

## 5.0 Settlement Groups

### 5.4 Mennonite Settlement

Between 1874 and 1881, approximately 7,000 Mennonites from southern Russia made their way to the newly established province of Manitoba. They left Russia when Czar Alexander II ended special privileges, granted to them a century earlier by Catherine the Great, to entice members of this German-speaking Anabaptist group to establish colonies in her newly-conquered, but largely empty, lands in the Crimea. The two main tenets of the Mennonite religion are pacifism and baptism by choice. By the 1870s, however, the Czar had removed their military exemption, and began to exert control over Mennonite schools and institutions. They soon began looking for a new home.

To attract these industrious farmers to the prairies, the Canadian Government offered inducements by way of exemption from military service, religious freedoms, and the granting of large tracts of land for their exclusive settlement. An amendment to the Dominion Lands Act allowed them the privilege of settling in villages, circumventing the demand that each farmer had to reside upon his own homestead, a requirement which guaranteed dispersal of settlement. The Mennonites were thus able to retain their distinctive "Strassendorf" or street villages. Like many other religious groups, they saw cohesion and religious solidarity as being dependent upon the settlement pattern of the group.

The Mennonites were granted two reserves in Manitoba: the first, in 1873, was an area of almost eight townships east of the Red River; and the second, in 1876, was an area of seventeen townships west of the Red River. At the time of their arrival, the open prairie was not highly regarded by most of the existing Anglo settlers, who were dependent upon ample supplies of wood and running water. But to the Mennonites, experienced in steppe land farming, the open prairie was an attractive area in which to settle.

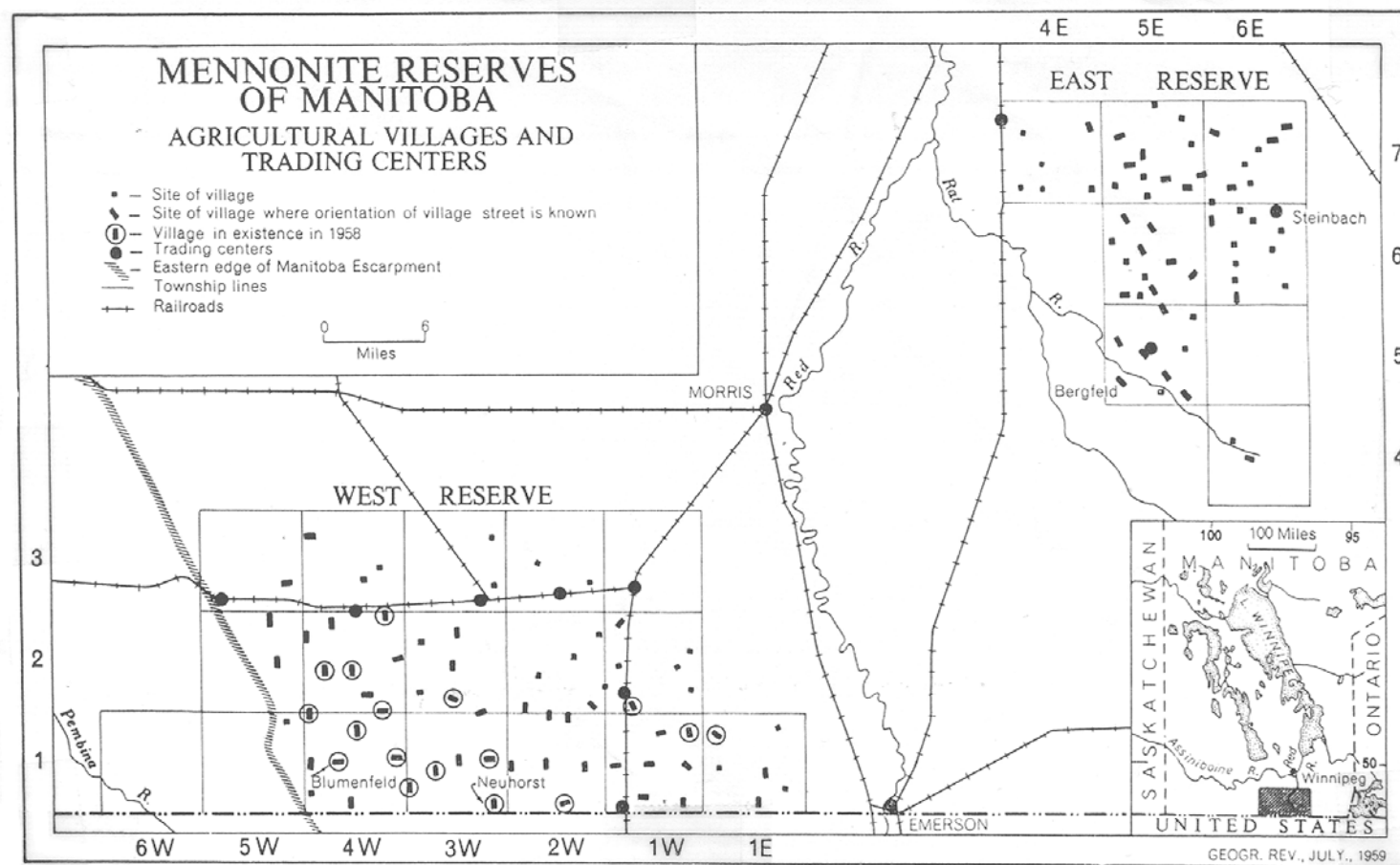
The initial contingent of Mennonites, who arrived in 1874, had the distinction of being the first large European block to immigrate to Manitoba; although Icelanders arrived right on their heels. Having been guaranteed by the government all the essential conditions of a happy settlement, the Mennonites went about re-creating on their land the commonwealth they had left behind in Russia. In all, they established 37 villages in the East Reserve, and about 50 in the West Reserve, although not all existed at one time, nor were all complete villages in the true sense of the word. The stony soils and scrub bushland of the southern half of the East Reserve, in particular, proved difficult to farm, and after 1876, a large number of Mennonite settlers transferred their homestead claims to the open prairie lands of the West Reserve.

When a Mennonite village was established, a group of twenty or so families would pool their homesteads into what became the village land, select a site for the village, and divide the land into arable, pasture, meadow and woodland. Each land type was further divided into strips, and each family received a number of strips for their personal use. By doing so, each family was assured of receiving a fair allocation of all land types at varying distances from the village. Stock could be herded in common, and the necessity of fencing cultivated strips was thus avoided, while the social advantages of nucleated settlement were achieved. In almost all the villages, the houses and barns were joined, recalling the Dutch origins of the group, where farms had to be built on man-made mounds to afford protection from flood waters. In the later Russian colonies, this compact form of settlement was retained and refined to afford protection from nomadic bands of Tartars, which often threatened the Mennonite colonies. In Manitoba, the villages most frequently consisted of a single street about half a mile long, with housebarns lining one or both sides of the "Strassendorf" street, which was usually oriented along a creek bed to afford equal access to water for the village livestock.

Most of the villages in both the East and West reserves have disappeared over the years. Today, in the former East Reserve, communities such as Kleefeld, New Bothwell, Grunthal and Blumenort are still in existence, but the traditional "Strassendorf" community plan no longer survives. Additionally, not a single example of the traditional Mennonite housebarn unit survives on its original location. The Steinbach village became the commercial centre for the East Reserve villages, and developed into a progressive and vibrant community, recently achieving 'city' status. While a handful of West Reserve villages are quite well preserved, and retain both the "Strassendorf" plan and surviving examples of the early housebarn units, Mennonite village life in the East Reserve is preserved solely at the Steinbach Mennonite Heritage Village Museum. This excellent museum development includes several relocated structures set up to illustrate the early agricultural era, and the later blossoming commercial era, of Steinbach's Mennonite heritage.

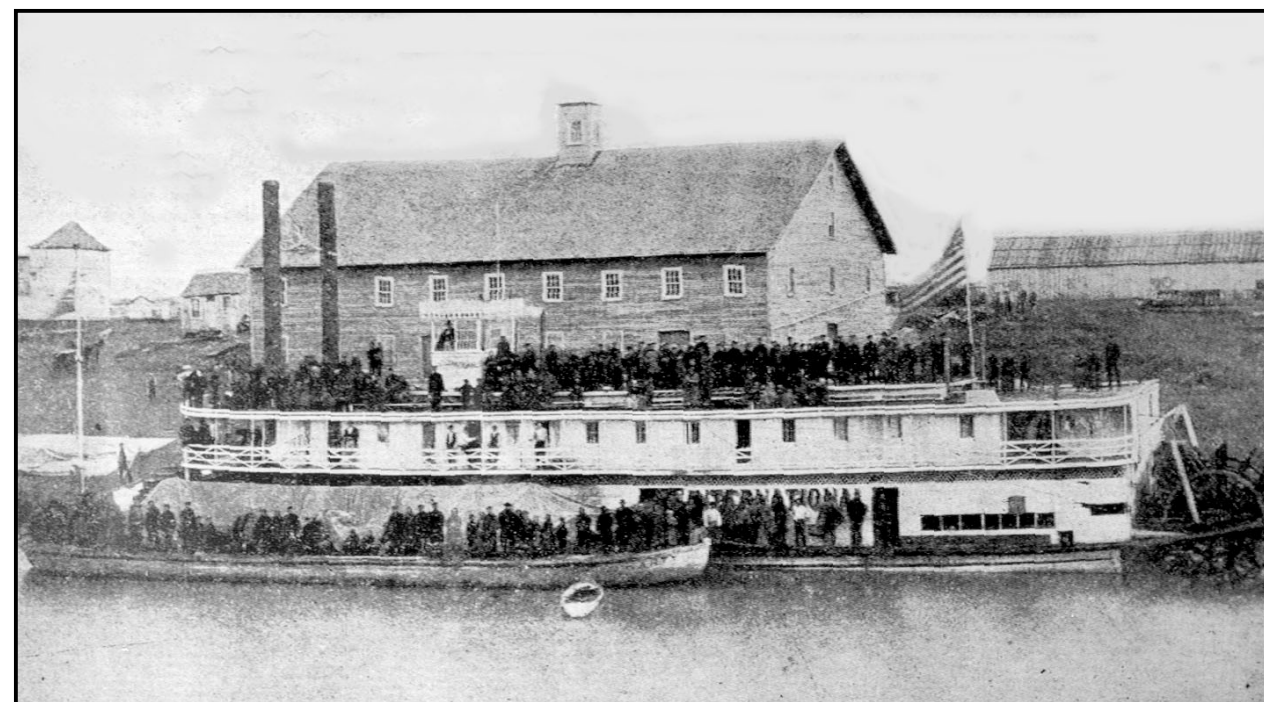
Sites noteworthy for their portrayal of Mennonite block settlement:

- 1 - Community, street, and business placenames
- 2 - Mennonite Village Museum
- 3 - Historical cairns



5.4.1 Above: Mennonite East and West Reserves

This map shows the areas in which the Mennonites settled in Manitoba, and the location of the farm-operator villages, which are known to have existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Map Title: *Mennonite Reserves of Manitoba*, by John Warkentin, in *Mennonite Agricultural Settlements of Southern Manitoba*, *The Geographical Review* Vol. 49, No.3 1959. HRB Map # 030.)



5.4.2 Above: Arrival of first group of European Settlers

The first group of Mennonites to settle in the Canadian west arrived in Winnipeg in October 1874 aboard the American steamship "International". (Photo: Provincial Archives of Manitoba)





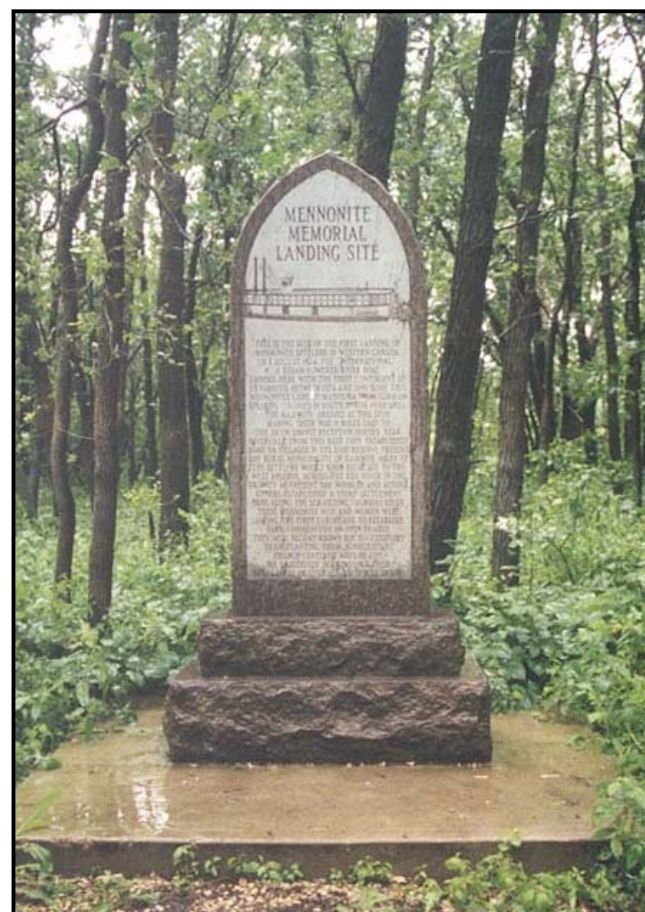
5.4.3 Above: Mennonite Village c.1880

A newspaper artist's depiction of a typical Mennonite farm village on the Manitoba prairie. Several villages in both the East and West Reserves possessed windmills for milling wheat into flour. The posts along the trail marked the route during the winter months. (Photo: Provincial Archives of Manitoba.)



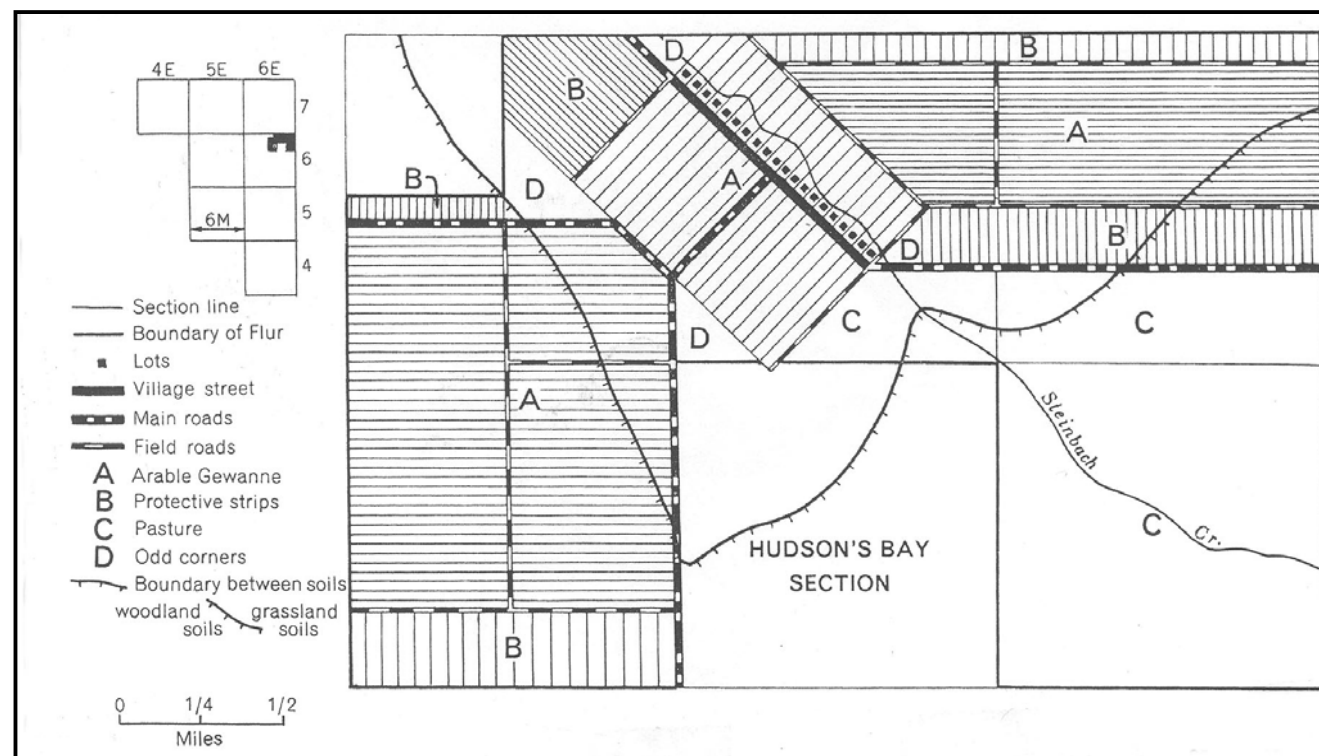
5.4.4 Left: Mennonite Housebarn

A housebarn structure typical of the 1900-1925 period. Note the maturing trees at the front of the lot, and the manure-based firebricks, called "Mest Sooden" drying in beehive shaped piles. Religious and cultural customs regarding community conformity dictated that all housebarns were to be the same size and configuration. Such control over architectural styles and village plans persisted well into the 1920s. (Photo: Mennonite Heritage Centre Archives.)



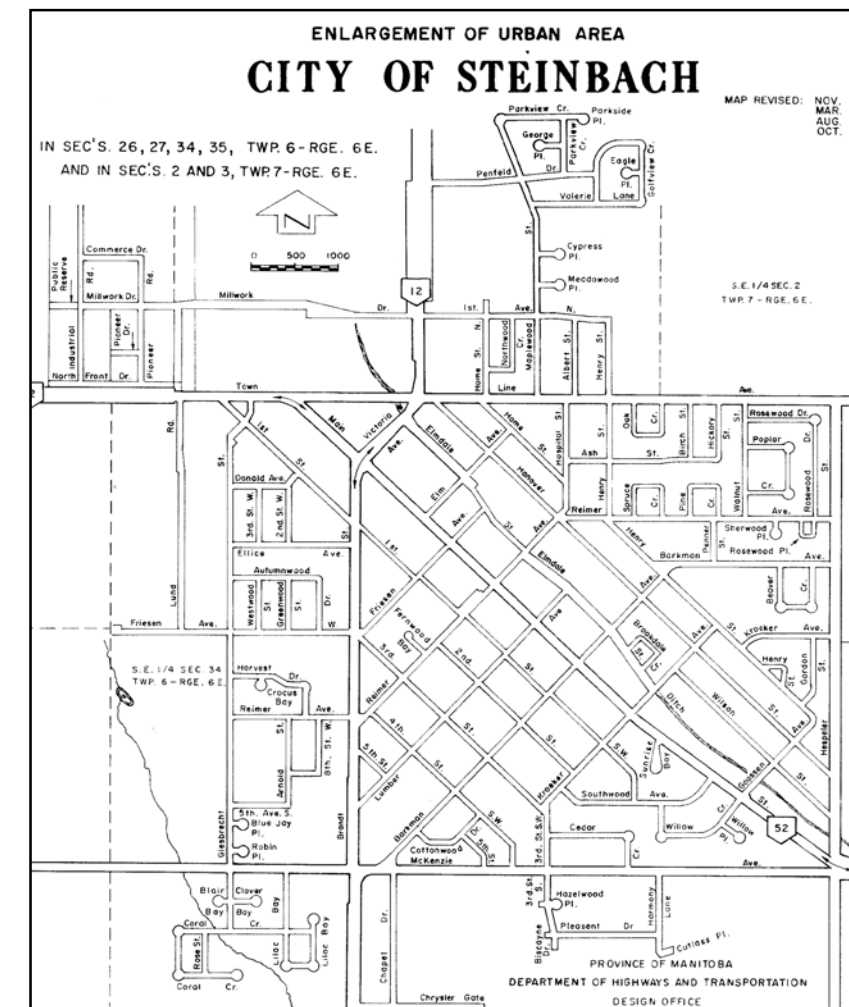
5.4.5 Above: Mennonite Landing

Mennonite Memorial Landing Site cairn located at the junction of the Red and Rat Rivers. There are several similar cairns in the region commemorating Mennonite settlement themes. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch)



5.4.6 Above: Steinbach Village and Field Plan

Most settlers accepted the scattered farm pattern inherent in the section survey, but the Mennonites were permitted to establish their traditional farm-operator villages, which characterized their Russian colonies. Twenty farmers lived in the village of Steinbach, tilled strips in the various parts of the village lands, and shared in the community pasture. Only the outside boundaries of the village land pool were determined by the section survey. The original layout of Steinbach was in lots called *Feuerstätten*, 2 1/2 hectare (6 acre) strips about 70 meters (225 feet) wide running off a wide main street, which had been hacked out of the poplar bush. The strip-fields proved to be unsuited to mechanized farm practices, and by the turn of the century many of the East Reserve settlers began reverting to the original township-plan homesteads, causing most of the farm villages to dissolve. (Map source: John Warkentin for article entitled *Mennonite Agricultural Settlements of Southern Manitoba*, in *The Geographical Review* Vol.49, No.3 1959. HRB Map # 059.)



5.4.7 Above: Steinbach Street Plan

Plan of the City of Steinbach. Note the lasting effects of the original village and field-lot plan on the current community street plan. Some of the more interesting aspects of the current town plan include: the retention of the oblique angle of the old main street; Steinbach Creek, part of which has been built over to create Elmdale Street, but with the curvilinear nature of the waterway still intact; the grid street pattern following the oblique orientation of the original strip fields, and the contemporary-style residential bays and curved street patterns in the "odd corner" areas of the original survey. The street plan for Steinbach, like several of the nearby French communities, was not influenced by the presence of a railway siding, but in this case, by its original traditional Mennonite farm-village survey pattern. (Map Title: *City of Steinbach*, Source: Province of Manitoba, Department of Highways and Transportation. HRB Map # 092d.)



## 5.0 Settlement Groups

### 5.5 Ukrainian Settlement

The wooded bush country east of Emerson and just north of the U. S. border was settled in the 1896-1905 era by Ukrainian immigrants from the Austrian provinces of Galicia and Bukovyna. At the time of settlement, these lands, to the east of the French river lots and south of the Mennonite East Reserve, were vacant apart from a few English-speaking ranchers and farmers on the western margins. The Ukrainians found the bush country to their taste because, despite its lack of long term potential for commercial agriculture, it did offer a great deal to a peasant farmer. For the most part, poor peasant farmers were unable to develop land on the open prairie because they lacked the capital to buy the equipment necessary for successful agriculture on the open lands. In the bush country they had wood, water, and meadow at hand and access to a wide resource base – a formula good for short-term survival, but not the long run.

Although accustomed to village settlement in their homeland, Ukrainian settlers were prevented from settling together in villages by the requirements of the Dominion Lands Act which dictated that each settler had to reside upon the claimed homestead land for three years before patent was granted. Villages such as Tolstoi (originally Oleskow), Vita (originally Shevchenko), and Gardenton were products of the railway and were essentially railway-based service centres, rather than bona fide village settlements.

The Ukrainian community was by no means homogeneous at the time of settlement. It was divided on religious grounds, which in turn often reflected point of origin of the settlers. The area south and east of Tolstoi was predominately Bukovynian and Orthodox in affiliation. To the north and east, the Ukrainian community was Galician (Halychyni) and Ukrainian Uniate or Greek Catholic in affiliation. Since the time of settlement intermixing of immigrants and a complicated history of religious organization has led to representation by both the Ukrainian Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches in the Ukrainian settlements.

In terms of physical Ukrainian features, the most obvious elements are the distinctive churches, cemeteries, and a few (mostly abandoned) houses built in the Ukrainian traditional style. Ukrainian churches are easily recognizable with their Byzantine onion-shaped domes (banyas), tripartite configuration and the separate free-standing bell tower. The Orthodox churches are further distinguished by the presence of the Orthodox cross. The interiors of these churches are rich in symbolism. Some of the more notable local churches include: Holy Ghost Ukrainian Orthodox Church at Tolstoi (1925); St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church (1899), west of Gardenton, which was the first Ukrainian Orthodox Church to be built in Canada, and now a national historic site; and Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church (1911) near Stuartburn.

Gardenton, with a current population less than 50, is undoubtedly the Bukovynian capital of Manitoba, if not Canada. It is a small, declining, former railway service centre. The railway line was abandoned in the 1960s and the village has since become the refuge of retired farmers from the district. Gardenton never had a grain elevator - few stations in this area did - as little grain was produced for export from the district. Mixed farming always has been predominant in this area and farm income always has been supplemented by cutting cordwood, digging "snakeroot" (seneca root), harvesting slough grass, the export of live frogs and more recently, driving school buses and road maintenance work.

The settlers, who pioneered the district around Gardenton from 1896-1905, came from the Onut and Bridok districts of Bukovyna. In settlement they displayed a strong preference for settlement alongside their former neighbours and kinfolk. It was not uncommon to find settlers grouped by family, families grouped by village, and villages grouped by district, and so on. Thus the social geography of the western Ukraine at the turn of the century was replicated in microcosm in Manitoba.

Sites noteworthy for their portrayal of Ukrainian block settlement include:

- 1 - St. Michael's Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church National Historic Site
- 2 - Gardenton Museum
- 3 - Inventory of 28 Ukrainian Churches located in the R.M.s of Stuartburn and Franklin

#### 5.5.1 Right: Galician style home

Photo of the Ewanchuk house, Foley District, c1914. The hip-shaped thatch roof, the mud-plastered log walls with whitewash finish, and the decorative coloured band at the base of the house, are all characteristics of traditional Ukrainian domestic folk architecture. The two-room design, with the entranceway into the smaller left side room, is one of the characteristics of the Galician regional style. (Photo: Provincial Archives of Manitoba.)

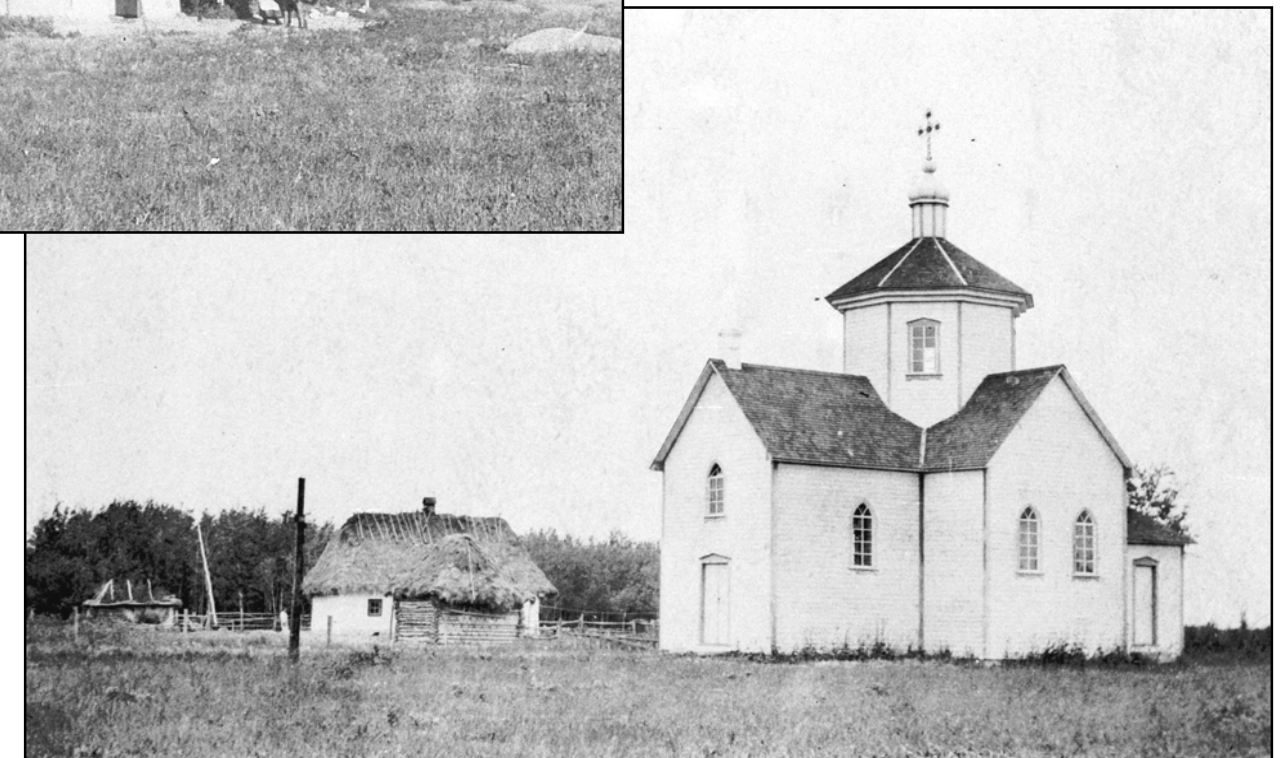


#### 5.5.2. Left: Bukovynian style home

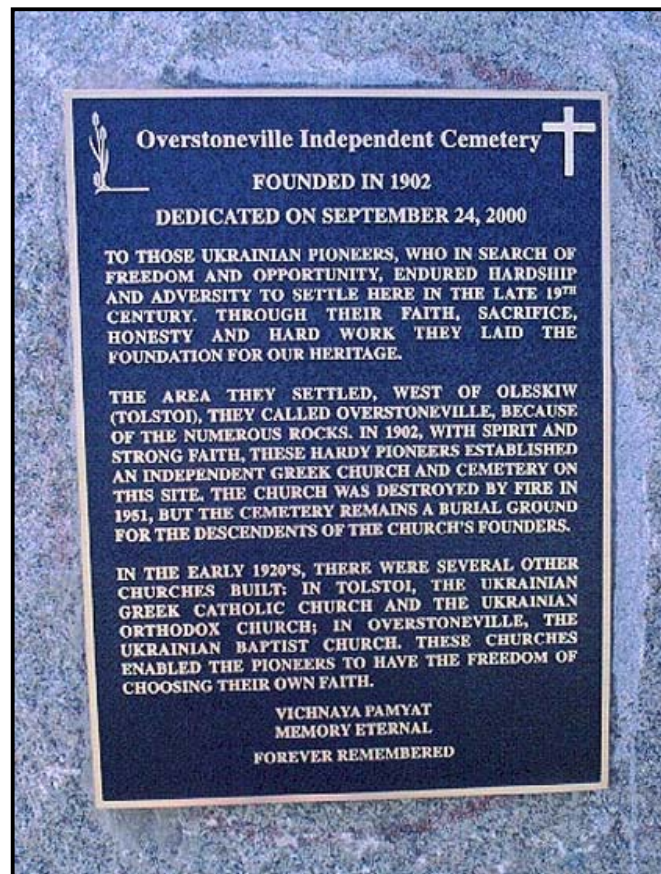
Photograph of a typical Bukovynian- style Ukrainian home. This style was characterised by a three-room plan with central entranceway and a large 'top-heavy' roof. (Photo: Provincial Archives of Manitoba.)

#### 5.5.3 Right: Ukrainian Church Architecture

View of Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church, Stuartburn, c1915. Ukrainian Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches were characterized by large-sized roof domes. (Photo: Provincial Archives of Manitoba.)







**5.5.4 Above: Historical Marker, Ukrainian Settlement**  
 Plaque located in the Overstoneville Cemetery honouring the Ukrainian pioneers of the Tolstoi and Overstoneville district. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**5.5.5 Above: St. Nicholas Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church, Arbakka district**  
 Erected in 1939, the asphalt roofing and stucco exterior finish are typical construction materials for the period; while the cruciform plan, multi-domed roof are traditional design elements. The stand-alone bell tower is characteristic of all Ukrainian churches and although strictly utilitarian, they often feature unusual and attractive designs. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**5.5.6 Above: St. Michael's Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church**  
 Constructed in 1899, near Gardenton, St. Michael's is the oldest Ukrainian Greek Orthodox church in Canada, and is a protected provincial and national historic site. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**5.5.7 Above: Gardenton Museum**  
 View of part of the artifact display area in the Gardenton Ukrainian Museum and Village. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**5.5.8 Above: St. Elias Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church; Sirko**  
 Constructed in 1906 of logs, and later sheathed with wood siding, this beautiful and unusual little church is one of only two traditional Bukovynian-style churches remaining in Manitoba. The style is characterized by a steeply-pitched roof, semi-circular ends, and eaves supported by carved cantilevered rafters. Note the original surviving log bell tower. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**5.5.9 Above: Interior, St. Michael's Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church.**  
 Many of the religious icons in St. Michael's Church were brought by the pioneers from the 'old country' when they immigrated. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



## 5.0 Settlement Groups

### 5.6 German Settlement

Fredensthal was established by German immigrants, from settlements they had established in southern Russia during the late 1700s. While the language and recent history was fairly similar to that of the region's Mennonite settlers, these German-speaking pioneers were of the Lutheran faith, and did not live the secular, communal lifestyle that characterized the early Mennonite settlers. This group first settled in the Gretna area west of the Red during the 1890s, where they worked as labourers and domestics for a few years to save money, and to become acclimatized to their new surroundings.

In 1896, the first few families from this group moved from Gretna to farms on the 'flats' east of Emerson. They were sponsored by a group of businessmen in Emerson, who provided lines of credit to the settlers and convinced them to take up lands which had been abandoned by earlier Anglo settlers because of the frequent wet conditions in the area. The first municipal drainage ditches were dug during the early 1880s, and by the mid 1890s the district's drainage problems were significantly reduced. The 'flats' district also suffered from a lack of potable water. This problem was overcome when an underground spring was discovered four kilometres (2 1/2 miles) south of Ridgeville. The Springbank Well, as it was called, was enlarged and improved several times over, as the area became more settled and the district's residents became more reliant upon this singular source of good clean water. Before the advent of dugouts to create a water supply, settlers came from as far as 16 kilometres (10 miles) away to haul water for their stock.

Additional families made the move in the following years, and by 1903 the new settlement was sufficiently large that a church was constructed. It was replaced by a larger structure in 1920, and replaced again a decade later when a tornado demolished the second structure. The first schoolhouse was constructed in 1904, and housed a class of 75 pupils who were taught in the German language by the local pastor.

In 1901 the railroad passed through the settlement, and in 1902 a station house and Lake of The Woods Milling Company grain elevator were built. A village store was opened in 1914, and a blacksmith shop in 1924. Due to the presence and influence of both Ridgeville and Emerson just a few miles in either direction along the rail line Fredensthal never grew beyond this modest level. Currently, the presence of this community is marked by the Fredensthal cemetery and cairn, and a modern church structure. When the railway line was removed during the 1970s the Fredensthal elevator was moved five miles west to the Pembina branch of the CPR and the new siding was named West Fredensthal. With names such as Knutt, Schwark, Kreitz, Schultz, Weiss, Becker, and Schiebe still common in the area, the Fredensthal district still stands out as an island of German heritage within the larger Anglo-settled, southeastern section of the Crow Wing Study Region.



#### 5.6.1 Lutheran Pioneer Memorial

Detail of cairn situated at the Fredensthal district cemetery, located at SW 13-1-3E, approximately 8 kilometres (5 miles) northeast of Emerson. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



#### 5.6.2 Fredensthal Highway sign

(Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



## 6.0 INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

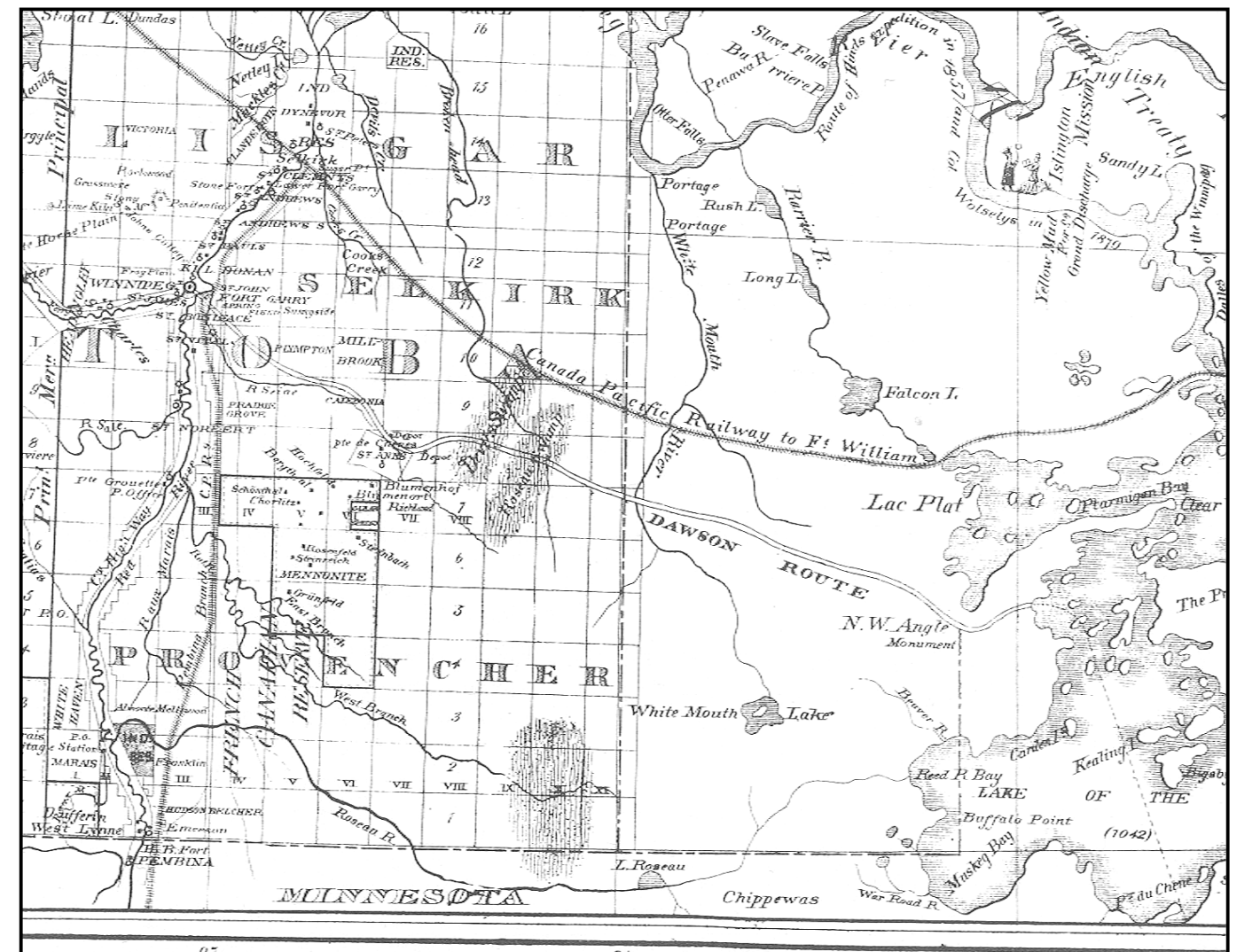
In the Crow Wing Study Region the infrastructure landscape includes items such as trails, roads, and highways, railway lines, drainage ditches and canals, river fords, ferries, and bridges. While not normally considered as significant heritage resources, infrastructure components nevertheless can be quite interesting and appealing both historically and in appearance, and are quite often highly visible landmarks on the landscape. There are a variety of sites in the Crow Wing Study Region relating to infrastructure development which merit recognition, such as the route of the first railway line in Manitoba, and some of the earliest drainage projects on the prairies. Some of the more significant known sites related to infrastructure development in the study region include:

- 6.1 Trail routes and remnants
  - 1. The Dawson Trail
  - 2. Ste. Anne Trail
  - 3. Mennonite East Reserve Trails
  - 4. Ste. Agathe Parish Trail
- 6.2 Railways
  - 1. Pembina Branch of the CPR
- 6.3 Bridges and Ferries
  - 1. St. Adolphe Ferry
  - 2. Dominion City Timber Truss Bridge
  - 3. Stuartburn Timber Truss Bridge
  - 4. Municipal bridge over South Branch Jordan River
  - 5. Municipal bridge over North Branch Jordan River
  - 6. Piney Road Bridge
  - 7. Senkiw Suspension Bridge
- 6.4 Drainage Canals
  - 1. Manning Canal
  - 2. Seine River Diversion
  - 3. Dominion City area drains

### 6.1 Settlement Trails

In addition to the Pembina and Crow Wing fur-trade era trails, several other trails were established in the study region during the settlement era; which in this part of Manitoba occurred from approximately 1870 to 1900. The most significant of these settlement trails was undoubtedly the Dawson Trail. Its construction was proposed as early as 1858 to help facilitate settlement of the Canadian West, but ten years would pass before work on it actually commenced. By the late 1870s, only ten years after its completion, the route had lost its appeal as a settlement trail, since an easier passage via the United States, by railway and steamboat, became the preferred route. By 1881, the journey to Red River from eastern Canada could be made quite comfortably by train on the CPR main line, which by that summer had reached the Red River valley.

The cartographic record shows several other trails, which were constructed and likely heavily used in the decades prior to the development of the provincial road network after World War I. These include a surveyed trail developed during the early 1880s paralleling the east bank of the Red River and connecting the newly incorporated communities of Winnipeg and Emerson, and often referred to as St. Mary's Road. An alternate to the Dawson Road route to the Métis settlement at Ste. Anne des Chênes was also developed during this period. It ran south of the Seine River and was commonly known as St. Anne's Road. After the establishment of the Mennonite East Reserve in 1874, the western portion of this route was extensively used by the Mennonite settlers, who, from the Ile de Chênes area developed two new branches heading southeast, one to the village of Steinbach and the other to the village of Kleefeld. From these villages the Mennonite trails branched again connecting several of the more prominent villages in the East Reserve. An additional, significant, settlement-era trail established in the study region was the Piney Road. From Ste. Anne it followed the south bank of the Seine River to Marchand and continued on, in a southeastern direction, cross-country over the high ground of the Sandilands Forest Reserve to the hamlet of Piney near the American border. This settlement-era trail was used primarily to access the timber and firewood resources of the southeasterly corner of the province. Being located largely outside of the study region, this trail is not included in the following discussions, although it is worthy of mention; being a very well known route during its day.



#### 6.1.1 The Dawson Trail

The most significant of the settlement-era trails in the study region was undoubtedly the Dawson Trail. This trail was, in fact, the most westerly section of a longer, combination water and land route connecting what are now Thunder Bay and Winnipeg. The final 160 km (100 miles) of this route consisted of a wagon trail, referred to most often as the Dawson Trail, but also known by several other names, including the Dawson Road, Mr. Snow's Road, the Road to NW Angle of Lake of the Woods, The Great Highway, and other more-colourful, names. For ten years after its completion in 1870, it was part of the only all-Canadian route to the prairies from eastern Canada. It is estimated that more than 3,500 settlers immigrated to western Canada using the Dawson route. Much of the eastern section of the Dawson Trail consisted of bone-jarring 'corduroy' road, made up of logs laid side by side. The final 60 km (37 miles) or so followed the route of a much older trail, which connected the Métis settlement of St. Anne with Fort Garry. The Dawson Trail was a notoriously difficult route, and it lost much of its traffic quite rapidly after the railway connection to St. Boniface from Minneapolis-St. Paul was completed in 1879. Portions continued to be used for local traffic, and for hunting and logging purposes, but gradually sections of it, particularly the eastern half, became abandoned and overgrown. Much of the western section of the Dawson Trail still exists as PR 207 and this section has been designated by the Manitoba Highways as a Heritage Route. The Dawson Trail was a difficult trail to use, but in its brief history, many notable groups and individuals traversed it at least once, and in its day it was undoubtedly a very well known and much-talked-about feature. (Map Title: Province of Manitoba and Part of the District of Keewatin and North West Territory Shewing The Townships and Settlements Drawn from the Latest Gov. Maps, Surveys & Reports for The Prairie Province, 1876. Source PAM #: H5 614.1 gbbd 1876. HRB Map #007.)



## 6.0 Infrastructure Development

In appearance, the settlement-era trails, like the older fur trade cart trails, were characterized by their direct “cross-country” nature, following the local height of land, river courses, and skirting the many low spots and marshes that dotted the study region before the advent of land drainage programs. However, unlike most of the Hudson’s Bay Company transport trails, which consisted of a wide series of ruts made by the “off-set” nature of hitching several carts one behind another, the settlement-era trails tended to consist more of a simple three-rut path, made by the wagon wheels with a single horse-path between them. As the 27-metre (99-foot) road allowances located between each section of the township survey began to be developed, both the old HBC transport trails, and the newer settlement-trails, were increasingly diverted onto the north-south, east-west survey grid. Currently, a few remnants of some of these old trails still survive, including major sections of both the Dawson Trail (as PR 207); Ste. Anne’s Road (as PR 210); and the ‘Ste. Agathe Parish Trail/St. Mary’s Road’ (as PR 200 & PR 246).

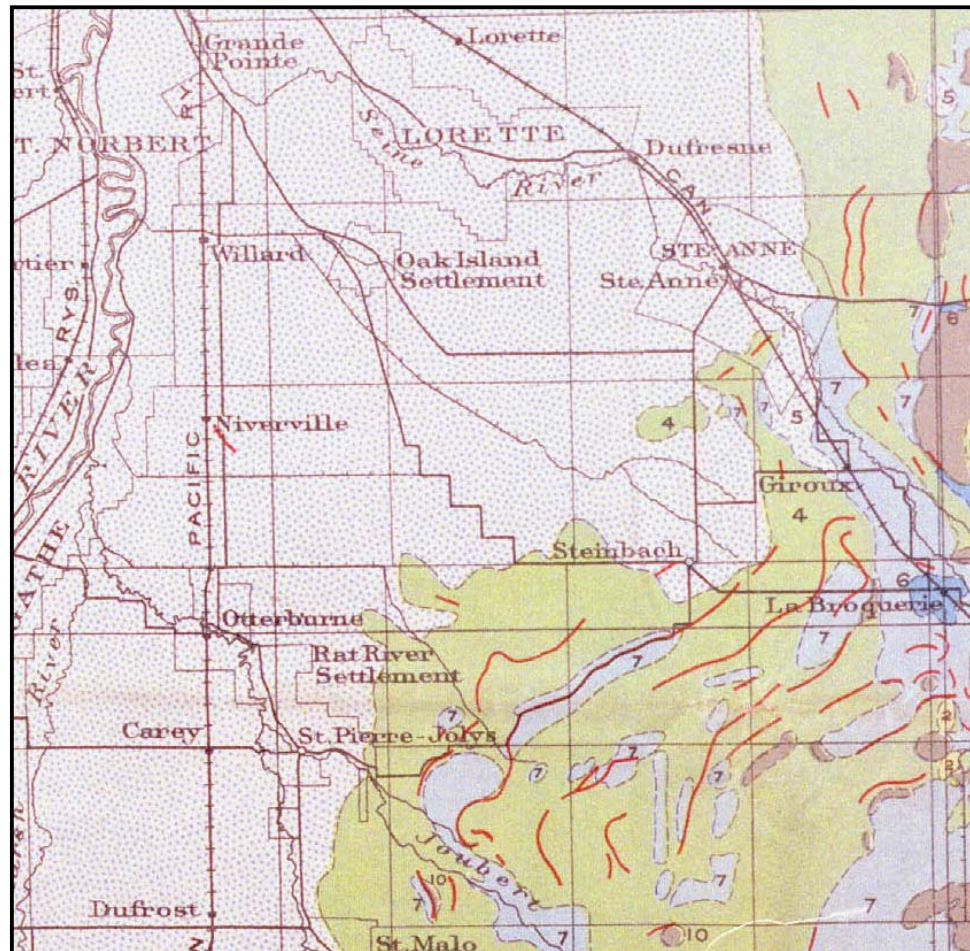
In reviewing the routes of the early trails as plotted on the various source maps used in this study, it was apparent that there is a direct correlation between many of the early trail routes and the surrounding physical landscape, which does not exist with the modern road network. This human/landform relationship is worth noting, and in simple terms, occurred as follows: The Ste. Anne Road very clearly followed the high ground just beyond the southern edge of the “Great Marsh”. The Dawson Trail to Ste. Anne and beyond to Marchand followed the course of the Seine River; the Piney Road followed the high ground of the Sandilands hills; the Ste. Agathe Road followed the Red River; and the Ridge Road followed a remnant beach ridge laid down by Lake Agassiz.

With the advent of large earth moving equipment in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the advantages of relating trails to physical features were largely lost. Low spots and marshy areas could be drained and they no longer needed to be skirted. Since roadways could now be built up on raised beds or “grades” above the surrounding landscape, the local height of land was no longer significant. Also, with farming practices being steadily mechanized after 1900, entire quarter sections could easily be cultivated as one large field. Landowners, therefore, increasingly came to view the old trails crossing their fields as obstacles to efficient farming practices and petitioned their government officials to close the old surveyed trails forcing travellers to use the road allowance grid. Changing times gave way to new norms, and as with other aspects of the cultural landscape of the study region, the connection between transportation modes and routes and the physical landscape slowly but steadily diminished.

### 6.1.2 Mennonite East Reserve Trails.

After the creation of the East Reserve and the arrival of 1,600 Mennonites in the area south of Ste. Anne in 1874, the Ste. Anne Trail became an integral extension in the Reserve of the Mennonite East Reserve Trail system, established. Almost immediately the settlers developed a trail network connecting key villages in the Reserve to the Ste. Anne Trail in the area of the original Ile des Chênes settlement. To the new settlers this was simply the “Winnipeg Trail”. Most notable among the four main branches of the East Reserve trails was the 25-km long “Gravel Ridge Road”. It connected Bergfeld in the southwest corner of the Reserve, with Steinbach; passing through Grunthal and Schonsee along the way. For almost its entire length it ran atop a prominent gravel ridge, and thus was unencumbered by the largely poorly drained and stony land in this area.

Today the only visible remnants of the roughly 200 km of trails development by the Mennonites during the 1880s and 1890s are two intersections with the Ste. Anne Trail, located in the old Ile des Chênes river-lot settlement. Leading up to the intersections, from the southeast are two short sections of former trail. One is two, and other four, kilometres in length.

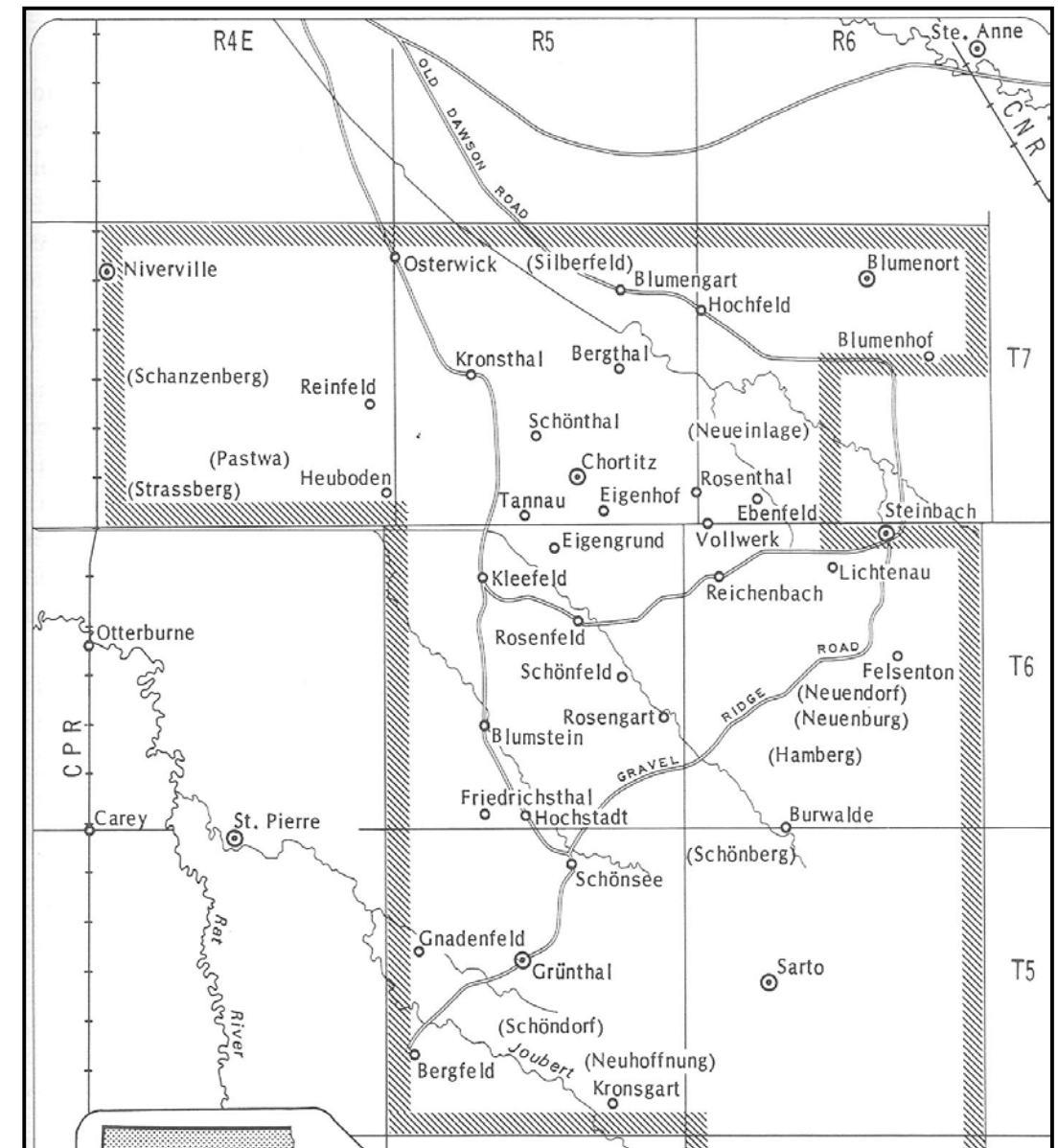


### 6.1.3 Right: East Reserve Mennonite Trails

Map of the Mennonite East Reserve in Manitoba showing the villages and major settlement trails as they existed in the district, c1880. Note that two of the trails join up with the much older Ste. Anne’s Trail, and also that the more easterly of these is erroneously labeled as the old Dawson Road. Note also the aptly named “Gravel Ridge Road” follows the course of the old beach depicted in figure 6.1.4. (Map Title: *Mennonite East Reserve Trails*. Source: *Mennonites in Canada 1786-1920 The History of a Separate People* by Frank H. Epp, 1975, page 213. HRB Map #053.)

### 6.1.4 Left: Beach Ridges

Detail from Canada Department of Mines map showing surface deposits in Manitoba, 1931. This map clearly shows Lake Agassiz beach ridges laid down across the natural slope of the land (in red) creating areas of silt deposits behind them (blue - No.7). Also the distinct transition line between the “Glacial Till Modified by Wave Action” (Green No.4) and the “Lake-Bed and Flood-Plain Deposits” to the west and north is noted. This same transition in surface deposits later would mark the transition from predominantly commercial cereal crop production to largely dairy and livestock production. (Map Title: *Surface Deposits, Manitoba Department of Mines*, 1931. Source: PAM, un-catalogued map “P2068, Map 254A”. HRB Map #059.)

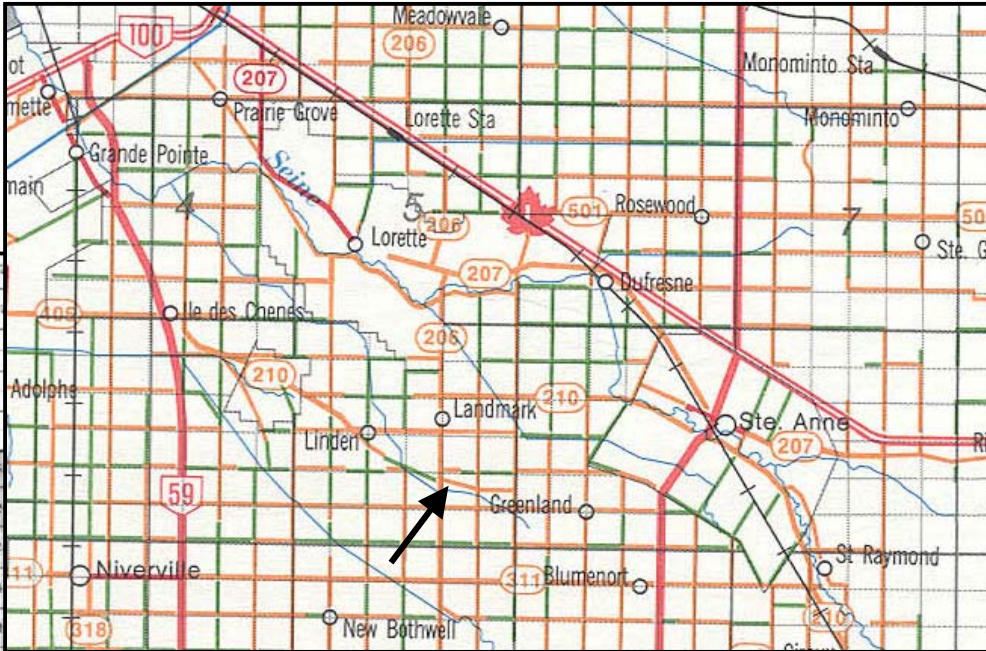




6.1.5 Ste. Anne Trail

Another well-used trail possessing a long and interesting history was the alternate route from St. Boniface to Ste. Anne des Chênes. It ran south of the Seine River, passed between two large permanent marshes and entered the settlement from the southwest. As with most trails, it was known by several names, such as, the Road To Oak Point, the Ste. Anne Trail, the Cart Trail to Ste. Anne's, but is now simply St. Anne's Road, a name that is used both in Winnipeg and in the rural areas. Although no longer completely intact, various sections of the 65 km long original trail survive, including a five km section of Provincial Trunk Highway (PTH) 59 north of Ile des Chênes, and a 15 km stretch of Provincial Road (PR) 210 south of the community. Because of the gentle, constant curve in the road, it almost appears to be a normal road allowance, except for the many odd angled intersections. Its out-of-the-ordinary routing is most visible from the air or on maps. The wide-open flat lands to be seen in the area southeast of the crossroads community of Linden are its most notable sight lines. In the area of the Ile des Chênes river-lot survey, the route becomes quite scenic, as the developed river-lot holdings create what seems to be a pastoral island in the midst of a wide open prairie.

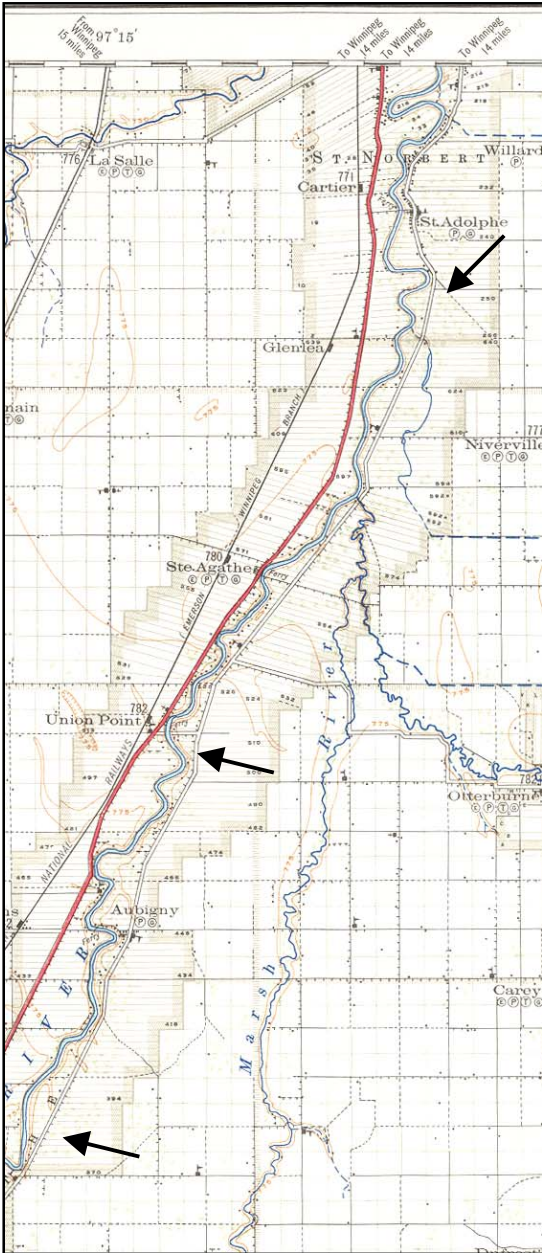
6.1.6 Right: St. Anne's Road  
Detail from a 1977 Manitoba roads map showing the surviving remnants of the old "Road to Oak Point". (Map: Manitoba Conservation, Maps and Surveys, 1977. HRB Map #061.)



6.1.7 Above: Ste. Anne Trail  
Detail from an 1871 map showing the Ste. Anne Trail, labeled in this case as simply "Road to Oak Point". In comparing this map to the 1977 map, note that the original route of the trail is now cut off by the Red River Floodway and built over by PTH 59. In the area south of Ile des Chênes its survives as PR 210 as far as Linden, continues as an un-numbered municipal road, and ends abruptly at the western boundary of Township 8 Range 6 East. This sudden cut-off corresponds to the western boundary of the Rural Municipality of Ste. Anne, suggesting that closing this section of the former trail near Ste. Anne was a municipal decision. Note also that the Ste. Anne river-lot settlement survey is not shown on this map. (Map Title: Map of the Province of Manitoba Showing the Surveys Effected in 1871. Dominion Lands Office, March 1, 1872. Source PAM: H5 614.1 bj 1871 State 2. HRB Map #010.)

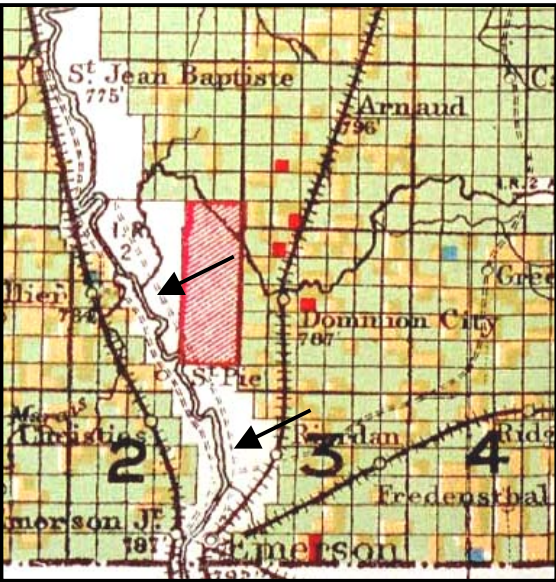
6.1.8 Ste. Agathe Parish Trail

A fourth major settlement-era trail developed in the Crow Wing Region is currently marked by the route of Provincial Road 200 and 246 along the east bank of the Red River. Known by several names including the Ste. Agathe Parish Road and St. Mary's Road, the exact origins of this trail are somewhat unclear. The earliest consulted map showing the route is the 1922 edition of the Dominion Sectional Map series. It clearly shows a roadway running the full distance from Winnipeg to Emerson, except for a 10 km gap in the area of the Roseau River mouth occupied by the Roseau River Indian Reserve (I.R.). South of the reserve the road continues the remaining distance to Emerson. Interestingly, a 1911 map shows a short section of trail along the east bank of the Red River north of Emerson that crosses the Roseau River, and traverses the entire length of the reserve before stopping abruptly at the reserve's northern boundary, where the 1922 roadway coming from the north ends (Figure 6.3.2 below). The 1911 map also shows the route of the Crow Wing Trail, which runs along the east bank of the Red River from Winnipeg to the Ste. Adolphe area where it swings southeast and continues overland toward St. Pierre-Jolys, before continuing in a southerly direction. This suggests that sometime between 1911 and 1922 these two short sections of trail, one running north from Emerson, and the other, a section of the Crow Wing Trail running south from Winnipeg, were connected; forming a continuous route between the two communities. However, as the Roseau River I.R. has always been federal jurisdiction, it appears that the section of trail within the reserve has never been improved, nor was a bridge crossing the river ever built. This resulted over time in a permanent gap in the route in the area of the Roseau River I.R.



Currently, the first 25 km (15 mile) stretch of this trail from Winnipeg to Ste. Agathe consists of paved highway (PR 200) that passes through a very scenic countryside with interesting sight lines, and a variety of vegetation types. From Ste. Agathe, it continues for 65 kms (40 miles) as a gravel road before being interrupted by the Roseau River I.R. South of the I.R. the roadway resumes for 10 kms (six miles) before terminating at Emerson. Much of the route passes through pastoral countryside making it a scenic alternate route to PTH 75 between Winnipeg and Emerson.

6.1.9 Above left: St. Mary's Road  
Detail from a 1922 map showing St. Mary's Road between St. Adolphe and St. Jean Baptiste. Note the remnant trail spur just south of St. Adolphe. It was at this point that the Crow Wing Trail veered away from the banks of the Red River and headed to the "ridge" located along the east side of the Red River valley. (Map Title: Sectional Map No. 23, Emerson Sheet, March 1922 Source: Maps & Surveys Branch files. HRB Map #035d.)



6.1.10 Left: St. Mary's Trail, Roseau River area  
Portion of a 1911 map showing the southern precursor to St. Mary's Road running from Emerson to the Roseau River I.R. (See Figure 5.3.1 for a more complete view of the map detail.) (Map Title: Map of Manitoba, Special Edition Showing Disposition of Lands, Dept of Interior, January 1, 1911. PAM #: H7 614.2 gbbd 1911. HRB Map #024.)

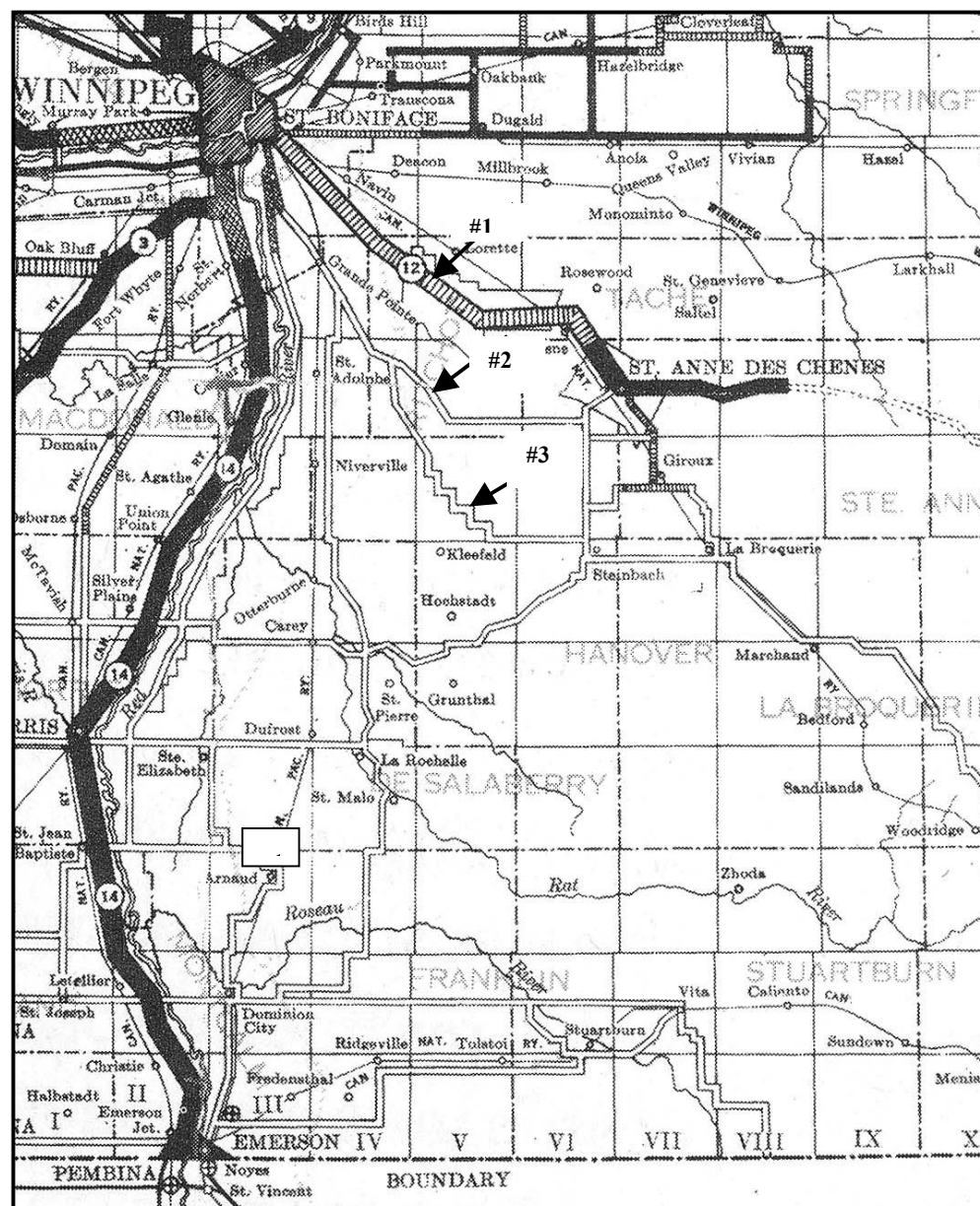


## 6.0 Infrastructure Development

### 6.1.11 Transition from Trails to Roadways

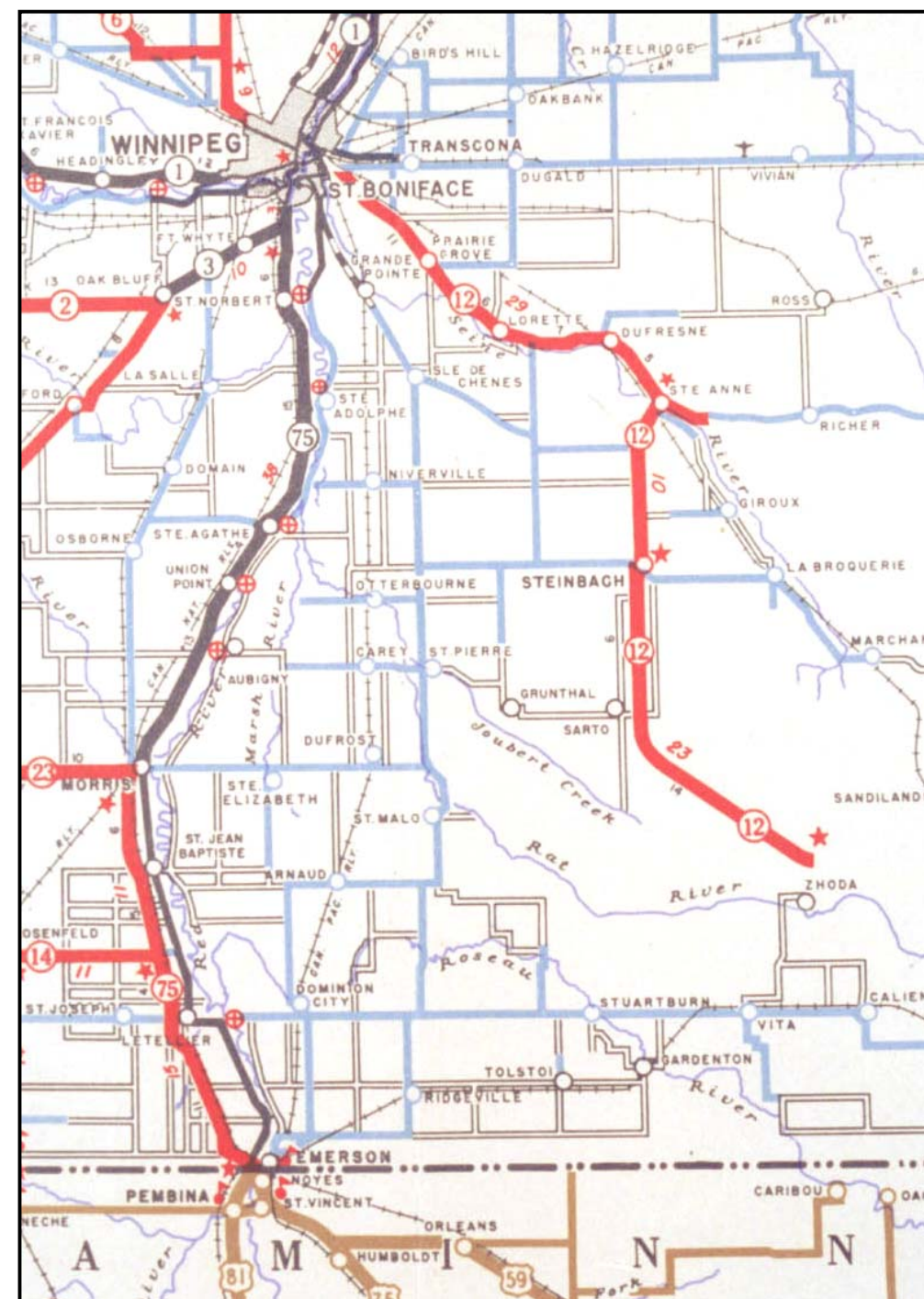
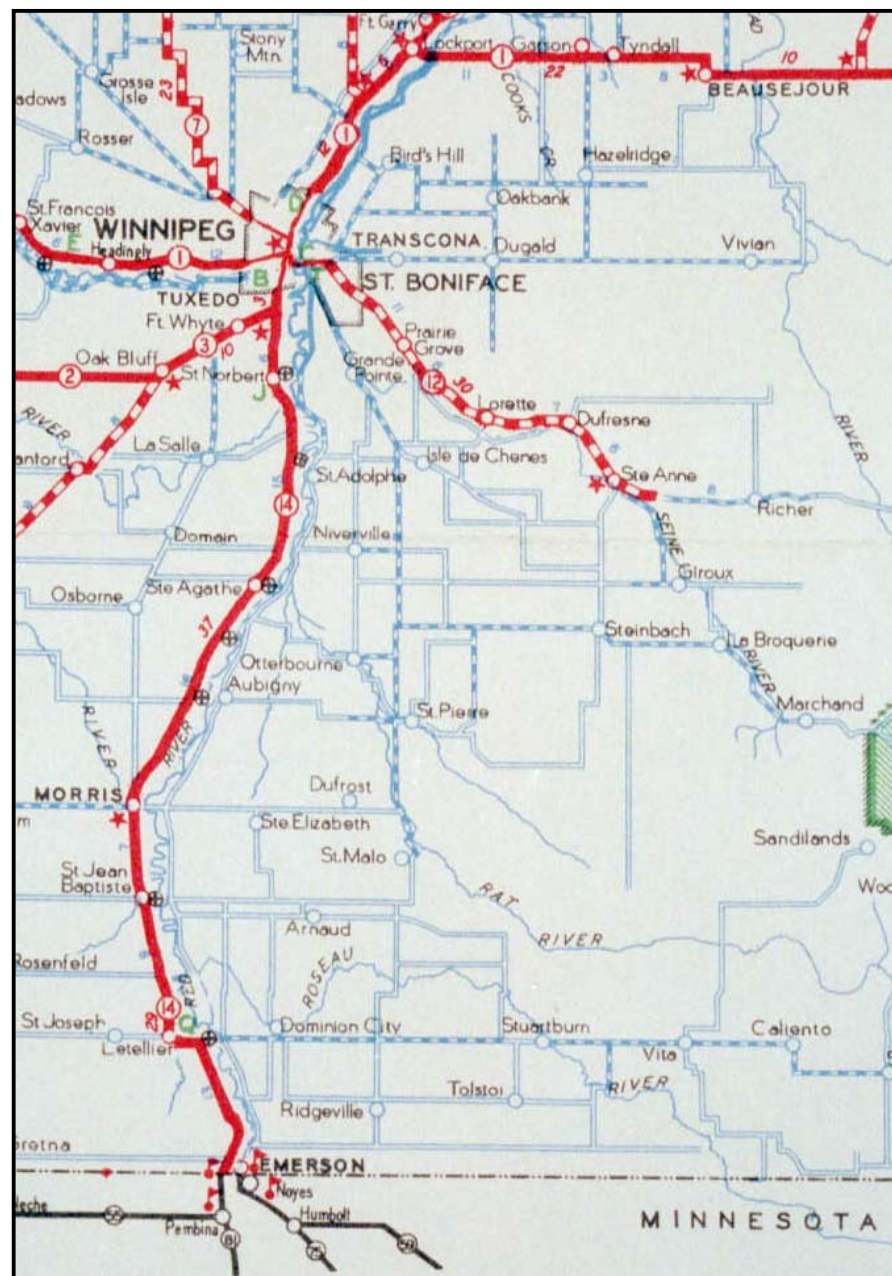
This detail from a 1928 Manitoba Roads Map (below) showing the road system in southeastern Manitoba, illustrates the transition of the early cross-country trail network to the new north-south/east-west road allowance grid. Noteworthy elements shown in the map include: 1. The route of the Dawson Trail from St. Boniface, which begins as a major roadway, (Highway No.12), This is then downgraded to a minor roadway near Ste. Anne des Chênes, then downgraded further to a mere trail, before being dropped completely as a mapped route. 2. St. Anne's Road, just south of Highway 12, retains its original cross-country route for much of its eastern section, but the western half now has been diverted to the section grid. 3. Most interesting is the Mennonite Trail to Kleefeld which branches off St. Anne's Road near Ile des Chênes in a southeasterly direction for about 10 km (6 miles) before it, too, is diverted to the section grid. Here a series of 'steps' along the grid are created as it attempts to retain its original southeasterly direction. The map also shows the old Ridge Road between Steinbach and Grunthal which is still largely in existence; as is the trail to Piney just to the east, and a section of the Crow Wing Trail between St. Malo and the St. Adolphe rail siding on the Pembina Branch of the CPR. Over time these former trails continued to be closed or diverted to the section grid for all new roads were strictly grid roads. In the years to follow, new municipal roads continued to follow the section grid. The routes of most of the more recently constructed provincial highways in the area utilized the most direct route, ignoring the section grid.

(Map Title: Manitoba Roads Map 1928. Source: Historical Atlas of Manitoba, page 431. HRB Map #046.)



### 6.1.12 Below: Highway System Takes Hold

Detail from a 1939 Manitoba Highways map showing, among other features, the route of the former Crow Wing Trail to St. Pierre being abandoned for a completely new route, destined to become PTH 59. The main route to the Ontario border, Highway No.1 at this time, was routed through Beausejour, just north of the study region. (Map Title: 1939-40 Manitoba Highways Map Source: PAM #: H3 614.3 gmbd Series 3 1939-40. HRB Map #055.)

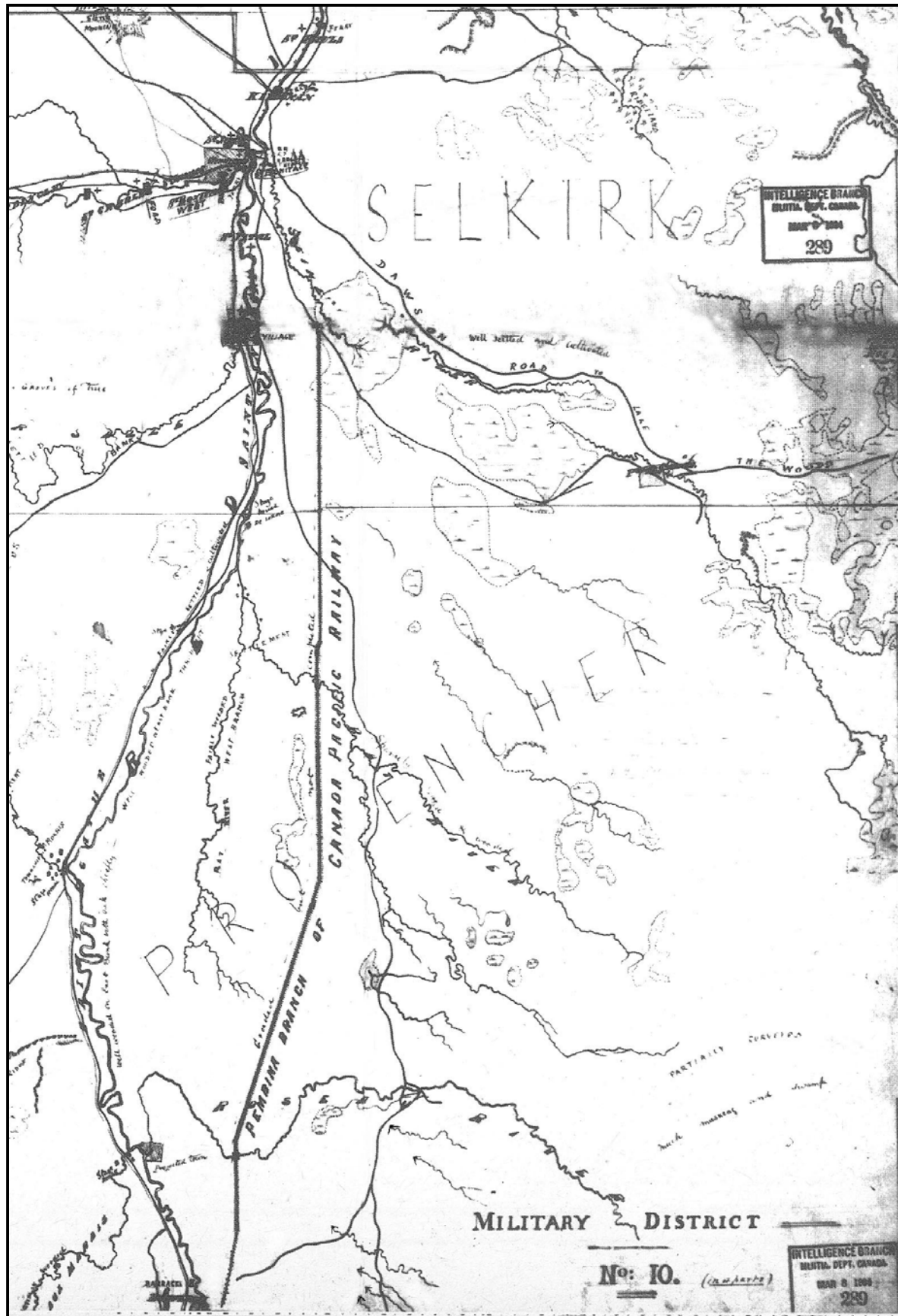


### 6.1.13 Above: Provincial Trunk Highways

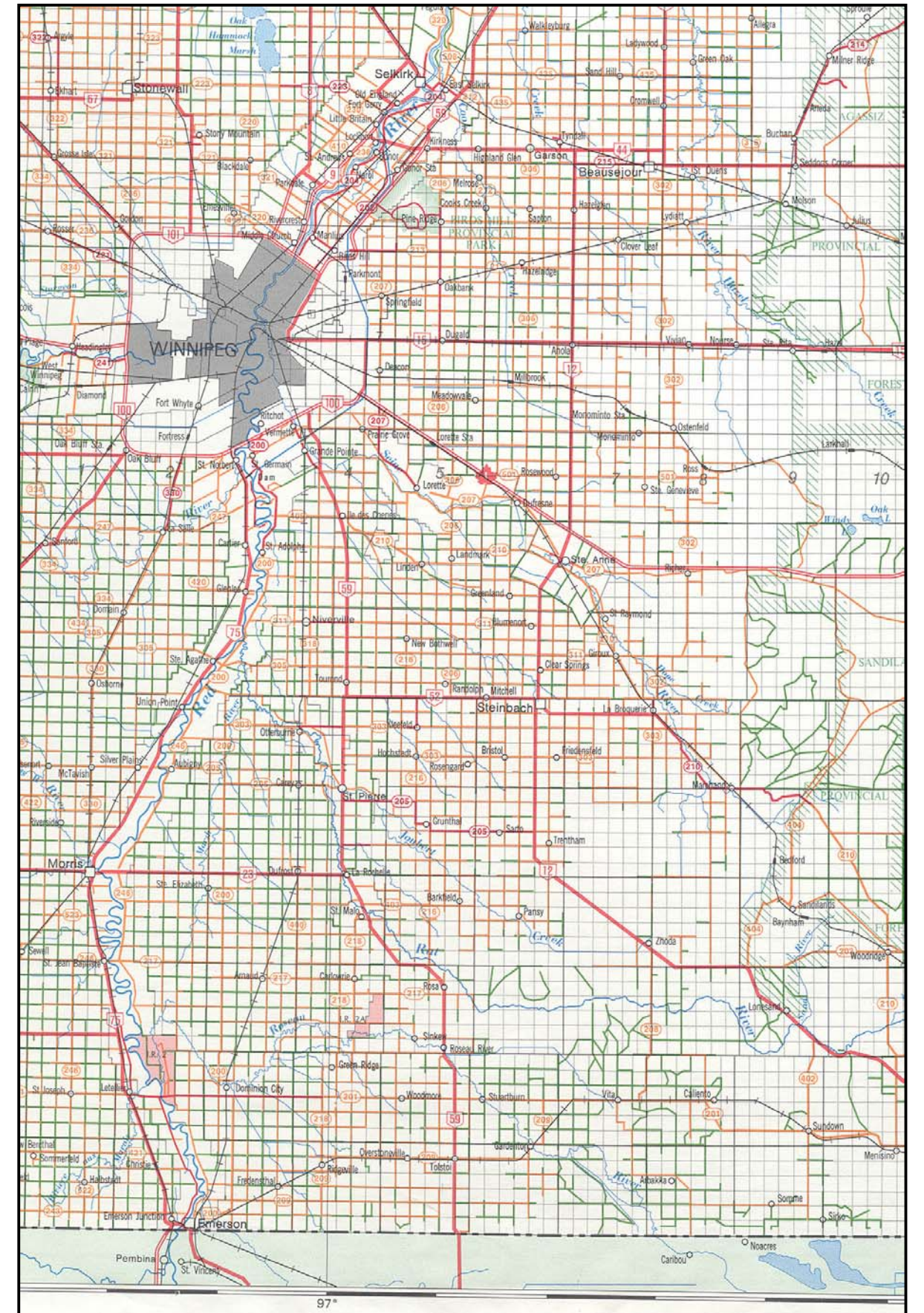
Detail from a 1951 Manitoba Highways map, showing, the ongoing development of PTH 12, or the "new" Piney Road. PTH 59 at this time ended at St. Malo. However, the beginning of the modern road system in the study region was clearly taking shape at this time.

(Map Title: Manitoba Highways Map for 1951. Source: PAM 614.3 gmbd series 3 1951. HRB Map #056.)





**6.1.14 Left: Transportation Infrastructure, in 1878**  
 Detail of a map printed in 1878 showing the four early trails in the study area and the as-yet-unfinished, Pembina Branch of the CPR. (Map Title: Military District No. 10. Department of the Militia, 1878. Source: Historical Atlas of Manitoba, page 482. HRB Map #029.)



**6.1.15 Right: Transportation Infrastructure, in 1977**  
 Detail of a map printed in 1977 showing all Provincial Highways and Roads, Municipal Roads, section roads, and railways in the study region. The change in infrastructure development in the 99 years between the printing of the two maps illustrates the massive changes that had occurred in the region during that time period. (Map Source: Maps & Surveys Branch, HRB Map #061.)



## 6.2 Railways

During the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, railways were THE vital link, and lifeline for the emerging settlements in Manitoba and the western provinces. To facilitate the rapid settlement and development of the Canadian prairies the Dominion Government encouraged the building of numerous branch lines to transport people and freight. The significance and impact of railways on rural districts remained paramount until the advent of all weather, high-speed highway transportation during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Since then, trucking has increasingly overtaken the role initially played by the railways in hauling freight to and from rural Manitoba communities. Similar to other regions across Canada, many branch lines throughout Manitoba now have been abandoned and tracks removed.

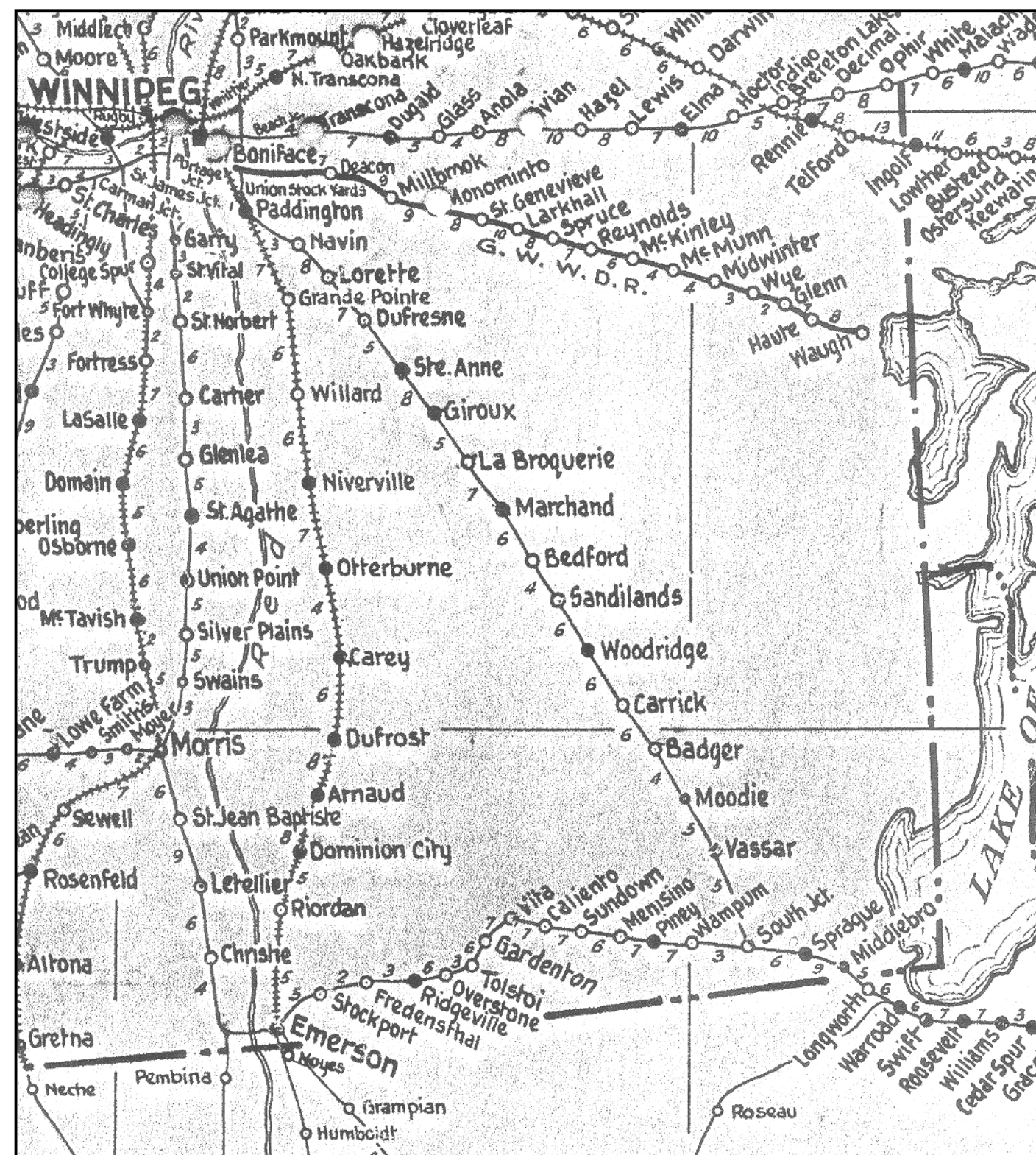
The Crow Wing Study Region possessed three railway lines. The CPR Pembina Branch between St. Boniface and Emerson, begun in 1874 and completed in December of 1878, connects to American railway lines leading south to Minneapolis, Chicago, and other points in the American mid-west. It is significant, as it was the very first operating railway line in western Canada. The second is the Canadian Northern Railway's 'Sprague subdivision' line, which runs from Winnipeg southeast to Rainy River, south of Lake-of-the-Woods in northwestern Minnesota, and then northeast to Thunder Bay, Ontario. It was begun in 1898 and completed in February 1902, and is currently part of Canadian National's 'southern' line to Thunder Bay and points east. This line became known locally as the 'Muskeg Express' because of the wet and wooded territory which it traversed, and for the millions of cords of firewood which came out of the woodland areas of southeastern Manitoba during the early decades of the 20th century. The third railway line was CNR Ridgeville sub-division. It was constructed between 1903 and 1907 and connected communities in the Stuartburn region with Emerson at its western terminus, and South Junction on the Sprague branch line, at its eastern terminus. The Pembina and Sprague sub-divisions are currently still active due to their continuing 'main route' role. The Ridgeville branch line was abandoned and its tracks were removed during the 1980s.

In addition to these three branch lines, several short spur lines also existed in the area for a short time. In 1879, the Canadian Pacific Railway built spur tracks from Dominion City to what was known then as Greenridge, to mine the gravel to build the ballast or 'dump' for the Pembina branch line. The track carried trains of flat cars every half hour over the 14-km distance to the siding at Dominion City. The line operated until 1882 when it was removed. After the closure, most commercial gravel for railway construction in the region was obtained from pits in the Bird's Hill area, northeast of Winnipeg. There was a second railway spur, on the north side of the Roseau River at Dominion City, which serviced a brickyard and a feed and flour mill. Bricks manufactured at this site were used in the construction of Winnipeg's well-known "gingerbread style" City Hall. When the brickyard folded and the mill burned down in 1884, the need for this spur disappeared and it, too, was removed. A third spur line existed for a time in the Ste. Anne area. The reason for its construction is unknown; however, it is clearly shown in a 1909 map of the region (Figure 6.2.7). As with the Dominion City spurs, it too was short-lived and all visible traces of it have now disappeared.



**6.2.1 Above: Pembina Branch during the 1950 flood**

April 1950, the CPR "SOO Line" rail link is threatened at Emerson. Crews dumped thousands of yards of gravel along the track to maintain the last line into Emerson. On April 30, 1950 the tracks gave way; train service was cut and not resumed until May 27, 1950. (Source: Arnaud *Through the Years, 1974*, by the Arnaud Historical Committee, page 336.)



**6.2.3 Above: Railways and siding locations in southeastern Manitoba**

The numbers between the sidings indicate the distance in miles between sites. Ten miles was considered the maximum distance a farmer could travel with horse and wagon on a return trip in a single day; thus most sidings were less than ten miles apart. (Source: *Canadian National Railways Synoptical History* by A.B. Hopper and T. Keramey, October 15, 1962. Copy in HRB files. HRB Map #094.)

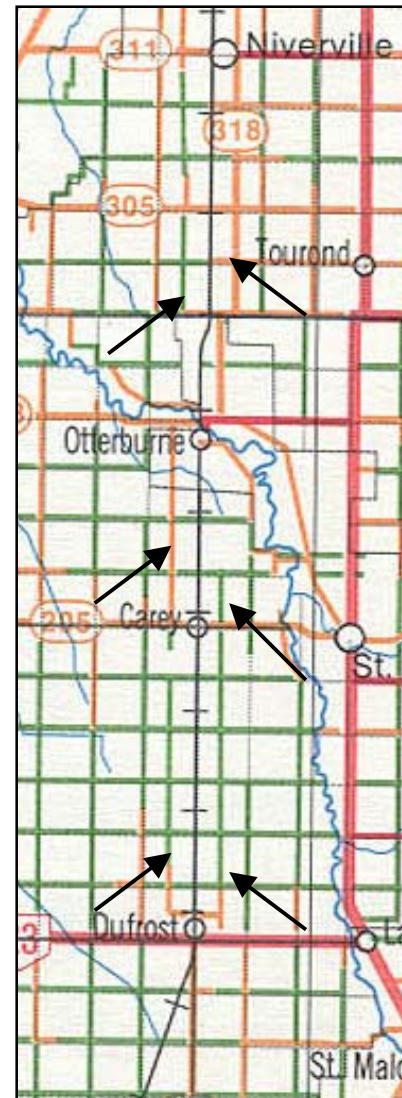


6.2.3 The CPR Pembina Branch.

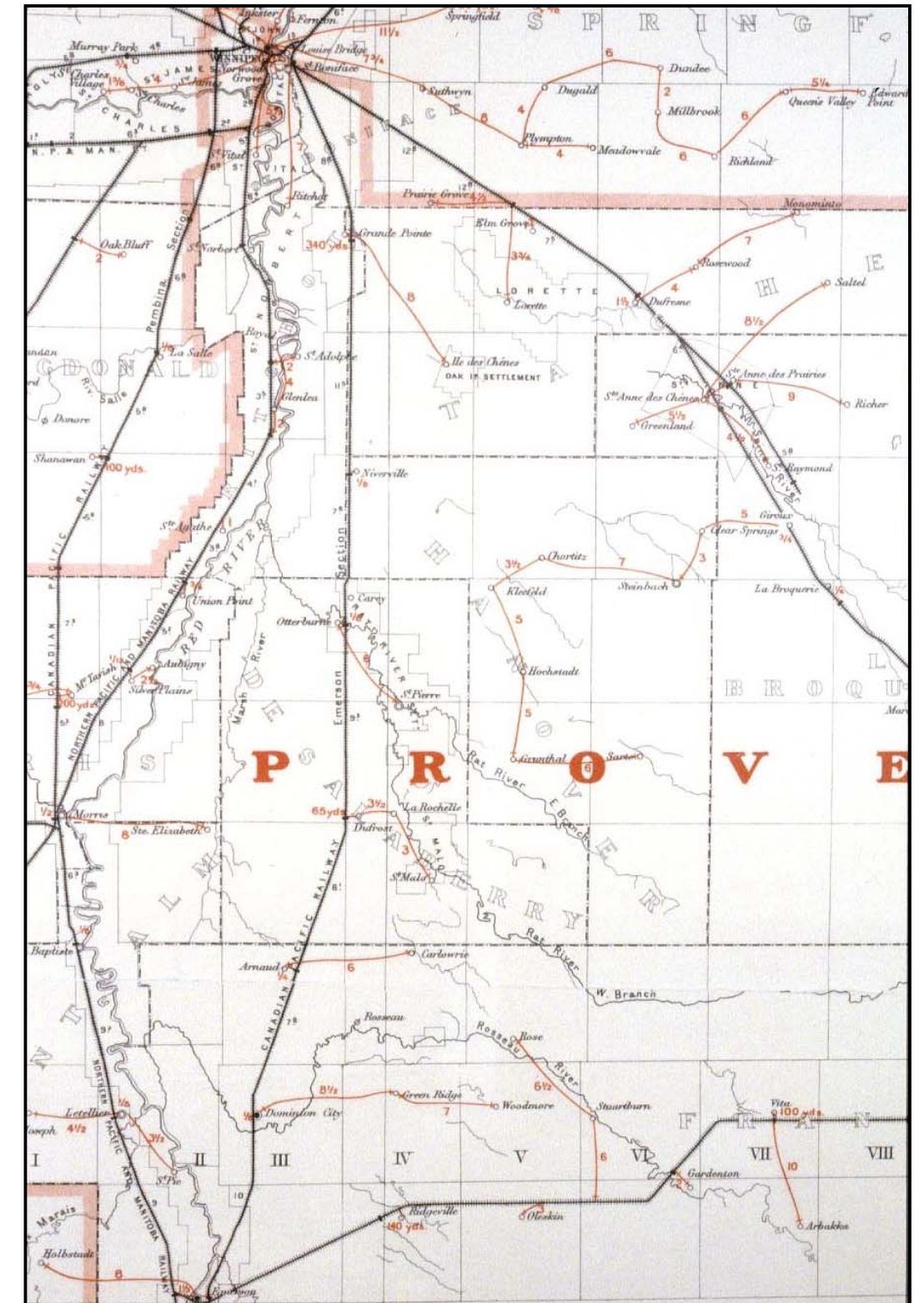
The first operating railway in Manitoba, and thus all of western Canada, was not the transcontinental, which came to be known as the Canadian Pacific Railway, but rather the branch line built from the United States to Pembina and completed late in 1878. Its construction was a prerequisite to the building of the CPR mainline, because it provided a supply route for the materials necessary to construct the western portion of the transcontinental. The railroad ran from St. Boniface to Emerson and Pembina, connecting with the US railway terminus at St. Vincent, Minnesota. The last spike on the railway was driven in the town site of present-day Dominion City, on December 3, 1878, and the first regular train to travel the new line arrived in St. Boniface one week later. The first locomotive on the line was the Countess of Dufferin, which was imported by riverboat and barge by builder, Joseph Whitehead, to use in his contract to construct various sections of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Manitoba. With the completion of the Pembina branch line a continuous rail link was established between Winnipeg and Eastern Canada. Consequently the Red River valley quickly filled with homesteaders and investors, and the entire region experienced a major economic boom. However, because the federal government of the day levied a high import tariff to protect eastern manufacturers and suppliers, the Pembina branch line was never able to become the vital economic link with Minneapolis and Chicago that it might have been, had free trade existed. By 1883, the boom had burst and the value of the line was reduced to that of just another branch line.

Geography played an obvious role in the building of the CPR Pembina Branch line. The east side of the Red River was selected as the route of the railroad, over the more-settled west bank, for two reasons. First, the terminus of the American line running to St. Vincent, Minnesota approached the Red River from the southeast. As well, Mr. Whitehead's CPR mainline contract consisted of the section between Winnipeg and Kenora. Thus, by keeping all construction activity on the east side of the river he avoided the huge expense of having to bridge the Red River. This was likely a very astute move, considering the expense and political fallout resulting from the first railway bridges over the Red in both Winnipeg and Emerson. Geography also played a role in selecting the route between Emerson and St. Boniface. The fledgling community of Roseau Crossing (later known as Penza, and finally Dominion City) was apparently chosen as the site for crossing the Roseau River because the river channel at that location was narrow with high, stable banks. Thus, constructing the approach and bridge span was a relatively easy task compared to the other, wider, sections of the Roseau River 'valley'. As well, after crossing the Roseau River, the railway was angled 8 km (5 miles) to the northeast before returning to its due north course, in order to avoid the low marshy land and many tributaries bordering the Marsh River.

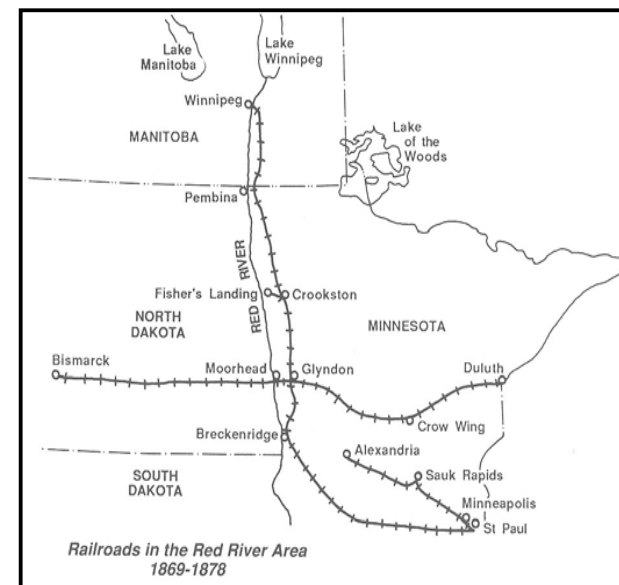
An additional point of interest is the 45-km (28-mile) section of the Pembina branch located between Dufrost and Grande Pointe. This section was deliberately constructed within the 99-foot (30-metre) road allowance located between townships three and four east. To stay within the road allowance, it makes a slight route adjustment at the second correction line. This appears to be the only instance in Manitoba where a railway line was deliberately built upon section road allowance, at least for any considerable distance. As a result, the adjacent municipal roads along this stretch of track had to be routed through the middle of the adjacent sections rather than along the road allowance proper, resulting in some of the section roads in the area being only a half mile apart (.8 km) instead of the usual full mile (1.6 km) between sections.



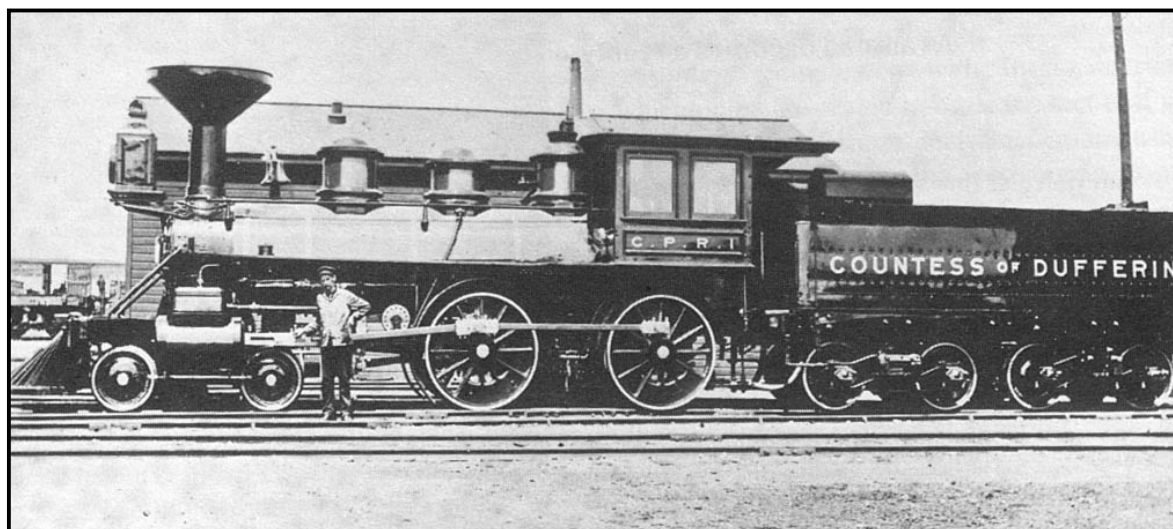
6.2.5 Above: Effect of the Pembina Branch on the local road network in the Dufrost and Niverville areas. Note the road development on the half-mile lines in areas adjacent to the track.



6.2.7 Above: Railways & Post Offices. Detail from a 1909 postal route map showing railway lines in the region south of Winnipeg. Note the short spur line in the Ste. Anne area. Two similar temporary spur-lines existed in the Dominion City area for a short time. As with most other goods and services, the mail was distributed throughout the countryside by the railroads. The mail delivery routes are indicated on this map in red and include the distance in miles between the various postal outlets. Note the ethnic basis for most of the rural delivery routes. (Map Title: no title. Source: PAM, # H3 614.2 gmd 1909 sheet 1. HRB Map 014.)



6.2.6 Above: Railways in the Red River Valley 1869-78 (Source: A River Runs North, page 27. HRB Map #091.)



6.2.4 Above: First Locomotive. The Countess of Dufferin was the first locomotive used in western Canada. Retired in 1910, it is now housed in the Manitoba Railway Museum in Winnipeg. (Source: Arnaud Through the Years, 1974, by the Arnaud Historical Committee, page 336.)



## 6.0 Infrastructure Development

### 6.3 Bridges and Ferries

The Red River and its many tributaries often posed significant barriers to overland transportation in the study region. Initially, simple level crossings were used in locations where the river was shallow with a firm bottom. The Red River was a major barrier and only during low water levels could a cart or wagon simply ford the river to the other bank. Even to cross the smaller Assiniboine River, from the Red River Settlement near the Forks, one had to travel to present day Charleswood to effect a safe crossing. Fords or crossing locations were common and well-known landmarks for many years, particularly along the Pembina and Crow Wing trails.

It was not long after the establishment of the Red River Settlement in 1812 that various forms of boats and barges were constructed to cross from the western 'settled' side of the Red River to the 'wild wood lots and hay-lands' of the eastern side. By the 1840s, cable-connected river ferries were becoming common along both the Red and Assiniboine rivers. Early river ferries were generally privately operated on a toll basis. However with the development and growth of the local municipal governments, the river-ferry business became a municipal responsibility and service. By the 1960s, the provincial highways department had taken responsibility of most of the province's ferry sites. The 1940 provincial highways map indicates nine ferry crossings between Winnipeg and Emerson, with Morris providing the only bridge crossing along that stretch of the Red. After World War II, Manitoba, like most other provinces, entered a period of rapid growth and infrastructure development and bridges soon began to replace the river-ferries. By 1967 only the St. Adolphe ferry was operating. Currently, the only operating river ferry in Manitoba is the Stockton ferry on the Assiniboine River near Glenboro.

The smaller Seine, Rat and Roseau rivers provided less of an obstacle to bridging, and bridges were more common along these watercourses than ferries during the early decades of the last century. Many of the first bridges were small and of straightforward wood construction. They were easily swept away or damaged during times of high water. During the 1890s and 1900s, timber frame and steel truss bridges were constructed in several locations. The first stone and concrete bridges were constructed between 1900 and 1914. During the 1920s, concrete arch bridges were the norm, and often attractively designed. Beginning in the late 1950s, many of the earlier types of bridges were replaced with simple flat deck versions which were better suited to the increasing size of motor vehicles and farm equipment. When viewed in sequence, the development of bridges can tell volumes about change and progress during the twentieth century. They are excellent showpieces of past cutting-edge design and construction techniques. The study region is blessed with a variety of surviving early bridge sites that should be viewed as potentially significant heritage resources. For this reason, the Historic Resources Branch and Transportation Branches are currently coordinating their efforts to identify and preserve the most significant examples.

Currently, six of the region's early bridges have been designated as municipal heritage sites under The Heritage Resources Act. These are the only bridges in Manitoba protected as heritage sites. One other, 'Beeche's Bridge' near Cartwright, was a beautiful example of an early steel truss bridge, but a lack of resources and local opposition from farmers on having the bridge declared a heritage site resulted in its eventual removal.

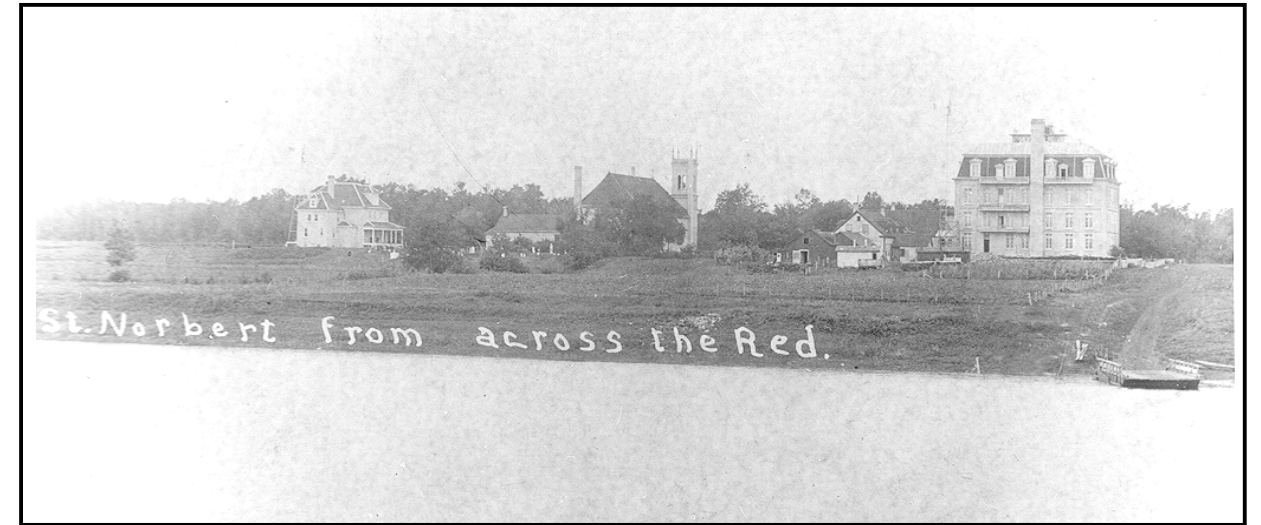
Sites significant for their portrayal of themes related to ferries and bridges:

1. former St. Adolphe ferry
2. Dominion City Timber Truss bridge - municipal heritage site
3. Stuartburn Timber Truss bridge - municipal heritage site
4. South Branch Jordan River concrete bridge - municipal heritage site
5. North Branch Jordan River concrete bridge - municipal heritage site
6. Piney Road concrete arch bridge - municipal heritage site
7. Senkiw School cable suspension bridge - municipal heritage site.

#### 6.3.1 Right: Ferry locations on the Red River 1940

Detail from a 1940-41 Provincial Highway map showing seven ferry crossings on the Red River between Winnipeg and Emerson. (Map Title: Manitoba Highways Map for 1940. Source: PAM 614.3 gmbd series 3 1939-40. HRB Map #055.)

6.3.2 Right: St. Norbert Ferry View of St. Norbert from the east bank of the Red, showing the ferry and major community structures, c.1900. (Photo: Provincial Archives of Manitoba.)



6.3.3 Above: St. Adolphe Ferry during spring high water in 1974

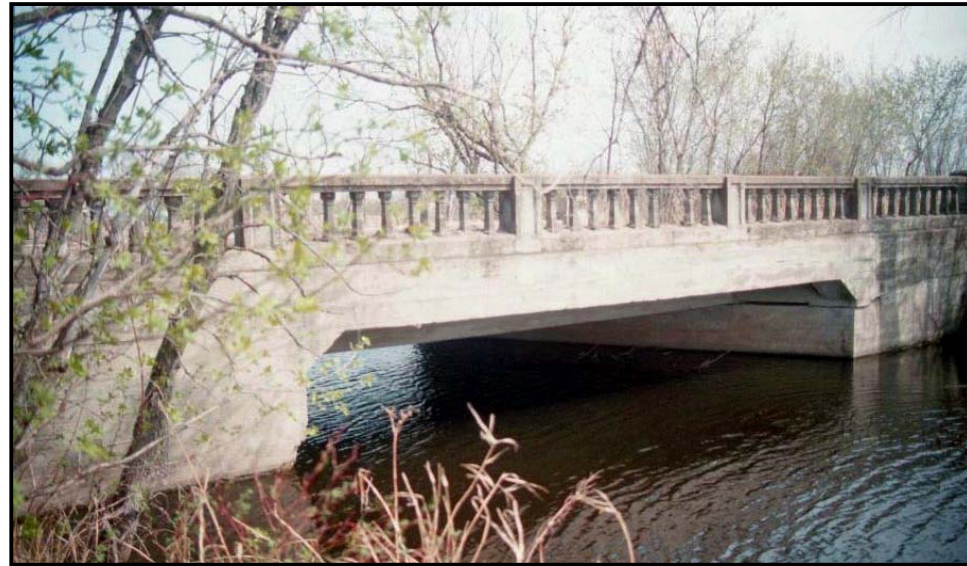
The last river ferry to ply the water of the Red River was the St. Adolphe ferry. It survives and can be visited, but sits unprotected and slowly weathering near the banks of the Red River in St. Adolphe. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



6.3.4 Above: Pontoon Bridge

St. Jean Ferry incorporated into a temporary pontoon bridge during autumn low water levels c1934. (Photo: Provincial Archives of Manitoba.)





**6.3.5 Left: Concrete Box bridge spanning the Jordan River near Greenridge**  
Local contractor Fred Esterby constructed this modest but attractively designed concrete culvert-style bridge for the R.M. of Franklin in 1920. Bridge construction in Manitoba during the 1920s often included decorative elements, such as the molded concrete balusters and railings on this example, which were not evident in the designs of earlier or later constructed bridges. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**6.3.6 Above: Multi-arch steel truss bridge over the Red River at Letellier**  
(Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**6.3.8. Above: The Senkiw School Suspension Bridge**  
One of only a handful of suspension bridges remaining in Manitoba, this structure was constructed around 1934 by area residents using old agricultural equipment components. It replaced an earlier cable-car apparatus which area school children used to cross the Roseau River to attend the nearby Senkiw School. Designated a municipal heritage site by the R.M. of Franklin in February 2002, there are plans for its rehabilitation and incorporation into the Trans Canada Trail which passes through the study region. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**6.3.7 Above: Modern flat-deck steel-beam and concrete-pier bridge over the Red River at Morris** (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**6.3.9 Above: Concrete-arch bridge spanning the Seine River at Ste. Anne**  
Constructed in 1921 and known locally as the 'Piney Road Bridge', this structure was designated a municipal heritage site by the Rural Municipality of Ste. Anne in July 1987, and was the first bridge in Manitoba to be designated a heritage site. It is the only surviving concrete arch bridge in southeastern Manitoba. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)



**6.3.10 Above: Timber truss bridge spanning the Roseau River at Gardenton**  
Constructed in 1918, this Howe truss wooden bridge is one of only two surviving examples of this bridge type in the study region. It was designated a municipal heritage site by the R.M. of Stuartburn in February 2002. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)

**6.3.11 Right: Trans Canada Trail Bridge**  
Local representatives of the Crow Wing Trail section of Manitoba's portion of the Trans Canada Trail inspect a newly completed bridge over the Rat River, near St. Malo during the summer of 2002. A separate pedestrian bridge was necessary since most Manitoba Highways bridges are not designed for, and therefore not insured for, pedestrian use. (Photo: Historic Resources Branch.)

