

How Cherry Grove Came to Be

George Burgess describes what the area was like, where Cherry Grove now stands, when they arrived in 1933. In the year 1919 a big fire went through the country and burnt thousands of acres of big timber. The fire had started several miles south of the Beaver River but the river didn't stop it. The story goes that it took only 20 minutes to go from the top of the south river hill until it hit the top of the north hill. The wind was so strong that the fire would run along the top of the trees as well as along the ground. The ground fire would be anywhere from one hundred yards to a half-mile behind the tree top fire. This made it impossible to control. It went through where Cherry Grove is now situated - north of the hills and burnt all across North Saskatchewan and into Manitoba. The fire never seemed to quit burning, it would get into the muskegs and burn all winter then come summer it would start up again. There were thick BIG jackpine in the Cherry Grove area and the people were reluctant to settle here. After the fire, it left huge black ragged stumps - not a pretty site to look at, but people started to settle into the area. When the group arrived in 1933 there was already a post office, a Baptist church, a store, and a cheese factory. Also a townsite was marked by stakes for the elevators, numbers one to six, a water tower, a railroad round house and stock yards. The post office got its name of Cherry Grove from a bunch of choke cherry bushes, some pin cherries and saskatoons that grew along the bottom of the hill (what is known as Stonehocker's hill. The C.N.R. had a camp a couple of miles east along the lake, now known as Campbell's Lake. The cheese factory didn't stay open long, it closed down in 1934. The store continued with groceries and some clothing and other necessities. The first store was owned by Bill Dilcox. The store changed hands and location several times, new stores were built and the last people to own and operate a store in Cherry Grove were Ed and Helen Jurick.