

**Brief Record of My Life
as I Recollect It**

by

Fred Hayes

**From Bradford, England to
Saskatoon, Canada**

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By Fred Hayes 1880 - 1962

Written between August 1959 and 1962

It all began when my mother brought me from darkness into light on the 7th of August 1880, in a lovely cottage on Lee Row in Bradford, Yorkshire, England.

I was one of nine children, namely, William, Minetta, Arthur, myself, Ethel, Ernest, Laura and Evelyn. Adeline died when she was but a few months old. I suppose many names were chosen for me by well meaning relatives, but my parents, Mary and Matthew Hayes decided to call me Fred, just Fred.

I remember little of my infancy other than that, before I learned to walk I recollect squirming around on my buttocks under the kitchen table, which in later years was my favourite spot during a thunderstorm. I dimly recollect being rocked in the family cradle and noting the colour of the paint under the hood, which I now know was pea green.

When I learned to walk my childhood was a happy one and up to the time I began to attend school at six years of age I wandered, carefree, with my playmates in Mr. Garlick's meadows, near our home, picking flowers, or chasing bees and butterflies. I well recollect the school agent or "Boardman" as we called him, kindly informing me as he passed, that I should be attending school in a few days.

Mother took me to school on the morning of that fateful day. I suppose, childlike, I thought that everyone in the class was staring at me and every thing appeared so strange. This thought got the better of me, for at recess, I raced home like a frightened deer. My mother took me back to school, and from then on I was on my own.

My first lesson was pushing a large needle, threaded with coloured wool, through perforations on a square piece of cardboard. The perforations formed the design of a star when all the holes were threaded through.

My school days, until I was nine years of age, were generally uneventful other than boyish pranks. One thing we used to do, which we thought was great fun, was to rush on to the Laisterdyke Bridge when we saw a train passing under it and become enveloped in smoke and steam from the locomotive.

As a school boy, I was greatly intrigued with the annual fairs or "tides" as they were called in Bradford. They consisted of a collection of carousels, hobby horses, switch back railways, ferris wheels, swings, side-shows, ice-cream, shooting galleries and other stands all created a conglomeration of sounds, sights and smells, which was to drum up the excitement and frivolity of the crowds. I used to frequent one of the carousels belonging to "Marshalls", in order to listen to the wonderful organ which stood nearby. It was about ten feet long by five feet deep, driven by a small steam engine. Cornets, trombones, flutes, drums, triangles and other instruments were the sounds emitted in the form of overtures and classical works. Listening to the fairground organ, as well as listening to the music played by the military bands, billeted at the Imperial Barracks nearby formed the groundwork for my present love of good music.

The fair would last about one week, and then it was dismantled and moved on to the next town, returning again the following year.

When I reached the age of nine, I was transferred to what was known as the "half -timers school" under a head master called Rhodes. This meant that I attended school for half the day and worked the other half. It was arranged that a child attended school for one week in the mornings and worked at the factory in the afternoons. The following week the procedure was reversed.

I worked at Tankards Woollen Mill, and my morning shift meant that I had to rise at six am. and be at the mill by six-thirty. Breakfast was at eight am. and then I worked until twelve noon.

We lost no time after work in changing into our school clothes, having

lunch scooting off for school at two o' clock, where we stayed until four-thirty.

Mr. Rhodes was very strict, too strict I thought at times. I remember one incident when all the scholars were congregated in the main assembly room. His son, also one of the scholars, had evidently erred in some way displeasing to Mr. Rhodes and he was brought out and was given the worst thrashing with a cane that I had seen. This, I suppose was to indicate to the rest of us that he had no favourites. I felt that he overplayed that side of his duties. On the other hand, Mr. Rhodes could be just as jovial. I recall an occasion when it was the last day before our summer holidays, when he sang and played the banjo!

But, to return to the mill. My first task, along with two or three boys of my own age, was cleaning dirty, empty bobbins on spools which had been used on spinning frames, or machines and throwing them into a wicker basket on wheels. For this first week's work I received nothing, being only a beginner. The following week, I received the princely sum of one shilling.

It wasn't long before I was promoted to the position of "Lifter up" and was in charge of twelve girls who were about my age, or perhaps younger. The girls were called "Doffers" and it was their duty to remove or doff the full bobbins, or spools of fine spun wool from the spinning frames and replace them with empty spools.

The full spools were then placed on steel pegs, ready to be collected later by the "taker-off" boys. As soon as the strands of wool had been attached to the empty spools by the Doffers, I shouted a warning to the girls and turned the machine on again.

Before this was done, however, I had to lift up the now empty spools, which were quite heavy, with a steel crank and adjust a small, pear-shaped cog wheel into place. Hence the illustrious title, lifter up!

Full time older girls tended the machines, repairing broken strands, where necessary and turning off the machines when the spools were full. Little girls of eight or nine years of age, swept the factory floors with brooms, the handles of which were, in most cases, much longer than themselves. No wonder laws were passed, some time later, prohibiting child labour in factories.

The final phase of my labours at the factory was my elevation to the position of "taker- off", which simply meant, taking off the full spools from the steel pegs and replacing them with empty ones. This operation needed care to see that no foreign matter was attached to the fine spun wool. All the above operations were under the supervision of an "over-looker" who was responsible to the management. I left the mill for ever when I was about thirteen years of age and became apprenticed to trade, but more of that later.

During the time I worked half days and attended school the other half, my father, who was the Superintendent of the Gas Department of Bradford, rented a workshop, close to our home. In his spare time, he started a cabinet making business. As work warranted it, he employed three men. Many evenings I recall helping Dad to cut the necessary lumber, in the rough, for the workmen the following day. I would come home from school after four thirty pm. and although I was only between ten and eleven, my father relied on me "getting up steam" to run the Donkey engine ready for the evenings labour in the workshop. However, Father's dream of building up a cabinet making business was crushed when the Civic Officials, for whom he worked, required that he either gave up his business, or his position with the City of Bradford. He gave up the business, which no doubt changed the whole course of my life as well as Father's, I believe.

During this period of my life I loved to wander alone along the country lanes, picking bramble berries, of which I was very fond, or listening to the skylarks. No wonder their songs inspired Shelley the poet to pen his immortal classic, "To a Skylark". Even now, the sound of church bells, or the sweet scent of newly mown hay and the sight of familiar wild

flowers, bring back wonderful memories of my childhood days.

As previously stated, when I left the factory, I became apprenticed to a trade, known as Machine wool comb making. I was thirteen years of age. I remember the workshop as being at the top of Harris Street, off Barkerend Road. There were two large iron gates at the entrance, across which were the words "John Varey Perseverence Works". There were about thirty men employed there and two boys, myself and Fred Heaton. Fred was a nice chap and played the violin well.

I was quite happy in my new surroundings until I reached the age when I realised that the trade I was following, did not have much future. I wasn't satisfied that the trade would provide a good living. I decided to stay until I became of age.

During my apprenticeship, my parents moved to a different part of the city and there I met a young girl of twelve called Ethel, who was destined to become my wife, although at the time, such things were foreign to my thinking.

I also met two boys named Harry and William Birtles, whose fortunes seemed to be bound up with mine for a few years.

Their Father was a local preacher. He also kept a tobacconist shop in the district. I became a good friend of the boys and the family. In the course of time I was invited to sit with members of the family in their private pew, in the Greenhill, Wesleyan Methodist Chapel on a Sunday morning. An experience I rather enjoyed.

We three boys, also attended the Greenhill Wesleyan Sunday school and went through all the classes until we reached the top, the "select class".

As time went on I reached the end of my apprenticeship, when twenty-one, and was given a "man's wage". I was not satisfied and left Varey's for a time, to obtain higher wages, returning when they paid me the higher rate. The conditions of work were better at Vareys.

It was during this period that my father received visits from a gentleman, named Hodgson. Mr. Hodgson had been to Canada and had taken up land in the Muskoka Lakes district. Mr. Hodgson's glowing stories about the country and conditions intrigued the three of us boys as well as my father and it did not take much to convince me, nor did it take much persuasion to make me decide to emigrate to Canada. I had learned, on good authority that women were being engaged to do the work I was doing, consequently, this changed my views for the future and it was then that I confirmed my decision to emigrate, one of the best decisions I had made!

Thus it was that myself, the two Birtle brothers, a friend named Walter Barker, my sister, Minetta and her husband threw in our lot with a "so called" Brittania Colony, advertised by a Rev. Issac M. Barr and Rev. Exton Lloyd, the latter connected with the British and continental Church society. The idea was to "found" the colony of "Britishers" in the Northwest Territories of Canada.

I thereupon left Vareys, where I had spent about seven years and learned a lot about human nature and the workings of "Trade Unions", of which I had mixed opinions! I always prided myself on being a good worker. Unions to my mind are helpful provided they are run on reasonable lines.

It was, therefore, with a feeling of relief that on the 31st of March 1903, we sailed from Liverpool, England on The Elder Dempster steamship, the S.S. Lake Manitoba, an old troop ship, with a passenger list of about 2000, men, women and children.

When I saw the shores of dear, old England and my dear old Dad, gradually recede from my sight, I experienced a feeling of loneliness and dejection I had never before experienced.

However, we all became immediately interested in things around us on board ship, and after locating our bunk or quarters, where we were to sleep, my spirits were regained.

I found, very soon, that I was a poor sailor, nor will I easily forget it ,for the sea was very rough for several days and I was confined to my bunk with sea-sickness, for four or five days.

When I did, finally, manage to go on deck, I enjoyed the rest of the voyage.

At this point it may not be amiss to describe the living quarters for we three boys. We were all travelling third class, or steerage and while the married quarters were tolerable, our quarters, in the "black hole of Calcutta" as we called it, consisted of the third lowest deck or hold, reached only through a trap door or hatch, with the words "Saddlery and Forge" painted on the door.

Our quarters were located well to the bow of the ship. No wonder several of the land lubbers, including the writer were sick!

While in mid- Atlantic, we saw several large whales spouting, as well as shoals of flying fish and dolphins which followed the steamship day after day.

On the eleventh day after leaving Liverpool, we landed at St. Johns, New Brunswick, Canada, the eleventh of April 1903.

The experiment of bringing such a large party of immigrants into Canada had received world wide attention and, no doubt, advance notice of our expected arrival had appeared in the newspapers, judging from the crowd of residents of St. Johns on hand at the railway station , close to the docks. I have often wondered just what the Canadians really thought of us for their were some strangely attired people in our party , which included doctors, nurses, lawyers, clergymen, farmers and people like myself.

The Canadian Pacific Railway Colonist passenger cars, with their full length corridors and hard wooden seats, which we saw for the first time, intrigued us greatly, as did the black looking locomotives at the head of the train, with their clanging bells and weird sounding whistles.

As we travelled through New Brunswick, we passed many small farms with criss-cross fences made out of poles. It was early April and a Sunday, so there was little activity and few animals to be seen. In Quebec Province, we passed mile upon mile of wild, rocky, tree covered countryside, parts of which were still covered in snow. Looking at the terrain, from the train, I wasn't impressed with the possibility of there being much agriculture in Quebec. In contrast to Quebec, the province of Ontario was level, with prosperous looking farms, with good roads leading in all directions, in many cases skirted with evergreen trees. The train skirted Lake Superior, came near to Owen Sound and the Muskoka Lakes District.

On the third day, after leaving St. Johns we entered, what was described at that time, as New Ontario and the Rainy River Districts. The land seemed sparsely settled and we passed such places as Kirkland Lake and Cochrane, which at that time were merely railway sidings or station houses. At the station houses there was an agent, telegraph agents, we called them. It was usually at such places that the colonists were able to buy bread and other commodities.

At such stops, the locomotive usually took on water and coal. Water was obtained from large round tanks built on the side of the railway track and fed through a long flexible pipe.

The Rainy River and New Ontario district consisted of level areas of land, covered with tall slender trees, pine and other varieties, which in those days would involve much time and labour to clear. A bulldozer would have revolutionized the clearing of such land. I felt unhappily that the land didn't lend itself to the prospect of wheat farming. I took consolation in the fact that the promoters of the colony had promised us that the district in which we would settle was level prairie, generally free from rock or bush.

During the time we had been travelling, we found of interest, the walk from one end of the train to the other, chatting with people on the way. The conductor of the train provided a fund of information concerning the terrain through which we might be passing at the time. His "all

aboard" before the train started was something new to we Britishers.

At last we arrived at Port Arthur and Fort William, at the head of the Lakes region, where we saw several grain elevators. I suppose we wondered where the grain to fill them came from, as I don't remember seeing any grain raising farms since leaving Ontario. However, we were not left in doubt for much longer. After leaving Winnipeg, not far from Port Arthur and Fort William, where we retired for the night we arose the next morning to a wonderful sight! The sun was shining brightly and as far as the eye could see, in every direction, a level stretch of fine black agricultural land lay before us. We had, at last entered the prairie region, extending from, a little east of Winnipeg to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains in western Alberta. It was the great Prairie Steppes region, which I had read about when a schoolboy, where, we were told, countless thousands of bison or buffalo had roamed before the Red-Indians had exterminated them. Had it not been for a few interested persons, who had corralled a number of buffalo calves and began increasing their number, the bison would now be extinct. The Government has now seen fit to transfer a large herd of a few thousand to feeding grounds not far from the Arctic Circle.

To return to the countryside through which we were travelling, I saw a farmer ploughing with five or six horses with what I now knew to be a double furrowed gang plough. A few straw stacks were burning, casting a haze of smoke in the immediate vicinity. I was greatly impressed with the vastness of the territory through which we had already travelled, although we were only about mid-way across the continent. We had been travelling for five days.

On the sixth day of our journey, we entered the southern and eastern part of the North West Territories, or Saskatchewan, as it is now called.

At Portage La Prairie town, the railway branched in a south westerly direction and so continued until it reached Regina. Here our train was shunted on to a branch line leased by the Canadian Pacific Railway, running north between Regina and Prince Albert, the most northerly town in Saskatchewan at that time. The main line continued west to

Vancouver, which was where it terminated.

Saskatoon, where we were to leave the train, lay mid-way between Regina and Prince Albert.

On the 17th of April 1903, our train arrived at Saskatoon, where those intending to proceed to the large area of free land, known as the "colony", were to alight. The journey was approximately 150 to 200 miles.

There was some delay in obtaining our baggage and tents, but we finally received them intact. There was much bustle and a little confusion for a few hours, but before darkness fell, all the tents were erected, which was a new experience for many.

A few days passed while we decided just what action to take next, as our party had decided not to proceed to the colony. Harry Birtles, being a carpenter, got a job with the local under taker, while William Birtles was hired by the village as a labourer. My sister and husband were lucky to find a building lot, which could be bought cheaply and Arthur, my brother-in-law, built a small shack. My sister found a job with an Ontario family, as a helper. Arthur got a job with a construction gang, out of town, for a while, until he joined up with a local blacksmith in the village of Saskatoon.

As for myself, I joined a bridge and building gang on the C.P. Railway, operating out of Saskatoon. But, more of that later.

It took most of the Colonists several days to organise themselves. I did hear that several of the party had been sold oxen and horses that were too light in build and totally unfit for the work that was expected of them. Too many of the party consisted of delicately reared women and children who undertook the "Trek" with much hardship and discouragement. The terms of the "free grant" of land were simply that each immigrant paid the Government \$10 entry fee, which made them eligible for 160 acres, provided that at the end of three years, he had built a place to live on the land, lived six months on the grant each year, for three years and cultivated at least fifteen acres of land. At the end of that period, if the terms were fulfilled, a "patent" was received from the Government and the "homesteader" as they were called, became the proud owner of the estate of 160 acres!

Some "homesteaders" gave up their land before the three years had elapsed. They became discouraged or lonely.

I began to work, as I have said, for a bridge building gang. The project I was to be involved with was a dam. The dam was to provide water for locomotives to fill their boilers. I found myself amongst a varied crowd of men, Chinese, Russian, Irishmen together with a few Canadians.

Our sleeping quarters consisted of two or three railway freight cars with double bunks built on both sides of the car and a corridor in the centre. The dining halls were freight cars with tables down the centre and wooden forms on each side of the table. The food was plain, yet good and it didn't take me long to fit into my new environment.

I worked here for about five weeks when my brother-in-law arrived from Chamberlain, a small place further south. He had a team of horses and a wagon. I left the camp, after being paid off, and we headed for Saskatoon.

The Birtle brothers, Arthur and myself agreed to share in the purchase of an "outfit." I made a gentleman's agreement with the Birtle brothers that I should work on a farm, for experience, for 10\$ a month, including board, while they worked in town. At the end of the year, we were to pool all our earnings and share evenly. The two boys never honoured the agreement!

The Barr colony movement had received widespread attention, in view of the large numbers involved and its success, or otherwise was being carefully watched. The result was that hundreds of settlers, from all parts of Eastern Canada and the United States were arriving at Saskatoon daily, some to purchase building lots, but chiefly to "outfit" and take up a free homestead. As a consequence, much business of all kinds and building work was in evidence, providing lots of work.

As Arthur and I returned to Saskatoon we had to travel around an area known as "Blackstrap Coulee". Here dense masses of grass grew in and around a large expanse of water. Millions of mosquitoes were rising from the grass as we passed by and there were such great clouds of

them that, at one point, we mistook them for smoke, left behind by a passing freight train.

Upon our arrival at Saskatoon we hired a land locater named Mr. French who finally located Arthur and I, as well as the Birtle brothers a homestead, East of Dundarn, a small place on the Canadian Pacific Railway, about 350 miles south of Saskatoon. On returning, we turned over the team and wagon to the other two boys, who purchased lumber and built a shack on their homestead. But more of that later.

My brother-in-law and I decided to find work for the summer on a farm and with that object in view, we walked about six miles west of Saskatoon to a district named Smithville, where we both found work. Arthur at Whittles farm and myself at Mrs. Barbers farm. The two farms were only two or three miles apart.

I found myself with a family of Americans, who had located a few years previously, with several farmers from Ontario and the United States. It was not long before I was accepted into the family, so to speak and this family was destined to play no small part in my future movements and thinking.

My first task was to learn how to milk, a tough assignment at first, but I soon caught on and milked eight cows night and morning. As I was called a "chore boy" I was expected to assist in or do anything there was to do, milking, feeding hogs, calves and chickens as well as taking care of stock and horses. When I had "nothing to do" I fixed broken fences or helped with the ploughing and harrowing. I worked, mostly in the open air and I felt healthier than I had for several years.

I stayed with this family until the end of November, when I left for Saskatoon, not knowing what was in store for me on this my first winter in Canada. While I had been at the "Barbers" I was guided into the purchase of the right kind of underwear, footwear and other necessary clothing.

Early in December, it came to my notice that men were wanted for commercial fishing at Red Deer Lake about 200 miles north of Saskatoon and about 100 miles from Prince Albert. I became one of the

twelve men required.

We were to travel by train to Prince Albert where we were to receive our instructions. On arrival we met our employer, Mr. Noble, a merchant.

In return for fish, salmon, trout and whitefish, he would provide us with cooking utensils, nets, a stove and any other requirements. We considered this a fair proposition. We were also allowed 6\$ per pound for the fish. The party consisted of ten old countrymen, one Canadian and one Indian, who acted as our guide. His name was Joe. There were two teams of horses hitched to sleighs which were loaded with empty fish boxes, equipment and food. It was at the end of the third day that we arrived at our destination, Red Deer Lake. Once again, I was fortunate to find myself again, with friendly people. There was George, an ex tenor of St. Paul's cathedral choir, London and Charles, who hailed from Lancashire in England and had a good bass voice and another chap who came from the south of England who we nicknamed Captain Kettle, due to the fact that he always wore a navy blue double breasted coat with brass buttons and what looked like a peaked, blue naval cap. He spoke in a very cultured English accent and seemed well bred.

The log cabin, in which we were to stay hadn't been used for some time. It was necessary to chink between the logs with clay. For some reason, I was chosen to be cook, while the rest of the boys did the fishing.

When we arrived at the lake, which was about seven miles across, the ice was about six inches thick and in order to get the nets under the ice the following procedure was followed First, a large hole called a basin was chopped in the ice about five feet in diameter, then another exactly a hundred yards from the first one and so on until basins were chopped for as many nets as required. Then, several small holes were cut between the large basins. A thin pole, long enough to reach from the basin to the first small hole was then shoved in the basin under the ice until it reached the first small hole. The pole had about 110 yards of cord attached to one end and when it had been pushed along to the next large basin, the first net which was attached to the other end of the cord was pulled under the ice and the cords fastened to stakes which had been frozen in the ice. This procedure was followed until all the nets were in the water. When ready the nets were pulled up by means of a rough windlass. The windlass kept the nets open wide so that they

didn't freeze together and enabled the fish to be removed easily. Near the basin while the fish were being removed was a small portable stove on which a shallow pan of water was kept hot at all times. If any of the men, while extracting the fish, felt his fingers liable to freeze he dipped them quickly into the pan of hot water. After they had returned to normal, he resumed his task. Strange to say, this treatment had no ill effect, due no doubt to the presence of oil on the skin of the fish. The fish were then cleaned by Captain Kettle, who piled them on to the ice to freeze. When frozen, the fish were packed in boxes ready for the freighter on his return trip to Prince Albert. Each month we looked forward to the arrival of supplies and the mail! The fishing was good, at first and we earned about six dollars a day and we each had visions of a large cash stake in the spring.

For some reason, however, the fish depleted or had left for other feeding grounds and our daily catch became so small that we pulled up stakes and moved on to Big Trout Lake, as the Indians called it. We started again!

My experience as cook was none too glamorous, but I managed to keep the crew looking fat and sleek. Breakfast consisted of oatmeal porridge or pancakes with syrup, sometimes fried whitefish, pike or jackfish, canned milk, buns, tea or coffee. Lunch was boiled chunks of red salmon, trout, potatoes and sometimes rabbit pie or baked fish with tea or coffee. Supper was stewed dried apples and the inevitable fish. Not bad for a bunch of hungry wolves!

I had, of course, to snare or shoot the rabbits and to cut all the stove wood for cooking and heating purposes.

From a child, I had been fond of singing and to brighten the evenings we sang hymns and songs in harmony, which we all enjoyed.

Eventually, the fish became less plentiful again and it was time to move on. It was March 1904, my first winter in Canada. We left for Saskatoon. After reaching Saskatoon and before settling down to look for work, I went to see my homestead, located east of Dundurn and when I arrived I found the soil to be light and sandy, so I decided to abandon it and look elsewhere. I later filed on a homestead south west

of Saskatoon on someone else's recommendation. But, when I saw the district later I gave it up as I thought the soil to be too heavy and the surrounding area too desolate. I decided to forget about the homesteading idea for the time being. As, however, I had come to Canada with the express idea of acquiring land and farming it, the next four or five years were spent working among the farmers of Smithville. The farmers I worked for were Christian minded people. They never sat down to a meal without first giving thanks to God for the many blessings received and the head of one family for which I worked never began the days work without family prayer immediately following breakfast. It proved to be uplifting to me.

On Wednesday of each week, the Christian Endeavour Meetings were held in the Public School House, while on Sunday church services were conducted in the small union church, a little north of the settlement. People came in buggies pulled by horses, while in winter sleighs were used. The reverends, in church, sowed the seeds of a wonderful community spirit in Smithville and the surrounding district in which I had the privilege of becoming closely identified. On occasion, I took part in debates, school concerts, I played the violin in a modest way. During the course of my work amongst the various farmers I naturally learned all I could and tried to prove myself willing and able and I believe succeeded in securing the confidence and goodwill of my employers.

I believe it was in the early fall of 1906 that I decided to go to the Vermillion River district, about 240 miles north-west from Saskatoon, with the object of taking up a homestead. There was only one trail from Saskatoon to my destination, a distance of around 100 miles. I set out with Horace Doubleday and we had to walk, but trusted to luck that we could beg a ride in a freight car.. It took three days to reach the Vermillion district. There was a small lumber building near the railway siding, the occupants of which were running a restaurant. While the food was good, I think all the flies in western Canada could be found on the screen doors.

The land around that district was generally rolling and while, no doubt, it was good grazing country and perhaps excellent grain growing land, it

did not appeal to either of us, so we decided to return to Lloydminster. Remember that we each carried a knapsack, full of our possessions and had to rely on our legs to get from one place to another. We also had to rely on the goodwill of the settlers to put us up at night and provide a meal, for which service we always paid. We were never refused food and shelter. After a day of walking, perhaps thirty or forty miles, we were glad to roll our coats in a bundle for a pillow on the floor, cover ourselves with a blanket and sleep the sleep of the just until morning. Once we had arrived at Lloydminster, after a short rest and refreshment, we walked over to speak to the driver of a locomotive standing on the siding. We were given the impression that he was taking the engine only, to Battleford the next town down the line, about a hundred miles away. We asked if we could ride with him. He replied that we could if we were willing to ride on the "cowcatcher" at the front of the engine. We jumped at the idea of a free ride.

At Battleford, the next day, we hired a land locator named Mr. Stebbins. He was to drive us around the country, feed us and locate a homestead of our choice.

After travelling for two days he found a district which seemed to satisfy us. We got all the information we required from Mr. Stebbins and camped for the night on my homestead! It was quite near a fresh water lake.

The next day we returned to Battleford, paid off Mr. Stebbins and filed for a homestead each on the same day.

In the spring of 1907 myself and Horace Doubleday decided to begin our homestead duties and we set off from Smithville, each with a team of oxen and a wagon.

The trail went west through a small town named Asquith, about 25 miles from Saskatoon and then through a range of hills known as the Eagle Hills, a very winding and difficult country. We reached the western edge of the hills and after feeding and watering the oxen, we camped for the night. There were no established trails beyond the hills, the prairies being wild and woolly for hundreds of miles west, so we decided to follow the thin trail made by the surveyors when surveying the railway line. In this way we calculated that we should sooner or later reach the vicinity of our homesteads. We remembered when filing on

the land that there was a large lake just south of Horace's homestead. WE set out the next morning on that assumption. At times we had to make detours around low lying places which had been softened by the spring rains and winter snows. On one occasion we had to lighten our loads by carrying our equipment across a certain area to lighten the load on the wagons.

After several days travel, we at last reached the vicinity of our homestead only to find that the country as far as we could see had been burnt by a prairie fire, presumably a few days previously. We had seen columns of smoke in what we had considered to be the direction of our homestead district. We were fortunate, however, in locating a small piece of unburned prairie on the edge of the large lake previously mentioned, sufficient to keep the oxen alive until the grass grew again, for which we were very thankful.

After we had got our bearings, erected our tents and rested for a day or two, we decided to travel south-west to the "bush" to get some hay. This turned out to be the Indian reserve. We intended to build a hay rack on the wagon. When we arrived at the "bush" we cut the necessary poplar poles and set to work. It wasn't long before the hay-rack was finished and we bought a load of hay from an Indian close by. We returned home the next day, home being a tent, standing white against the charcoal black of the prairie. When we returned home, we were astonished to see several marques and tents, as well as scores of men with teams of mules. They were grading the right of way for the Grand Central Pacific Railway. You can perhaps imagine our feelings when we realised that we were on the verge of eventually being connected by rail with civilisation! Like us, these men were making history by helping to open up a new highway for the service of man. The thought of having a railway near us gave us a sense of closeness to the scheme of things. That summer, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, north of us, began to grade their right of way, with the result that all our homesteads were between the two railways.

Horace and I then began to work in earnest. I started to build a sod stable about 18 feet square. On my plan I allowed space on the west

side for three double stalls and on the right side, space for my living quarters, which I intended to board up with lumber. Firstly, I ploughed a patch of land in the centre of which I intended to build, so that I would have the sods handy.

At this point Horace had found it necessary to leave for Smithville and it was the intention that some of the boys would come out with him. I had no-one to talk to for about two weeks and I experienced my first and last fit of despondency or loneliness. I felt so lonely that I actually decided to give up the land and return to Saskatoon. I set out on the long trip back only to spy three men on the horizon coming my way. When they came up to me they informed me that they were going to be my neighbours. When I informed them of my intention, they gave me, in rather strong language, a good dressing down. One of them complimented me on my ploughing, saying that it was the straightest he had seen for a long time. As a result of this encouraging conversation my spirits rose and from that time on I never looked back!

The sod stable was soon finished with two small windows and a large, strong door. I had lived in a tent for a long time and it was a wonderful feeling to be-able to sleep, secure from wind, rain and mosquitoes. I then began to organise my living quarters. I had bought a good wooden bed from Mrs. Barber, with springs and she gave me a good bed tick, which I filled with new hay. I made a small table, stool and a bookcase. The latter I nailed on to the wall. For a cupboard I fastened an apple box with one or two shelves to the wall, in which I kept my crockery and food. My small portable stove was the one I had used in all my travels and was serving my purpose well. At all events I was quite comfortable in my small quarters, even during the coldest weather. For light, at night, I had a small coal oil lamp. I had purchased several good books from a mail order house, which proved a real solace and comfort during my leisure hours. I studied grammar, little thinking that the time spent was helping to prepare my mind, somewhat, for my life's work, of which at that time I was totally ignorant.

My water supply was obtained from the fresh water lake previously mentioned, which certainly proved a great boon.

Around the lake were a few small trees and shrubs, as well as an

abundance of lush grass on which Billy and Bob, my oxen regaled themselves when not working. My hours of work, when ploughing, were from daybreak until about 9am and from 5pm until dusk. During the interim I simply turned the oxen loose and they looked after themselves.

After a short rest, I would get on with other necessary work. When I needed the oxen again, all I had to do was whistle and hold a gallon can of oat chop and they would waddle up to the stable in anticipation. Each ox would receive a gallon of oat chop before going on a long journey or prior to a day's work.

In the meantime, Horace had returned, together with Arthur Tilford, Charlie Holmes and Harold Fanshaw. We were soon helping each other to mark out the dividing lines between our homesteads. While we were busy, a very angry, black swirling cloud appeared in the western sky and before we realised it, a terrific wind and rainstorm came upon us, soaking all of us to the skin within a few seconds. The wind was so strong that we had difficulty in holding the horses, which we guided behind a wagon, holding 70 bushels of oats which the wind had turned completely around. Our tent was down and one chap, who had just had a wash and changed into a clean shirt, instead of assisting, came crawling out from underneath the tent looking like a wet rag. We had to laugh, even though we all felt wet and uncomfortable.

We arranged to go to my place to dry our clothes and get warm. When we came in sight of my lumber shack, something looked odd about it. Sure enough, we found that the shingled roof had been blown off and the rafters broken into pieces, some of which were stuck well into the ground with the force of the impact, while shingles were strewn in the path of the storm like playing cards, a few of which were stuck in the ground. A hundred pound sack of flour lay wet on the floor, with a mixture of corn syrup and rain! A ten pound tin of syrup had fallen from a shelf and had run all over the floor, while other food was in glorious confusion.

As it was obvious that we couldn't dry out there, we all went to Jack Miller's place. After we were dry, we all went to see how Horace Doubleday had fared and found the poor chap stood in the corner of his

sod shack transfixed with fear. The wooden roof of his shack had blown completely off!

It wasn't long, however, before we brought things back to normal.

Part of my original equipment comprised of a pair of large blacksmiths bellows, which I had bought for two dollars in Saskatoon. I built a blacksmiths forge in one corner of my stable. I was therefore able to sharpen my own plough shears as well as those of everyone else.

When the ploughing and haymaking season was over in the fall, we began visiting the "bush" in search of dry wood ready for winter.

That winter was mild and as the lake was frozen over we had been melting snow so that the horses could drink. I started to dig a well on my place and because it would be of mutual benefit, Sid offered to help me, which I readily accepted. I built a rough wooden windlass to which I attached a rope about 70 feet long. At the other end of the rope was a strong galvanised pail for bringing up the soil. Sidney would let me down with one foot in the pail and both hands holding the rope. We changed places sometimes, oblivious of the risks we took. Here was Sid, about 6ft. 2ins. tall and weighing around 200 pounds and little me weighing between 130 and 140 pounds, pulling Sid up with a homemade and perhaps not too strong windlass. When we came to reflect later, we liked to think that once again, a gracious, heavenly father was watching over us.

After we struck water, at about 60 feet below, Sid would come to the well daily, when weather allowed, to water the horses, making a nice hard trail in the snow between our two places.

During that winter Mr. Bingham arranged to hold Sunday services and preach at different homes around the district. I played the violin in a modest way and I always assisted by playing the hymns during the singing. These weekly services, I feel sure, helped to maintain the morale of the settlers.

I read considerably, when time allowed, in an effort to improve my mind and I believe the time spent had a salutary effect on my thinking.

One of the experiences I had while on the homestead, I acted as Deputy Returning Officer during the 1908 election, in which Sir Wilfred Laurier became Prime Minister.

Life in the settlement began to be more interesting as each of the settlers made improvements. Arthur Tilford had married Esher Barber and brought his bride to her new home, a sod shack. I built them a partition in the shack so that some privacy could be enjoyed.

On one occasion, I was hauling two large poles from Burreford to a designated place, to be used by the Canadian Pacific Railway in culvert work. I had almost reached the point of delivery when the spokes of one of my wheels broke, leaving me only three wheels. I was in a dilemma, miles from home. With difficulty I drew the wagon gears clear of the logs, which were between 25 to 30 feet long and heavy and surveyed the damage. An idea then struck me. I cut a poplar pole about 10 feet long and about four inches thick and stuck one end under the front part of the wagon gears, with the other end stuck in the air. At the end, in the air I attached one end of my logging chain and at the other end, to the axle of the broken wheel. I tightened the chain until the axle was about level with the others and fastened it securely. Eureka!! It worked and I could travel pretty fast on only three wheels, which I did until I reached my destination, about six miles.

At about this time, my homestead requirements had been fulfilled. I sensed that I could not see myself being a farmer for my life's work. I seemed to lean toward work in which I could earn a regular salary. I also had the urge to visit the land of my birth. With that in view I went to Battleford, signed the necessary documents and received the "Title" for my farm. I then sold my oxen and farm implements and a few personal items to my brother William, who had filed on Arthur Blakey's homestead, which Arthur abandoned and never saw. William also rented the ploughed land on my place and put it in crop. After settling with my brother and saying my goodbyes to the "boys" I left the homestead country for Saskatoon, never to return!

At Saskatoon I obtained work with the Canadian Pacific Railway Bridge and building gang. The principal task of this gang was to erect stockyards and grain loading platforms at small towns between Saskatoon and Salcoats, the division point. This was in the fall and winter of 1909 and well into the summer.

On December of 1909 I sailed to England on the Allan Line steamship the "Grampian."

After a rather pleasant voyage, we arrived at Liverpool. It was a grand feeling to see once again, the land of my birth and to feel the thrill of being "home" again, to meet Mother and Dad and other members of the family. It didn't take me long to look up my boyhood sweetheart. I made the most of the short time I had in England and became engaged to Ethel German, who was later to become my wife. The arrangement between us, was that I should return to Canada, sell all my assets, including the farm and return to England where I would obtain work and get married.

After a lovely stay in Bradford, my home town, I bade farewell to all of my friends and family and sailed on the "Tunisian" for Halifax, Canada. We landed in Halifax on a crisp, spring day and for one hour only, the Captain allowed us to stretch our legs on land. We finally arrived at Montreal and disembarked. Shortly after I had returned to Saskatoon, my sister took a trip to Bradford and while there, my intended had every opportunity to question her as to the conditions in Canada. Since I felt that I could never fit into the "old country's" ways of working, I cabled Ethel asking if she would come out to Canada with my sister on her return journey. It was too short a notice for her to return then, but she came to Saskatoon later under the supervision of the Anglican Church Society, which kept in touch with her from leaving home to reaching Saskatoon. After her arrival at Saskatoon at about four o'clock in the morning, I took her to my sister's home in the only conveyance available, a hotel bus. There a nice breakfast was waiting. Ethel stayed with my sister until we were married one month later. We were married in St. John's Anglican Church on the 7th of June 1911 by Canon E. B. Smith. We rented a cottage and lived there for about a year. By now I was working in Saskatoon for the Post Office. My employer, a French Canadian proved to be a wonderful friend who seemed to go out of his way to help me become acquainted with work at the office and was greatly responsible for my later promotion.

A short time after our marriage, my sister's husband Arthur, took a trip to England on his own. On his return journey he was registered as "missing" on the Allan Line boat on which he was travelling. No reason could be given by the steamship officials for the tragedy and it could

only be assumed that he either fell or jumped overboard. It was some time before my sister became reconciled to his loss. She had a son, Harry, to care for and educate.

Some time later, my sister bought my farm and with some of the cash we built our first home, a two storey building and I settled down to my life's work at the office and to raising our family.

Our firstborn, Freda, died in her mother's arms at ten months old. One or two years later our only son Douglas Frank came on the scene, followed five years later by a daughter, Joyce. Our two children provided us with lots of interest and happiness. When old enough, which was right in the middle of the "Great Depression" Douglas attended the Saskatchewan University for two terms, until the second world war interrupted his studies. Five years overseas in the Canadian army prevented him from resuming his studies. After the war, his wife, whom he had married overseas came to Canada and we had the pleasure of meeting and getting to know her before Douglas was released from the services and allowed home three months later. After living in Toronto for a time Douglas obtained a position with the British Broadcasting Company in England and he and his family left for England!

When Joyce was old enough, she joined the St. John's Anglican choir with me and her mum. She followed a secretarial course at a good school, which fitted her for the work which she then followed. She too returned to England and lived in Brighton, Sussex.

As time passed, we endeavoured to prove ourselves good citizens and found much interest in St. John's Church choir, which proved a great comfort over the years. My wife, who had been a member of the Bradford Choral Society for several years as a soprano, was a great help to me as accompanist on the piano, on which she was proficient. In 1915, the first Great War was in progress and I became the tenor soloist, a position I held for about 30 years. My wife assisted me greatly in my solo work and without her I should have found it difficult to learn new songs. She remained in the choir until the family came on the scene.

As a result of this background, our son Douglas, when 12 years old, won the "Boys soprano medal" at one of the local musical festivals.

The years seemed to pass quickly, almost unnoticed, and at last the time arrived for me to retire on the 7th of August 1945. I said goodbye to my fellow workers and the work I had followed for almost 35 years. After saying goodbye to our Saskatoon friends we went to Victoria, British Columbia and bought a house in that city. The climate was wonderful and the scenery lovely. We enjoyed many happy years in Victoria, but while I enjoyed good health, my dear wife was afflicted with arthritis, an incurable illness, but thank God I was able to give her the love and care that she needed.

When I look back over the years, both prior to and after my marriage, I cannot but feel that a benevolent, heavenly Father has guided our footsteps all along the way. I feel grateful for all His mercies. I close this account of my life as I remember it in my 80th year.

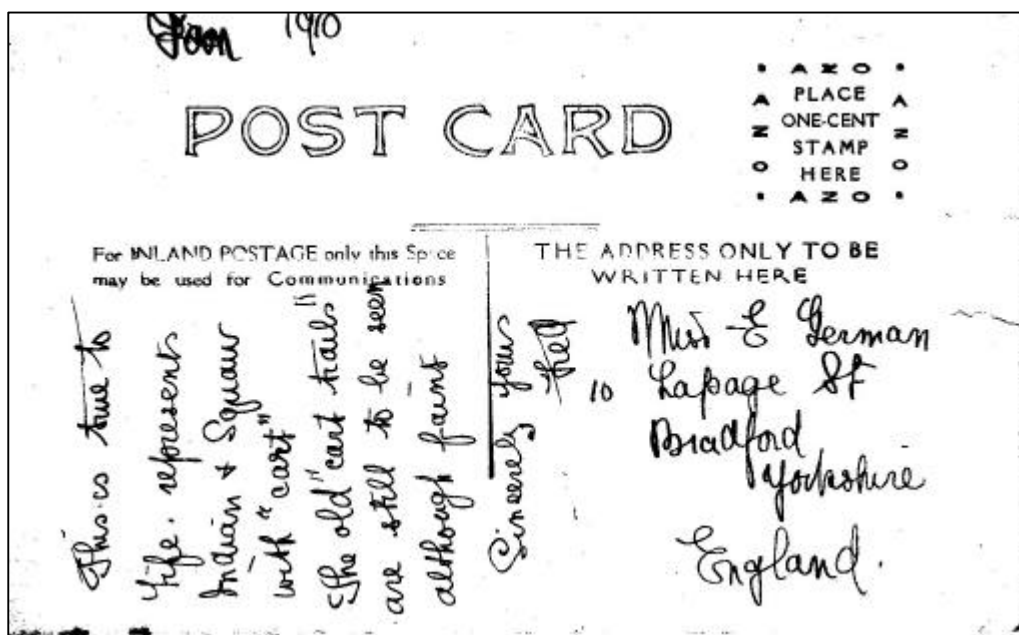
My dear wife passed away, peacefully, in hospital on the 23rd of September 1961, having had a stroke two days previously. Needless to say, I miss her greatly and my only solace now is the memory of more than 50 years together and the thought that I shall meet my son and daughter in England next Spring, where I expect to live with my son Douglas and his wife Joan.

Fred Hayes daughter Joyce writes "My father was ill with cancer before leaving Canada and lived only a matter of months. He was 82. He still retained his faculties but was confused at the end. He visited Brighton for 10 days before the end of his life and I went to London nearly every weekend until the end on the 15th of December, 1962.

APPENDIX



Ethel & Fred Hayes
Saskatoon
Saskatchewan
Canada
June 1911



Postcard from Fred Hayes to his future wife from Bradford.
Posted January 1910

Strangest West Had Ever

(Canada is a land of many nationalities and races. This is another of a series of articles profiling Canada's main ethnic communities and their contributions to Canadian life.)

By LEON KOSSAR

LLOYDMINSTER, Sask. —It wasn't the usual after-school routine from the voice behind the freckles.

"Hey, mom!" it chirped. "Do you know what a Barr Colonist is?"

"It's just our own Mr. Hall in his Sunday clothes!"

The fatherly neighborhood merchant they all knew well was just about the last person Lloydminster youngsters thought they'd see when their teacher stirred imaginations with a story right out of the wild west: of wagon trains, pioneers and Indians, and the tent village that was the beginnings of their city in 1903.

"Those first people," she told them, "were the Barr Colonists from England. And one of them will be here to talk to us today."

In the period-furnished living room of his two-storey frame home, the thin-haired businessman who still dresses fastidiously in this prairie centre of casual garb, recalled his classroom public-speaking debut a few weeks ago, and the comments of a neighbor's son.

His broad moustache lifted for a smile.

"I guess they expected someone in a buckskin jacket after that build-up."

The migration that brought Steve here with 1,500 people from the British Isles along the Saskatoon-Lloydminster "Trail of 1903" was undoubtedly the strangest caravan the early west had seen.

Only a sprinkling were agricultural men. The rest: city people with no inkling of farm life, let alone a frontier existence.

"There was nothing here — completely nothing — when this huge migration arrived," the 66-year-old storekeeper said.

"It was just a No Man's Land between the Blackfoot nation and the Crees."

But to this wasteland came brass founders, lumberyard clerks, felt-hat makers, soldiers of the South Africa wars. Strange bedfellows amid the winds of the prairie night —

... the booming cry of the loon, ... the ...



STEVE HALL
... memories of '03

... together uphill so the "democrats" would not slip backwards.

At least six were reported to have strapped pianos atop their overloaded wagons. Wet spring trails trapped many. Most were unable to recognize "weather breeders" — storm warnings.

A Canadian-born curate in London, England, had drummed up the idea for the mass movement of colonists. But Rev. Isaac M. Barr was ousted as leader of the group when his personal money-making schemes and lack of organizational ability all but scuttled the settlement project.

Rev. George Eston Lloyd, later Anglican Bishop of Saskatchewan, took over the leadership. The town was named for him.

Strictly speaking, Steve wasn't a Barr Colonist. But his family was the only one to make the journey across the Canadian west with the English colonists. Rev. Lloyd had asked Steve's father, Herbert, then in New Brunswick, to accompany the group as an "instructor and farming adviser." Herbert, with another settler as partner, opened the town's first store, still operated by Steve today as H.B. Hall and Son.

But because Steve's family history is closely bound to the Barr story, he has been able to assess the lasting effects of this movement on the west.

"It helped Saskatoon's growth immeasurably," he ... That city was only 400 ...

Among the colonists were a good number with livestock experience and after the first tests of pioneering had passed, a few whose bank accounts were estimated in six figures began importing the finest English pure-bred stock. They turned the area into a show-piece of mixed farming, captured many international livestock awards.

Another Lloydminster merchant, 76-year-old Barr Colonist Henry C. Messum, learned the Cree language, slept on blankets "laid on the frozen ground," and watched the settlement grow from tents to a city of oil refineries and streamlined block, stone, stucco buildings.

But the process failed to strip Henry and many of the Barr oldtimers of their London accents, British reserve, and dry, discriminating humor.

The Barr Colonists honored their late leader with a cairn and plaque, and Bishop Lloyd Memorial Scholarship presented annually to the city's most promising Grade XII students. To claim it, the student must present a verbal tribute to Lloyd and the colonists.

Over 250 Barr originals gathered for a reunion during Lloydminster's Golden Jubilee in 1953. The irrepressible spirit of enterprise they brought here half a century ago is still a Lloydminster characteristic.

Henry Messum looks back to a windswept night in 1903 when a disheartened settler reached for a dying ember from a fire, traced in bold, rough letters on the inside of their tent wall: "This is our Promised Land!"

Says Henry: "It became just that!"

(Telegram News Service)

Cutting from Canadian newspaper about the Barr colonist of which Fred Hayes was part of the party.

Extract of Information from the W.W.W.

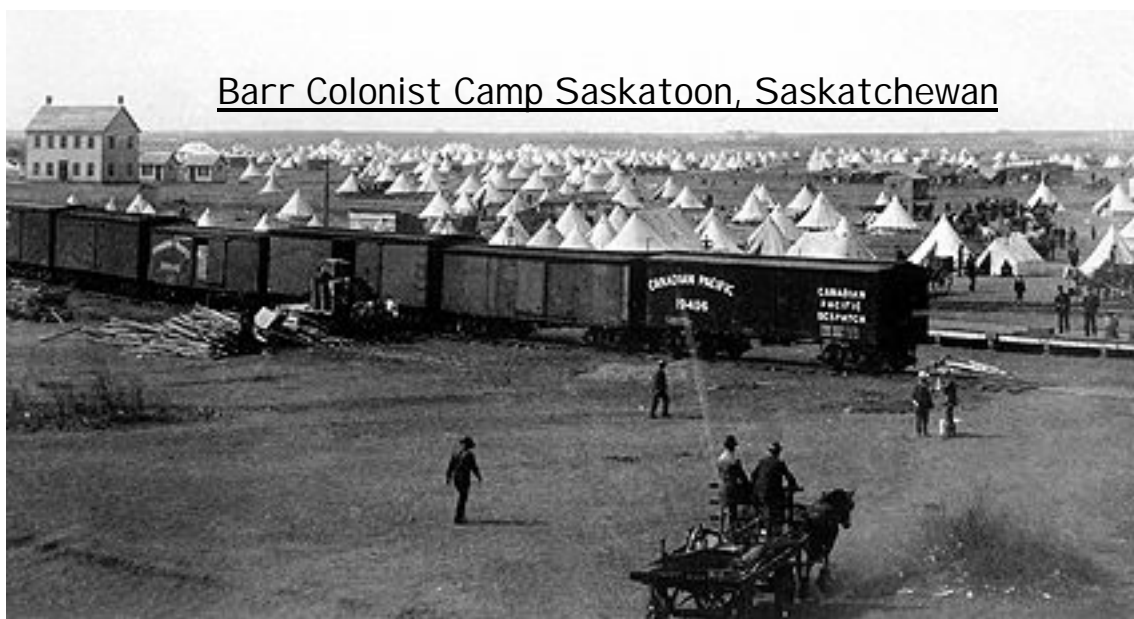
Barr Colonists

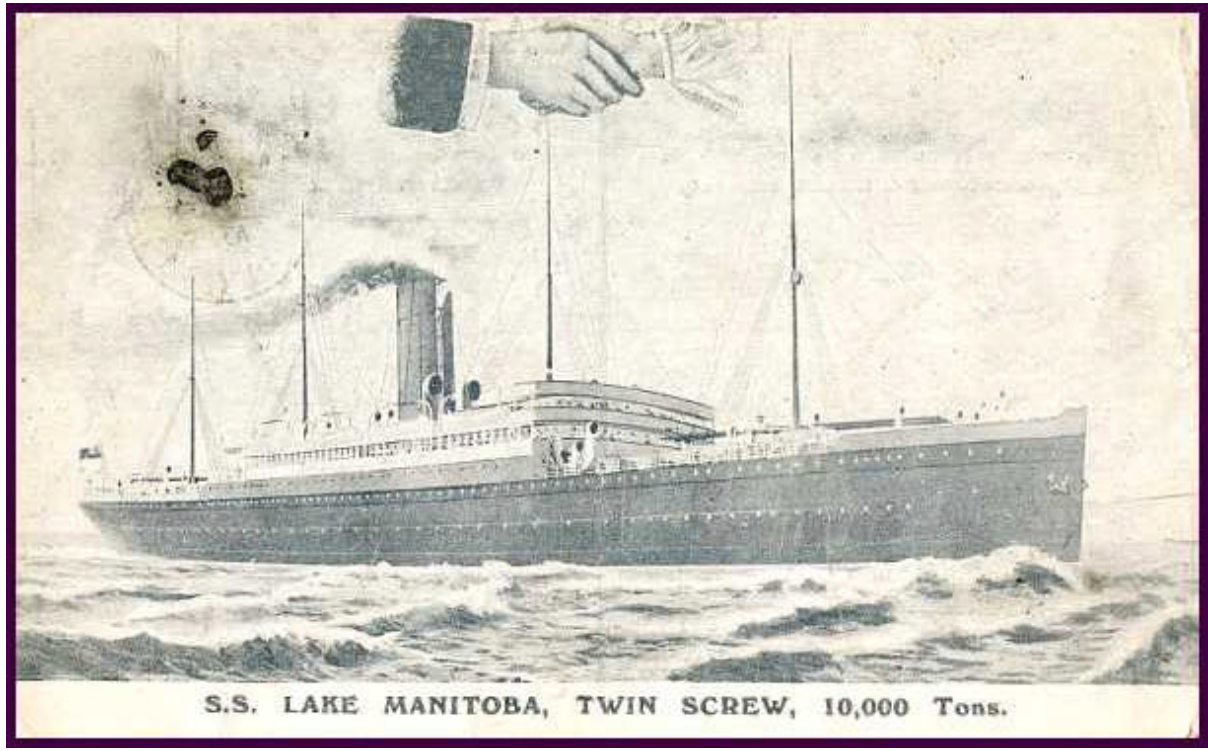
Barr Colony was a prairie settlement, founded in 1903 in the region of present-day Lloydminster on the Alberta-Saskatchewan border. It was the brainchild of the Reverend Isaac Barr, who signed up for the land in 1902 on behalf of the settlers he was to organize.

Barr recruited almost 2000 settlers in England. In the spring of 1903 he brought them to Canada on the SS *Lake Manitoba*, a ship built to carry only a third of that number. The discomforts of the voyage quickly turned many of the colonists against Barr. After disembarking at Saint John, N.B., a shortage of food and blankets on the train journey to Saskatoon added to their complaints. Part of the problem was that Barr was moving too many people at once. Just getting them and their luggage onto western-bound trains caused major difficulties.

The colonists arrived in the West in April 1903. Most were from English cities and had no experience of farming. Even the wagon ride from Saskatoon to the colony seemed to them a major hardship. Their feelings against Barr were so strong that he left a few days after arriving at the colony that bore his name. Leadership passed to the Reverend George Lloyd, to whom the settlers had increasingly turned for help during their journey from England. They named their first town after Lloyd, who later became bishop of Saskatchewan.

Some of the colonists soon left, unable to cope with the difficulties of starting a farm on the open prairie. Others persevered, and they formed the basis of many of the rural communities that developed west of Saskatoon.





**Passenger List of SS Lake Manitoba
March 31 to April 10, 1903**

Hardy to Hilder

Last name	First name(s)	Age	Occupation
Hathaway	H.	11	None
Hathaway	Herbert	8	None
Hathaway	M. S.	6	None
Hawkins	R.	28	Warehouseman
Hawksby	H.	22	Butcher
Hayes	Fred	23	Woolcomber
Hayward	W.	34	Clerk
Headley	H.	43	Engineer
Headley	Mrs. G.	37	Wife
Headley	Marjorie	8	None
Heald	Arthur	24	Engineer
Heald	Alfred	22	Engineer

References

This record was taken from Fred Hayes handwritten notebook which also contained sketches of his house, farming equipment, layout of the homestead etc.

At places it was summarised, due to the handwriting being poor and perhaps less interesting parts.

Further information was taken from the W.W.W. at:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=J1ARTJ0000531>

<http://www.merchantnavyofficers.com/iainPC2.html>

<http://www.lloydminster.net/passlisthardytohilder.htm>

Compiled by Mrs Lesley Middleton (nee Hayes) whose grandfather was Earnest Hayes who was one of the nine brothers and sisters of Fred Hayes.

Berkshire
England
August 2004