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The Icelandic Canadian

Volume XXX, No. 3

Winnipeg, Canada

Spring 1974

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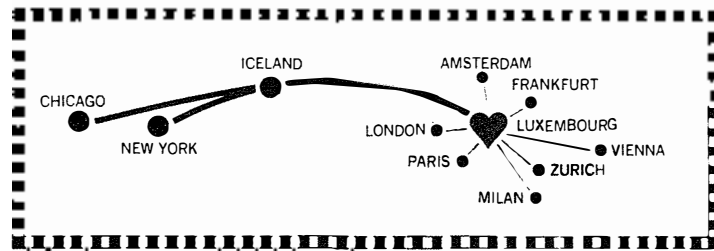
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EDITORIAL

The Winnipeg Centennial

by W. Kristjanson

This year the City of Winnipeg celebrates its one hundred years of history. Next year the people of Icelandic descent in Manitoba will celebrate the centennial of their arrival in the Province, in Winnipeg, on October 11, 1875, and at Willow Point on the 21st of the month. For virtually one hundred years the history of the Icelandic people in Winnipeg has been a part of the history of the city.

When Winnipeg was incorporated and when the first Icelandic settlers arrived, on the Red River stern-wheeler *The International* and the flatboats in its tow, the population of the city numbered some 2,000. Perhaps upwards of fifty of the first Icelandic party remained in Winnipeg when the main party proceeded north and by 1879 their number had increased to some 500-600.

Icelandic newcomers at first made a humble but essential contribution to the economic life of the city. They were employed mainly in casual manual labor such as sawing wood, loading fire-wood on the river steamers, and digging sewers. Some were employed at the Brown and Rutherford lumber mill, the source of many pieces of lumber for the buildings of Icelandic Shanty Town on the Hudson's Bay Company flats, east of Main Street and between Broadway and Water Street. A few were clerks in stores and others soon became skilled carpen-

ters. Many of the women were employed in domestic service. By the Winnipeg Boom of 1880-1882 several were actively involved in the hectic real estate speculation of that time.

With the passing of the years, the Icelandic people became actively involved in the various other phases of city life, in business, education, medicine, law, scientific research, music, sports and athletics and public life. They helped to build the city.

Some specific events may be mentioned. Probably the first house built by an Icelander in Winnipeg was the one in Shanty Town, near Broadway, built by Fridrik Sigurbjornsson in 1876. As the flamboyant Francis Evans Cornish, first mayor of Winnipeg, in 1874, is remembered as a pioneer, so is Sigurbjornsson, from Iceland and the Icelandic settlement in Ontario, to be remembered as a pioneer. Arni Frederickson had a store and shoe repair shop at 403½ Main St., in 1879. He was city alderman in 1892. Sigurdur Antonius placed second in a 24-hour Go—as—you—please contest in 1879, covering 132 miles in the 24 hours. Some twenty Icelanders enlisted for active service in the North-West Rebellion of 1885, mainly from Winnipeg. The Icelandic Celebration of 1890 attracted considerable attention; at that time there were 3000 Icelanders in the city. Active in the Woman Suffrage movement before and after the

turn of the century was Margret Benedictsson, editor of the woman's suffrage paper *Freyja*, and at that time several Icelanders were prominent in the Good Templar movement. At the beginning of the century, shoemaker Magnus Smith was Canadian Chess Champion. Arni Eggertson, member of the city council in 1907, 1908, and 1917, played an important part in the promotion of City Hydro. In 1909 and 1910 Skuli Johnson and Joseph T. Thorson, students at Wesley College and Manitoba College respectively, proceeded to Oxford as Rhodes scholars. About the same time Drs. O. Bjornson and B. Brandson and others were on their way to eminence in the medical field.

In the Norris cabinet, commencing 1916, Hon. Thos H. Johnson was a key member and effective in social reform measures. Icelanders were well represented in World War I in the Winnipeg based battalions such as the 8th, 27th, 44th and 78th. Many paid the supreme sacrifice. In 1920, the Falcons of Winnipeg, Allan Cup holders that year, carried the Canadian emblem to victory in the Olympic hockey

games. Charles Thorson, originator of Bugs Bunny, was prominent on Walt Disney's staff. Together with their fellow Winnipeggers' people of Icelandic origin endured the searing experience of the Depression of the 1930's. Alderman Paul Bardal was at that time the administrator of relief in the city. In the period 1925-1963, Dr. Thorvaldur Johnson of the Dominion Laboratory of Plant Pathology on the University of Manitoba campus conducted rust research that saved the farmers of the West millions and won for him international recognition.

Indicative of the the growing social unity of the multi-racial population of the city, neighbors may be and have been Canadian-born, English-born, Danish-born, Icelandic-born, Polish-born, Ukrainian-born, and German-born. Good neighbors and good friends all. The accelerated rate of racial inter-marriage is a yet more vital example of the process of racial integration and the development of a Canadian people in the cosmopolitan city of Winnipeg, now celebrating its one hundred years of history.

The Icelandic Canadian regrets to announce the death of two devoted members of the magazine staff, Hjalmur F. Danielson and John V. Samson. Hjalmur Danielson was Business and

Circulation Manager from the time of the founding of the magazine, in 1942, until 1968. John Samson was his successor. Biographical accounts are featured in this issue. —Editor.

HJALMUR F. DANIELSON



Hjalmur F. Danielson

When a man lives to enter the tenth decade of a life that is active and productive almost to the end, he is bound to leave his mark along the way.

Hjalmur Danielson, who passed away in Winnipeg last February 21, at the age of 91, will be remembered for the rich and varied contributions he made to his community, his work and to the special culture that helped shape his character.

Veterans of two World Wars, who took to farming in Manitoba under the federal government's Land Settlement Branch, remember him as a knowledgeable and trusted consultant. Others remember him for his writings and other work in related fields. All who knew him remember him as a

happy, genial, well informed gentleman who could converse about a great variety of subjects, but most happily about Icelandic and English literature, especially the old classics, which he deemed far superior to the modern product.

Born in Iceland, Hjalmur came to Canada with his parents at the age of twelve, and had already acquired a taste for Icelandic literature, which he cherished and cultivated all his life. He grew up in the Shoal Lake community near Lundar, Manitoba, and received his early education there and where he was early an active community worker. He enrolled in the University of Manitoba and graduated in agriculture with a B.Sc. degree in 1915. He was employed as an agricultural representative with the Manitoba government for less than a year before enlisting in a Field Ambulance of the Canadian Army. He served overseas for three years. On his return to Canada and subsequent discharge from the armed service in 1919, he took a position with the Federal Government as a Field Supervisor of the Soldier Settlement Board, later the Land Settlement Branch, with headquarters in Arborg, Manitoba. In time his district came to include the entire Manitoba Interlake area. At Arborg he met and married a young school teacher, Hólmsfrídur Johnson, and there the couple's only son, Baldur LeRoy, was born.

During a brief period as stenographer in the Department of Veterans Affairs, following World War Two, this writer handled some reports that Hjalmur wrote in the course of his

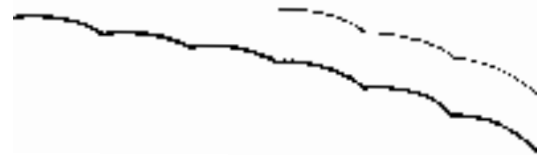
work, and now, well over 25 years later, remember them for their perceptiveness, concise wording and clear style of writing.

Although Mr. Danielson remained in this post until his retirement in 1947, the family moved to Winnipeg in 1939, and soon became effectively active in the community. Mr. Danielson was a member of the Canadian Legion and Mrs. Danielson an active worker in the I.O.D.E. Both belonged to the First Lutheran Church. They were members and active supporters of the Icelandic National League and among the earliest members of the Icelandic Canadian Club. Hjalmur

was chief organizer of the quarterly magazine, The Icelandic Canadian, its business and circulation manager for twenty-five years.

He was an avid reader, who in the process of following unusual trails, sometimes made unusual discoveries. He did much research on ancient Irish history and wrote several articles on the subject, which were published in Canada and in Iceland. He wrote informative articles on a variety of subjects, contributed a number of items to the Icelandic Canadian, such as a lengthy article on Iceland's Golden Age of Literature.

Caroline Gunnarsson



GOOD NIGHT

by Guttormur J. Guttormsson

Stillness reigns. — The winds are sleeping.
 All our world is bent on keeping
 Tryst with night, whose wings are sweeping
 From the west each ray of light.
 Dusk, a soft and silken cover
 Over all is seen to hover
 In its readiness to cover
 All the drowsy world, — Good night.
 Earth, — a restful bed inviting
 All her tired to sleep. — Good night.

Translated by Jakobina Johnson

JOHN VICTOR SAMSON



John V. Samson

May 26, 1909 — February 7, 1947

John Victor Samson, the business manager of the Icelandic Canadian magazine, passed away in Winnipeg on February 9, this year. Until the last weeks before his death he had been in good health and active in his work.

John was a native of the City of Winnipeg, where he came to serve as alderman and member of both the Police Commission and the Board of Parks and Recreation. He was the descendant of Icelandic pioneers in Manitoba. Among his ancestors in Iceland was Jón Samsonarson, an outstanding statesman in his country. Therefore, one may say that John's abiding interest in public affairs, as well as his willingness to serve his com-

munity, were, at least in part, inherited.

John's career as a printer began in the later 1920's with Ólafur S. Thorgeirsson and Co., and in 1930 with Viking Press in Winnipeg. In 1949, he and his brother-in-law, bought the Viking Press and changed its name to Viking Printers. Their firm grew to be a successful printing house, and it still remains one of the centres of Icelandic-Canadian publications. In addition to his work as manager of the Viking Printers and previously mentioned duties of public office, John had his own insurance agency, was a member of several cultural and business societies, and worked tirelessly for various Icelandic-Canadian organizations, where his sound guidance was always greatly valued.

John became involved with the magazine from the time it was founded. He and Sveinn Oddsson, then a compositor at Viking Press, were consulted as to the size, shape, and how the advertising should be handled. From that time on, John's advice was sought on publishing matters, as well as being the printer. He became the Business Manager when Hjalmur Danielson resigned from that position, in 1968.

There are many reasons why John Samson was held in high regard by his friends and fellow citizens. He possessed a pleasing personality, and his refined sense of humour never failed to have a salutary effect on

everyone around him. He was an unassuming individual with a strong sense of duty who felt that honest work should carry its own rewards without loud words of praise or publicity. But even though he did little to publicize himself, his personal qualities were immediately recognized by all who

came to know him. These same people will remain grateful for having had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of John Samson, a man who has now left them with pleasant memories and a good example to follow.

Haraldur Bessason



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REMINISCENCES

Stephan G. Stephansson (1853–1927)

Translated by Axel Vopnfjord

Part IV.

MISADVENTURES IN THE PROMISED LAND

(Continued from the Winter issue, 1973)

The Lord permitted Moses to view the promised land from a mountain top in the land of Moab, but not to go over thither. But the great Hebrew prophet was spared the frustrations and midadventures that awaited us almost immediately upon our arrival in our New World.

Having eaten our breakfast in haste, we landed at Quebec City at 7:00 a.m., August 25, 1873. Not knowing that the members of the crew were obligated to carry our luggage ashore, we personally proceeded to do so. At the Customs Office to which our belongings had been conveyed we were met by Paul Thorlaksson, a man of good will who was to render invaluable assistance to many a confused and desperate member of our group. Those of us whose destination was Milwaukee were required to renew our passport at a cost of \$2.75 per capita. Many of those who had made arrangements to go to Ontario now wished to go to Milwaukee, but Paul's efforts on their behalf were of no avail. The Canadian government informed him that charges would be laid against him should he recommend that they do so.

The necessary arrangements having been made to proceed to our destinations, we ventured to explore the

city, where some of us went to a restaurant for a meal which cost each one of us 25 cents. The conductor of the train had previously made arrangements whereby the meal would be ready for us upon arrival. At the restaurant it was "every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost". There was a mad rush for the limited number of seats, followed by a raucous voice shouting, "25 cents please". One got the impression that the crowd consisted of barbarians rather than civilized people. But for a kindly Englishman who helped me to get food, and a sympathetic Danish student who lent me his knife, I would not have been able to satisfy my hunger. On returning to the train a colleague and I found that there were no empty seats in the coach reserved for the Icelandic immigrants. We then went to a coach occupied by English-speaking passengers, who obviously resented the intrusion of ignorant (in their opinion) foreigners, but we couldn't have cared less, and adamantly persisted in successfully refusing to leave.

Our train dashed like lightning across the Promised Land. I thought how much more fortunate I was than poor Moses, denied entry into the land flowing with milk and honey.

What a pleasure it was to sit placidly in the coach watching the beautifully forested landscape, the verdant fields, and the comfortable-looking, cozy homes flit past my window! Life has its pleasurable interludes. A couple from Eyjafjord in Iceland, Kristinn and his wife, Katrin, left the train at Cobourgh where shortly afterwards their child was born. At Toronto the Ontario-bound group left the train in such haste that we could not bid them farewell. It was sad to witness the departure of so many fine people, many of whom we would never see again.

Such is life:

"Ships that pass in the night,
And speak to each other in passing.
Only a signal shown,
And a distant voice in the darkness."

Early next morning, August 28, we crossed the border into the United States at Port Huron. We were ordered out of our coaches while the customs officials inspected our luggage. Everywhere the standard cost of each of the following was 5 cents; a cup of coffee, as well as each of glasses of milk, beer, or wine. At long last the inspection of our belongings was completed. The only customs duty collected was 10 cents for each eider-down quilt. That evening we Icelanders were ordered out of our coaches to spend a part of the night in a hostel provided by the railway company for that purpose. Later that night the train that was to take us to Grand Haven on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan arrived. Words cannot des-

cribe the plush interiors of the coaches to which we were assigned, the padded seats with their gilt coverings! Overwhelmed by all this splendor, I fell into a deep sleep from which I awakened the next morning refreshed and high-spirited. happily anticipating what awaited me that day. Alas, the vanity of human expectations! Little did I suspect that misadventure would befall me that day.

Some time after I awoke at 6 a.m. the next morning I became aware of a strange commotion in the coach. People, apparently terror-stricken, were frantically rushing out, some screaming, some cursing. Why hadn't I noticed this before? I must have been in a reverie. I grabbed my shoes, hat, and valise which I had laid aside before I went to sleep, and rushed like lightning to the nearest door, but could not get out because of the frenzied throng that blocked the exit. I then hurried to the next coach, but I have only a vague recollection of what happened at first after arriving there. The heat was unendurable; the perspiration was dripping from me in rivulets; the coach was permeated with steam; visibility was practically zero. All this happened almost instantaneously. In desperation I threw myself out of the window landing on my feet, an action that in all likelihood saved my life. There I stood semi-conscious, without shoes, my face and hands bloody, one of my socks scorched, the sole and toe of one foot badly burned. In my state of stupor I was scarcely aware of those around me, some of them as afflicted

as myself, some engaged in rescuing people from the coaches. As in a dream I heard someone shouting that the coach was burning. Paul Thorlaksson, a staunch pillar in times of adversity, warned us that it was not safe to remain where we were standing, and that it would be advisable to go behind the train. We promptly heeded his advice. Some of our belongings were saved, largely through the efforts of Stefán from Ljósavatni (Lake of Lights), who like the boy on the burning deck, remained in the coach for some time in order to throw out as much of our luggage as he could. A doctor who had arrived on the scene recommended that we be taken to a neighboring town called Muir. There I was taken to a house along with other Icelanders. A girl in that house asked me if any of us spoke English. I foolishly answered, "No, Madam", which convinced her that I had some knowledge of the language. Thereupon she led me upstairs to act as an interpreter to a badly injured Swedish girl. My condition was such that I could not be of much help, nor was she capable of answering my questions. (Translator's comment: It appears that St. G. St. had some knowledge of Swedish). A doctor dressed my wounds and gave me a liberal portion of an alcoholic drink. Every effort was made to cheer us up. The lady in charge was as considerate as a loving mother. Shortly afterwards the Swedish girl died. Previously her mother and a sister had died. The poor father who survived had lost his wife and two chil-

dren. A German woman and her infant child were crushed between two coaches; both died.

A series of mishaps that led to the accident occurred during the night. A wheel under one of the coaches had broken. The train could not move while repairs were being made. The neighboring stations were promptly notified. The nearest station agent sent a signaler, named Brown, to warn an oncoming train. The lazy lout of a signaler answered with curses when admonished by his superior to go far enough to be able to warn the train in time. Due to reduced visibility on account of fog the engineer did not see the signal in time, but he was able to reduce the speed of the train from 30 miles per hour to 10 miles per hour before it crashed into the rear of our train, ruining two coaches. Had he not been able to do so, all the coaches would have been ruined and most of the passengers probably killed. The newspapers reported that Brown had been arrested, and that there would have been no accident had he obeyed instructions. Some of the Icelanders in the rear of our coach had seen the approaching train. They had warned the rest of us before jumping to safety. The Icelanders most seriously injured were Eirikur Hjálmarsson, a lady named Herdís, her son, Kristján, Sigurbjörg from Mjóadal (Narrow Valley) and myself. Eirikur and I had the long convalescence. The others recovered rapidly.

After a short sojourn at Muir, we resumed our journey to Grand Haven,

arriving there at 10:00 a.m. August 30. At 11:30 p.m. we left there in the steamboat Ironsides, across Lake Michigan, arriving in Milwaukee at 6:00 a.m., August 31. We the injured, had a long wait on the boat while Paul Thorlaksson was trying to persuade the railway officials to provide and care for us until we had fully recovered. While we were waiting, a resident of Milwaukee, Thorgrímur Laxdal, came to visit us. After a long wait Paul returned with a vehicle in which we were driven, at his expense, to the home of an Icelander named Harold, where all the Icelanders stayed for a few days. (Translator's comment: It appears that Paul was unable to per-

suaude the railway authorities to assume responsibility for the accident. How times have changed!) After a nine-day stay at Harold's, eighteen of the Icelanders left Milwaukee. Having remained there for fifteen days, I left for Stoughton.

Was this misadventure a harbinger of the shape of things to come in the Promised Land? No! A thousand times "no"! This was a land that "sober-sided Freedom chose". Here opportunities and challenges beckoned. I had survived my ordeal of fire relatively unscathed. In no way did it dampen my youthful exuberance.

—End of series

MARVIN I. NORDMAN

Deputy Minister of Public Works

Marvin I. Nordman has been appointed Deputy Minister of Public Works in the Manitoba Government. He has been Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Works since February, 1971.

Born at Cypress River, Manitoba, he worked for a major oil company in 1941-42 before joining the R.C.A.F. He served as a pilot instructor at Gimli and Souris. Mr. Nordman returned to the oil business in 1946, joined Canadian National Railways in 1947, and re-enlisted in the R.C.A.F. in 1951. He was stationed throughout Canada, in France and at Tyndall, Florida.

On retiring from the Armed Forces in 1970, Mr. Nordman joined the Manitoba government as a program co-ordinator and was appointed assistant deputy minister the next year.



Marvin I. Nordman

From "RASMUS B. ANDERSON, — an Autobiography"

THE ICELANDERS

In 1856, Lord Dufferin, who afterwards became governor-general of Canada and viceroy to India and who occupied nearly all of the most important British ambassadorships, including St. Petersburg, Constantinople, Rome and Paris, while yet a young man, made a voyage in his yacht to Iceland and Jan Mayen. In Iceland he was most royally entertained. On his return he followed the coast of Norway, stopping at various points. This journey led him to make a fairly thorough study of Iceland and its interesting history, and of this visit he wrote one of the most charming books of travel ever produced.

In this work he takes occasion to tell of the discovery and settlement of Iceland and of the causes that led to that tremendous emigration from Norway. He also touches briefly on the discovery and settlement of Greenland, and then gives an outline of the voyages to Vinland. The title of his book is, "Letters from High Latitudes". It overflows with good will to Iceland and to the Icelanders.

This book has been printed in many editions on both sides of the Atlantic. While Lord Dufferin was governor-general of Canada an American publisher asked him for permission to reprint this very popular book. He graciously granted this permission, but said that he would like to give the book a revision. This was in the '70s. He wrote to me and said that he had

read my "America Not Discovered by Columbus" and "Norse Mythology" and asked whether I would be willing to revise for him his "Letters from High Latitudes." A new edition was about to be published and he was too busy a man to undertake the revision himself. He knew that his book contained mis-spelled names, some wrong dates and other minor errors. I answered him that I would be delighted to render him this service. I said I would correct and eliminate such faults as it was possible for me to find, adding that I did not regard myself as any authority. He sent me a copy of his book. I gave it as thorough a revision as I was able and returned it to him. For the pains I had taken he sent me his hearty thanks and a draft for \$300. This was my first big money for literary work and it made me feel rich.

From that time on my relations with Lord Dufferin were most cordial. He repeatedly invited me to visit him and be his guest at the government mansion in Ottawa. But as I have more than once stated my life was at that time exceedingly strenuous and my means very limited. I continued to postpone this visit until it became too late. Lord Dufferin left Canada for higher posts of honor in the old world. Still he now and then found time to write me a short letter. He was particularly pleased when he found that I too had been called into the diplomatic service. He then ad-

dressed me as his "dear colleague".

But the heading of this chapter is "The Icelanders", and I have apparently drifted away from my topic. Let me return to it. Sitting in my chair and dictating this to Mr. Barton I shall not be able to give accurate dates, nor is this necessary. It all happened during the '70s. Even before the '70s a few Icelanders had emigrated to America. They were of the working class and found employment here and there among their Norwegian cousins.

The first one of these Icelanders whom I saw came to our house in 1871. He was working on a farm near Madison. His name was Bergman and he came from Akureyri in the north part of Iceland. I had not learned old Norse or Icelandic at Luther college. In my study of the discovery of America and of Scandinavian mythology and history I became most painfully conscious of my need to understand Old Norse. I got text books from Norway, Sweden and Denmark and studied these books most industriously, and now you may imagine how glad I was to get hold of an Icelandic who could actually read and understand my old Norse books. I made him read aloud to me; then I read aloud to him. I do not know whether it was a blessing or a misfortune that this Icelandic knew neither English nor Norwegian. He had been sent to me by Madison people because they could not converse with him and they thought I might be able to do so.

This Icelandic brought three or four of his countrymen to see me and we soon all became fast friends. I looked upon these sons of Iceland with wonderment and they all had to help me to read correctly and to talk Icelandic which is practically the same today as it was in the days of Leif Erikson. It is the only vernacular that

has continued more than a thousand years with practically no change of utterance. When you talk with an Icelandic you are hearing the same words, the same accents that you would have heard had you listened to Harald Haarfager at the battle of Hafersfjord in 872.

Later, in 1871, I received a prolonged visit from the Icelandic poet Jon Olafsson. He was a fugitive from Iceland. At about this time, that is to say, in the latter part of the '60s and the beginning of the '70s the relations between Iceland and Denmark were exceedingly strained. The Icelanders were clamoring for home rule. They wanted their own parliament, a demand which the Danes later very wisely granted. I may add here that Iceland with its scattered population of about 70,000 has absolutely no illiteracy. Although there are no schools outside of Reykjavik, the capital, in the south, and Akureyri on the north coast, the children are taught to read and write by their parents in the long winter nights and there is not to be found in the whole island a single man or woman of normal mind who is unable to read and write Icelandic, while a large percentage of the population can read Danish and English and some of them even German and French books. It is also a remarkable fact that Iceland has no executioner and hence a person guilty of a capital crime cannot be executed. Not a criminal has been executed in the past one hundred and fifty years.

Jon Olafsson was charged with high treason. Though but a young man in the early '70s he was very precocious and had already written enough to make a substantial volume. Among other things he had written a patriotic song breathing defiance to Denmark, and it was for this fact that he was to

be arrested and tried for treason. He escaped to Norway in a Norwegian tramp vessel. From Norway he made his way to America and when I first heard of him he was working on a farm in the Norwegian settlement called Muskego in Racine county, Wisconsin. I invited him to visit me and I remember he went with me to Moscow, Iowa county, Wisconsin, where we both spoke on the 17th of May.

Young Olafsson was highly educated. He was well versed in the ancient classics and spoke fluently both Danish and English. With him I took a strenuous course in Icelandic, reading long parts of the eddas and sagas and also of modern Icelandic literature. He remained with us about two weeks and then returned to his work in Muskego. His career in this country was most remarkable. He had conceived the idea that it would be a splendid thing for the Icelanders to emigrate in a body to Alaska. In emigrating from and abandoning Iceland they would escape Danish tyranny and besides find better soil and a finer climate than in Iceland. But how to carry out this idea, that was the great problem. Prof. Willard Fiske of Cornell University and I equipped him with letters to Washington, but after getting there he would have to fight his own battles. After he got to the seat of our government he elbowed his way to members of congress, to United States senators and members of cabinet and even got an audience and interview with President Grant. He told all of them that he wanted the 70,000 people in Iceland to leave the homes they and their forebears had occupied for a thousand years and settle in Alaska. He made it appear that the idea was perfectly practicable. And what happened? Jon Olafsson received an

appointment from President Grant to take two other Icelanders with him and proceed at once to Alaska to select a site for a settlement. A United States revenue cutter was placed at his service and provisions made for the necessary travel in Alaska.

Jon Olafsson and his companions made the journey. Of the trip and of the Alaskan country in general Olafsson wrote in Icelandic a ponderous report. It was a large octavo pamphlet of, I think, not less than 200 pages. This was ordered printed by the government in an edition of several thousand copies. In the meantime Jon Olafsson through diplomatic correspondence had received full pardon for his treasonable poem and so could return to Iceland unmolested.

The president of the United States sent him to his native land with a cargo of his pamphlet on Alaska. On his arrival home he at once began to agitate in favor of emigration to Alaska and distributed his pamphlet. But neither his preaching nor his pamphlet had any other effect than to make him the butt of ridicule. His audiences hissed him and he was, by way of disparagement called "Jon Olafsson Alaska-fari," i.e. "Alaska-farer". The whole enterprise was a colossal failure and fell flat. Not a single Icelandic was found willing to give up his Iceland home in exchange for one in Alaska.

Jon Olafsson remained in Iceland, started a newspaper and lived there until in the early '90s when he again visited America, living most of the time in Chicago and then a short time in Madison, Wis. Here he edited a Norwegian paper published by O. S. Buslett. Then he returned to Iceland where he still lives.

As above indicated Iceland obtained home rule in 1874 and Jon Olafsson

has for many years been a leading and very influential member of the Icelandic parliament.

The settlement of Iceland by people from Norway on account of the tyranny of Harald Haarfager dates from the year 874, and in 1874 the Icelanders celebrated their millennial. The King of Denmark attended the celebration in person and brought with him as his millennial gift a new constitution for Iceland providing for home rule. The celebration was attended by many distinguished visitors, among whom was Bayard Taylor from the United States. Willard Fiske of Cornell in the east and I in the west made a large collection of books which we sent to the library at Reykjavik in honor of the millennial. No other people in the world appreciate books more than the Icelanders. On his return home Bayard Taylor published his very readable book on his journey to Iceland and I made all this aid me in the campaign I was conducting to get the Scandinavian languages, including Icelandic, recognized at the University of Wisconsin.

Icelanders came to America in increasing numbers. Early in the '70s we find a whole colony located on Washington Island outside of Green Bay. Quite a number had located in Milwaukee and others had found their way into various Norwegian settlements on both sides of the Mississippi. Among these there were bright and ambitious young men who wanted to attend school and such were assisted by the Synod ministers and sent as students, first to Luther College, and thence to St. Louis to study theology. I kept one of these young men by name Thorlaksson, who afterwards became a pastor in Canada, in footwear dur-

ing his course at Decorah and then St. Louis. I had promised to take care of his "understanding."

Then, I think it was in 1874, Luther College added an Icelander to its faculty. This was Jon Bjarnason. He was a graduate of the college at Reykjavik, in Iceland, a gifted man and ripe scholar. Unfortunately, he was found by Rev. V. Koren of the Synod and by his colleagues in the faculty to entertain theological views that were not strictly orthodox. He was thought to be too liberal. This caused friction and at the end of the school year he lost his position.

With me it was still the petit done and the undone vast in Icelandic, as in many other things, and so I invited Prof. Bjarnason and his wife, Laura Pjetursdottir, to come and make their home with us for a year or pending his finding some other position. Laura was a daughter of the organist at the Reykjavik church, a musician of note. She too was an able musician and an expert on the guitar. She assisted Mrs. Anderson in doing the housework, while Bjarnason gave me a rigid course in reading, translating and speaking Icelandic and in assisting me in various ways in my literary work. He helped me prepare for publication my "Viking Tales of the North". Before the year was out he got a position as editor of a Norwegian paper, published in Madison by Lars J. Grinde, but Jon and Laura continued to live at our home. The next spring I got him a position on "Skandinaven" in Chicago. He worked there a short time and from there was called to be editor in chief of "Budstikken" in Minneapolis. Then he went to serve as one of the pastors of the Icelanders who had settled in Manitoba where he has done a great and noble work in building up the Lutheran church

among his countrymen. He is now the president of the Icelandic Synod in Manitoba and North Dakota and the editor of its official organ. A few years ago I had the pleasure of visiting Jon and Laura in their splendid home alongside of their magnificent church in Winnipeg.

I now want to add by way of self-praise that through Jon Bjarnason, I became so proficient in Icelandic that

when soon after my arrival in Copenhagen as United States minister the Icelanders connected with the university and others in that city gave me a reception I was able, to the great and agreeable surprise of my entertainers, to respond to Prof. Finnur Jonsson's address in their own vernacular. Prof. Jonsson in his address to me not suspecting that I would understand Icelandic spoke in Danish.

MORE ABOUT THE ICELANDERS

I have already mentioned the Icelanders in Manitoba. How did they get there? In most of what I have already stated I have intended to lead up to the answer to this question. It was largely with this end in view that I introduced Lord Dufferin to my readers. I have shown how deeply he was interested in Iceland, its people and its history. I have given an account of Jon Olafsson's and President Grant's abortive enterprise to get the whole population of Iceland to emigrate to Alaska.

As stated, the Icelanders continued to emigrate in increasing numbers from year to year. But they had failed to find a large body of unoccupied land where they could settle together and preserve their Icelandic language and traditions and maintain schools, churches and newspapers. I believe it was sometime in the summer of 1878 that three middle-aged Icelanders visited me to discuss this matter with me. We considered North Dakota, the Pacific coast and Texas, where suitable large tracts of land might be available. But the fact was that the Icelanders had no money to buy even the cheapest land on the market. Then it suddenly occurred to me that Lord Duf-

ferin was Governor-General of Canada; that in Canada there were large tracts of unoccupied land; that Lord Dufferin was a friend of the Icelanders and that I knew him. I therefore suggested that these three Icelanders should go to Ottawa and find out what Lord Dufferin might be able and willing to do for them. I gave them a letter to the governor-general.

Lord Dufferin received them most royally as if they had been ambassadors from some foreign potentate. He entertained them at the government mansion. His fertile mind soon found a way. He selected a strip of land some thirty miles in length and perhaps ten miles in width on the west side of Lake Winnipeg in the province of Manitoba and in a message to the Canadian parliament he recommended that this strip of country be set aside for an Icelandic settlement and that the land be sold exclusively to Icelanders and on very easy terms of payment. The recommendation was adopted with alacrity by the parliament.

Here the Icelanders would find a climate not unlike what they had been accustomed to in their native land; they would find the soil immensely more generous than that of Iceland, and be-

sides they would have the sea, that is, Lake Winnipeg, on the side facing the rising sun. This lake would supply their tables with fish.

In the space of a few years several thousand Icelanders located on this land. Take your map of Manitoba and you will find in this little American Iceland a number of names of Icelandic origin, such as, Icelandic river, Geysir, Árnes, and the chief town Gimli, the heaven in Norse mythology. Besides maintaining churches and schools and an official organ of the church, they published, in Winnipeg, two ably edited political papers, and several Icelanders have had seats in the Manitoba parliament and one is now serving as a member of the cabinet of Manitoba.

From Manitoba a number of Icelanders have drifted down into Pembina and Cavalier counties of North Dakota, and Icelanders in this state have found their way into the North Dakota legislature. There is a large body of Icelandic students at the University of North Dakota, and in Grand Forks and other cities. They are ably represented in the legal and medical professions. Then there is an Icelandic congregation in and around Minneota, Lyon county, Minnesota. Several Icelanders have found employment in some of the most prominent American libraries. Both Canada and the United States have abundant reason to be proud of their Icelandic immigrants.

Perhaps one of the most interesting Icelanders that has landed on our shores in recent years is A. H. Gunnlaugsson. There were two brothers, one of whom had gone to Paris, lived and died there as a prominent writer on economic subjects. The father of Gunnlaugsson was a high Danish official in Iceland, but it is of the Gunnlaugsson who came to America that I am speaking. As a young boy in

Iceland he was captivated by the Catholic religion. Catholic missionaries came to Iceland and took the young man with them to Rome where he was placed in the Propaganda College and served as an acolyte or altar boy to the pope. He showed a wonderful talent for languages and learned in a jiffy all the leading ancient and modern tongues, Hebrew, Sanskrit, Greek and Latin, Italian, Spanish, German, French and English. The plan was that he was to be made a missionary to Iceland to bring the Icelanders back into the fold of the Catholic church. But young Gunnlaugsson lost his faith in the Catholic religion and ran away from Rome. In course of time he became settled in London where he enjoyed the intimate acquaintance of Lord Beaconsfield, became the tutor of Queen Victoria's daughter Princess Christian, and did editorial work on several of the English quarterlies and some of the most prominent British monthlies. But his health failed him; he suffered from a nervous breakdown. He imagined that he was being persecuted by the Jesuits and other Catholics for having deserted the propaganda school in Rome. One would think that he must have read Eugene Sue's "The Wandering Jew". At all events he considered himself in great danger of being waylaid and assaulted or thrown into some dungeon.

In this state of mind he became unfit for work and he fled to America, coming first to Chicago. Here a prominent Dane, Prof. N. C. Frederiksen, took an interest in him, furnishing him with food and clothing, both of which he was greatly in need, and then brought him to Madison and left him, so to speak, on my hands. I was supposed to be the friend of all Icelanders. I got him a room at the corner of Carroll and Johnson streets,

in Madison. We soon got classes of young ladies for him to teach. He taught the daughters of General Lucius Fairchild and some of their friends, and in this way he managed to make a living. But he still had spells of suffering from his suspicions of being persecuted and this interfered very much with his success as a teacher. I gave him some literary work to do and he helped me translate Horn's history of Scandinavian literature. Then he decided to return to Chicago where he eked out a miserable existence and finally moved to Tacoma, Wash., where he still lives and where I met him a few years ago.

This tall, slender, emaciated Icelandic was no less interesting in his general appearance than for his remarkable history. Though poor as Job's turkey he was proud and independent as a millionaire, and he liked to boast of how Disraeli depended solely on Albert H. Gunnlaugsson for his foreign policy. The Englishman never ventured to take a step without Gunnlaugsson's advice and consent. All in all he was a unique specimen of humanity.

Of course I met a number of distinguished Icelandic scholars in Copenhagen and there I received a visit from

Iceland's greatest poet, Matthías Jochumsson. He has honored me with a beautiful poem in which he lauds me for what I have done for Icelandic literature, history and mythology and for the interest I have taken in the Icelanders. While in Copenhagen I was invited to visit Iceland, to be entertained by the Icelandic people, but unfortunately the time never became opportune.

I had one opportunity to serve an Icelander in Iceland. Every year there came to the west coast of Iceland a fleet of American fishermen from Gloucester, Mass.; but there was no American consul resident in Iceland. An Icelandic merchant on the west coast of the island became ambitious to become American consul. He came to see me about it, as Iceland was included in my jurisdiction as minister. I recommended his appointment to our state department at Washington and this worthy Icelander was duly made U.S. consular agent. As a souvenir this consular agent made me a present of the largest and clearest specimen of Icelandic spar that I have ever seen. I still have it and cherish it as one of my choice treasures. It is a thing of beauty in itself and represents to me the capstone on my connection with Iceland.



TRAGEDY AT A LAKE WINNIPEG SHORE

by John S. Matthiasson

It looked like a good place
 To launch our new canoe.
 Gentle waters, clean sand
 And a small pier.

As Carolyn and I stood
 On either side of the car,
 And removed the strappings,
 We noticed the men in the water.

"We may have to maneuver between divers",
 I said in irritation,
 Angry at the activity
 Which disturbed the still surface.

Before we had taken the canoe from the car roof
 A woman drove up beside us.
 One more disturbance.
 We silently hoped that she didn't own the pier.

She stopped her car, and,
 After rolling down her window,
 Asked,
 "Have they found the body?"

She then explained to us
 About the child who had gone for a late swim
 The evening before,
 And hadn't returned.

As the three of us talked,
 My childrens' questions ignored,
 We all watched the men
 As they formed themselves into a long line.

They grasped one another's hands,
 And walked out, deeper and deeper,
 Breaking the line of foam in front of them,
 And feeling pain, for the day was cold.

The woman turned her car around
 And continued on to her meeting.
 Carolyn and I re-tied the canoe to the car
 And went on to find another launching spot.

BEOWULF WALKS AGAIN

by Betty Jane Wylie

My mother never taught me Icelandic because then she wouldn't have been able to gossip with her mother and sisters in my presence when I was a little girl. Spending every summer of my young life in Gimli, I got so I could understand most of what they were saying anyway, but I never let on. By the time my grandmother Tergesen died, God love her, I was in university and studying Anglo-Saxon and **Beowulf** and that helped. When the minister conducted the private family service in Icelandic I understood him as much because of the Anglo-Saxon as because of my skimpy Icelandic. For example, the word for Lord in Anglo-Saxon is **dryten** and in Icelandic it's **drottinn** and Lord knows whether I spelled them right.

The point is, I always had this almost mystical feeling for the language as well as for the attitudes of the people. So much so that when I took my Masters degree in English, my major was Twentieth Century Poetry and my minor was Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse. I translated **Beowulf** for the second time and a couple of the Norse sagas as well. My pronunciation is impeccable, though I've never had an old Norse assess it.

When rock music first came out I remember commenting in my writer's journal on the relationship between the sprung rhythm of Anglo-Saxon poetry and rock rhythms. So all those pure beautiful words and sounds and images and rhythms had been running

around in my head like pre-historical sounds when I chanced to have an interesting party conversation with a young New York director. Talking about northern literature he said he'd love to see a musical based on **Beowulf**. **Beowulf**! Next to Rhet Butler, one of my favourite characters, though for vastly different reasons. I'd never want to marry **Beowulf**.

That chance remark began a correspondence as the young director and I discussed by mail the idea of **Beowulf** set to music. Alas, the y.d. fell by the wayside but my roots, you see, were much deeper. I spoke to a composer I knew about the idea. Victor Davies of Winnipeg had never heard of **Beowulf**. When he did, he wished he hadn't. At first, I sent him a few lyrics and he read a translation. Nothing happened. At first. .

But **Beowulf** gets to people and tunes began humming in his head. He phoned me and asked me if I had any more lyrics. It just happened that I had. I had just finished what may or may not be the final draft of a play (it has never been produced) and took a holiday by writing the libretto of **Beowulf**. Like the farmer's axe with three new heads and two new handles, that is what we have today, only with more changes. In passing, just to demonstrate my devotion to this Norse thing, I'll tell you that the play I referred to is a giant thing based on the story of Signy in the **Volsungasaga**. Norse literature turns me on.

So Vic started writing music and I started changing lyrics and we have worked together for almost two years now, producing what is virtually an opera. That is, there is no spoken dialogue (well, about six lines). It is all music. In all, we find we have written thirty-seven separate songs. Although some of them are in a rock medium, the piece is far richer and more varied than mere rock. Vic is a trained composer with a degree from Indiana University, home of musicians and swimmers, and he brings a wide range of knowledge and love to his music. One other thing about his music: it is hummable. Very satisfying.

Our *Beowulf* is about to become a recording. Shortly after this magazine goes to press we will begin recording in Toronto and Winnipeg to produce a triple-record album slated to be released in the fall under the Daffodil label in Canada. After that, we hope to help it to a theatre production but that will take more money than we now have. First things first. Know any Norse angels?

The basic themes of *Beowulf* are Norse themes: better to struggle and die than never to have tried; a man's deeds shall live after him therefore let him live and die honourably. Though the ethic is uncompromising, there is a certain joy in the struggle and pleasure in the virtuosic exercise of youth and strength. I think we have captured not only the statement but the feeling of this in our *Beowulf*.

The character of *Beowulf* himself is a little like a Scandinavian Li'l Abner intent on doing his duty as he sees it. This man does know his own strength,

and uses it well. He is, as a character sings about him, too good to be true, in short, an epic hero. But as I said, I'd never want to marry him. Heroes don't make good husbands. Look at James Bond.

I have a theory about Canadian art and literature. It is simply that we are a northern people. That sounds too simple but it is a telling answer to those who claim that our culture is no different from that found in the United States. We use the same brand of toothpaste and floor cleaner but I mean something different. W. L. Morton in his book *The Canadian Identity* puts it like this:

"What is meant is the existence in Canadian art and literature of distinctive qualities engendered by the experience of northern life. These are a tendency to the heroic and the epic, to the art which deals with violence . . . That is the art of the hinterland . . . To the heroic and the lyric, the satiric is to be added. For northern life is moral or puritanical, being so harsh that life can allow little laxity in convention. But the moral affords the substance and creates the disposition for satire . . . In all these qualities, Canadian literature has of course affinities with both Scottish and Icelandic literature. They give promise of a literature, and an art, as idiomatic as it is significant universally."

Does that sound like anyone you know?



JOHN S. WALKER:

PART III

Hecla Island Expropriation Inquiry

(Conclusion)

OPINION ON THE QUESTIONS IN ISSUE

On the question of whether the intended Expropriation is reasonably necessary Objectives of the Expropriating Authority

At the time of this hearing, the Government owned, by far, the vast majority of land on the Island except for a few relatively small holdings. This hearing was complex and involved difficult decisions, but none as difficult as the conflict between the various cottage owners and the Government over the future of the Gull Harbour.

AS TO THE COTTAGERS

The Parks Branch has planned an intensive use of the beach area in Gull Harbour. It has plans under way for the construction of numerous large parking lots, comfort stations with sewage facilities, and a program has been commenced to clear the waters in the lagoon to make them more suitable for swimming. The only thing that is missing in this extensive program which is underway is the actual beachfront land itself.

Unfortunately, this beachfront land is owned by individual cottage owners.

The Gull Harbour cottagers pointed out other beaches that were available on the Island and argue that it was not "reasonably necessary" that the Government take theirs.

The question for me to decide is a concise one. Is the intended expropriation reasonably necessary for the achievement of the objectives of expropriating authority?

The beach facilities under construction are obviously useless without a beach. The Government showed that it was now locked into its development program at Gull Harbour and that considerable public monies have already been spent. For this reason I conclude that an expropriation of land in the Gull Harbour area is reasonably necessary.

When, in this report, I conclude that the intended land is reasonably necessary for the achievement of the expropriating authority, it is for these stated reasons.

The argument was made that private land left in a park area may become very valuable due to the increment that may result from the public expenditure of money all round it.

However, let us carry those thoughts a step further. Governments are always

proceeding with projects of some kind —buildings, different types of centres for service in a community and even roads. When a government expends public money on these various purposes, it is also aware that people along the side of these developments gain an economic benefit. Even when a mere change of zoning is allowed on a property, the value of that property may very well sky-rocket. Our Government has not yet taken steps to stop others from profiting from this unearned increment in land values. Whether it is right or wrong—it is going on all the time.

How can it be said this is wrong for the Hecla Islanders and therefore they should not be allowed to keep their land? The Islanders say that this gain is not what they are after. Their wants are basic, not speculative. How can we fairly use this argument against them? There are other parks in this province in which there is private land. There does not appear to be any attempt to take away any increased value that may result to those holdings.

The question is therefore put "Why the Hecla Islanders?" "Why are they to be treated any differently from anyone else in society?"

. . . I cannot say that it is reasonably necessary that the Parks Branch own that land which is presently being used for the homes of the people on the Island.

Another consideration is that the Parks Branch is still considering condominiums on Hecla Island. If this

were allowed, then there would be a type of private ownership introduced into the Parks policy.

AS TO THE PERMANENT RESIDENTS:

On the other hand, the question has to be asked whether a public park cannot exist even though residents who have made objections are allowed to retain their land.

On this question there is no doubt that however convenient it may be for the Government to have title to all the land in the park in its own hands, it cannot be said that expropriation is reasonably necessary for the achievement of the objectives of the expropriating authority.

The expropriating authority could still, and without any difficulty, accomplish all its objectives within the land already owned.

When I conclude that an expropriation is not necessary, it is for these reasons.

On the question of "Whether the Intended Expropriation is Fair"

I am directed by the Expropriating Act, not only to consider whether the expropriation is reasonably necessary for the achievement of the objectives of the expropriating authority, but I am also directed to inquire into whether the intended expropriation is fair.

I have tried to consider fairness from several aspects. Fairness, as relat-

ing to the objectives of the expropriating authority.

I conclude the objectives of the expropriating authority are fair objectives (to develop a public park). I have considered the public interest as well as the interests of private owners.

I have also considered fairness, in terms of the end result as between the expropriating authority and the individual being expropriated. It was in respect to this latter consideration that a serious problem was evident.

Because the basis for due compensation under the new Expropriation Act is market value, the people of Hecla are placed at a disadvantage to other people in Manitoba who have their homes or farms expropriated.

Market values, measured in dollars, have been and still are low. The market value of Mr. Benson's land was apparently \$14.00 per acre, but he would never have sold it for such a low amount.

Comparable sales will show that the market value of land on the Island at the present time is only a few dollars per acre.

Market value may be a fair approach if the expropriated person can then turn around and buy other comparable property in that same market. If he cannot, then an injustice will arise.

This is not possible in the case of Hecla Island. The Government owns, or will own, all the remaining property on the Island and there is no more for sale.

An expropriated person will therefore be forced to go to the mainland or some other place to buy a similar home or holding, but he then moves into a different type of market.

On the mainland there has been a higher demand for land than on the Island, and consequently a higher market price for a similar dwelling or building has resulted on the mainland.

This is one of the fundamental complaints of the Islanders and the cottagers. They were not offered enough compensation to be able to re-locate themselves in accommodations that will be at least equivalent to that afforded by the land expropriated.

The usual approach of the Land Acquisition Branch has not been acceptable to them.

The Land Appraisal Commission did raise the amount of the compensation offered to the land holders, but it did not satisfy them.

To those who remain on the Island, their location has a special value — living is cheaper in many ways — food is plentiful. (The Islanders have eaten fish all through the mercury scare, and joke about their own personal mercury levels.)

Their homes and property are as valuable to them as comparable properties on the mainland and other locations on Lake Winnipeg.

The dollar value of their homes and cottages is not high, but they do not measure the value to them in market dollars.

These Islanders (and there were many) who left during the difficult times, sacrificed or abandoned their homes to leave. Those who remain, did not want to sell at market prices which have become deflated as a result of the absence of demand.

It is true that under Section 26 (2) of the Expropriation Act, an owner who is expropriated is entitled to get, in addition to market value, an amount necessary to enable him to acquire other land that will afford him residential accommodation at least equivalent to that offered by the land expropriated. First of all, it must be noted that this section is limited to an owner who occupies land for his residence. It does not apply to summer cottages, or to persons who have farms. This is a result of the wording of the section.

Furthermore, the standard of housing is quite adequate to the needs of the Hecla Islanders. But equivalent would hardly be appropriate to enable the dispossessed freeholder to feel as comfortable in those new surroundings as he is now.

Section 26 (3) of the Expropriation Act introduces the concept of compensating an owner who intends, in good faith, to re-locate in some other place, on the basis of the reasonable cost of equivalent reinstatement, but only where the owner can prove that "there is no general demand or market

at Hecla Island, although a depressed one.

Counsel for the Crown at the hearing suggested that the objections as to value should be raised before the Queen's Bench Judge when the time for valuation comes. That, in my opinion would be futile. A Judge can only apply the law as it is enacted, and make his decision accordingly. A Judge would be bound to apply the formulas laid down in the statutes.

The Act unfortunately does not provide an equitable formula for compensating owners in a peculiar market such as that which has existed on Hecla Island.

I conclude, therefore that the intended expropriation of these peoples' properties in the absence of a more equitable formula is not fair.

I came to the same conclusion in the cases of the cottagers. The formula to be applied under the Expropriation Act, as it now stands, would not be a fair one, in my opinion.

Over twenty pages of Mr. Walker's Report that follow are being entirely omitted in this presentation. The basic question as to the fairness of the expropriation has been answered and space permits no more.

Several pertinent matters are dealt with in these pages and recommendations made.

The report concludes:
"It is hoped that if these recommendations are carried out the support of many of those who were affected by the expropriation could be regained".
—Ed.

THE 1974 ISLENDINGADAGURINN HONOUR PRIZE IN POETRY

The Icelandic Festival of Manitoba, Isleendingadagurinn, announces a poetry contest in connection with the Festival of 1974. The prize money is \$100.00.

The prize winner will be announced August 5, 1974, at the Icelandic Festival at Gimli, Manitoba. The prize will be presented in person to the poet or, if that is not possible, mailed to the winner.

Entries may be published for one time distribution only at the time the prize is announced but no entry will be published for commercial purposes without the consent of the poet.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY:

- * The contest is open to any individual whose ancestry is Icelandic.
- * Each entrant, by submitting a poem, acknowledges his assent to the conditions of the entry.
- * Each entry must be original, and unpublished on the date of submission.
- * Each entry must be typewritten, double spaced on one side of plain, unlined paper 8½ x 11 inches. Any clear copy is acceptable.
- * Entries must be postmarked between March 1, 1974 and June 1, 1974.
- * Poet's name and address, and title and first line of poem must appear on two typewritten 3 x 5 cards placed in a sealed envelope. Only title and first line of poem must appear on face of envelope. Title must appear on the entry.
- * No entry will be returned.
- * Entries must be addressed to W. D. Valgardson, 628 N. Main, Nevada, Missouri, 64772, U.S.A., — or —Box 1051, Gimli, Manitoba, R0C 1B0, Canada.
- * No more than three entries may be submitted by one poet.
- * Entries must not exceed 30 lines.
- * The directors of the contest reserve the right to withhold the prize.
- * Judges and directors of the contest will not enter into any communication whatever about the contest or individual entries.
- * Entries must be in English.

ARFURIN

Eftir Þorstein Erlingsson

Þú átt kannske frækna og fengsæla þjóð,
þér finnst kannske ólga þitt göfuga blóð,
er sástu' hana sigurför halda,
þar nábuinn látæki fjötraður sat,
sem föðurleifð varði á meðan hann gat,
er látinn var liðsmunar gjalda.

Þá ljómar um salina þjóðheiður þinn,
er þrekaði bandinginn leiddur er inn,
og þá er þér sigurinn sætur;
og veizlan í höllinni veglegri þá
og vínið þar bjartara skálunum á,
ef einhver er inni sem grætur.

En þú, sem að hefur í hjartanu blóð,
úr hrakinni, smáðri og kúgaðri þjóð
og eitrad á hörmungar árum:
Það knýr þig sv● fast, þegar arfurinn er
á einverustundunum réttur að þér
af minningum mörgum og sárum.

Þó holdið á örmunum þrútnaði þar,
sem þrælkaði faðirinn hlekkina bar;
Það harkaði' hann af sér í hljóði. —
En kvölin, sem nísti' hann, er nakinn hann lá
og níðingahnúarnir gengu' honum á:
hún brennur í sonarins blóði.

THE HERITAGE

Translated by Vilhjalmur Stefansson

It may be that yours is a powerful land,
It may be your heart swells with pride where you stand
When her armies come home from afar
With the man who has fought for his home while his strength
Could support him, but now has been conquered at length
Bound fast to our triumphal car.

Your fatherland's glory illumines the halls
When, loaded with fetters, the prisoner falls
On the threshold. Your triumph is sweet,
For you feel, at the banquet the gloom of his soul
Will brighten the shimmer of wine in the bowl
And lighten the tripping of feet.

But for you through whose heart surges blood from the veins
Of a people downtrodden and loaded with chains,
A nation that all men despise,
The trial is bitter when Memory's hand
Leads your soul through the barren and desolate land
And naught but shame meets your eyes.

When the chains that he bore made the muscles to swell,
And the sting of the lash brought the blood drops that fell
Where the father that cherished you stood,
The anguish that quivered and shot through his frame
Brought neither a cry nor a word; but the shame
Now simmers and burns in your blood.

The Centenaries Celebration Committee, Winnipeg

(1970-1980)

An open meeting of the Centenaries Celebration Committee was held at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, November 13, 1973, in the Parish Hall of the First Lutheran Church, Victor Street, Winnipeg. Some 48 persons were in attendance.

The Chairman, Dr. Paul H. T. Thorlakson, opened the meeting and reviewed briefly the objectives of the Committee to unite and co-ordinate celebrations and activities in this decade to celebrate the 1,100th year of settlements in Iceland and the 100th year of Icelandic settlements in Canada and the United States of America. The Chairman also remarked on the great upsurge of interest in Icelandic studies and culture that is evident recently.

Mrs. Ingibjorg Goodridge, the Committee's Project Secretary, read the list of projects, some of which have been completed, while others are being developed and some are still under consideration. The following is a list of all these projects:

1. Charter flight from Winnipeg to Iceland, July 3, 1974. Reported on by Mr. Stefan Stefanson.
2. Charter flight from Vancouver to Iceland in July, 1974. Reported on by Dr. Thorlakson.

3. A research project to secure and verify the names of the Icelandic settlers who arrived at Willow Point, near Gimli, in October of 1875. Reported on by Professor Haraldur Bessason who is in charge of the project. About 180 names have been verified.

4. The preparation of a bronze plaque to be presented to the Icelandic Cultural Corporation of Gimli in 1975. The plaque or monument is being designed by professor Gissur Eliasson and will contain the names of the early settlers who came to Willow Point. Reported on by Dr. Thorlakson with a sketch. This project is presently under study.

5. A suitable musical composition to commemorate the 100th anniversary. Reported by Dr. Thorlakson.

6. An anthology — an English language translation of prose and poetry by selected Canadian authors of Icelandic descent. Reported on by Dr. W. Kristjanson.

7. An anthology comprising English

language translations of poems, essays and letters by and to Stephan G. Stephansson, born in Iceland in 1853 and died at Markerville, Alberta, in 1927. Professor Haraldur Bessason.

8. The preparation of short biographies of prominent Icelanders in various fields of endeavour. Reported on by Mrs. Ingibjorg Goodridge.

9. The preparation of text books and visual aids for the teaching of Icelandic language and culture. Professor Gudbjartur Gunnarsson and Professor Haraldur Bessason.

19. The publication of an English language translation of the Old Icelandic Book of Laws. Reported by Professor Haraldur Bessason.

11. An English language translation of the history of the Old Icelandic Commonwealth by Jón Jóhannesson. Professor Haraldur Bessason.

12. Committee formed to compile and index a mailing list of at least

6,000 names of people of Icelandic ancestry in North America.

13. The possibility of a National Conference of people of Icelandic descent has been discussed.

14. Youth Exchange and Travel Committee. The Arborg community has made some arrangements. Reported on by Mr. Dori Stefansson.

15. An exhibition of works of art by Canadians and Americans of Icelandic descent. Letter from Mr. John P. Crabb.

16. A Centennial Book of Remembrance to be published about 1980 which will record celebrations and events occurring during this decade.

17. A special issue of Lögberg-Heimskringla will be published outlining the objectives of the Centenaries Committee and The Canada Iceland Foundation. This issue will also include the names and addresses of all known Icelandic clubs in Canada and the United States, etc., etc. Reported on by Dr. Thorlakson.



DR. BALDUR KRISTJANSON NAMED ASSOCIATE DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

The Manitoba government has announced the appointment of Dr. Baldur Kristjanson as the Associate Deputy Minister of Agriculture.

Dr. Kristjanson, who as Associate Deputy Minister of Agriculture, will serve as chief policy advisor to the minister and will be responsible for planning for both agriculture and rural development.

The premier said the appointment would strengthen both the planning functions and programs of the department. He said Dr. Kristjanson's duties would enable the new deputy, Willem P. "Bill" Janssen, to deal with administrative and program matters, as well as to help provide policy and planning advice.

Premier Schrever said the new appointee carries impressive credentials in his fields.

Gimli-born Dr. Kristjanson, at one time acting assistant deputy minister of the Federal Department of Agriculture, has been serving in Manitoba in two capacities, as chairman of the Economic Development Advisory Board and chairman of the Manitoba Milk Board. He is the son of the late Hannes Kristjanson and Mrs. Elin Thordis Kristjanson.

He has specialized in agricultural economics and holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Manitoba (1939), a master's from Virginia Polytechnic Institute (1941) and a doctor's from the University of Wisconsin (1949). He had served as an instructor at the University of Saskatchewan (1944-45) and as a professor at North Dakota State University (1947-55) before going to Ottawa for three years (1955-58), becoming head of the Canada Department of Agriculture's co-



Dr. Baldur Kristjanson

operative and credit unions branch. He spent two years as an economic advisor to the Government of Iran as he was a natural member of a Harvard University team, returning to Ottawa as secretary of the Resources for Tomorrow Conference, and later as acting assistant deputy minister.

In 1963 he came to Manitoba as executive director of the Manitoba Economic Consultative Board, through the efforts of the Progressive Conservative government. He was named deputy minister of the Manitoba Development Authority in 1967 and economic advisor to the premier the following year. After serving in Tanzania for a year, he returned to Manitoba in 1969 as economic advisor, and later assumed additional duties as chairman of the Milk Control Board. Dr. Kristjanson also is on the board of directors of three regional development corporations, and is a member of the Canadian Committee for Man and the Biosphere Program of UNESCO.

MATTIE HALLDORSON:—

MRS. KRISTIN JOHNSON

On the pathway of life one acquires friends from many walks of life, with different interests and opinions. It is interesting to reflect on the many personalities one encounters along the way, some fleetingly, others for a longer or shorter time. But all make an impact in one way or another.

One person who made a lasting impression on me was Mrs. Kristin Johnson. I feel the richer for having her as a good friend for many years.

Mrs. Johnson was a member of The First Lutheran Church choir for a long time. She was the librarian and spent hours cataloguing the music and keeping it in good repair. She was intolerant of careless handling of any music. From as far back as 1947 she made costumes for the Christmas Pageant at the church.

Over lunch one day with her daughter Eileen, Mrs. W. D. M. Stewart, she recounted the various hobbies her Mother had. Eileen described a Macrame purse, which must be just beautiful. To mention a few of her interests she mastered the making of pillow lace, made with a bobbin over a pillow. It is intricate work with the threads set on a frame for the design. Kristin demonstrated this work in a downtown store a few years ago. She also did oil painting, sculpture, which included a bust of Nikulas Ottensen, a Winnipeg pioneer. She was an excellent photographer and had a great number of slides among them over 4,000 of scenery and people from Iceland. She had a complete stamp collection with first covers included. She

pursued these hobbies with great enthusiasm, using the best of equipment and her recreation room was an art museum.

Mrs. Johnson was made an Honorary Life Member of the Winnipeg Camera Club and was a member of the Handicraft Guild.

Kristin drove an automobile until her death. As a matter of interest she was taking driving instructions and took her last defensive lesson ten days before she died.

In some little things she was perhaps careful of her money but in others she was philanthropic. She helped a number of people in need, some known and others unknown to the family. She was concerned about the young people who were having difficulty in pursuing their studies. I have heard that she gave two or three pianos to pupils who showed talent in the field of music.

Her husband, Guðmundur Julius, "Mundi Barber" as he was affectionately called, was very appreciative of her accomplishments in the pursuit of her hobbies. He owned and operated a flourishing business. Kristin was a good bookkeeper and she kept meticulous records of all expenditures, both in the home and the barber shop.

Guðmundur was the son of Bjorn and Guðrun Johnson and Kristin the daughter of Ketill and Soffia Valgardson of Gimli.

What great satisfaction Kristin must have enjoyed with her variety of interests and hobbies which filled many an hour of pleasure for her.



Joe Stefansson and a friend enjoying a moment of leisure

THE LEGEND OF JOE STEFANSSON

Joe Stefansson was a brother of the internationally renowned explorer, Vilhjálmur Stefánsson, who was born at Arnes, Manitoba, in the early days of the New Iceland settlement. Later the family moved to Saskatchewan to farm in the vicinity of Wynyard and Elfros. According to Mr. James Barnett, an elderly Welshman of the district, the Icelanders named Elfros, and at first the name was pronounced Elfrose or Álfarós. This lore is hard to track down, however. It is true, though, that the spinning wheel once owned by the mother of Vilhjálmur and Joe Stefánsson is now in the Museum of Western Development in Saskatoon, Sask., and greatly treasured. Mr. Barnett, said

that Joe Stefánsson was famous in a large area of the prairies for his long red hair, which he used to braid and wind around his head.

In early pioneer days Joe filed on a homestead near the site of the present city of Nekoma, N. D. He wore his long red hair in flowing waves. As a salesman of hair tonic, he travelled his territory by horse and buggy, but braided it and wound it around his head for cattle punching.

Mrs. Elizabeth Oakland of Grand Forks, North, Dakota, heard the legend of Long-Haired Joe and has written the verses below. With Joe on the accompanying picture is an uncle of Mrs. Oakland's husband,

When the wind whispered over the prairie
 Where the acres once rippled with grass,
 The thoughts of the oldtimers tarry
 On legends; to make the time pass.
 Long Haired Joe was a favorite subject
 When pioneer stories were spun.
 He filed on a claim near Nekoma,
 On the range where his cattle could run.
 In summer he herded for hire,
 At so much a head was the deal.
 Through whirlwinds, around prairie fire,
 How he and his pony would wheel!
 And sometimes he peddled hair tonic,

And users had only to wait.
 They did not find it ironic,
 To expect a well covered pate,
 Since Joe was a walking example,
 His flowing hair reached to his waist.
 Even braided and coiled it was ample
 For those with extravagant taste.
 Joe was not meant to be wealthy,
 He had not coveted fame.
 His brother, Vilhjalmur, earned glory,
 Made famous the Stefansson name.
 Yet Joe had a wit and a humor,
 He was generous, never a bore.
 Dropped the reins of his horse, never tied him,
 Said, "I like to be met at the door".
 Middle age found Joe growing restless,
 In Saskatchewan he chose to stay.
 Loneliness found him defenseless,
 He married his first love, they say.
 This story may have little merit
 But in lives of the brave pioneers
 Are the qualities children inherit,
 The fruit of the toil and the tears.

Elizabeth Oakland,

—Logberg-Heimskringla



THE FIRST CANADIAN CONFERENCE ON MULTI CULTURALISM

by W. Kristjanson

In October, 1971, the Prime Minister the Right Hon. Pierre Elliot Trudeau, announced in the House of Commons a new policy of "Multiculturalism"

The objective of the policy of multiculturalism is set forth in the following paragraph.

Programmes are designed to encourage cultural groups to share their heritage with all other Canadians . . . to make them aware of their cultural diversity.

A multicultural grants program was designed to assist second and third generation ethnic minorities to maintain and develop a sense of their own cultural identity, to assist new immigrants adjust to Canadian life, and to increase the sensitivity of the British and French Canadians to the advantages of a multicultural society. The federal government was spending approximately ten million dollars on multicultural programs in 1973. Projects funded have included festivals, television programs, Saturday schools, summer camps, literary clubs, archives, art exhibits, dance and music, travel, history, and translations, etc., Upwards of 500 groups have been funded. The National Ethnic Archives has been

created as a distinct unit of the Public Archives of Canada.

An important step in implementing the government's multicultural policy was the establishment of a Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism, May 17, 1973. This council, consists of members appointed by the Governor-in-Council for a term of three years, with the possibility of only one successive renewal. Its essential function is to provide a source of consultation to the Minister in the implementation of the multicultural policy.

Approximately 80 per cent of the councils membership is drawn from Canada's minority "ethno-cultural" groups. The remainder represent native, English and French communities. Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, of Winnipeg, has been appointed a member of this council. There are yearly national and regional conferences.

A further development of the government's multicultural policy was the holding of the first Canadian conference on multiculturalism at Ottawa, October 15 and 16. In conjunction with this gathering was a meeting of the Consultative Council. Including Conference and Council members, resource

personnel and workshop chairman, over 300 persons attended these sessions.

The conference was convened by Hon. Stanley Haidasz, minister of State Responsible for multiculturalism, and chairman of the conference was Senator Carl Goldenberg.

Icelandic Canadian members were Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, of Winnipeg; Dr. W. Kristjanson, of Winnipeg, representing the Icelandic National League, and Mr. Gustav Tryggvason, of Richmond, B.C., Treasurer of the Icelandic Canadian Club of B.C. Present was a person well known in the Icelandic community, Dr. Watson Kirkconnell, of Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

At the the opening session, Hon. Hugh Faulkner, Secretary of State, stressed that the English and French have much to gain from multiculturalism. Hon. Stanley Haidasz, Minister of State for multiculturalism, stressed that uniformity is not essential to unity. Tolerance and mutual respect of the individual citizen is the foundation of society. Senator Paul Yuzyk used a phrase that has often appeared in the *Icelandic Canadian*, "Unity in Diversity".

On the first day of the conference, which met in the old Union Station, now converted to such uses, six workshops assembled in separate rooms. On the second day there was a plenary session where all conference members assembled. There was provision for simultaneous translation of English and French over earphones at all the sessions.

I mention the six workshops with the possibility in mind that even the mere mention may stimulate thought and discussion.

1. The arts in a multicultural society. The theme was the encouragement of literature and the arts as a vehicle for cultural pride.

2. The attitude of youth to multiculturalism. The theme was the rejection of ethnic background by some young people and a deliberate search for their cultural identity by others.

3. Overcoming inequity. This referred to deeply entrenched barriers of prejudice and overt discrimination.

4. The immigrant in a multicultural society.

5. Language and culture retention.

6. The preservation of our multicultural heritage. The theme suggests museums, galleries, archives, libraries, and language publications.

In No. 6 workshop, to which I was assigned, some valuable suggestions were made and valuable information given. Also, following the sessions, I was able to make a brief visit to the National Ethnic Archives. I wish to mention specifically the courtesy of two staff members, Mr. W. Neutel and Mr. W. Senchuk.

The National Ethnic Archives has a program of making available to the public copies of documents of historical value. This includes records of

the early Icelandic settlements in Canada and it includes specifically the names of the 1875 settlers in Manitoba.

The archives will provide travelling exhibits for special occasions, as for the centennial of Icelandic settlement in Manitoba, 1975. It is understood that there must be a competent place for their care and display.

The importance of trained staff for archives and museums was stressed. There is real danger of deterioration of articles if not properly cared for including temperature and humidity.

Museums are becoming more and more competent to provide displays for schools. Also, in Winnipeg, thousands of students have visited the museum of Man and Nature, with the cooperation of the Department of Education.

People are urged to write in to the Public Archives for information and advice.

The importance of collecting documents, letters and photographs was stressed.

Archives collections could be the subject of M.A. and Ph.D. theses.

The stress should be on preserving traditions above artifacts. The emphasis is on "people".

In the plenary session, some projects were advocated which seemed to reflect a narrow ethno-centric outlook. Third language broadcasts were advocated. Carried to a logical conclusion, broadcasts in fifty different languages would scarcely be acceptable to the great majority of the C.B.C. viewers leaving out of consideration the expense involved.

Multi language departments within the provincial departments of education were advocated. This would lead to undue proliferation of staff. A more feasible, if more limited approach, would be the use of Department of Education Correspondence Branch lessons. The preparation of these could be farmed out.

To me a startling feature of the plenary session was a widely expressed feeling that there is marked discrimination against the peoples represented at the Conference in the matter of employment and career opportunities. Apparently we have some distance to go before we achieve unity in diversity.

An interesting feature of the conference was meeting and mingling with the people of numerous and varied racial origins. This was at the sessions, at meal-time, and at the evening social and entertainment events.

Also, it was a privilege to hear such speakers as Senator Carl Goldenberg and George Ignatieff, probably our most distinguished diplomat and Canada's representative at the United Nations.

The multicultural conference of 1973 was the first all Canadian conference of its kind. It was an achievement and worthwhile. A recommendation was brought forward for more adequate planning for another conference, and it is likely that another conference will be held this year. Such conferences will promote a better understanding by the people of different racial origins of each other and promote the cultural enrichment of our Canadian way of life, and promote Canadian unity.

BOOKS

by Gus Sigurdson

How well I do remember as a child
 The fascination that a book compiled
 When first my mother's tongue I learned to read —
 And later how the English books became
 Enchanted with this feeling, much the same;
 Opening worlds wide of beauty and wonder,
 Of daring deeds, adventure, blood and thunder.

I thrilled with poets on the printed page
 Of many nations—Guideposts of our age—
 Blazing their inner fires and casting light
 Into the dim dark dungeons of the night;
 Or painting in glowing colors the faces of flowers
 Who smile in be-jeweled beauty after showers
 Towards the God-like gleaming sun above,
 Like babes who dry their tears on mother love.

All these and many other things I found.
 In fact, most every thought of man is bound
 Somewhere within the pages of a book.
 Search and you shall find, if but you look.
 Every subject, every work of art,
 Every human feeling plays a part
 Upon the pages of the books we read —
 All bonds are severed, every slave is freed.

Taken as objects, books and how they're built:
 Hundreds of hours of human endeavour spilt
 Fondly and gladly into skilful toil
 By many minds who burn the midnight oil.
 Creating a product beautiful and fine —
 Scanning each page, and every printed line,
 All must be perfect in the way it looks
 In man's creative haven of common books.

Like children born, so too books appear,
 Some rather dull, yet others in fact most dear.
 Depending upon the soul implanted in
 It's author's creation — A book seems so akin
 To God's own work, creating the common man —
 Man like his Master, doing **the best he can**
 By breathing the living fire, his love relates
 Of his own image, into what **he creates**.

Books are source of every subject on earth,
 The greatest mass of knowledge on from birth
 And on to death. The loftiest inspirations
 Of all our leading minds in all the nations
 Live on through books. The sparkle of childhood tears
 Glisten in pealing laughter, death disappears.
 In flashes of life hereafter: Man is forevermore,
 Books are his golden keys that open his every door.

STUDIA ISLANDICA (Islenzk fræði)

Reviewed by Dr. Richard Beck

Volume 31 and 32
Reykjavik, 1972 and 1973

It is with genuine sadness and deep sense of loss that I approach the writing of this review of the two latest volumes of the important annual *Studia Islandica*. Early in April last year its long-time editor and an esteemed personal friend of mine Dr. Steingrímur J. Þorsteinsson, died as the result of an automobile accident in Reykjavík.

For two decades he had been Professor of Literature at the University of Iceland, specializing in Icelandic literature of the later centuries. In this field his wide and thorough knowledge and mastery of the subject was so rare, that his peer will not soon appear, as his former student and successor, Professor Sveinn Skorri Höskuldsson, rightly pointed out in his warm-hearted tribute to him (*Morgunblaðið*, April 15, 1973.) A productive Dr. Þorsteinsson had contributed numerous significant articles and studies to various journals, but it is to be deeply regretted that he did not live long enough to write a History of Modern Icelandic Literature, for

which task he was so eminently qualified in every respect.

Now a brief consideration of the two last volumes of *Studia Islandica*, which he edited. The older one of these, and one of the more extensive (160 pages) consists of Grímur Thomsen's study "On the Character of the Old Northern Poetry", edited and introduced by Edward J. Cowan and Herman Pálsson. The second part is a detailed survey by Edward J. Cowan

Cowan of "Icelandic Studies in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Scotland". The purpose of the volume is excellently described in the following paragraphs from the Preface:

"In 1867 *The North British Review* carried a remarkable essay entitled "On the Character of Old Northern Poetry." Even now many of its arguments retain a freshness and originality, deserving of a much wider readership and appreciation than it has hitherto enjoyed. Like most contributions to that journal, the essay was anonymous, and only recently was its authorship established. Among the holdings of the National Library of Scotland is MS 3853 which contains a number of English translations, in prose and verse, from Ice-

landic, sent by Grímur Thomsen to the Edinburgh publisher, David Douglas. The manuscript was purchased by the Library at an auction in Edinburgh on 2nd of December 1949. The papers show beyond doubt that Grímur Thomsen was the author of the essay in *The North British Review*, which was at the time edited by David Douglas. It is in fact a translation of an essay previously published by Grímur in two parts in Danish journals (1846 and 1857).

In the present volume we have reproduced Grímur Thomsen's essay; however, we decided to omit some of his translations, and we have silently modified the form of several proper names (e.g. changing **Hla** to **Hel**, **Valhalla** to **Volholl**, ect.) In the Introduction to our edition of the essay we have tried to offer a coherent story of the Thomsen/Douglas association basing it largely on MS 3853 and the Douglas papers now in the possession of W. S. Douglas.

Finally, in order to set Thomsen's contribution to the *Review* in a meaningful context, one of the present writers (EJC) has offered a broad survey of Icelandic studies in Scotland down the 1870s.

It appears to me that the editors have achieved splendidly what they set out to do with respect to the publication of Grímur Thomsen's notable essay. Because of his wide knowledge and penetrating understanding of the subject, his interpretation has much to offer any present-day reader interested in Old Northern Poetry. The in-

clusion of his translation of the Eddic poem "Guðrúnarkviða I" (The First Song of Gudrun) in the editors' Introduction to the essay is also a happy choice, and amply supports their observation: "It seems a great pity that David Douglas did not go ahead with his projected volume of Edda translations, considering that Thomsen's version of the poems would have proved a significant contribution to Icelandic literary studies in Great Britain, even though he often failed to attain the standard he was evidently aiming for."

In short, this scholarly edition of Thomsen's essay casts a new light on the extensive literary activity of that leading Icelandic poet.

Cowan's survey of Icelandic studies in Scotland during the 18th and the 19th centuries is also both highly informative and most welcome, as, according to my knowledge, it is the first special survey of its kind, although much has previously been written on the general subject of Scandinavian influence on English literature.

Among the prominent Scots discussed in the survey are Sir George S. Mackenzie, author of *Travels in Iceland* (1811), and Ebenezer Henderson, author of *Iceland*; or the journal of a residence in that island, during the years 1814 and 1815. (Edinburgh, 1818) Both of these works are classics in their field, and did much to arouse interest in Iceland. The third Scot discussed in the survey to whom we Icelanders owe a particularly great debt of gratitude is our Sir George Webbe Dasent

whose translation of *Njáls saga* (The Story of Burnt Njal) may be said to have become a classic, to name but one of his translations from Icelandic into English. Cowan does not exaggerate when he says: (p. 133): "Dasent's contribution to Icelandic studies in the British Isles is immense by any standards."

Included in the volume of *Studia Islandica* under review is a concise summary in Iceland by Hermann Pálsson.

The 32. volume of the series is in Icelandic and is entitled Helgi Skúli Kjartansson: *Myndmál Passíusálmanna*. The opening of the short English summary sufficiently indicates the contents of the study:

"The present thesis (written for the B.A. degree at the University of Iceland 1971) is a study of the 50 Passion Hymns by the Rev. Hallgrímur Pétursson

(1614-74), focused on style, esp. imagery.

Metrical form is briefly described".

Both because of the fact that it is in Iceland and its highly specialized nature, this study has only limited appeal to the readers of *The Icelandic Canadian*. However, it is a noteworthy contribution to the literature on the Rev. Hallgrímur Pétursson and his famed *Passion Hymns*, which have been of such a long-lasting and deep influence in the religious life of the Icelandic nation, an influence which also encompassed many among the older generations of Icelanders in America. The 300th Anniversary of Hallgrímur Pétursson's death will, of course, be duly commemorated in Iceland this year.

The *Studia Islandica*, is published by the University of Iceland, Faculty of Liberal Arts and the Icelandic Cultural Fund.

THE I.O.D.E. SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The Jon Sigurdson Chapter, IODE, at a meeting at the University Women's Club, Winnipeg, November 27, presented four scholarships, awarded to outstanding students.

The Johanna Gudrun Skaptason Memorial Scholarship

JANICE GUDRUN ROBSON, of the Science Faculty of the University of Manitoba. From Winnipeg.

The Elinborg Hanson Memorial Scholarship

ELAINE SIGURDSON, of Gimli, Manitoba. She intends to study Medicine.

GREGORY DOWNEY, of the Science Faculty, University of Manitoba. From Fort Garry.

The Jon Sigurdson Chapter Musical Scholarship

MRS. HEIDA SIGFUSSON, B.A., University of Manitoba. From Winnipeg.

★

BOOK REVIEW:

CANADIAN HISTORY SINCE CONFEDERATION

ESSAYS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Bruce Hodgins and Robert Page.

607 pages, Irwin Dorsey Limited, Georgetown, Ont. 1972

Price: \$10.00

The history of any given era remains the same unless new evidence comes to light by way of new discoveries or other related means. However, interpretations of specific facts and situations are always subject to variation as time moves on.

The revisionist thesis in this volume give it a uniqueness sorely needed to broaden the traditional points of view. To a large extent this is accomplished by many of the essays presented in this book in six general areas of Canadian History, namely, The Confederation Era; The Age of the National Policy; Late Victorian Canada and Her External Interests; Early Twentieth Century Canada; The Inter-War Years; Contemporary Canada.

These six sections contain over thirty essays presented by over thirty authors. Consequently there is built into this material a great deal of variety and a lack of any single bias running through the full content. It offers rather refreshing reading as approach

and style differ with the various authors. As a result of the great number of historians involved in this eclecticism of Canadian history since Confederation, there are reinforcing and exciting infusions of human interest that help to eliminate the monotony and drudgery that the student, or well established historian engaged in research, normally is faced with. For them this book offers a new breath of vitality for history in general. For example it gives this reader considerable "relief" from tediousness when he "lives" through the essay "The Wake", by Ralph Connor. What a delight to discover a history "text" wherein one learns something of the emotional background of the people who made history! Perhaps if we had a greater knowledge of how people thought, felt, believed and consequently reacted, we would be the better able to accept some of the events that evolved.

In an essay about Riel, edited from "The History of Quebec: A Patriot's Handbook by Leandre Bergeron", as far as this reader is concerned, Riel comes out the hero. It is refreshing that this view is expressed in an apparently reputable edition of Canadian History.

Certainly few accounts of Canadian history include much, if anything

about the effect on Canada of the Spanish Civil War of 1936. This volume includes a delightfully presented account, by Hugh MacLennan, relating to the 1200 Canadians, the famous Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion of the XV International Brigade, who fought on the side of the Republicans in Spain. The Republican cause was promoted in Montreal by the Canadian socialists who "saw the Spanish war as a fight between two rival ideologies—Socialism and Fascism". This account

is presented in a "Story Time" style and form that hypnotize the reader into the actual drama being unfolded.

It is probably appropriate at this point not to reveal any more of the interesting and highly motivating themes presented in this edition but rather leave the joy of their discovery to the prospective readers. Not only is this volume an excellent supplement to any student text; it also makes delightful fireside reading.

—Arius Isfeld

BOOK REVIEW:

THE SAGA OF TRISTRAM AND ISOND

Translated with an introduction by Paul Schach University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1973. P.P. 148. Price \$9.50.

To those with an interest in medieval romance, whether scholarly or casual, here is a book which should offer considerable appeal. In the annals of chivalry, perhaps no name is more noted than that of Tristram. In all the knightly arts—horsemanship, use of the sword and lance, and skill in the graces of courtly life—he was without peer. His long and tragic love affair with Isönd—an Irish princess and wife of his uncle, King Mark of Cornwall—forms the core of the Tristram legend.

In one form or another the tale of the ill-fated lovers has been told and re-told throughout northwestern Europe. Rooted in Celtic tradition, it has at times been associated with the Ar-

thurian legend. Wagner used the story in his opera "Tristram and Isolde", based on the 13th Century romantic poem by Gottfried von Strasburg. This present work by Paul Schach (University of Nebraska) is a translation of the version written by a Friar Róbert in 1226 at the request of King Hákon Hákonarson of Norway, which in turn was based on the 12th Century poem composed by Thomas of Brittany. In his introduction the author traces the literary history of the Tristram poem and discusses its various versions. "In Iceland, especially," he writes, "the influence of **Tristram's** saga was persistent and pervasive." He sees a "spiritual affinity between **Tristram's** saga and the indigenous literature of the North that accounts in large part for its enormous popularity during the Middle Ages." It is of interest to note that the author completed his translation

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during recent sojourns in Iceland.

The tale itself is almost epic in proportions. It opens in Brittany, with an account of the young knight Kane-langres, who was to be Tristram's father. It ends in Brittany as well, as Tristram expires from his fatal wounds, mistakenly believing that his beloved has abandoned him to his fate and refuses to forgive him for his apparent infidelity to her. Other events take place in Ireland, and many in England (at the court of King Mark, of Cornwall). Many of the incidents in the story involve personal combat, others are more fanciful—struggles

with dragons, giants, etc. But underlying it all is the theme of love passion of Tristram and Isönd and the tragic sense of fate which dominated their relationship.

The language used throughout in this translation is generally direct and forceful, with a certain dignity which is obviously most in keeping with the subject of the story. The medieval romance stands somewhere between the epic poem of ancient times and the modern novel. This work combines a good many of the qualities of both.

—G. Kristjanson

A NEW PUBLISHING VENTURE

A new publishing firm may be born in Winnipeg in the near future, although it is still in the embryonic stage. Queenston House is the brain child of Mrs. Joan Parr, (daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Jon and Oddny Asgeirson, of Winnipeg), who sees a need for an outlet for writings by Manitobans who often find it difficult to compete in the eastern and United States markets. In an effort to raise funds for the venture, on February 9, an evening of reading of their own works by Winnipeg authors was held at a spacious home on Grosvenor Avenue. Participating writers were Don Bailey, David Williamson, John Parr, Edward Kleiman, Dr. "Sheppy" Hersfield and the inimitable Maara Haas, of "This Country in the Morning" radio fame. Approximately one hundred and fifty attentive listeners formed the audience, which spilled over into hall-ways and the kitchen. The readings reflected the diversity of writing activities in Winnipeg, and

ranged from Bailey's poignant capturing of a lonely childhood to Maara Haas's brilliantly humorous tales of ethnic inter-mixture in Winnipeg's north end, and from David Williamson's raunchy description of a meeting between two middle-aged people who had once been "old flames" to Ed Klieman's sensitive handling of an upwardly mobile young man in the academic world, taken from his novel **Mister Golden Boy**. Dr. Hersfield's sentimental recollections of his youth on Main Street added a touch of yeast, and John Parr explored the theatrical fantasies of an usher in a movie theatre, who dreams that he is on the stage himself.

The evening was enjoyable, even if it did serve inadvertently to remind us that many writings by Winnipeg writers are possibly too auto-biographical in nature. We look forward to the birth and healthy growth of Queenston House.

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IN THE NEWS

ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPT.

Attorney General Howard Pawley has announced the appointment of Gilbert Raymond Goodman, Q.C., director of prosecutions for Manitoba, as an assistant deputy minister in his department.

Mr. Goodman will be responsible for co-ordinating the provincial government's legislative program and will direct the progress of legislation from approval-in-principle by cabinet to its publication in the statutes.

He will also report to the attorney-general on the activities of the Land Titles Office, the Office of Public Trustee and legislative counsel. His other duties will include sitting on the Remission Board, supervising legal research for proposed government programs, review reports by the Law Reform Commission and act as the minister's liaison officer in policy matters relating to that commission as well as the Human Rights Commission.

"Essentially," said Mr. Pawley, "Mr. Goodman will coordinate the legislative activities of the various departments of government with a view to making whatever refinements that may be necessary. He has also indicated an interest in engaging in various special projects relating to planning and programming in the field of criminal justice as well as prosecuting certain special cases when the Legislature is not in session."

Mr. Goodman was born in Winnipeg and graduated in law from the University of Manitoba in 1960. He articulated first with White, Walker and



Gilbert Raymond Goodman

Irish and later with Inkster, Walker, Irish and Hughes before joining the Manitoba Attorney General's Department in 1961 as a crown attorney. In 1968 he was appointed senior crown attorney in City of Winnipeg's provincial judges court and director of prosecutions for Manitoba in March 1969. He was named a Q.C. in the January 1, 1971 honors list.

Mr. Goodman is the son of Gudmundur and Johanna Goodman.

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WEDDING BELLS

The Icelandic Canadian extends best wishes to a present member of the editorial board, and to a former member of the board, who were married last summer. Kristine Jakobson was married to William Perlmutter, of Winnipeg, and Janis Johnson was married to Premier Frank Moores of Newfoundland.

★

THE RED RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCANDINAVIAN NIGHT

The Red River Historical Society, with membership in Minnesota, North Dakota, and Manitoba, featured Scandinavian Night at their convention at the Fort Garry Hotel, January 11 and 12.

The dinner meeting and program was on January 11. Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson brought greetings on behalf of the Scandinavian community in Winnipeg. The main speaker was Dr. Hiram Drache, author and professor at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota. In a sequence of colorful, graphic biographical sketches of the sturdy Scandinavian pioneers in the Red River Valley south of the boundary, he pictured their important contribution in the building of communities and institutions in that region. Dr. W. Kristjanson thanked the speaker.

Entertainment was provided by the Icelandic group of the Scandinavian pavilion of the Winnipeg Floklorama. Their program of song, recital, and dance received sustained applause.

Approximately 150 persons attended including three who flew in from Duluth. The chairman was Mr. Gordon Pruden of Winnipeg, President of the Society.

★



Carl Magnus Thorsteinson, Ph. D.

Dr. Carl Magnus Thorsteinson, B.Sc., EE/66, M.Sc., EE/68 obtained his Ph.D. from McMaster University of Hamilton, Ont. in May, 1973, and is presently working on post-doctoral scholarship at a N.R.C. laboratory at Ottawa.

Dr. Thorsteinson is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Magnus Thorsteinson, of 648 Burnell Street, Winnipeg, Man.

★

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Icelandic Canadian Club of British Columbia held its annual Independence Day dance on June 23, at the Peretz hall in Vancouver. The hall was appropriately decorated in the traditional Icelandic color scheme, with candles and Icelandic flags on each table. The princess of the Club, Regina Helgason, wearing the traditional Icelandic costume, welcomed everyone as they entered the hall.

The evening began with a social reception. President Connie Anderson gave a short address, briefly outlining the history of Iceland's struggle to become an independent country.

Over 140 guests seemed to feel that the rulluppylsa, beef, pönnukökur, kleinur, vinartertur, rosettes, sandwiches, skyr and dainties were better than ever.

Several interesting items on the program combined to make a successful evening.

* * *

Response has been good regarding the chartered flight to Iceland in June, 1974. Several persons have al-

ready paid their deposits.

At the time of writing, plans were made for a summer picnic at the Blaine Peace Arch Park on Sunday, June 29.

★

DECEMBER 14th, 1973

Our last Christmas Party came off very pleasantly indeed. The gay decorations in the Parish Hall of the First Lutheran Church set the tone for a happy evening of eating, singing, and

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friendly chatter.

Beside the lunch committee, the entertainers, drivers, and friends, about a hundred senior-citizen guests sat down to enjoy the food provided by Mrs. Lauga Sveinsson and her helpers. Mattie Halldorson had arranged with Snjólaug Sigurdson to bring her two church choirs to entertain with their own selections, beside leading in interspersed carol sing-song in two languages.

To these ladies and helpers our thanks are due. Also to the two dozen volunteer drivers who left their homes on a bitterly cold night to gather in the guests from far-flung Greater Winnipeg and beyond.

This annual event has proved to be one of the best received projects that are sponsored by the Icelandic Canadian Club to serve the community.

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THE MID WINTER CONCERTS

Frón Concert —

The annual concert of The Frón Chapter, Icelandic National League, was held Thursday, January 24th. The newly-elected president, Garðar Garðarson, welcomed the guests.

As usual, an interesting, entertaining program was presented. Mrs. Helga Anderson, director, had brought the senior choir of the Winnipeg Boys Choir to perform. They sang, accompanied by Mrs. Kerrine Stewart-Hay, a number of selections, including one in Icelandic.

Mrs. Elma Gislason, accompanied by Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, sang a medley of Icelandic and English songs to the delight of the audience.

Three young ladies from Arborg, Manitoba, who are studying Icelandic in the schools read poems in the Icelandic language and did a very good job of it.



Icelandic Canadian Club Concert

The annual concert was held January 25, 1974, in The First Lutheran Church Hall in conjunction with the Icelandic National League convention.

A play "A Stroke of Luck" was presented by the New Iceland Drama Society. The play "Happið" by Páll Ardal was translated from the Icelandic by Keneva Brandson, who directed it as well. Congratulations Keneva!

'A Stroke of Luck' was first staged in the winter of 1897. It takes place in the farm "Dalir" owned by Hallur, played by Cameron Arnason. His daughter, Valgard, played by Kristine Perlmutter, is in love with one of the farm hands, Gunnar, played by Bruce Arnason. Hallur is not pleased with the romance. Helgi, a not too bright neighbor's son, played by Lee Brand-

son, would be more acceptable. Helgi, however is engaged to Kristine, played by Donna-Lee Arnason. He reluctantly agrees to break the engagement to marry Valgerd. Then the "Stroke of Luck". Gunnar receives a telegram saying that his uncle in America has died leaving a legacy to him and his brother of \$12,000.00. One of the actors remarks— "Wasn't it a stroke of luck that the old man died". All ends well and both couples are happy.

The role of Helgi was played exceptionally by Lee Brandson. He is a natural actor as is evident in this and other plays he has been in.

Others in the cast were: Maureen as Grima and Jonina Stratton as Sigga.

SCHOLARSHIPS PRESENTED AT THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB CONCERT, JANUARY 25,

The Good Templar Scholarship

DOUGLAS R. ANDERSON, School of Physical Education, University of Manitoba. From Riverton.

The W. J. Lindal Scholarship

KENEVA BRANDSON, University of Manitoba. From Winnipeg.

The Mundi Johnson Scholarship

BALDUR HAFSTED, M.A. Program, University of Manitoba. From Iceland.

The J. Magnusson Estate Scholarship

VALERIE PALSSON, University of Manitoba. From Hnausa, Manitoba.....

Harold Olson Scholarship

PATRICIA PALSSON, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. From Hnausa.

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Icelandic Canadian Club Scholarship
GREGORY DOWNEY, Science Faculty (Pre-Medicine), University of Manitoba. From Fort Garry, Winnipeg.

Canada Iceland Foundation Scholarship

EMMA EYPORSDOTTIR, Department of Agriculture, University of Manitoba. From Iceland.

ASLAUG HELGADOTTIR, Department of Agriculture, University of Manitoba. From Iceland.

JONINA STRATTON, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. From Winnipeg.

Icelandic Festival of Manitoba Scholarship

(a) University Entrance

GREGORY DOWNEY

KATHY KRISTJANSON, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. From Winnipeg.

(b) University

RICHARD STEVENSON, University of Manitoba. From Calgary.

KRISTINE PERLMUTTER, Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. From Neepawa, and Winnipeg.

The Icelandic National League Dinner

The Icelandic National League convention held Friday, January 25 and Saturday, January 26, was climaxed

by a dinner held at the Fort Garry Hotel. Honored guests were His Excellency Haraldur Kröyer, Ambassador of Iceland to the United States and Canada, and his wife frú Unni Kröyer. His Excellency was the guest speaker of the evening. He outlined the progress made by Iceland in the past few years and mentioned appreciatively the assistance the Canadian people gave to the Westman Islands at the time of the violent volcanic eruptions on the main island in 1973. Consul-General Grettir L. Johannson introduced the speaker.

Mrs. Joy Antenbring, accompanied by Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, sang two operatic solos, and Melvin Martin, of Brandon, Manitoba, accompanied by his mother, Mrs. Martin, rendered violin solos.

Three honorary memberships in the League were presented to: His Excellency Haraldur Kröyer, Mrs. Kristin R. Johnson, and Mr. K. W. Johannson. Life memberships were presented to: Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, Mrs. Elma Gislason, and Mrs. Lara Tergeson, president of the Gimli Chapter of the National League.

Mattie Halldorson



The winner of the open 10 mile Bicycle race at the Icelandic Festival at Gimli, August, 1973, was Grant Björnson of Winnipeg, not Bjarnason.

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