the years in the Postal service he served

many times as delegate to conventions in distant cities throughout Canada, and he was elected to various offices, including the presidency of the B.C. Federation of Labour in 1913. The education which he missed in his youth he found, at least in part, through the travel, the contacts and the study which the labour movement afforded him."

To which may be added that Sivertz had for many years served as secretary of the Victoria Trade and Labor Council and was one of the founders of the B.C. Federation of Labor. As Secretary of the Labor Council he was instrumental in obtaining a pension plan for B.C. postal workers. Small wonder that **The Vancouver Sun** headlined the story of his passing at the age of 95 in October 1960, with the statement: "B.C. Labor Pioneer Dies in Ontario".

In a feature story in the **Colonist** in Victoria (July 26, 1968), during the postal strike of that year, Sivertz' vigorous and influential leadership in the interest of his fellow postal workers and the Labor movement was recalled in the following words:

"Mention the name Christian Sivertz to the average postal worker on strike here, and chances are it will mean absolutely nothing.

But it most definitely should.

It was here that he helped lead the early Federated Association of Letter Carriers into the former Victoria Trades and Labor Council in 1901.

A Victoria mail worker, he was also one of the founding fathers of the former B.C. Provincial Federation of Labor in 1910.

In 1913 he gave the letter carriers considerable prominence in the province by moving into the top job. He

—continued on page 48



Two Farm Boys — a sketch by Dr. A. Blondal

(B. B. Jonsson and Thos. H. Johnson)

REV. B. B. JONSSON, D.D.

1870—1938

Dr. B. B. Jonsson is prominent among the churchmen in the Icelandic community in North America for over 60 years. He was pastor of the Lutheran Church in Winnipeg, and President of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod 1908-1923. He lived through a period of marked change in the Icelandic community, in his church, and he was eminently the man for his position at that time. It was a period of transition from

a predominantly Icelandic-speaking to a predominantly English-speaking church and he worked with that change. Controversies, religious and others, still plagued the Icelandic community and he worked for harmony in religious matters. He was active in the larger community in Winnipeg and was twice president of the ministerial association of Winnipeg.

—W. K.



THOMAS H. JOHNSON

1870—1927

The most outstanding contribution of an Icelandic person to public life in Manitoba has undoubtedly been that of Thos. H. Johnson, Minister of Public Works and Attorney-General in the Norris administration. He is said to have been the driving force in the growth and access to power of the

Liberal party in Manitoba, about 1915, and the key man in the Norris administration from 1915 to 1922. He was an active promoter of social legislation and was Canadian representative to the League of Nations Labour organization at Geneva in 1920. —W.K.

ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB CONCERT.

The Icelandic Canadian Club Mid-winter concert, February 26, was likewise held in the Parish Hall. In the absence of the Club president, Mr. Tim Samson, vice-president Dr. John Matthiasson, of the Anthropology Department of the University of Manitoba, was chairman. In his opening remarks, Dr. Matthiasson referred to the Manitoba Cultural Mosaic Congress held in Winnipeg last October, and announced the purpose of the Club to sponsor a similar gathering next October, to discuss the preservation of the Icelandic cultural heritage and the Icelandic Canadian identity in Canada.

Dr. Larus Sigurdson waved a magic wand and transported his entire audience on a conducted tour to Egypt, Lebanon, Israel, Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Italy. Biblical places included Jerusalem's Mount of Olives, Nazareth, Bethlehem, the Sea of Galilee, and the Isle of Patmos. He also took his audience back a thousand years to the time when Icelanders and Norwegians served in the Varangrian Guard of the Byzantine emperor, and Harold Hardrada and Jancred perpetrated wholesale butcheries in the Holy Land.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER AT ICEL. CANADIAN CLUB CONCERT

Miss Olivia Thorsteinson, the IOGT scholarship of \$200.

Kenneth M. Kristofferson, of Gimli, the Icelandic Canadian Club scholarship.

Miss Joan Sigrid Johnson, of Arborg, the John Olafson scholarship.

Johann Sigurdson, of Lundar, the Kristín Johnson scholarship.

Gus Kristjanson, of the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba, contributed popular solo numbers, Icelandic and English. He was accompanied by Jona Kristjanson. Miss Morene Ingrid Palsson read poems by the Icelandic poet Þorstein Erlingsson and the local poet Gisli Johnson. Miss Norma Jean McCree, a rising T.V. and radio star, contributed vocal solos, including one of her own composition, to her own accompaniment on the guitar.

Following the program, His Honor Judge W. J. Lindal presented scholarships to University students of Icelandic, or part Icelandic descent. At one point Judge Lindal addressed himself particularly to the convention guest of honor, Mr. Andrés Björnsson, Director General of the Icelandic State Radio and Broadcasting Services in Iceland, stressing that the scholarship winners present were but representative of some forty promising students of Icelandic at the university and that "interest in Icelandic was not decreasing but increasing. (The list of scholarship winners follows this account of the three midwinter concerts.)

Gunnlaugur Sigmar Martin, of Brandon, the Harold Olson scholarship.

Miss Kathy Medd, of Winnipeg, the George Magnusson Estate Scholarship.

Miss Ingrid Farewell, Canada-Iceland Foundation scholarship.

Miss Hallfríður Pálsdóttir Ardal, of Kingston, Ontario, Canada Iceland Foundation scholarship.

Miss Stephanie Blondal of Winnipeg, Canada Iceland Foundation scholarship.

Miss Gloria Thorsteinson, Winnipeg,

Canada Iceland Foundation scholarship.

Miss Penny Woodfield, Winnipeg, Canada Iceland Foundation scholarship.

Miss Judy Hanson, Winnipeg, Canada Iceland Foundation scholarship.

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE CONCERT

The National League Concert, February 27, likewise held in the Parish Hall, was almost exclusively in Icelandic.

The chairman being traditionally the League vice-president, Mr. Heimir Thorgrimson occupied the chair. He welcomed the members of the audience as "friends and fellow workers (samherjar)."

Mr. Andrés Björnsson, Director of Broadcasting in Iceland, who with his wife, frú Margrét Vilhjálmsdóttir, attended the Convention as a guest of honor, was the guest speaker of the evening. In an imaginative and finely tuned address he told of his meeting with Icelandic Canadian servicemen in London during World War II, of his great pleasure in making the acquaintance of the works of the Icelandic poet laureate, Stephen G. Stephansson, Guttormur J. Guttormsson, Jakobina Johnson, the prime humorist of Icelandic poetry, "KN" (Kristjan Júlíus), and other Western Icelandic poets. The main part of his address was a poignant account of his father's chest of letters received from the many friends who had emigrated to America in the early years of the outward movement and whom he would never see again. But now times have changed, he said (nú er öldin önnur) and people of Icelandic descent are strongly drawn to visit the land of their forefathers.

Dr. Richard Beck's vote of thanks to the speaker took the form of a poem dedicated to Andrés and frú Margrét.

Other items on the program included Reg Frederickson's solos, accompanied by Snjolaug Sigurdson; Holmfríður Danielson's recital of a poem by Davíð Stefánsson and an impersonation of a Yiddish lady in Brooklyn seeing a ballet (t) performance for the first time. Mrs. Stuart-Hay (nee Kerrine Wilson) with her own compositions on the piano, and Elma Gíslason, accompanied by Snjolaug Sigurdson, with her impressive operatic selections. The words of one of these selections had been rendered into Icelandic by the singer herself.

At the conclusion of the entertainment, President of the League, Mr. Skuli Johannsson, occupied the chair for the concluding business of the convention which consisted of the presentation of Honorary Memberships in the National League to Mr. Andrés Björnsson, Judge W. J. Lindal and Wilhelm Kristjanson, the last two being for service in the community at large and their literary work.

Refreshments served by the Ladies Aid of the Unitarian Church brought the evening and a successful and well-attended series of the Midwinter concerts of the 52nd annual convention of the National League to a close.

W. Kristjanson

The Wedding of East and West

by Johannes P. Palsson

(Read at the wedding reception of the poet's grandniece and her Persian husband, a Doctor of Medicine)

"Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside one singing in the Wilderness —
And Wilderness is Paradise enow."

Omar Khayyam

So wrote the poet centuries ago
A song of love, for all the world to know.

Still Omar's spirit lingers in the lay
Alive and vibrant on this festive day
To sing for Rami, scion of his race,
A song of Judy's warm and airy grace,
A song to drown, the old and banal bleat:
"By all the gods, no East and West shall meet,
By all our mighty terror — bombs and tanks
No tricks of Cupid's ever break our ranks".

So here a future fable may be told,
Should Fate allow the present to grow old.

Love's blessed imp of bow-and-arrow fame
With blissful ardor played life's oldest game.
His target set — a chevalier and dame —
He shot the myth of two but left one name.

Some think it happened on a summer day,
When shadows and the highlights were at play,
Or else a balmy moonlit night in May.

Others have set the time, a silent eve,
While zephyrs whisper to each blade and leaf
Sweet mysteries beyond one's last belief.

One Rami East to Judy West had said,
"My sweet, the omens tell, that we shall wed."

Asked prudent Judy, "What of bowl and bread?"

Quipped buoyant Rami, "Love will find a bed
Nor write accounts in columns black and red".

They said no more, and sensed a silent call,
"You're safe my dears, for I shall tell you all.
This good old earth and open skies above
Is all one home for those who are in love."

A fairy-tale though oddly off the beat,
Still indicates how West and East could meet.

Scholarship Award Winners



Miss Christine McMahon

Miss Christine McMahon, an Arts graduate of Brandon University, was named the first graduate "Robbins Scholar" of that institution in May, 1970.

The conditions of this award are demanding and the honors of winning it are therefore correspondingly high. To be eligible, a student must have a distinguished academic record and have demonstrated constructive extra curricular activity during his or her undergraduate years in the university or wider community. The award carried with it a monetary value of a \$1,000.00.

Miss McMahon fulfilled the above conditions with distinction. Her academic record of her three university years bore testimony to her scholarly

qualities. She took an active part in student affairs and student government. Intensely interested in dramatics and musical productions, she found time for voice instruction and was a member of the Western Manitoba Philharmonic Choir, the Brandon University Chorale and the Brandon University Singers. During her final year she was vice-president of the Brandon University Repertory Players and helped to promote amateur theatre in rural centres as well as to establish a co-ordinating drama group to provide a long term continuous drama program in her home community.

At present she is entered in a graduate program in drama at the University of Alberta.

Christine McMahon is the daughter of the late Mr. Gerald McMahon and Mrs. McMahon, nee Olof Sigfusson, who lives at 331-27th St. Brandon, Manitoba. She is a granddaughter of the late Skuli Sigfusson, M.L.A. and Mrs. Sigfusson, of the Lundar district.

★

The Jon Sigurdson Chapter, I.O.D.E., scholarships were presented at the November meeting held at the Winnipeg home of Mrs. Gloria Meadows, with her mother, Mrs. Maria Sivertson as co-hostess.

Following the business meeting the guests were welcomed by the Regent, Mrs. E. W. Perry.

Mrs. A. F. Wilson presented the scholarship, which was established in her mother's memory, the Johanna Gudrun Skaptason Memorial Scholar-



Dale Gustaf Johnson

ship (IODE), to Dale Gustaf Johnson, of Selkirk, Man. He is the son of the late Gustaf Johnson of Selkirk and his wife Gudrun, who is now Mrs. Fred Magnusson. Dale has had an exceptional career in scholastic and extra-curricular achievements. His average mark in Grade XII is 84.9 and based on the combined Board and School exam his average is 87%. He has been science student of the year, 1968-69; on the Reach for the Top team, 1969-70; Class president, 1968-69; and vice-pres. 1969-70; president of the SCI Electronics Club, 1969-70, has the SCI Senior Letter, 1970. While in Grade XI he was also very active in the Rotary Club Adventures in Citizenship.

Dale is attending the U. of M. taking Science-pre-Med. When presented with the scholarship of \$150.00, Dale made a very nice little thank-you speech, paying warm tribute to his mother, who was with him at the meeting.

Mrs. Paul Goodman presented the Elinborg Hanson Memorial Scholarship, (IODE) of \$75 to Miss Joanne



Joanne Violet Fredrickson

Frederickson, of Winnipegosis. Joanne has also had a very brilliant high school career, her average mark in Grade XII being 84.8. She has been Jr. Rifle Club instructor, Sunday School teacher, student counsellor secretary, and has taken part in volleyball, curling and swimming. Joanne registered at the U. of Winnipeg, and majors in languages. She was awarded the University of Winnipeg Women's Auxiliary entrance scholarship and a Certificate of Merit (Duck Mountain School Division). Joanne is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. O. Frederickson, and she was accompanied by her grandmother, Mrs. Oskar Frederickson of Winnipegosis.

Mrs. Goodman also presented the IODE (J. Sigurdson) Music scholarship of \$75 to Miss Carolyn Arnason of Winnipeg. She completed her Grade 10 Western Board of Music, with a mark of 86, and has had consistently



Carolyn Arnason

high marks in piano, theory and harmony throughout her musical studies. She has accompanied the school operettas at Kelvin High School, and taken part in other musical activities of the school. Carolyn favoured the meeting with a delightful piano solo. Her mother, Mrs. T. A. Arnason, who is also her piano teacher, was with her at the meeting.

The girls thanked the Jon Sigurdson Chapter for the scholarships. Lunch was served by the hostesses, Gloria Meadows and Maria Sivertson.

—Holmfridur Danielson

DR. WATSON KIRKCONNELL AT MANITOBA CULTURAL MOSAIC CONGRESS

Professor Watson Kirkconnell, of Nova Scotia, guest speaker at the opening banquet, of the Manitoba Cultural Mosaic Congress, held in Winnipeg, October, 1970, substituted for the mosaic idea the concept of "cultural tapestry where the gifts of all, in their myriad variety, have been woven into a single national achievement."

He criticized the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism for "its preoccupation with the ethnic group themselves rather than with the Canadian nation as a whole."

"It is not enough to produce a brief cultural euphoria in each ethnic group on its pathway to extinction," he said.

He proposed, in addition to support for ethnic groups themselves, some ef-

forts to make the whole nation familiar with, and proud of, its composite past.

To accomplish this, he suggested the introduction into the public school system of a collection of the folk-tales of all our peoples for elementary schools, and an "All Nations" reader for secondary schools. The latter would include translations from the major works in the literatures of all the cultures represented in Canada.

"Pupils of all origins would grow up into a comprehension of the human nobility of all the stocks making up the Canadian nation," he explained.

He also suggested the development of an "All Nations" library composed of translations of major works in various languages.

Thank You, Valerie, for the Gold

The above is the heading of a news report in the Winnipeg Free Press, Monday, August 31st, 1970. The reference is to the performance of Valerie Peterson, of Gimli, at the Canadian senior track and field finals, the previous weekend.

"Manitoba did not wax strong" at the meet. "Valerie Peterson, a tall brunette javelin thrower, saved the day for Manitoba on the winners' podium, picking up our only gold medal with a toss of 149 feet four inches."

A week before this, at the Canadian junior championships in Abbotsford, B.C. Valerie won both the junior women's javelin and shot put. She was the lone Manitoban to win a gold medal at this meet.

Following these successes, Valerie distinguished herself at the Canada-Sweden-Norway tri-nation track meet at Victoria, B.C., September 20, 1970. She won the class of the women's javelin competition; her 150-foot 4 inches throw out-distanced her closest competition, Margaret Carell of Sweden by more than three feet.

Her best official javelin throw is 152 feet and her best unofficial throw is 165 feet. She holds the Manitoba junior and senior record in this event. Her achievements with the javelin and the shot put may be listed as follows:

JAVELIN

1970 Manitoba senior Champion.
1970 Manitoba Junior Champion
1970 Tri-Province Champion.
1970 Western Can. Senior Champion.



Valerie Peterson

1970 Canadian Senior Champion
1970 Canadian Junior Champion

Best official throw 152', best unofficial throw 165'. Manitoba junior and senior record. Selected for Canadian team for competition against Norwegian and Swedish teams in September meets in Winnipeg, Edmonton and Victoria.

SHOT PUT

3rd 1970 Can. Junior Indoor Champs.
1970 Manitoba Senior Champion.
1970 Manitoba Junior Champion.
2nd 1970 Tri-Province Meet.
2nd 1970 West. Can. Junior Champs.
1970 Canadian Junior Champion.

LONG JUMP

2nd 1970 Man. Senior Championships.

OTHER HONORS

Runner-up, Outstanding Manitoba Female Track Award.

1970 Outstanding Junior Athlete in Manitoba Championships.

Awarded Flying M Outstanding Athlete Trophy.

Valerie Peterson was born and brought up in Gimli. Here parents are Mr. and Mrs. S. Peterson, of Gimli

and her maternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. S. Branson, of Arborg, Manitoba. Her paternal grandparents now deceased were Mr. and Mrs. Jjetur Gudmundsson, of Gimli.

She completed her grade XII at the Gimli High School and in the autumn of 1970 she was invited to attend Simon Fraser University, in Vancouver to avail herself of training facilities there. She intends to continue her studies there.

ICELANDIC IMMIGRATION NOT A THING OF THE PAST

The concept of a cultural mosaic in Canada is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the activities that take place in the International Centre in the heart of downtown Winnipeg. Here new Canadians of all races and backgrounds are welcomed to the country of their adoption, given an opportunity to avail themselves of lessons in English, and initiated into some of the ways of the new land.

The International Centre celebrated its first anniversary a few months ago. Filipinos and other Asians, West Indians, and Europeans of varying backgrounds mingled with Canadian volunteers from the Centre at this gala function, which was held at the fashionable new Winnipeg Inn. All levels of government—federal, provincial, metropolitan, and civic were represented, and all paid tribute to the work of the Centre. A special award to Mrs. Mary Panaro, executive secretary of the Citizenship Council, was made by Alderman Magnus Eliason,

representing His Worship Mayor Stephen Juba of the City of Winnipeg.

People of Icelandic origin normally consider themselves a thoroughly assimilated national group who have received no infusion of "new blood" from the mother country for many years. Yet one of the couples who were welcomed at this function was Snorri Asmundsson and his charming wife, Gunnvörr Danielsdóttir. This young couple arrived in Canada last summer and are fast becoming established in the new land. Mr. Asmundsson was successful in obtaining employment almost as soon as he arrived in Winnipeg. The Icelandic Canadian wishes to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Asmundsson and their little daughter, Sigrun, and hopes that they may have many years of success and happiness in their newly adopted land. They may be heartened by the fact that many of their countrymen have trod the trail before them.

G. Kristjanson

TWO WHO WANT TO RETURN TO CHINA

by Val Werier

This week the ship *Almestelhof* is clearing 1.1 million bushels of prairie wheat to China. It is part of the order of 98 million bushels to China and an important factor in Canada reaching a record export of all grains.

Two men at the Canadian Wheat Board derive particular satisfaction from this shipment, because they negotiated the sale. They are Assistant Chief Commissioner G. N. Vogel and Commissioner Dr. R. L. Kristjanson who have spent more time in China in recent years than most westerners. In the past four years they have been in Peking and Canton for about four months in the annual negotiations.

They happened to be in Peking on Oct. 13 when Canada recognized China.

"The recognition improved the already good relations we had", says Mr. Vogel. "They were delighted with the news and welcomed it. It was well publicized. Every commune we visited knew about it."

The commissioners found the Chinese to be very friendly towards Canadians, particularly to the Canadian Wheat Board because of the years of good relations. They were shown communes, schools, hospitals, factories, stores, parks and taken to theatres and concerts.

"We have been told by other foreigners that they were amazed where we had been", says Mr. Vogel.

North of Peking they visited an artificial lake, 20 miles long and 10 miles wide, part of a series of such projects

to prevent the devastating floods of the past and to provide irrigation for crops. About 50,000 persons were moved in six months to make way for the project.

Dr. Kristjanson asked about the problems in such a transfer, while explaining the great difficulty in moving 150 people at South Indian Lake in Manitoba.

"We have a different social system", replied the Chinese with a smile.

Both were impressed with the great physical progress in the four years they have been visiting China. There appears to be no shortage and no line-ups at the stores.

"Another thing that impresses us is the apparent happiness of the people," says Mr. Vogel. "In the streets you see teenage girls doing heavy manual labour and giggling as if they were having a ball."

"Whether you agree with him or not," suggests Mr. Vogel, "Mao Tse Tung has to go down in history as one of the greatest living people. He is a man of peasant stock who created a nation out of 800 million people."

"You have to remember," added Dr. Kristjanson, "that China had a feudal system before the revolution where landlords had the power of life and death over the people."

In a sense diplomats, the two commissioners don't care to discuss any reservations they may have over the way of life in China. They did find the dress drab and uniform.

As for trade, they point out that many are unaware that China is a new

exporter of great quantities of food in the form of rice, meats, fruits, vegetables, nuts, oils. Agriculture is much more intensive in China with some areas producing as many as four crops a year.

They saw one commune of 10,000 acres which before the revolution supported 200 farmers. Today it has 60,000 people and industry, and produces rice, bananas, sweet potatoes, beans, meats and other products.

China buys wheat because it can put its acreage to more intensive use. She does produce about one billion bushels of wheat. It finds it cheaper to buy

additional quantities and sell rice at twice the price. Furthermore it solves transportation problems because wheat from Canada goes to the big port cities which would otherwise get their supplies at great cost from the interior.

Mr. Vogel and Dr. Kristjanson are looking forward to going back to China again and again where they have gotten to know their opposites as friends. Every such trip is good news for Canada for it means another sale of wheat to China which for the past three years has become Canada's biggest customer.

—Tribune.



HAROLD THOMPSON NAMED MONARCH LIFE PRESIDENT

The Monarch Life Assurance Company in January announced the appointment of Harold Thompson as a director effective Dec. 22, 1970, and as president and chief executive officer effective January 1, 1971.

Mr. Thompson is of Icelandic extraction, his grandparents were the late Finnur and Ingvaldur Finnson and Bjorg ad Erlendur Thordarson who migrated to Canada from Iceland in 1885. Both families settled in Winnipeg. His parents, Harry "Turk" Thompson and Nia Finnson, were married in May, 1921.

Born in 1922 Mr. Thompson received his formal education in Winnipeg. He graduated from the University of

Manitoba in 1944 with the degree of bachelor of commerce.

During the Second World War Mr. Thompson joined the Royal Canadian Air Force and served overseas from August, 1944, to November, 1946, with the fleet air arm.

In January of 1947 he joined the actuarial department of the Monarch Life Assurance Company. He passed his examinations in 1949 to become a fellow of the Society of Actuaries (FSA) and fellow in the Canadian Institute of Actuaries (FCIA).

In 1946 he married the former Beatrice Shipman and they have two children, Patricia, 19, and Gordon, 12. The family lives in Winnipeg.

BRINGING HOME THE BACON

by Art Reykdal

Jeremiah limped through the woods. The long-barrelled rifle that he had carried so proudly earlier in the day flopped over his shoulder. The cartridge belt that he had regarded as a badge of maturity was now only a burden. His step, once so jaunty, dragged listlessly, and a tight knot of depression gnawed at his stomach.

This morning Jeremiah had started gaily from the cabin where he lived with his grandfather, a triumphant small boy bursting with pride that he had at last been allowed to go hunting alone, for Grampa's gout was especially vindictive today and the pair were out of food. Gramp had hesitated to send the boy alone, but his own misery and the boy's exuberance had conspired against him.

Jeremiah would show him. He'd bring home the bacon. He'd be back in an hour with meat for a month.

★

That's how it was when Gramp went. He knew the ways of the wild and the habits of its life. His sharp old eyes never missed a track and the bullets that he sent spitting from the long barrel of his rifle never missed their mark.

But Jeremiah wasn't Gramp. He tried to be. He aped the old man's every gesture, followed him everywhere, even fancied that he felt the quabus of his gout. He had gone hunting so often with his grandfather that he al-

most believed he had bagged the trophy himself.

But distance and despair had done their work and his spirit sagged. One scrawny squirrel was all he had to show for the miles he had trudged through the forest. And it had no head.

★

Gramp had warned him about that. "Whatever you shoot," he had said, "don't shoot it in the head, for I need the brains to tan the hide."

But the squirrel had been peeping over the edge of a log with only its head visible and Jeremiah already weary and discouraged after his long trek through the woods, had blazed away.

Too late, Jeremiah remembered his grandfather's admonition. The old man was pretty handy at tanning boy's hides too, and Jeremiah hated to go home with only that poor little prize to show.

★

Then, out of a clearing, came a weird sound such as Jeremiah had never heard before. It had a hint of humanity to it, but it seemed more animal—sort of a cross between the wail of a wounded magpie and the howl of a hungry covote. Jeremiah spun his rifle from the cartridge belt over his shoulder and climbed a handy

tree to look down into the clearing.

It was the International Association of Royal Commissioners enjoying an outing in the bush to celebrate the culmination of its brotherhood's latest monument to futility. The sound Jeremiah had heard was produced by the Bi and Bi Commission members jab-

bering in a confused mixture of English, French and Pig Latin that rivalled the Tower of Babel.

Jeremiah balanced the barrel of his rifle in a crotch of a branch and took aim. He had to shoot 75 commissioners before he had enough brains to tan one squirrel hide.

RAGNAR BJARNASON ENTERTAINS IN VANCOUVER

Nearly 200 members and friends of the Icelandic Club of British Columbia spent a pleasant evening October 31 when they were entertained by Ragnar Bjarnason. The popular Icelandic singer, who is a featured entertainer at Reykjavik's Hotel Saga, charmed his audience with a combination of modern and old-time favorites in English and Icelandic.

His short visit to Vancouver, with his wife Helle, was part of a tour of west coast cities.

After their Vancouver visit, the couple moved on to New York and Florida, later to return to New York for an appearance by Ragnar for the New York Icelandic Club.

While in Vancouver Ragnar was interviewed by Kay Alsop, feature writer of the Vancouver Province. She calls Ragnar the Sinatra of Iceland. Among other things she says:

He's not only a kind of travelling troubadour, this six foot plus Icelander, but he's also a one-man chamber of commerce, selling his country as fervently as he sells his songs.

At 36, Ragnar Bjarnason heads up the six-piece band which plays dinner background music at Reykjavik's Hotel Saga.

He's been in music since he was six—his father was with the Symphony. Ragnar Bjarnason himself started out first on drums, tinkered with piano, now confines himself to vocalizing.

But, like the better mouse trap, his singing has brought the world to his door. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that it's opened his door to the world.

He's travelled the Scandinavian countries, singing as he went. Paris, England, the United States and Canada—he's known them all, through the invitations he's received to come sing for people of Icelandic origin.

Tourists to the country—and the number has increased during recent years to over 50,000 annually—finds the rugged scenery breathtaking, while appreciating at the same time the sophisticated new motor hotels which have sprung up during the past few years.

He is proud of the governmental disciplines which he credits with keeping young Icelanders happy at home. There is none of the permissiveness of other Scandinavian countries, he says—pornography is not allowed, for one thing. Topless clubs have not appeared in the country. And drugs have not as yet, been a problem.

At home, besides leading the band at Hotel Saga, he's also a featured performer on the government-owned TV station, which operates four hours a day, and the state-owned radio station, which broadcasts all day. He's also made some 22 recordings, both in Icelandic and English.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

ICELANDERS ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

was elected president of the Federation that year.

Because they were guided by such a militant man, the letter carriers became one of the most active unions in Victoria and played a leading role in all labor functions.

Actually, Christian Sivertz gave the mail workers a start that was to last in one way or another until after the Second World War.

His active interest in community affairs found fruitful expression in other ways. For several years he served on the Board of the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, B.C., and for a five-year period on the Victoria Public Library Board. It was, therefore, highly fitting that his family honoured his memory with the gift of a sizeable sum of money to the Library Fund for the purchase of books on Iceland in the English language.

Thorsteinn Thorsteinsson (Stone-son) and his wife Ingibjörg Einarsdóttir came from Iceland in 1887 and to Victoria, it appears in 1889, where they lived for several years before moving to Point Roberts and later to Blaine, Wash. Their sons, Ellis Leo and Henry, who later became widely known large-scale building contractors in San Francisco, were born in Victoria. Their unusual success story there, which will be summarized later in this historical sketch, is told in detail in Mrs. Louise Gudmunds' article "The Stoneson Brothers and the City They Built". (Icel. Can. Spring number, 1960).

In 1890 Arngrímur Johnson and his first wife, Helga Sigurlína Þorsteins-

dóttir, came to Victoria from North Dakota, where they had made their home for a number of years. He came from Iceland in 1874 and to Winnipeg in 1875, where he had played a prominent part in Icelandic cultural organizations, and continued his participation in such efforts during his Victoria years. His daughter Guðbjörg Krístrún, Mrs. H. M. Hannesson, the widow of the late Lt. Col. H. M. Hannesson, onetime M.P., now makes her home in Victoria.

Einar and Margret Sigurðardóttir Brynjólfsson also came to Victoria in 1890, and made their permanent home there. Although a leather worker by trade, he early became a member of the construction firm of Silver and Brynjólfsson, for many years a successful business venture. His long-time and significant participation in the Icelandic Literature Society in Victoria will be noted below in the historical account of the Society. He and Mrs. Brynjólfsson had a large family, and several of their sons have made a name for themselves in the field of education and in sports, as later noted in some detail. Two of them, Walter and Clarence, reside in Victoria.

Pétur and Ólína Kristín Christianson came from Iceland to Winnipeg in 1887 and three years later to Victoria, after that their permanent home. He was active in Icelandic affairs there, including the Icelandic Literature Society, and also in the Fraternal Order of Eagles in Victoria.

Þorsteinn Kjartansson (Anderson) and his wife Ragnhildur Eiríksdóttir came from Winnipeg in 1890 to Vic-

toria, but had for some time been in North Dakota. A cabinetmaker, he worked for years for a well-known furniture store in Victoria. Their daughter Ragnhildur ("Ranka"), born in Grafton, N. Dakota, makes her home in Victoria.

Skúli and Halldóra Jóhannsson also arrived in 1890; a saddle-maker by trade, he became a dairyman in Victoria. Jakob and Vilborg Snorradóttir Jackson also came to Victoria about 1890; he was a carpenter by trade.

In order to keep this account as chronological as possible, special reference will now be made to a very important event in the annals of the Icelandic pioneers in Victoria. The organization, in 1889, of the first Lutheran congregation and the building of the first Lutheran church in Victoria and British Columbia, were notable events in the history of the Lutheran Church on the West Coast.

This is attested by the following statement of the Reverend Theodore A. Jansen, long-time pastor of Grace English Evangelical Lutheran Church in Victoria, in his booklet published in connection with the 25th Anniversary of the church in 1934:

"The earliest Lutheran work in Victoria was done by a group of Icelanders, who carried on a faithful work beginning about 1890. A small chapel was built and the services held by the local members and an occasional travelling pastor. No regular pastor could be secured and with the moving out of several leading families the work had to be dropped".

A more detailed and contemporary account of the Icelandic pioneers in Victoria and their church activities, in particular, is found in *The Victoria Daily Colonist* (Thursday, November 20, 1890). It is entitled "Industrious Icelanders" and has as its sub-head-

ings "The Colony in Victoria Growing in Numbers and in Importance" and "How the Lutheran Church has been built -- A Sober, Hardworking People."

Because of its intrinsic historical value, and because, as far as the writer knows, the article has never been printed elsewhere, it is included here in its entirety:

"Perched on the top of Spring Ridge, with Mount Baker looming up clear and white on the one side, and the corporation gravel pits yawning dismal, damp and dirty on the other side is a little settlement, the existence of which, probably, not one of every hundred in Victoria is aware of. It is a settlement of industrious Icelanders, the majority of whom have come from the Northwest Territory of Canada, or the Western States. The Victoria colony now numbers about 80 souls, 15 families, — typical Icelanders, who cherish all the traditions of their fatherland, and keep alive in their daily conversation the Old Norse tongue. They are sturdy, hardworking people, of medium height and substantial build, who would be creditable citizens of any community. It is said to their credit that they have not a drunkard in their ranks; or a man who fails to do his six days' work every week. The men find employment as carpenters, blacksmiths or laborers.

The little body of Icelanders belong to the Lutheran Church — the national church of Iceland — and have recently organized under the name of the Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, belonging to the Icelandic Lutheran Synod in America, which this summer held its sixth annual convention on Lake Winnipeg. Mr. S. Myrdal is the leader of the Victoria congregation, which is the first of its kind on the Pacific Coast. There

is as yet no regular or ordained minister, and the colony is just now waiting for funds to complete their church. This edifice occupies the lot adjoining Mr. Myrdal's on Fernwood road, and is now in an unfinished state. The building is neat, though small — it is only about 40 feet long by 20 feet wide — with three arched windows on either side, and a graceful little belfrey. It is to be painted white when completed. At present operations are suspended owing to a shortage of funds, the plastering being in an unfinished state. For fifteen families, not in the best of circumstances, to undertake the building of a church, however humble, is a big undertaking, even when outside help is received as in the case of the Icelanders. They expect though to have their church completed in time for the celebration of the Christmas festival.

Two meetings are at present held each Sunday at Mr. Myrdal's residence. In the morning there is scripture reading, and in the afternoon Sunday School. All services are in the Icelandic language, which the children are taught at home. As the youngsters of each family attend the city public schools, they are called upon to do double work — take the ordinary school course of education, and receive Icelandic instruction at home. The people of the settlement, for their class, are uncommonly well educated; they are fond of study, and receive frequent importations of standard works direct from Reykjavik. It is satisfactory to know that the settlement is growing steadily, not only in numbers, but in wealth and importance.

It appears that the Icelanders in Victoria realized their hope, expressed in the Colonist article, of having their church ready for Christmas in 1890.

At any rate, the following news item, entitled "At Oak Bay Beach", appeared in the Colonist on July 5, 1891:

"The sturdy and self-reliant little congregation of Icelanders, whose neat and homelike church stands on the crown of Spring Ridge, pic-nicked at Oak Bay Beach yesterday, enjoying their sports and the contents of their lunch baskets to the full. About 60 formed the picnic party, which went and came by the tram cars."

This, as far as records show, was the first Lutheran church picnic not only in Victoria and Vancouver Island, but in British Columbia and on the West Coast as well.

In his "Recollections", Arni Mýrdal throws further light on the religious life of the early Icelanders in Victoria, the building of their church, and the leading part which his father, Sigurður Mýrdal played in those activities. He had been especially active in the Lutheran congregation in his former home town, Pembina, North Dakota, had represented it at the founding of The Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Synod in America, and served as its first Assistant Treasurer 1885-1887 until he left for Victoria. It was, therefore, natural that he should continue those activities in Victoria, as described by his son Árni in the following words:

"He kept up his custom of reading a sermon on Sundays. Soon all our Icelandic friends attended. The attendance grew in number as the Icelandic population increased. Before long our house proved too small to seat all of them. Then a congregation was organized, and arrangements made to build a church. Every member contributed either money or work, some both, and a large number outside the congregation aided us greatly. When the church was completed, father was the unanimous choice to conduct services

there. This he faithfully did, without recompense, until the summer of 1894 or until we moved to Point Roberts."

According to the reports in the 25th anniversary memorial publication of The Icelandic Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Icelandic congregation in Victoria was founded and joined the Synod before the annual meeting in 1889, but withdrew in 1892; other sources indicate that the congregation disbanded about that time or shortly afterwards, although Icelandic church services apparently continued for some time, and likely occasionally still later, when Icelandic pastors made visits to Victoria.

However, by 1904, when it seems to have been unused for some time, the Icelandic church building was acquired by the congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Victoria and moved from its original site on Fernwood Road to a site on Mears Street, near the Pioneer Cemetery. The writer has it on good authority that the moving of the church building was done by none other than Olafur Johnson, who, as noted above, moved many buildings, including some other historical ones in Victoria in the early days.

In the years following 1890 a number of Icelanders came to Victoria and settled there permanently or made their home there for shorter or longer periods.

Hinrik and Guðríður Eiríksson came in 1897, and remained in Victoria for the next twelve years. Eiríkur and Guðríður Anderson (Arnason), and his brother, Björn, arrived there in the same year for a few years stay. Sigríður Skúladóttir had also arrived in 1897. Shortly after her arrival she married Magnús S. Ólafsson (Olson), and they made their home in Victoria the next eleven years.

Gísli Guðmundsson (Goodman) and his wife Sigurbjörg Sigurgeirsdóttir Sivertz also resided in Victoria for several years during this period. Friðrik and Steinunn Hanson were likewise for some years residents of Victoria.

J. Ásgeir J. Lindal had also arrived in Victoria in the early nineties, at any rate before 1894, according to a reference to him in the minutes of The Icelandic Literature Society. In 1903 he married Steinunn Jónsdóttir Júlíus, a sister of the poet K. N. Júlíus, who had already been a resident of Victoria for some years. Their son Victor lives in Victoria.

Ásgeir Lindal contributed both prose and poetry to the Winnipeg Icelandic weeklies. An examination of many of his poems in manuscripts (some of which very likely, however, had been published in the Icelandic papers referred to), reveal his alert mind, command of language and facility in versification.

Ólína Brandson, a sister of Dr. B. J. Brandson, arrived in Victoria, apparently in the late nineties to remain a life-long resident there.

In the fall of 1898, Jón E. Eldon, at that time the Editor of the weekly *Heimskringla*, visited the Icelanders in Victoria, and from there wrote a long newsletter to his paper (dated October 4, 1898), and published Oct. 20. In it he names and characterizes the following Icelanders in Victoria, all of whom have been referred to before: Ásgeir Lindal, Magnús Olson, Hinrik Eiríksson, Ólafur Sæmundsson, Pétur Christianson, Sigfús Guðmundsson (Goodman), and Jóhann Breiðfjord.

Eldon notes that Lindal had become known for his contributions to the Icelandic Canadian weeklies, and that both Magnús Olson and Sigfús Guðmundsson had published their poetry

in his paper *Heimskringla*. In that connection it may be added that Olson expressed his appreciation of Eldon's visit to Victoria in a laudatory poem, published in *Heimskringla* October 27, 1898.

After describing the City of Victoria of that day and conditions there, Eldon points out that his countrymen there have greatly decreased in number as a result of the migration to Point Roberts. He adds, however, that there are still said to be 20 Icelandic families in Victoria, not counting unmarried men and those living in the rural area.

The migration to Point Roberts, to which Editor Eldon refers, began in 1894 and continued during the following years. The reasons for leaving Victoria appear principally to have been lack of employment there at the time, availability of land at Point Roberts and the proximity of fishing grounds, along with better employment prospects.

A detailed historical account of the Icelandic settlement at Point Roberts, including biographical sketches of the individual settlers, was written in Icelandic by Mrs. Margret J. Benedicsson (*Almanak O. S. Thorgeirssonar* 1925). The earlier links of many of the settlers with Victoria are, of course, duly noted and this has been of great value to the writer of this article.

The church activities of the Icelandic pioneers in Victoria have already been discussed on the basis of available sources on the subject. In his "Recollections" Árni Mýrdal draws attention to another phase of the cultural life among them, saying:

"The young people organized or formed a chorus club. Jonas Tryggvi was our conductor, a talented vocalist, just recently out from Iceland but had learned the English language there.

Mr. Tryggvi subsequently moved to Seattle and died there recently in his eighty-ninth year". (The article is dated, at Point Roberts, December 21, 1952).

(to be continued)

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IN THE NEWS

DEER LOGE HEAD

WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Dr. J. Asa MacDonell, director of Deer Lodge Veterans Hospital since July and the first woman to administer a Canadian Veterans' hospital, was named 1970 Woman Of The Year by the Women's Advertising and Sales Club of Winnipeg.

The club's selection committee names a Woman Of The Year annually.

In an interview prior to the annual Boss n' Slave dinner at which she was honored, Dr. Asa MacDonell said she was both proud and pleased with the award and that 'it was very much of a surprise'.

She said she felt there were many women who deserved the honor "and I feel my role here is that I'm representing all of them tonight."

Aside from her present duties as director and senior treatment medical officer at Deer Lodge Veterans Hospital, Dr. MacDonell has been active in community activities.

She was a member of the federal task force on hospital services, on the wages and salaries committee, during 1969.

Until last year Dr. MacDonell was both a member of the board and of the executive of the Community Welfare Planning Council of Greater Winnipeg.

She was also program chairman of the opportunities for youth committee of the council from 1967-69.

Dr. MacDonell was active on the disbanded Manitoba Voluntary Committee on the Status of Women as a

member of its sub-committee on employment and education.

"I helped with the briefing women in the civil service," she said. "I think it's been well documented that there is not equal pay for women for equal work."

On the aims of the women's liberation movement, Dr. MacDonell said "I understand and go along with them on equal pay and the lack of opportunities for women, but after that they've lost me."

Her husband, Dr. J. A. MacDonell, is the clinician in charge of geriatrics at Deer Lodge Veterans Hospital.

The couple graduated from high

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school in Winnipeg in the same year, from medical school at the University of Manitoba in the same year of 1943 joined the army together on the same day (she served in Canada while he went overseas), and share the same initials.

Her husband, present during the interview, noted that "she's boss at work and at home" and his wife merely smiled "we're very compatible."

—Winnipeg Free Press

★

PALMASON NAMED A SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT

Lorne V. Palmason, formerly of Winnipeg and now of New York, has been named a senior vice-president of Marsh & McLennan Incorporated, international insurance brokers and

employee benefits consultants. He is assistant to the director of the national production department in the New York office.

Mr. Palmason joined Marsh & McLennan in 1953 as a field representative in the Boston area and came to New York as vice-president in charge of property insurance in 1962. In 1968 he was appointed assistant to Mr. William V. Platt, a director of the company who heads up the national sales organization.

Mr. Palmason was born in Canada and graduated from the University of Manitoba with a B.S degree. Upon completing his education, he spent several years with a consulting mining engineering firm in Canada then entered the insurance business as a field engineer with the Factory Mutual Engineering Division. Mr. and

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Mrs. Palmason, parents of three children, live at 15 Colt Road, in Summit N. J.

★

ST VITAL HONORS SUPERINTENDENT ISFELD

The citizens of St. Vital believe in expressing their appreciation for long service and work well done. This was clearly demonstrated when Superintendent of public works, Adalsteinn Isfeld of 65 Crystal Ave., retired after twenty-seven years with the department. City officials and public works associates joined in honoring him at a farewell reception. Among the eighty guests were former local dignitaries. Presentation of a television clock was made by the Mayor and Ald Florence Pierce on behalf of the council, presented him with a well lined billfold.

★

Mr. Isfeld and his Icelandic-born wife Anna Margaret are now enjoying retirement with some travelling and generally "just taking things easy."

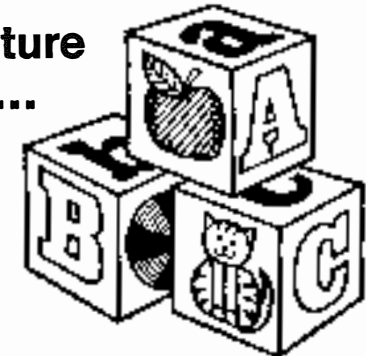
Hrund Skulason was elected president of Fron, the Winnipeg chapter of the Icelandic National League, at the annual meeting held in November at the chapter's headquarters on Home Street. She succeeded Skuli Johannsson who gave account of the chapter's activities over the preceding year.

Birgir Brynjolfsson was named vice-president, Heimir Thorgrimson secretary and Jochum Asgeirsson treasurer. David Jensson was named assistant secretary, Mattie Halldorson assistant treasurer, Baldur H. Sigurdson financial secretary and Reynir Magnusson assistant financial secretary.

Prof. Haraldur Bessason thanked outgoing president Skuli Johannsson for what he termed exceptional ser-

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vices during recent years. Other retiring executive members were Prof. Bessason, Pall Hallson and Hjalmar V. Laruson.

★

GIMLI HAS MOVIE POSSIBILITIES

●n two occasions at the beginning of February actor Darren McGavin and producer Philip Feldman toured the Canadian Forces Base at Gimli, Manitoba. The purpose of the visit was to study the suitability of the base for movie making. The tentative date for the start of the movie is July 1, 1971, but before this materializes many questions have to be answered.

★

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF B.C. OBSERVES THORRABLÓT

The Icelandic Canadian Club of British Columbia held a **Thorrablót** dinner and dance at Vancouver Hotel in Vancouver, February 13. This was a **Thorrablót** Celebration but it was also an evening for Frank Frederickson, World War I pilot, invited to Iceland in 1920 to get aviation off the ground in that country, and hockey star. He was presented with the Order of the Falcon on behalf of the Icelandic government by the local consul for Iceland, Mr. John Sigurdson.

The evening was a gala affair, in good style, and well attended. Noteworthy was the large number of former Winnipeg and other "Prairie" people.

President of the Club, Mr. Pall K. Johannson, received guests at the door and Mr. Arthur Oddson was Master of Ceremonies. Miss Laura

Arnason of Vancouver donned an Icelandic festive costume for the occasion.



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Mr. and Mrs. Arni M. Johannson of Langruth, Man., were honored by family and friends when they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary last Christmas when present were all of their seven children and their families who came from various parts of the continent including Vancouver, B. C., Calgary, Alta., Saskatchewan, Oshawa and Toronto, in Ontario, Montreal, Que. and from the United States. Mr. Johannson's parents came from

Iceland while Mrs. Johannson, the former Hilda Blanche Dalton, hails from Nova Scotia. A teacher, she taught school in Nova Scotia for five years before coming to Manitoba in 1918. They were married on Christmas day in 1920. Over the years Mr. Johannson was a wheat farmer and cattleman, first in the Thingvellir district and later at Big Point on the west side of Lake Manitoba.



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ENGINEER BACK AFTER THIRTEEN YEARS ABROAD

David Einarson, son of the late G. O. "Mundi" Einarson and Elin Einarson who now lives at Arborg, Man., has returned to Canada after working in the oil exploration industry throughout the world for the past thirteen years.

Mr. Einarson has now taken up residence in Calgary, Alberta, and has been appointed manager of Geophysical Service, Incorporated. The firm engages in exploration services for oil companies throughout the world. These services, directed from Calgary, include both field operations spreading from the Rocky Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean and the 49th parallel to the North Pole, and a highly techn-

ical data processing computing centre in Calgary.

During his thirteen years of foreign assignments Mr. Einarson has dealt with many governments and many petroleum companies operating in surveys in Indonesia, Libya, the Middle East, Europe and the North Sea, and has acquired an outstanding reputation in the exploration field.

Mr. Einarson attended Ardal High School and graduated from the University of Manitoba with a bachelor of science degree in 1956. He has now returned to Canada with his wife Gina and sons Harold Paul, 6, and Russell John, 4. Mr. Einarson feels Canada is the best place to bring up his family and has committed himself to contribute to keeping it that way.

★

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CONSTRUCTION STARTS ON HECLA ISLAND CAUSEWAY

Work started in the fall of 1970 on the construction of a two-mile long causeway linking Hecla Island with the mainland. The contract price is \$1,090,070.

The causeway will be 44 feet wide on top with a 40-foot wide road surface and will vary in depth at the bottom depending on the depth of the water. It is to be primarily rock fill with earth fill on the top and heavy rocks placed on the side for protection against wave and ice action.

The contract includes a navigation channel on the northwest tip of Hecla Island.

The cost of the project is being shared by the provincial and federal governments to provide access to Hecla Provincial Park which is now under development.

ODE TO A CIGARETTE

by Colleen Gislason

I'm just a friendly cigarette,
Don't be afraid of me.
Why, all the advertisers say
I'm just as harmless as can be!
They tell me I'm your dearest friend —
I like that cunning lie!
They say you'll walk a mile for me
Because I satisfy.

So come on, baby, be a sport!
Why longer hesitate?
With me between your pretty lips
You'll be quite up to date.
You may not like me right at first,
But very soon, I'll bet,
You'll find you just can't get along
Without a cigarette!

The color's fading from your lips,
Your fingertips are stained,
And now you'd like to give me up,
But, baby, you're chained!
Your freedom you began to lose
The very day we met,
When you decided it was in
To smoke a cigarette.

And now that I have done my best
To send your soul to hell,
I'll leave you with my partner, Death.
He'll come for you — Farewell.

★

BROKEN

My angel wings are broken,
And halos made of gold,
Elves sit upon my shoulder,
The wind blows through my soul.

—The Editor is fully aware of the impropriety of revealing a woman's age, but on this occasion he ventures to say that Colleen Gislason is age sixteen.

★

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KJARTAN JULIUS KJARTANSON

Kjartan Julius (1893-1970), latterly of 1168 Spruce Street, Winnipeg, was not one of the early pioneers, but he was a pioneer. His parents settled in Cacalier, North Dakota, on their arrival from Iceland in 1888, but in 1898 the family moved to Manitoba. Kjartan Julius resided in the Amaranth district, on the west shore of Lake Manitoba from 1909 to 1915, the year of his marriage. Then he blazed a trail through the bush to his homestead. By the time of his retirement in 1966 at the age of 72 years, his farm had grown to several sections (now owned and operated by his eldest son).

As well as farming, he fished and was a well-known and respected fish net supplier and fish-buyer in the Lake Winnipeg and Lake Manitoba districts for both the summer and winter fishing seasons. He was the first to truck fish to the U.S.A. and delivered fish to Chicago in 1935.

★

Lloyd Olason was elected president at the annual meeting in January of the Icelandic Club of Greater Seattle in the state of Washington. J. Marvin Jonsson was named vice-president, Ethel Vatnsdal secretary, Carl Anderson treasurer and Ruth Sigurdson recording secretary. Thor Viking is immediate past president.

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TO BE A CHILD AGAIN

To be a child again,
Out in the wild again,
Footloose and fancy free,
A happy soul.
If fortune smiles again,
I'd be a child again
And like a child pursue a happy goal.

To be a girl again,
What things I'd do!
I'd win my joy again,
My dreams come true
—To find new joy again
Beneath the sun,
A barefoot girl again
Where life is fun.

— Colleen Gislason

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THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

HERMANN PALSSON GIVES ADDRESS AT UBC

The Icelandic sagas should not be taken at face value said Hermann Palsson, noted translator of the sagas from Icelandic to English, to an audience of students and professors at the University of British Columbia. His lecture was co-sponsored by the U.B.C. English department and the Icelandic Club of British Columbia. To understand the sagas it must be understood that they are thirteenth century men's views of the eleventh century events. He stressed also that the Icelandic word saga originally had not the heroic connotation and the sense of heroism now associated with it, a relatively recent development. The sagas should be read by those who enjoy them, and not so much as a view of history as a glimpse of the spirit of man.

Mr. Palsson completed his talk by telling a classical tale that illustrates his analysis of how sagas differ from other world literature. This was the story of Ivar.

THE STORY OF IVAR

It was the story of Ivar, an Icelandic poet who had attached himself to the court of the King of Norway in the eleventh century.

Ivar, who had endeared himself to the king and his court with conversational grace and wit, was visited by his younger brother Thorfinn—a man less gifted and less suited to life at court.

Thorfinn was disgruntled by his own lack of courtly success. He felt envious of his vibrant brother's success and esteem in which he was held. Feeling humiliated by the need to live in his brother's shadow, Thorfinn decided to go home to Iceland.

Ivar didn't understand the depth of his brother's discontent. When Thor-

finn was leaving Ivar asked him to take a message to a woman called Oddny, in Iceland. The message was that Ivar loved her and wanted to marry her and asked her to spurn other suitors until Ivar could return and wed her.

Thorfinn, his ego bruised and his jealousy aroused, revenged himself by wooing and wedding Oddny without ever mentioning the message his brother had given him to deliver.

When Ivar discovered his brother's betrayal and the loss of the only woman he had ever really loved, a deep and unremitting melancholy settled over his spirit. His brooding discontent soon became noticeable to the king, who summoned Ivar to explain.

Under persistent royal questioning, Ivar reluctantly disclosed the reason for his grief. But he refused the king's offer to arrange a match with another woman of his choice. He also refused, out of loyalty to his brother, an offer to free Oddny from her marriage.

The king saw that no direct solution would help his courtier. So he proposed that Ivar should approach him each day—after the affairs of state had been disposed of—and they would talk of Oddny.

Their talks, said the king, could go on as long as Ivar wished them to. Ivar could not gracefully refuse.

As time went by Ivar and the king talked often and long about Oddny and gradually the weight of Ivar's lonely sadness was lifted. He had released in speech the pent up grief of betrayal and disappointment.

In time he recovered his spirits and regained his accustomed place in the

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