

History overview of the R.M. Arlington No. 79

By Reeve Don Lundberg

The first permanent residents of the RM inhabited the Chimney Coulee Historic Site where there was a Metis wintering village up to the 1870's. After the Metis abandoned this site, following the disappearance of the buffalo on the plains, a Hudson Bay Trading Post was established by Isaac Cowie in 1871 and 1872. According to Hudson Bay Company records Cowie bought large numbers of Plains Grizzly and wolf hides.

After Cowie abandoned the post in 1872, it sat vacant until an N.W.M.P Detachment was established in 1876 to monitor Sitting Bull and his Sioux as they travelled between Wood Mountain and Fort Walsh after coming to Canada after the Battle of the Little Big Horn. The N.W.M.P Post was closed in 1887 at which time it moved to the present Eastend Townsite.

The First Certificate of Title was issued on January 23, 1906 to the Hudson Bay Company on Section 08-07-21 which is the section just North of Eastend, which is now owned by Nancy Wills and Family.

The first title issued to an individual was on August 22, 1906 to Dan Pollock on a quarter just North West of where Howard and Gail Bock now live.

After that through 1908 – 1910 the flood gates opened with large numbers of settlers arriving to homestead. One of the very first families to arrive was the Sam Smith Family from Wyoming. They settled just one mile north of here in 1900 after arriving here in a covered wagon, but for some reason he did not receive his Certificate of Title until 1911. For those of you who remember Bill Smith, he was born in that covered wagon on the way to that homestead in the Spring of 1900.

The first formal organization of this present R.M. occurred when the Local Improvement District No. 79 was organized and the First Meeting held January 3, 1911.

Taxes in the early years were always hard to collect and many people worked off their taxes doing roadwork. As late as 1958 in his Annual Report Ray Ballentine reported current year tax collections at \$83,252.00 or 79% which they found encouraging. In 2012 we collected nearly 5 million in taxes with over 99% being current so things definitely improved.

Education tax on land was always a contentious issue. As far back as the 1920's at S.A.R.M. Conventions there were resolutions asking for change. All were ignored for the next 80 years. Things finally came to a head in 2005 with the Education Tax Revolt where many RM's including No. 79 withheld the Education Tax for nearly a year. I think we withheld nearly \$900,000. Major changes began in 2010 and continue.