

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN MAGAZINE

## Canada Iceland Foundation Inc.

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# *The* ICELANDIC CANADIAN



Fall 1996



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# The ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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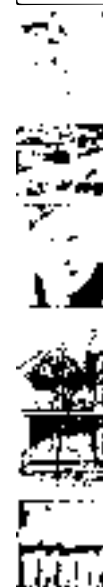
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## THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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# Editorial

*By Hal Sigurdson*

It is sometimes said that the older a man becomes the faster he could run as a boy. There is a certain amount of truth to that charge and in an age when cynicism has rapidly replaced hero worship as a staple of the sports world, it is common to view heroes of the past with a bit of skepticism.

Were players of the old Falcons hockey team as fast and selfless and dedicated as Fred Thordarson describes them in his colourfully told tale, *The Romance of the Falcons?* Since they became hockey's first Olympic gold medal winners over 75 years ago in 1920, or a dozen years before I was born, I have no right even to offer an opinion. However, it is fact that when the Falcons defeated the mighty Selkirk Fishermen 2-1 in a best-of-three series for the Manitoba senior hockey championship there were four future members of the game's Hall of Fame in the game.

Bullet Joe Simpson of Selkirk was inducted into the Hall in 1962, the same year it honoured Fred (Steamer) Maxwell, the Falcon's crusty coach. Selkirk's Harry Oliver, a player of Icelandic heritage whose family is still prominent there, entered in 1967. Frank Fredrickson, the Falcon's gifted centre, was the first to be ushered in. He was honoured in 1958.

Over the years I've heard a lot of respected hockey people insist the Falcon's Mike Goodman also should be in the Hall. A cham-

pion speed skater and swimmer as well as a fine hockey player, Goodman was obviously a remarkable athlete.

It seems clear then, the legend of the Falcons is based on solid fact, rather than fond memory. They played against many of the best players of their day and defeated them.

Mr. Thordarson's intimate account of the birth of the Falcons and their most memorable achievement tells us one other thing. The more things change, the more they stay the same. Time after time he stresses the compatibility of the players. He notes their unselfishness, their modesty and their will to win. They fit together into one tightly-knit unit.

Today coaches call what those Falcons had 'good chemistry.' Now, as then, good chemistry is hard to find. Many a coach has lost his job after an unsuccessful effort to create it.

It is unlikely Winnipeg hockey fans have seen much better hockey during the Jets' 16 seasons in the National Hockey League than they enjoyed in the heyday of the Falcons. The Jets are now in Phoenix and an International Hockey League team, the Manitoba Moose, has taken its place.

Team owners of the new franchise held a 'name-the-team' contest. However, they could have done no better than to call them Falcons.

CANADIAN

SPORTS  
AND OUTDOOR LIFE

10¢

"OUT FOR  
BIG  
GAME"

L. G. MOLECEY



Beginning

"The Romance  
of the Falcons"

by

AL. RITCHIE  
L. G. MOLECEY  
DR. SPEECHLEY  
G. C. ALEXANDER

"Curling"

by

CHARLIE  
HARRIS

SPECIAL HOCKEY NUMBER

VOL. 1. No. 3

WINNIPEG - MAN.

*The Romance of the Falcons* was printed in *Canadian Sports and Outdoor Life*; team captain Frank Fredrickson appeared on the cover.

# *The Romance of the Falcons* or, The Sport Saga of the Vikings

By Fred Thordarson

Edited by Shirley Thordarson McCreedy

## PREFACE

It was the keen interest shown by a group of young men in a brief recounting of some of the highlights of the (Winnipeg) Falcon Club's history – and the background provided by the hockey of the stirring early days – that gave impetus to a long-felt urge for setting down in words *The Romance of the Falcons*. Often the remark has been heard that the Club's history carries the basic elements of interest and appeal and, if interpreted aright, would reveal the essence of successful sport and the secret of the Falcons' success. With the aid of information gleaned from the reminiscences of many old-timers, as well as other younger members and followers of the Club, the attempt is made to convey to the young athlete some idea of the spirit that brought such wonderful results – each serving his part unselfishly – none giving a semblance of the appearance of 'falling down on the job' or introducing a discordant element. This spirit is essential to any organization that hopes for a measure of success and worthwhile accomplishment.

The individuals of a team, or club, create a certain spirit or 'atmosphere' which the whole derives from the participation of each one comprising the group. Some teams or groups appear to be naturally able to coordinate their affairs. Others simply cannot do themselves justice for lack of a motivating spirit, some jarring note being present, or an essential something in personalities that may be lacking. When a group has this atmos-

phere or harmony which, in reality, is the subjection of the individual to the whole, each and every one of the group requires the will to contribute his share – to put forth the effort to make a 'go' of things.

In presenting this 'Sport Saga,' with the famous Falcon Olympic Championship team of 1920 as the central figures, the story being told is that of a group of clean-living young men, each striving with all his heart and mind to achieve the goal they had set for themselves, with no thought of personal advantage but rather of doing everything for 'the good of the team.'

However, before going on with the main theme of *The Romance of the Falcons*, culminating in the Olympic Championship, it is fitting that the activities of the Club during the intervening years 1920 to 1933 – should be reviewed.

*The Seasons that Followed* – Riding on the great wave which the spirit of the Falcon Olympic combination engendered, the Club produced a junior team in the following year to the Olympic Championship which won the Canadian Junior Championship. The success of this squad, the first Western junior team to travel east to compete for the Dominion title, is something of a story in itself. That junior club had the old Falcon spirit – and harmony reigned. They were one of the gamest aggregations ever to step on ice.

They played through their eighteen-game schedule without a single loss, but in their

play-off with Regina for the Western Championship, which they won in two desperately fought encounters, they suffered a severe blow which had every appearance of minimizing their chances of victory in Eastern Canada.

**A Fight Against Odds** – It happened when the Falcons were pressing strenuously in front of the Regina goal. Several players of each team suddenly sprawled on the ice in one big pile. When the bell rang and the referee extricated the various players, Art Somers emerged from under the heap and had to be assisted from the ice with a severely wrenched ankle. Art, who had started the season as a second substitute, had developed rapidly towards the end of the season and with this valuable reserve power missing from the line-up the Club appeared to be under a severe handicap for their series with the highly-touted Eastern teams.

But the boys were not dismayed! The Falcon spirit had still to be reckoned with! They played and defeated Fort William quite handily without the services of Somers, and went on to Toronto.

Never did an injured limb receive more attention and nursing! On the eastward journey, trainers and officials availed themselves of every opportunity to reduce the swollen condition of Art's injured ankle, for his value as a centre man was nearly equal to that of Wally Fridfinnson who was then turning in a mighty good performance in the centre ice area for the Juniors.

Howie Morenz was the centre ice man for the Stratford Junior Eastern Champions. With this 'speed-merchant' leading the opposition, what were the Falcons' chances of victory?

**The true will to Win!** – Vividly are recollected the moments in Toronto before that first game! The lads were silent – and just a little grim. They were resolute that the great Falcon Club, which had skated like whirlwinds onto Toronto ice only a year before to defeat the famous Varsity team, would not be let down by their showing. All around the dress-

ing room the determined aspect of the players showed itself. Art Somers, gamester to the core, was in uniform. The boys, tired as they were, went out and when the first goal was scored Somers, and not Morenz, scored it! Imagine the surprise when eight more goals followed this counter into the net and the Westerners took the first game 9-2!

Injuries and the exhausting effect of the strenuous season combined to bring the resistance of the game young Westerners to a very low ebb on the second night of the play-offs. Wally had received a wrenched shoulder muscle in a violent collision with Morenz in the very first flash of the first game. Harry Neil, the stocky defenceman, had a badly bruised hip, and Frank Woodall, the 60 minute man, had to take a rest after five minutes of play. They were barely able to provide serious resistance. Once again Art Somers, injured leg and all, skated the puck right through the opposing defence and notched the first goal for the Falcons! Although the drive was not kept up, the famous firing line of Stratford could not turn the first defeat into final victory. The Falcons played a determined game and although they lost 7-2 they gained the round by 11-9 and the first junior championship for Western Canada.

**The Line-up of the Falcon Juniors** – To Connie Neil, their manager, great credit is due. He handled the boys wonderfully. They worked with the greatest of harmony and no truer expression may be used than that they were a pocket edition of the famous 1919-1920 Falcon Olympic Champions.

At a civic welcome on their victorious return, they were presented with gold watches suitably engraved, the gift of the City of Winnipeg.

Here is the line-up that brought glory to the old club: goal, 'Scotty' Comfort; defence, Harry Neil and Sammy McCallum; centre, Wally Fridfinnson; right wing, Harold McMunn (who in 1924 was chosen as the West's representative player to accompany the famous Granite Hockey Team of Toronto to the Olympic games); left wing, Frank

Woodall; forwards, Art Somers, 'Big' Bill McPherson and Dave Patrick.

**The Seniors of the 1921 Season** – In the 1920-1921 season, with the World Champion Falcons greatly in demand by the professional clubs – Frank Fredrickson going to the great Victoria Cougars and Bobby Benson and Slim Halderson accepting contracts with the Saskatoon club – new figures appeared in the Falcon line-up. The pugnacious Bill Borland and his brother Eddie, 'Big' Burney McPhail and 'Crutchy' Morrison (the Selkirk Club having disbanded) together with Eddie Stephenson, who had been with the Young Men's Lutheran Church Juniors when they won the Manitoba Championship and was now coming into his own in senior ranks, were all valuable additions to the Club. However, 'Steamer' Maxwell was away the greater part of the season on business and Mike Goodman went to Saranac Lake for the Speed Skating classic that year so that, altogether, it was only a moderately successful season for the senior team. Brandon won the Western title but lost the finals to Varsity of Toronto. In the Brandon line-up were such great stars as: goal, Stewart; defence, Ambie Moran and Sandy McNeill; forwards, Bob Armstrong, Ty Arbor, Billy Hill, Coldwell and Creighton.

**Seniors Regaining Strength** – During the 1921-1922 season, with Harvey Benson as playing-manager, the champion juniors with the exception of Wally Fridfinnson going over to the Victoria Club with Connie Neil, and Crutchy Morrison going to Edmonton with Joe Simpson, the Falcons played good hockey but with no exceptional results.

It was in the 1922-1923 season that the Falcon Seniors again appeared to be potential Allan Cuppers. Formed around the remaining seniors and former juniors, they presented a strong line-up. In goal, Wally Byron of the Olympic Champions, was outstanding. On the defence, Konnie Johannesson and Sammy McCallum teamed up most effectively, while the forward line,

comprised of Eddie Stephenson, Art Somers, Wally Fridfinnson, Harold McMunn, Frank Woodall, Harry Neil, Huck Woodman and Lorne Carroll, performed in sensational fashion.

**Exciting Campaign** – Through some glorious old battles the Falcons of that year won the Manitoba Senior Championship. Their play-off with Port Arthur was a hard fought series, marred only by the misfortune of Eddie Stephenson, who suffered a broken leg. This colourful exponent of the game heard the returns of the final game with Port Arthur over the telephone while lying in bed in the Winnipeg General Hospital with the old leg well propped up.

He must have felt plenty of excitement for with just thirty seconds left to go on the timer's watch, Sammy McCallum came through to score the tying goal. With the fans wildly cheering, the Falcons then went on for a later period score which gave them victory. It was one of those sensational finishes which beggar description. The two-game series with Winnipeg Tigers was also desperately fought.

**Then the Anti-Climax** – Ordered to play a sudden death game with Souris (Manitoba Intermediate Champions) the following night, the strain began to tell on the boys. Seven games in ten nights is far too much for any team to stand, but that was the necessity which the team had to comply with. The officials apparently overestimated the resistance of the team, for they had completed not only one of the most strenuous of league schedules but had been forced into overtime in other hard fought play-down games.

Harold McMunn, the leading scorer of the league, was on the sick list and the team itself physically exhausted. The manager prevailed upon Konnie Johannesson not to don his skates during the early part of the game in order to conserve his energy. The weary Falcons started the game slowly and as time wore on without effective results, a tragic drama gradually unfolded before the eyes of the wondering audience.

The picture of this mighty team still stands clear and fresh in the minds of many of the Club's followers, for in that game with Souris, for all their skill and ability, they could not shake off the overpowering weariness, and like some great lion of the forest, drugged by fatigue, fell victim to a gallant team which was actually of a lesser calibre. Tears were in many an eye as the fans realized the situation and the Falcons bravely fought to shake off the exhaustion that only a strenuous season of hockey can bring on. The final result of 4-3 in favour of Souris indicated that the Southern Manitobans were able to slip in four markers on individual forays and long tantalizing shots and pack their defence almost throughout.

**Professional Leagues Wrought Havoc** – The season 1923-1924 marked the team's amalgamation with the Winnipeg Tigers, the combined team operating under the name of 'Falcon-Tigers.' For some years, the Falcons did

not appear on the hockey map largely because the professional teams of the United States and Canada found among these Winnipeg boys some of the finest material available for their teams, while at the same time there were few, if any, Icelandic boys coming up to take the places of those who were stepping out into higher company. Such great names throughout the whole hockey world as Frank Fredrickson, Mike Goodman, 'Slim' Halderson, Bobby Benson, Cully Wilson (an old Viking man), Konnie Johannesson, Art Somers and many others had gone on to fame and achievement after leaving the Winnipeg Icelandic hockey organization.

However, by 1928 the Falcon Athletic Association was back in operation, with a four-team league which operated for several years. From this humble reawakening the Falcon Hockey Club was revived in 1932, and in close cooperation with the Association began placing feeder teams in Juvenile, Junior and Intermediate city leagues. The

reorganizing officials included W.J. Lindal, president, and Fred Thordarson, secretary-treasurer.

With the Falcon Hockey Club once again in senior hockey, it was hoped the prediction would not be far wrong that this 'Preface' would be only a bridge between two great eras in *The Romance of the Falcons*.

*Editor's note: At the particular point in time **The Romance of the Falcons** was written and prepared for publication in a new magazine, **Canadian Sports and Outdoor Life**, the community was looking forward to an exciting season which would see a renewal of an ancient hockey feud, that of the traditional rivals – Falcons and Selkirk. The 1932-33 season of senior hockey in Winnipeg included three teams, Falcons, Selkirk and Winnipeg. Indeed, the Falcons remained on the hockey scene in Winnipeg until the early years of World War II producing several championship teams.*

*The Falcon Intermediate A team won the McDiarmid Shield in 1933. A Falcon Juvenile A team won the Canada Cycle Trophy in 1934. The Senior Falcon team won the Pattison Trophy in 1935. The Seniors of 1935 were the last Falcon Hockey Club championship team. Nevertheless, the hockey tradition was still alive in the Icelandic community in 1937, when the First Lutheran Church (Victor Street, Winnipeg) had two excellent Sunday School teams playing at the Midget and Junior levels.*

*By 1938-39 there was an amalgamation, and the 'Falcon-Rangers' perpetuated the name for several years. However, the teams were no longer under the management of the Falcon Hockey Club. In 1940-41 there was a West End Falcon Junior team; and in 1941-42 there was a Senior League team, the Winnipeg Falcons.*

## THE ROMANCE OF THE FALCONS CHAPTER ONE


*Respectfully dedicated to the memory of the late 'Buster' Thorsteinson, a sportsman and gentleman.*

Trudging through a driving snowfall with his skates and hockey outfit, a big broad-shouldered Iclander from the South End set out to walk to the mile-distant rink for a crucial game in the great winter sport to decide the supremacy between the North and the South. Turn back the pages of time some thirty years and endeavour to catch an impression of the spirit which motivated his activities. We can picture him as the snow swirled up and about his sturdy figure, with no thought of the rigours of the elements but with glowing heart and with sinews straining with eager anticipation of the pulsating action of the game he loved. He hugs a couple of well-taped sticks under one arm. These are more than pieces of wood to him – his trusty aids. One is almost a 'boner' (an expression used for an old worn out stick) but endeared to him through his familiarity with the feel of the handle, its balance and the spring of the wood as the flying puck leaves the blade.

Gentle of manner, modest of speech, tender of heart – qualities ingrained in him as his heritage from deeply religious forebears; yet in keen competition he revelled in his virile power and was at all times eager to match his skill with no quarter asked or given; with a supreme will to victory, no matter what the odds.

Thus can be described a youth, typical of the young men who thrilled their friends and supporters with their exploits on the ice in the old 'Viking – I.A.C.' (Icelandic Athletic Club (IAC)) days.

Exhibiting strong evidence of the traditional fighting spirit of their forefathers the Vikings, the Icelandic hockeyists of the early days, beginning about 1897 with play between the Icelandic Athletic Club and the Vikings, waged many a strenuous battle on the blades. In those days, heavy body checking was permitted under the rules and there



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was much give and take along the boards. The boys played for the thrill of the game and even under a great handicap as to equipment and rink accommodation. Nor was it the fashion to pad to any extent. A small pair of bamboo shin-guards and some padding in the knee-length pants, but no knee, elbow or shoulder pads. Old-time fans will recall that the hockey gauntlets of that day afforded little protection for those who wore them compared with the wonderful gloves now available for hockey players.

The old Félag's Hús (Club House) on Jemima (now Elgin) Avenue, and later club rooms on Princess Street, were the centres for boxing, wrestling, fencing, gymnastics, and so on, among the energetic young Icelanders of that period. The late Olafur Eggertson was a prime mover in the Icelandic Athletic Club while Frank Frederickson (no relation to the Frank of Olympic Hockey fame) was a fine athlete and a leading figure in the organization work (also a leader in dramatic presentations). Another prominent member of the club was Harry Sivertson, son of Sigurdur 'Homeopathi,' that grand old man of medicine who ministered to the needs and ills of the old-time Icelandic settlement in Winnipeg. The IAC Hockey Club was organized by some of the boys of the Athletic Club – the Swanson brothers, Jack and 'Swanny,' and Harry Sivertson being largely instrumental in bringing this about.

At first, there was no hockey opposition from the young Icelanders residing in the then Southern part of the city, but not to be outdone by the North-end IAC, a meeting was one day held at the home of Oliver Olsen, then on Maryland Street, and the Vikings came into being. The rivalry which existed between the North-enders and the South-enders through occasional competitions in football and baseball, was to be carried into hockey – and with a vengeance!

'Icelanders Play Hockey' was the sports writers' headline after the first game between the Vikings and IACs and it was reported that they might be lacking in some of the finer points of the game – but did they have col-

our! There was plenty of it – the ice being splattered with red! This was only a forerunner of the sensational conflicts that followed and 'feud' was the only word for the year-in-year-out partisanship that grew deeper, and had far-reaching effects upon the social life of the community. So much so that if a Viking was seen out walking with a North-end girl, his team-mates wondered if his loyalty to his Club was weakening and on the other hand, to win a 'queen' of the opposing camp was just one more way of showing superiority. Young Jack Swanson was bold enough to win the sister of the Vikings' crafty centre man, Mike Johnson, The girl remained a faithful supporter of the Vikings but her heart was with fair young Jack whose well-knit figure flashed along the right boards on the IAC attack.

Let us endeavour to recall some of the originals in action and their characteristics of play – the Vikings in red jerseys with large, white Vs and white pants, the IACs in dark blue sweaters and black pants.

The IAC goal was soundly guarded by Harry Sivertson while with brainy, agile Percy (Ben) Olafson at point and 'Swanny' Swanson, the human dynamo, at cover point, the IACs were well fortified on the defence. Let us keep the forwards out of the picture for the moment and size up the defence at the other end. In the Vikings' net blond Fred Olsen was outstanding. Fred played with Manitoba College and later with the Victorias. He was known as the 'board fence' and travelled east with the Victorias in 1903 when they went in quest of the Stanley Cup. Reports of these games in Montreal described Fred as stopping flying pucks with all parts of his anatomy, even his head. In front of this great net minder at point was Paul Johnston who, it might be mentioned, was a marksman of the first rank (having been Manitoba champion trap shot), sportsman and amateur photographer par excellence. Rather slimly built, he was adept at blocking and out-guessing the opposition. Six foot Henry Thompson, towering on the Viking defence at cover point, dealt out robust body checks.

Possessing a fine physique, he was fast and added plenty of punch to the Viking attack.

Crafty Magnus (Mike) Johnson held down rover position for the South-enders. How Mike could hang onto that old puck and worm his way through the opposition! He achieved his stick work through 'ragging' the puck on outdoor rinks and on river rinks, where many of Winnipeg's best players learned the game.

Opposed to Mike as rover for the IACs, 'Fusi' Byron was perhaps the most sensational player of either roster. Fast and tricky, running and tearing into the attack, dodging around making extremely rapid motions with his stick, he was almost impossible to stop. Fusi had a great mop of hair and, with a head-tossing gesture reminiscent of some wild horse, he would throw back his flowing locks as he broke away on his frequent forays into the enemy territory. Whenever Fusi got the puck, two or three of the Vikings would jump right on him and what a time they would have stopping him!

The IAC forward line of Magnus Peterson, Jack Snidal and Jack Swanson comprised a clever attacking trio. Magnus Peterson, for thirty-five years at the City Hall, many of which he served faithfully as City Clerk, was fast and a clever stick handler. Jack Snidal of dental fame was a clever forward and an all-round athlete. Young Jack Swanson, flashing spectacularly up and down the right boards, was always a thorn in the side of 'Big Sam' Johnson, who patrolled the left boards for the Vikings. Big Sam, curly-haired, six-foot-two man-mountain, weighing no one knows how much over two hundred pounds was the Babe Ruth of the Viking Club and instilled a world of confidence in his team-mates by his mere presence on the ice. His genial qualities made him a prime favourite with the player and fan alike.

The legend may have some basis in the fact that the nimble young Jack, on occasion, slipped through between Big Sam's legs. But when brother Swanny, who was himself quite stoutly built, would crash into Big Sam, even upsetting him by main strength the crowd

would go wild! Here was action! and the fans on each side would take up the battle cry, crowds lining the fence cheering on their favourites and throwing taunts at the rabid partisans opposite. It has also become legend that on one occasion Big Sam, having been knocked out cold through violent collision with Swanny, lay flat on his back like some great giant and gave the impression of reaching from side to side of the playing surface.

Oliver Olsen was a clever forward. He was employed by the Dominion Rubber Company as a tire salesman. While his vocation was to 'tire' vehicles, as a skater he was 'tireless.' Arni Anderson, who practised law for a great many years and filled the position of secretary-treasurer for the Club, quite often donned his skates and played a fine brand of hockey. Young 'Guinea' Anderson, short, rotund but extremely nimble played aggressive hockey as did Gunnar (Jack), another Anderson brother, a big, burly defenceman who turned in some mighty useful games.

Feelings ran high among the players as well as the supporters of both teams. There was always plenty of excitement as the battle waged fast and furious. The crowds were like armed camps, on opposite sides of the rink, voicing their enthusiasm and partisanship in no uncertain manner. There were no seats in the old Brydon and McIntyre rinks but the fans stood jammed up against the fence surrounding the playing surface. The IAC supporters were supplied with narrow cordwood sticks out of the rink woodpile, to be used as noise-makers. When they slapped the fence with these four-foot sticks you can imagine the din! Old folks and young folks, men and women, crowded to these games and on occasion a spectator was liable to get out on the ice to forcefully give a goal umpire or referee a 'piece of his mind.'

It was the seven-man game and the players who started the game usually stayed on for the full sixty minutes. Unless a player was injured to such an extent that he could not return to the ice, a substitute or spare man did not often have a chance to get into the game. No substitution was permitted after

half-time and the boys went two thirty-minute periods. It was a case of getting your second wind and staying with it to the finish. To relieve the strain on the forwards, 'lifting' was sometimes resorted to and this became a fine 'art.' Some of the defencemen of that day could lift a puck from one end of the rink to the other, the rubber going high up among the rafters as it soared goalwards. In those days the defence men's positions were point and cover-point, the latter taking up his position a short distance in front of the point man and the rover did a lot of defensive work as well as feeding the forwards, in distinct contrast to the present-day system of two men abreast on defence and no rover. In 1933 ten men were allowed to dress on each team with practically unlimited substitution, and with the forward pass to speed up the game.

After each tussle, the bumps exchanged were forgotten and the members of the two teams were the best of friends. Often a supporter of the winning team who had won a wager on the game would invite the players

to an oyster supper, usually at Emma and Panaro's restaurant – then on the east side of Main Street between McDermot and Bannatyne. It was quite an event when the boys talked and joked over their supper in the old cafe, leaving about midnight for home. Times certainly have changed!

At the end of the season the losing team banqueted the winner in royal style, usually at the Criterion Hotel. And what a night that was!

Time has a way of either increasing or decreasing the glamour of events. In the case of these old time conflicts between the Vikings and the IACs, reminiscences seemed to grow more interesting with the years, so there must have been more than a little to enthuse over in these battles of skill.

When reminiscing, the wonderful athletic talent of Winnipeg during that era should not be overlooked. So, let us digress for a moment. Never the light of day shone on finer specimens of manhood than were to be found connected with athletic clubs of Winnipeg at


that time. In the City Hockey League, some truly great teams were battling it out for supremacy. Take for instance the Winnipeg Rowing Club when their roster included Claude Bennest, Percy Browne, Chas. Johnstone, Billy Breen, Billy Kean, Joe Hall, Claude Borland and Billy Bawlf. Those were the days when 'Barney' Holden, Fred Lake and Riley Hearne were the ideals of aspiring hockey players, the days when Tony Gingras, the great French player, was splashing across the hockey firmament, when the old Victoria Club was often in the forefront of hockey supremacy, when Dan Bain, the Flett brothers and many others were thrilling the fans with their exploits on the ice.

Those were the days when Jimmy Boswell, one of the greatest athletes the city has ever produced, was in his prime. Possessed of a magnificent physique, superlative courage and 'sunshiny' nature that endeared him to all, Jim was an all-round athlete. He excelled at rugby, also at bicycle racing along with such stars as Riddell and McCullough when that sport was in its heyday. Incidentally, a number of the Icelandic boys competed creditably in this fast company, notably Mike Johnson and Henry Thompson. Jim was used to tumbles in the bicycle racing game. A serious injury in a rugby game nearly cost him his life. However, his rugged constitution eventually was the means of bringing about his recovery. Later, in a dare devil automobile race from Stonewall to 'Happyland' on Portage Avenue, when that park was officially opened, his racing car skidded in the dirt at an 'S' turn and in a flash, realizing that a crash was inevitable and that he had time for only one of two things – push his mechanic out or jump out himself – true to his natural make-up, he saved the mechanic and 'took it' himself as the car turned over. For weeks his life hung in the balance and for many score yards along the streets adjacent to his home, sawdust was strewn to help maintain the silence which was so essential. Again the iron physique and the splendid reserve power preserved by his clean living gradually brought him back. Broken though he was so far as

any future activities were concerned, the same spirit prevailed and on through the years he has become the best loved figure in Winnipeg's realm of sport and among the hockey fraternity particularly.

To return to our story, each year, from 1897 to 1902 the original two-team Icelandic league functioned. Interest never seemed to wane until the last year when a certain amount of persuasion was required to get the old Vikings out. And this last season (1902) produced the most stirring finish of any. With the two teams tied, having three wins each, the seventh and deciding game was also tied at full time. The Vikings eventually scored in the overtime to win the championship for the sixth successive season, after one of the most gruelling games the team had ever played. That was the game where rugged Swanny Swanson, IAC defenceman, striving with all his might and skill for the long sought championship, essayed rush after rush. The forwards, ever attacking, were not quite able to gain the mastery of the game, the Vikings matched them at almost every turn and still retained the extra ounce of 'punch' and the confidence that the winning habit instills. Young Jack Swanson rushed along the right wing and was sent hurling by a solid body check from big Henry Thompson. Knocked unconscious at the moment his head struck the fence, Jack fell back, his head coming in contact with the ice with such force as to put him out for half an hour and opening a cut requiring seven stitches. Byron, Snidal and Peterson swept down the ice time after time but could not pierce the Viking defence, and the great net minding of Fred Olsen was just enough to turn the tide in the Vikings' favour. Their forwards working with the determination that would not brook defeat, the team finally came through with the win.

While they did not succeed in winning the league once, great credit is due the IAC Club for their continuing endeavours and pertinacity, year after year, in striving for the elusive victory.



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OVER THREE DECADES OF CARING FOR THE ELDERLY



After the 1902 season, the old-timers of the original IAC and Viking teams hung up their sticks and interest lagged. It was some two years later before the old feud was revived with the IACs turning out winners of the Hanston Trophy on the ice in the 1905-6 season. But from then until 1909 there were many repetitions of the former famous duels. Readers may recollect the names of some of the players of that period. Defence stars were Sam Laxdal and Steve Dalman. The latter was able to take more punishment in the scant protection of hockey outfits of that day than possibly any man now playing hockey. In goal one of Slim Halderson's brothers, John, played a mighty good game while two other brothers, Bill, at rover, and Chris, at left wing almost made the team a family affair. Alex Johnson was a good forward and Eric Jorundson, left wing, and the writer at centre provided two ambitious youngsters eager to live up to the reputation of the team. 'Baldy' Walter Wilson played with the Vikings of that time, although he also played later with the IAC.

An outstanding player for courage and stamina was 'Ole' Erickson. He suffered one of the few major injuries ever incurred by a hockey player in Manitoba. During a game with Brandon, a player accidentally struck him in the face with his stick. Ole skated over to Bill Halderson and asked, "what is the matter with my eye, Bill?" When he left the ice his plight was not made known to his team mates, but in the dressing room afterwards we felt that a tragedy was being enacted. True enough, we found out later, Ole had had his eye gouged out! Another sample of this courageous player was that of playing throughout the game with a clean fracture of his little finger, without telling a single person about it.

**'Cully' and his Pro-Career** – It was in this two-team Icelandic league that 'Cully' Wilson began his hockey career. Later when he joined the Monarchs, after serving with the Vikings and the Falcons, Cully played a bril-

liant rugged game and soon drew the attention of the professional moguls. He was one of the first of all local players to join the moneyed ranks afield and he served for some sixteen years with great distinction with professional clubs from coast to coast. He runs a mighty close race for the title of the most bescarred of all players, but with an indomitable spirit it never seemed to slow him down.

**Early Neighbourhood Life** – As mentioned before, the Icelanders of Winnipeg of that time were sharply divided into two rival camps. The North-enders resided in the neighbourhood of Jemima Street (Elgin Avenue) while the South-enders bailiwick was in the wide open prairie to the west of Sherbrook Street in the neighbourhood of Nellie Street (Ellice Avenue).

Dairies were scattered all over the prairies. To the west of Nellie and Sherbrook was much low land, which was generally under water during the whole of the spring. Just back of Maryland and Ellice there was the famous 'Cat' Island, a large round knoll which resembled a saucer. The bigger fellows would wade out to the island and the younger ones would be carried on their backs. Here all kinds of games, battles and contests took place. Nearly every youth of the neighbourhood took to the sport as ducks to water.

There was ol' Kelly Valgardson's dairy. Around and around his huge haystack the boys would race. It made an ideal racetrack. When he could stand the din no longer he would kick open his front door and roar at the top of his voice, "You young ....., get ....., off my property!" The boys used to get a great kick out of his yelling and we fondly imagined his voice carrying right down to the far away river bank.

Where the John M. King School now stands was the site of our skating rink. We hauled water in barrels on small sleighs from the corner of Ellice and Sherbrook. I will always remember an ancient old man with a flowing white beard which made me think of St. Peter or Methuselah who came daily

to the pump on a sleigh drawn by a huge St. Bernard dog. He would climb slowly up out of the little sleigh, pick up his axe and chop the ice which formed in large quantities around the pump.

**Some IAC Stars** – On the Icelandic Athletic Club's teams of that time one recalls 'Old Faithful' John Eggertson, goalie; Minty Stephenson who later starred on the Monarch defence; Connie Benson, the second of this strong rear guard (he turned professional with Phoenix, Rosslund and later starred with Portland); and Billy Benson, a colourful rover. On the forward line there was Baldur Olson (since a noted physician), Alf Albert, and rounding it out, the clever Steve Finnson.

Chris Olafson, Allan Johannesson, who starred at centre, and Emil Goodman were another great trio. Manny Johnson, he of the powerful shot, Gales Johnson and his brother John brought this name well before the public at that time. The genial Stony Stone played a strong game, while Leifur Oddson was also seen with the IAC in the nets as well as John Eggertson, the old timer.

Both IACs and Vikings had practice sessions on the old Brydon and McIntyre rinks while the youngsters played on outdoor surfaces, generally in the neighbourhood of the General Hospital or at Ellice near Sherbrook for the South-enders. At that time there was undulating prairie and baseball in summer, and lacrosse most of the time, with hockey in winter – and all took place in the great sports area. Little did the curious knots of spectators realize that some half dozen of the boys were going through a period of development from boyhood to the component parts of the greatest hockey machine of the time, and one of the really outstanding teams in the history of amateur sport in Canada.

It was here and then that Frank Fredrickson came onto the hockey horizon. A pretty small fellow but with a determined chin, and an able ability to concentrate and go home and practice what he had seen the elders doing in the hockey games of that time. Frank from the very beginning was a 'win-

ner,' and the rink that his father built for him and the lads of the neighbourhood was one of the strongest factors in his early hockey education.

**The Icelanders Combine** – In 1909 Winnipeg was beginning to shake off its small town feelings and was rapidly blossoming into a big city. It was then that the Icelandic boys decided to bury the hatchet and combine to wage a joint war against the other leagues and teams in the city that were rapidly coming into being. So the Falcon Hockey Club, a combination of both older clubs, came into being at a meeting held in the home of Big Sam Johnson on Portage Avenue West. Emil Goodman, veteran of many a hockey battle himself, was the sponsor of the name 'Falcon.' In 1910-11 along with the Monarchs, Winnipeg, Kenora and Brandon the Falcons formed the Manitoba Independent League and played Intermediate hockey.

**The First Falcon Line-Up** – The original Falcons found George Johannesson in the nets, Connie Benson and Steve Dalman in front at point and cover-point; Bill Halderson, rover; and Ole Erickson, Allan Johannesson and Steve Finnson on the forward line rounding out a team which finished the season tied with the famous Monarchs. Hopes for entering the City League by virtue of a play-off were rudely shattered when the Monarchs were promoted into the City Senior League.

Disappointed, but undaunted, the Falcons aided in maintaining an Independent League comprised of themselves, Portage La Prairie, Selkirk and the Winnipeg A.A.A.. In this manner the Icelandic Club pioneered senior hockey embracing teams from outside the city and continued in this attitude throughout the next several years, always with the ultimate aim of gaining entry into the (Winnipeg) City League.

The 1911-12 season was finished with the Falcons 'out of the money.' It was about this time that 'Big Minty' Stephenson, Cully Wilson and Connie Benson became members of the Monarchs.

**New 'Stars' Gleaming** – With the 1912-13 season, some of the other players retiring necessitated recruiting from the younger ranks, and in that year's team were found two of the coming 'world's champions,' Konnie Johannesson and Frank Fredrickson. Harvey Benson was player, organizer and manager for some years, while 'Buster' Thorsteinson made his advent on the scene, as also did the pugnacious Johnny Jonasson. That year, with the inclusion of new blood, the Falcons turned out a winner.

Selkirk was the other team in this league and they had Stan Jackson in goal, and Rod Smith, along with Joe Simpson, on defence. As forwards Jocko Anderson, Johnny Mitchell, Alf Morrison and Neville were exceptional.

A smooth combination of young Falcons of 1913-14 together with some veteran experience, consisted of: goal, George Johannesson; defence, Bobby and Harvey Benson; rover, Buster Thorsteinson; centre, Frank Fredrickson; right wing, Fred Thordarson;

left wing, John Jonasson; and forward, Konnie Johannesson.

The Honourable Thomas H. Johnson, honorary president of the Falcon Hockey Club, was never far away, while Skuli Hanson and Hebbie Axford acted in executive capacities with Jack Baldwin as manager.

**Falcons Win Independent Title** – In 1914-15 Wally Byron assumed goal tending duties and the Falcons won the Manitoba Independent League title. The club had also added to its roster at this time, Percy Walker, Bill Borland and (Dr.) Joe Olson. In the play-off against the Monarchs an exciting series resulted with the Monarchs winning. The latter team boasted of such stars as Dick Irwin, Del Irvine, Clem Loughlin, Tommy Murray, Alex Irwin, Stan Marples and Frank Cadham.

The following year the Falcons gained their objective and were admitted to the 'B' Section of the Winnipeg Senior League with the Victorias and the Winnipegs, while the 'A' Section was made up of the Monarchs, 61st Battalion and the All Stars. The 61st went on to win the division, the league and the Allan Cup. Chris Fridfinnson was a new Falcon addition that year.

The following season of 1916-17 found the whole Falcon body in the 223rd Battalion hockey team in the Winnipeg Patriotic League. With more serious duties of military pursuits calling, their performance did not reach great peaks that year.

**Requiem** – Here we might pause to pay tribute to the memory of one hockey player whom team-mates and adversaries alike admired and respected – the popular Olie Turnbull of the Winnipegs. His death was a great loss for he was one of those quiet, lovable fellows with a broad vein of humour in his make-up. He was 'all man.'

Another to pass into the great beyond was Buster Thorsteinson who made the supreme sacrifice for his nation in Flanders on the very eve of the Armistice, just after his last letter to his loved ones in Winnipeg telling them of his joy in being able to get a few days of

leave back of the lines. Buster was the iron man type of player, a clever stick handler and an ideal rover. Naturally quiet and reserved, he was a little man but very sturdily built. It was his disposition and lovable nature which made him stand out among his club mates and he had one of those rare personalities which kindled a warm glow in human hearts and brightened the lives of others.

Buster's pal, the curly-headed George Cumbers, also laid down his life for his country over there.

There was a big gap in the ranks and an ache in the hearts of the Falcons themselves as they sought to gather up the strands of three years of war service – years of turmoil, heroism, heartbreak and victory – but ever at work were the laws of nature, man building, strengthening and surmounting every contingency carrying on.

**The Falcons Return** The fall of 1919 saw the first gathering into a group of the members of the 1920 Olympic Champions.

Overseas, the boys had developed into sturdy manhood, and at least two of them were veritable young giants upon their return. This assisted in offsetting the lack of opportunity for playing during the nearly three year absence from hockey.

In the meantime, a number of very promising juniors were making rapid strides towards stardom, among them, on the Young Men's Lutheran Club team of the Manitoba Junior Champions, were Mike Goodman, Eddie Stephenson, Huck Woodman and Slim Halderson. The veteran seniors, combined with the new material from the junior ranks, formed a likely looking aggregation. Speed was their outstanding characteristic and the true spirit of the Falcons began to make itself felt. The team was comprised of – goal, Wally Byron; defence, Konnie Johannesson and Bobby Benson; centre, Frank Fredrickson; left wing, Mike Goodman; right wing, Slim Halderson; and substitutes, Huck Woodman, Chris Fridfinnson, Ed Stephenson, Harvey Benson, Connie Neil and Babe Elliott. The

manager was Steamer Maxwell; Honorary President, Hon. Thomas H. Johnson; President, Hebbie Axford; Vice-President, Col. H. Marino Hannesson; secretary, Bill Fridfinnson; and the executive committee consisted of Bob Forrest, John Davidson and Fred Thordarson.

In the first place the boys were in superb physical condition. None of them smoked or drank during the hockey season. Good living and strict training is, of course, absolutely essential if any exceptional proficiency in the game of hockey is to be reached and held. Equipped as they were with sound bodies and keen minds, the thing of still greater importance was the dynamic force which was engendered by the spirit which prevailed among the members of the club. There was harmony; the club had a sufficiently large roster of players to make two teams and a large slate of executive officers and officials; yet there was never any dissension. Each one did what he could for the club in the most unselfish manner. In addition to harmony they had perseverance and a fighting spirit.

It was with the utmost difficulty that the Club obtained admittance to Senior company at the commencement of the 1919-1920 season, having been turned down repeatedly. League officials did not consider the team qualified for senior standing. Finally, after a great deal of publicity in connection with the Club's continued fight for admission (Col. H.M. Hannesson's efforts in this regard deserving a great deal of praise), the Falcons were placed in a new section of equal standing with the old combine which held fast. This new section included Selkirk, Brandon and the Falcons, and what a league it turned out to be!

Now that they were in the league it was up to the boys to prove their merit and they went about their pre-season preparations and training quietly and modestly, not boasting of what they could do when they came up against the redoubtable Selkirk team and the strong outfit from Brandon. Another quality they had was poise, and in the Club's dressing room there was order and quiet, no

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rowdyism or loud boisterous talk. This may seem to be a matter of minor importance, but in reality it is the opposite. The atmosphere in the club room has an important bearing on the players' serenity and balance when they take to the ice. Discord or rowdyism may affect a team's play in a most detrimental manner. Even one loud-mouthed man in a club room may so affect some of the players as to preclude their playing a game they would be capable of were they undisturbed by any jarring note. The whole club must be a cohesive, understanding combination, with a very fine sense of the fitness of things. In the Falcons' dressing room before a game quiet reigned; most of the time you could almost hear a pin drop as the boys went about the business of preparing for the contest. An occasional jocular remark quietly passed – just friendly kidding, not overly serious yet restrained and controlled. Talk of winning the championship was not heard. Confident but not too much so, the boys seemed to avoid talk of winning the championship lest the charm be dispelled and their instinct was, in the long run, correct. For thinking too much ahead to the goal – the 'championship' or prize – has more often than not put a team off their game, when by quietly and steadily going about the business of 'doing their stuff,' they would achieve the best results. A man does not score a goal by thinking of it; in fact, the less he thinks of the goal itself the better he can apply himself to getting within shooting distance. Then again, a feeling that one always has something in reserve adds to con-

fidence and gives a sense of being in command of the situation, whereas over-anxiety and over-straining precludes one's doing himself justice. This 'something in reserve' the Falcons seemed to possess.

Now to this harmonious group with latent ability not even guessed at by their supporters was, by good fortune, added the coaching and managerial genius of Fred 'Steamer' Maxwell. The club's first practice was ragged, but under his masterly guidance they achieved cohesion and good team play. Later, a system of play evolved by Steamer was both new and effective. Always very apt in his remarks, though caustic at times, Steamer worked with an admirable, unselfish spirit in moulding the team into an effective hockey machine. He would illustrate the plays with matches representing the different players until the boys got the idea so clearly that their execution on the ice was greatly simplified.

Each member of the regular team had some outstanding qualifications which characterised his style of play, and the system evolved was designed to bring into play, and used to the best advantage, the particular department in which each individual excelled. That great speed merchant, Mike Goodman, excelled in overhauling opponents after they had apparently got clean away. Mike therefore was instructed to back check, if necessary, on the opposite side of the rink to his position. He was not to allow any man to get away clean without being back checked – and could that boy catch them!

Frank Fredrickson's skating and stick handling and especially his shooting skills were utilized to the best advantage. Frank, therefore, was up with every rush.

Slim Halderson was a great puck carrier. He could weave his way down the right wing with uncanny control over the puck. Slim, who was six foot two inches tall, travelled down the ice at a much faster clip than the actions of his long limbs indicated. A few long strides and he'd be down to the other end of the rink before the opposition expected. Incidentally, one is reminded of a little by-play which occurred at one of the earlier practices

of that great season. Steamer was impressing upon the forwards the necessity of staying in their position. Slim had a slight habit of rushing down the right wing and, as he neared the goal area, weaving over to centre ice and finally ending up in the opposite corner. At this particular practice Steamer was so emphatic about the matter that he instructed forwards to keep to their 'third' of their ice surface, dividing the ice into three sections separately by imaginary lines. Slim had the misfortune to bump his head quite sharply on the ice when he collided with another player. It caused him to become slightly dazed but nevertheless just a minute or two later, he grabbed the puck and was off on another rush on the ice. His old habit asserted itself; he veered over into the centre ice and was headed for the opposite corner when Steamer by fast skating caught up to him. He was furious and administered a resounding 'whack' on Slim's seat to stop him and inquired in a most aggrieved tone, "what the devil are you doing over here?" "I don't know, Steamer. It must have been the bump on the head," replied the nonplussed Slim. But the same Slim, with his great puck carrying ability, his tenacity of purpose and his unselfishness when he saw a chance to pass, together with Frank Fredrickson with his speed, weight and exceptional ability in shooting – these two whose thoughts and actions were as one, made a great combination on the attacking line. Add to this Mike Goodman's sensational skating proclivities (he was at the time Canadian speed skating champion) and one need not wonder at the power of their attack and their superb defensive play.

Big Konnie Johannesson with his long reach and his uncanny ability to divide the intention of onrushing opponents and little Bobby Benson, sturdily built, with his quick aggressiveness, composed a wonderful defence. Bobby's 'Herculean' antics tickled the fans beyond measure. No man was too big for little Bobby to hop onto. They called him the 'jumping jack.' This contrasting pair formed an effective defence – their under-

standing of each other's play being remarkable. It is said that the defence was not once 'split' during the entire season's play. Behind this bulwark was keen-eyed Wally Byron. His marvellous agility and intuition and his all-round masterly work in the nets made him a prime favourite with the fans who packed the Amphitheatre to the rafters for game after game.

The plucky, crafty Huck Woodman; that pugnacious, hard-working, colourful and crowd-pleasing Eddie Stephenson; the light, elusive Chris Fridfinnson; the diminutive, wiry veteran, Harvey Benson and occasionally Connie Neil of the beautiful skating style upheld the substitute duties in superb fashion. Babe Elliott the faithful sub-goalie attended every practice which was later to prove its value, and the sturdy Babs Dunlop was also always on hand.

When a man started off on a rush he and his team-mates knew which player was to go down with him, and 'speed' was their watchword as was it that of their host of supporters. Speed! Speed! Speed! And yet more speed, was the cry of the crowd that jammed the rink. Enthusiasm was raised to a pitch such as had never before and has never since been witnessed at athletic exhibitions in the City. There was colour; there was speed to burn; there was rivalry between evenly matched clubs. The strenuous encounters with the famous Selkirk team were epics of the great winter sport. Even years later the remark was frequently heard, "Don't think we'll ever see hockey like the old Selkirk-Falcon games again."

In the first game of the season the Falcons were not conceded much of a chance with the great Selkirk aggregation which included that hockey wonder, Joe Simpson (who later, in his debut with the New York Americans was nicknamed 'Bullet Joe') one of the finest players who ever stepped on local ice; Harry Oliver, an Icelander (who, by the way, became a star with Boston Bruins), Crutchey Morrison, Reddy Smith, Alex Morrison, Jocko Anderson, Pete Mitchell – and many other stars. The Falcons stepped out and ex-

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ceeded their own expectations and surprised the hockey fans of the town by taking a most thrilling set-to by a 7-2 score.

They started off carefully, with a three-man defence with Slim Halderson or Huck Woodman usually the pivot third man. That was the first time this style of defence had been adopted here and the Selkirks were baffled. They threw attack after attack at the Falcon bulwark, but were consistently stopped or eased towards the boards from where an angle shot with no player obscuring the line of flight of the puck was just to Wally Byron's liking. And how he could kick those sizzling shots out! Wally was a fine ball player and this stood him in good stead in his goal-keeping. He had a great pair of hands and used them to the best advantage. The Goodman-Fredrickson-Halderson combination was working like a charm. The pace was a withering one and no let-up on either side was permissible or the results would have been disastrous. Jocko Anderson and Harry Oliver, and the fleet Crutchy Morrison strove

desperately to penetrate the Falcon defence. Joe Simpson, the wonder man, who always put all he had into his weaving corkscrew rushes and packed a terrific shot, went down time and again. They sent down three and four-men rushes, storming the Falcon defensive territory in a desperate bombardment and sometimes succeeded in stirring the conflict into a regular melee in and about the goal mouth; the fans meanwhile raising a deafening roar of approval in anticipation of a score. The Falcons adhered to their prearranged plan of two-man rushes with rapier-like thrusts deep into the Selkirk defensive zone and their shots were trained on openings. The Falcons added to their count while Selkirk strove to solve the Falcon defence. As the game wore on, to the Falcons at their own game. This had not been their practiced way and the new methods of the Falcons upset the calculations of the great Selkirk team.

The final score stood, as said before, Falcons 7, Selkirk 2. The fans, wending their way slowly out of the rink, were in a jubilant mood. Later, after obtaining a taste of this high-speed hockey, many fans would stand all night in line at the rink waiting for the box office to open up for the sale of tickets for the next game. The queue formed would sometimes reach a good city block back from the entrance of the rink.

The Selkirk team took the next game from Falcons, 5-4. They fought desperately and Joe Simpson's redoubtable brigade finished on the long end of the score in the closest, most scintillating hockey imaginable, with twenty minutes of torrid overtime play. The winning goal came from a wild scramble in front of the Falcon goal with several players sprawled on the ice. Jocko Anderson, lying flat on his stomach, was just able to reach the puck with the end of his stick and poke it into the Falcon net.

The Falcons took another game from Selkirk when they tied the score with only fifteen seconds to go and went on to win in overtime, 3-2. Fredrickson went right through the Selkirk team to score while off balance,

Brandow having stepped into his path. This picture of the flying hockeyist carrying through to score after having been knocked clean off balance, both his feet flying outward from under him, has remained vividly impressed upon my memory as a highlight of hockey at its best; coordination of hockey sense and physical power requiring no premeditation accomplished the seemingly impossible.

In the greatest game of the season Selkirk opened with a terrific burst of speed which carried all before it. Joe Simpson was training his sights on the Falcon goal and after a characteristic rush scored the first goal for Selkirk. Selkirk pressed hard, sending four men down and Slim broke away on a counter-attack to beat Brandow, alone on defence and notched the equalizer. Falcons finished strong, Selkirk seemingly having burnt up a lot of their surplus pep in the opening attack. Despite the stubborn and desperate nature of the defensive tactics there were singularly few penalties and those only for minor infringements. With end to end rushes in perpetuity sequence there was never a dull moment throughout although there were stages when both sides seemed to have played themselves to a standstill. Supremacy hung in the balance. Upon resumption of play in the second period, Selkirk literally swarmed over the ice around the Falcon citadel. They fought desperately, and Crutchy Morrison scored on a beautiful effort to send Selkirk into the lead. There followed another goal by Pete Mitchell, whose shot from behind caromed in off a Falcon skate. Just ten seconds later, Jocko Anderson took a pass from Mitchell to again increase the Selkirk lead. The pace was terrific! Continuing their strong pressure, the fifth marker came from Ernie Anderson's baton on a snap pass from Crutchy Morrison. Just before the end of the second period, the Falcons scored. Fridfinnson, known as the useful sub, got the marker which reduced the Selkirk lead, leaving the score 5-2.

Into their dressing room for the interval filed the Falcons. Steamer's usual crisp, apt remarks, always the right word at the right

time, had the desired effect and the boys rested quietly. Meanwhile, the able trainers rubbed aching muscles back to suppleness and renewed power.

The referee signalled with his bell that the rest period was over.

Aquiver with eagerness to be into the game, the Falcon men went out for the third period in just the right frame of mind to permit of their reaching the peak of their form, and intent on following implicitly their manager's instructions. On taking the ice they did not dash about but did stand around or circle slowly until they got their bearings.

The bell rang for the resumption of play. We can picture the play as the game progressed towards its dramatic conclusion. With the 5-2 lead entering the third period the game seemed to be tucked away in the old 'fish basket,' when suddenly the Icelanders who had been travelling under somewhat of a cloud, reasserted themselves, recovering their hold on the game and began to pull down their opponent's lead. The phenomenal speed and back-checking of Mike Goodman, who tied up the great Joe Simpson, began to swing the tide in the Falcon's favour. Joe tried desperately to get through but Mike, as a man imbued with a single great purpose, checked the Selkirk 'cyclone' to a standstill, swooping back to poke the puck away and again skating backwards zig-zagging in front of the onrushing Joe to frustrate his best efforts. The great audience gave voice to the surge of enthusiasm with cries that burst from thousands of throats and mingled together in the familiar roar. Selkirk seemed bent on defensive play, but this was broken up. Bobby Benson sallied down alone and scored a pretty goal, which infused the breath of hope into the struggling Icelanders. "Speed! Falcons, speed!" was the cry of the multitude of fans. Slim Halderson culminated a piquant combination with Fredrickson to fetch the Falcons within tying distance, and suddenly unexpectedly the equalizer came when Mike Goodman, from the face-off thirty feet out, back-handed past Bobby Morrison. Pandemonium reigned!

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The teams were matched to a hairline, finishing exhausted and practically at the last gasp, yet showing throughout hockey above criticism, speed beyond praise, sufficient to rouse the most phlegmatic to fanatic enthusiasm.

Jaded, and well nigh exhausted, the teams returned to the fray, fighting for the winning goal in a spirit fraught with desperation. The first ten minutes of hectic overtime play brought no score. More overtime! There followed a short interval. The band played a stirring overture. Jack 'Speed' Snidal, great booster of the Falcons, stepped onto the rail and 'walked the rope,' balancing with arms thrown wide, to the great delight of the fans.

Again they returned to the fray, and do-or-die scrimmage for a place in the sun on the one hand and a virtual safe lead for the ultimate honours on the other, was resumed. Jocko Anderson rushed fast and crashed into the Falcon goal, but the puck was not in! Konnie cleared and plowed down centre ice on a 'take all with you' that sent two Selkirk men and himself floundering on the ice. Resurrecting the last and flickering remnants of their fading energy, staking their all on a last and whirlwind spurt, the Falcons combined in the closing stages of the last five-minute overtime period. With less than two minutes to go, Johnnie Mitchell gave Brandow a perfect pass in front of the Falcon goal, but Byron pulled off a wonderful save and Bobby Benson grabbed the puck and travelled down the ice fast to give Morrison a hot shot. Morrison was equal to the occasion but unable to clear in time and Halderson, skating in fast, batted it into the net for the tally that transformed the monster gathering of wild-eyed fanatics into a vast multitude of maniacs in a scene that beggared description.

It was the dramatic finish to a heartbreaking game, where the sympathies were as generous to the losers as the congratulations to the winners. All the other games of the season were cast into oblivion before this grueling tussle and never did fervid fandom get so many opportunities to enthuse and give vent to their pent-up feelings.

The usually taciturn Steamer Maxwell beamed on his proteges.

The spirit of the Falcons had prevailed, the spirit that would not acknowledge defeat – that retained confidence as long as there was a minute left to play – that subjected the individual to the good of the club. This victory stamped the Falcons as a truly great aggregation yet they kept their 'balance' and grew in power. They were never over-confident but had always the steady determination to stay with it until they won. And always the cry was, "Speed! Falcons, speed!"

Meeting the Winnipegs, winners of the other section of the Senior League, the Falcons' superiority was evident by the scores of 5-0 in the opener and 10-1 in the second game.

Eliminating the Fort William stalwart brigade by 7-2 and 9-1 in the semifinals, the Falcons were ready to travel to Toronto in quest of the Allan Cup which had been in the East for the previous three years.

The same poise and quiet reserve was always noticeable in the Falcons' dressing room before games and practices. Steamer had a favourite nickname for most of the players and used these with no malice but in a most appropriate and telling manner in his efforts to bring out their best. If Frank Fredrickson was expounding to Slim on some weighty matter using four and five syllable words, Steamer would quietly remark, "Hey! Education! Save your wind for the game!" And, "You, Good-lookin," (directed at Slim), "get out there and get your hair messed up."

En route east, to meet the Varsity team at Toronto for the Dominion Championship, the boys maintained their steady way. The spirit that prevailed, their playing talent and Maxwell's firm guidance, all fused together making them into a coordinated aggregation with almost unlimited possibilities.

Those memorable games against Varsity will long be remembered by those who were fortunate to witness them. Some of the newspaper reports, which we have preserved, are worth relating. An enormous crowd packed the great arena to the roof for the opener.

*(continued on page 32...)*



*Above: in front of the Amphitheatre in Winnipeg before leaving for the Olympics. From back row (left to right): Hebbie Axford (President), Huck Woodman, Slim Halderson, Konnie Johannesson, Chris Fridfinnson, Steamer Maxwell, Bobby Benson, Frank Fredrickson, Mike Goodman, Wally Byron.*

*Below: souvenir postcard designed by Charles Thorson (postcard courtesy of The Icelandic Collection, University of Manitoba).*



*Above: Viking Hockey Club, Icelandic Championship of Manitoba, 1897-1902. From back row (left to right): Skuli Hanson, Thorold Johnson, Oliver Olsen, Big Sam Johnson, Joe Palson, Paul Johnston, Arni Anderson, Fred Olsen, Mike Johnson, Henry Thompson.*

*Below: later team. From back row (left to right): Billy Benson, Chris Olafson, Lowrie Finney, Steve Finnon, Alf Albert, Gales Johnson, Jack Swanson, Dr. O. Bjornson, Tom Gillis, Swanny Swanson, Manny Johnson, Harry Sivertson, Fusi Byron.*



*Above: early team, 1903-04. From back row (left to right): Dr. Jack Snidal, Fusi Byron, Swanny Swanson, Jack Swanson, Tom Gillis, Dr. O. Bjornson, Paul Olson, Percy Olafson, Harry Sivertson, Zabatus Johnson.*

*Below: later team, 1908-1909 Insets (clockwise from top left): Alex Johnson, W. Haldorson, Magnus Johnson, Chris Haldorson. From back row (left to right): John Halderson, Eric Jorundson, S. Laxdal, Fred Thordarson, Cully Wilson, Steve Dalman, Fred Olsen, Sam Johnson, O. Erickson.*





## Complimentary Banquet

dedicated to

## The Falcon Hockey Club

1920-1921

OLYMPIC GAMES 1920

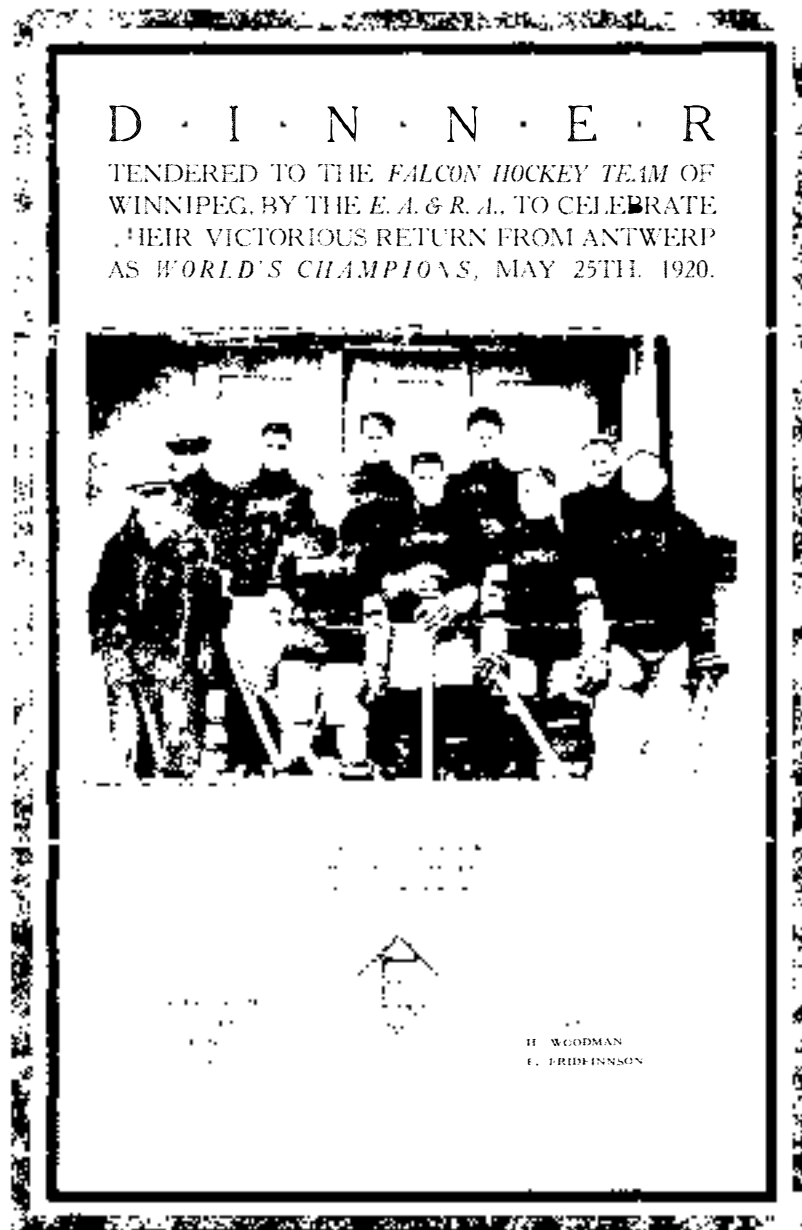
PROGRAMME / MENU  
 BANQUET FOR  
 THE FALCON HOCKEY CLUB

*Programme / menu for banquet at the Fort Garry Hotel, May 22nd, 1920.  
 On the menu: Fruit Cocktail, Strained Oxtail, Roast Sirloin of Beef au jus, Potatoes Rissoles,  
 Matignon of Fresh Vegetables, Biscuit Tutti Frutti and Macaroons.*



*Above: the team, in Antwerp (left to right): G. Sigurjonsson (trainer), Hebbie Axford (President), Wally Byron (goal), Slim Halderson (right wing), Frank Fredrickson (centre), Billy Hewitt (CAHA rep), Konnie Johannesson (defence), Mike Goodman (left wing), Huck Woodman (rover), Bobby Benson (defence), Chris Fridfinnson (centre), Bill Fridfinnson (Secretary-Treasurer).*

*Below: 'Buster' Thorsteinson. **The Romance of the Falcons** was respectfully dedicated to Buster in *Canadian Sports and Outdoor Life*, January, 1933.*



*Programme / menu for a dinner and dance at Eaton's, May 25th, 1920. On the menu: Cream 'Fredrickson,' Tenderloin Steak, 'Goodman' Style, Roast 'Byron' Potatoes, Creamed 'Woodman' Carrots, 'Slim's' Lemon Pie, 'Fridfinnson' Rolls with butter, 'Bobby Benson's' Coffee.*



*Above: victory parade (photo courtesy of The Icelandic Collection, University of Manitoba). Below: Falcon Juniors of 1920-21. From back row (left to right): Dave Patrick, Sammy McCallum, 'Scotty' Comfort, Harry Neil, W. McPherson, Frank Woodall, Wally Fridfinnson, Harold McMunn, Art Somers, J. Austman, Connie Neil, Fred Thordarson, T. Swainson.*





*Above: Champions Falcon Inter-Club League, Juvenile Series, 1935-36.*

*Below: First Lutheran Junior Hockey Team, 1937.*

*Insets (left): Stony Stone, President; (right) Harvey Benson, Coach.*

*From back row (left to right): Jon Johnson, Alex Watt, Murray Dempsey, Bill Eager, Alan Finnbogason, Cliff Stone, George Johnson, Ted Thorsteinson, Stefan Johnson, Ragnar Swanson.*



*Above: Executive of Falcon Athletic Club, c. 1932. From back row (left to right): Fred Thordarson, Joseph T. Thorson, Dr. Agust Blondal, Dr. Baldur Olson, Judge Walter J. Lindal, Dr. Brandur J. Brandson, Marino Hannesson.*

*Below: First Lutheran Sunday School Hockey Team (Midgets). Inset: Stony Stone. From back row (left to right): Bill Goodman, Stefan Thorsteinson, two 'unknowns,' Harvey Benson, David Snidal, Harold Thompson, Doug Baldwin, Ray Baldwin, Bud Stephenson, Alan Halderson, Norman Thorsteinson.*

The Falcons played brilliantly to win the first game, 8 goals to 3. Frank Fredrickson scored the first goal in seventeen minutes on a pretty play – a rush from his own end through the Varsity. Gouinlock scored in one minute in a mix-up in front of the Falcon goal mouth. The second period started with a bang, the pace being terrific. The third goal came after a face-off at the side of the Varsity net, Goodman taking Frank's quick pass and lifting it into the corner of the net. Mike Goodman scored his second goal in five minutes. It was a beautiful play with Frank Fredrickson. They broke fast, with the puck being passed twice to work right inside the defence for a fast shot which Langtry had no chance to save. Varsity attacked viciously but close checking prevented them getting through. Halderson broke away and dodged the defence but missed the net by inches. Byron made a brilliant save from Olson's shot. Frank took the rubber at his own defence and went right through the Varsity team to score while off balance. This was the most spectacular goal of the game. Thirty seconds later Mike scored a long shot that bounded into the corner of the net. Varsity pressed desperately but Benson relieved. The play attained terrific speed; attack followed by counter-attack in rapid succession. Konnie Johannesson made a great poke check on a two-man combination and he tumbled Goodman on the play so that the great speed merchant had to be taken to the dressing room, having hit his head on the ice.

In the third period, Falcons started with a rush. Fredrickson scored in forty-five seconds, going down from the face-off with Halderson and when the defence looked for a pass, he dodged right through and beat Langtry when he was right on top of him. Johannesson toppled Gouinlock when he was right through and saved what looked like a sure goal. The play shifted with phenomenal rapidity, and masterly work by both teams had the fans in a continuous state of intense expectancy as the colourfully clad figures made their lightning thrusts, or swooped back like hawks to smother attacks that were pressed with all the

vigour of straining sinews. There are few sights in sportsdom more impressive than the fine figure of a man flashing at full speed down the playing surface with power in every line and movement with the deftness of the stick work making it appear as if the puck were part and parcel of the speeding figure which swerves and shifts with almost imperceptible movements then literally leaps, with all powers exerted, to an opening for a bullet-like drive trained on the opening! The goal keeper's quick stab! The dented net! And the roar of acclaim as the goal umpire throws up his hands!

Gouinlock scored when he dodged right through for a close shot, giving Varsity their second goal. Goodman brought the crowd to its feet with some wonderful skating, but was checked as he nearly got through. Ramsay beat the whole defence with a clever exhibition of stick-handling but failed to score as he was checked upright in the goal mouth. Wright dodged and gave Carson the puck right in the goal mouth, but Bill missed it. Sullivan made a sensational rush and gave Byron a sharp shot which Wally deflected with a lightning movement of his hand. Bobby Benson took the puck at his own goal, jumped and hurled down on a great rush with Frank on his left. Bobby slipped a fast pass to Frank who went in to score. Varsity pressed and scored shortly before the bell rang for full time, and the final score read Falcons 8, Varsity 3.

The second game was a hectic struggle for supremacy with Varsity using their weight freely. Here, we might mention that Dr. Joe Olson was a star with the Varsity team, as at that time he was studying dentistry in Toronto. Joe was formerly a team-mate of the Falcons. Right after the commencement of the third period, with the Falcons holding a 2-1 lead, a long shot he did not see hit goal keeper Wally Byron in the left eye. A fifteen minute delay ensued, several stitches being required, and after the doctors had dressed the wound, they refused to permit Wally to return to the ice. 'Babe' Elliott, faithful substitute goalie, donned the gear and went into

the nets to give a fine performance and the Falcons put on a splendid exhibition of how to keep the opposition from getting inside the defence for a shot on goal. Mike Goodman scored the Falcons' third goal on a pass from Fredrickson and the valiant efforts of the Varsity squad netted them another well-earned tally, making the final score, Falcons 3, Varsity 2. By the two-game score of 11-5, the boys were worthy winners of the Allan Cup, emblematic of the Amateur Championship of Canada.

Back home in Winnipeg the enthusiasm of the citizens was boundless and the great crowds hearing the returns at the *Free Press* and *Tribune* were in jubilant mood as the results came over the wires. The prize – a trip to Antwerp for the Olympic games.

About the Falcons chances at Antwerp, the *Free Press* had this to say in the write-up by Billy Finlay:

*"The Winnipeg Falcons, conquerors of America's classiest hockey teams, embark on the steamer Melita this afternoon at St. John where they are looking for more worlds to conquer, when they will carry with them the best wishes of all Canadians in their efforts to bring back to Canada, and Winnipeg, the world's amateur hockey championship. That the boys who upheld the name of Winnipeg so nobly at Toronto, when they lifted the Allan Cup and demonstrated beyond all doubt that they were the best amateur hockey team playing the game in Canada, can be depended upon to continue their triumphs in the Olympic games, goes without saying. They have the winning spirit imbued right into their systems and there are few Canadians who would dare to say that they will not return with the world's title. Conditions will be much different from playing in Canada. The rink will be narrow, the seven man style of game will be in vogue and the ice may not be as fast as the boys have been used to playing on, but the Icelandic boys have shown the winning punch under all conditions this year and there is no reason to feel that they will not carry it into Belgium with them,*

*where the majority of the lads are right at home, from their exploits in helping in the downfall of the Huns."*

It was regrettable that the Club's great manager, Steamer Maxwell, had to forego the trip to Antwerp and all which that entails. This was in keeping with Fred Maxwell's magnanimous, unselfish spirit and showed the character of the man. He was not looking for the glory but followed his best judgment unerringly. On this subject the *Free Press* commented:

*"It is indeed unfortunate that manager Steamer Maxwell finds it impossible to accompany the boys to Antwerp owing to business reasons. Every player had implicit faith in what Maxwell said, and though at times he seemed to be rather gruff and hard in his rulings, the boys never lost faith in his ability to know what was the best for them. Steamer's word was gospel all the time, and his presence with the boys overseas would spell success. Let me say right here that much of the success of the Falcons this winter was due to the strategy of Fred Maxwell. He had a habit of studying the other team, and he taught his boys how to combat their style of game. He showed splendid judgment in handling the boys at Toronto, and the fact that they went on the ice and played faultless hockey and showed wonderful condition despite the fact that the boys hadn't played a game for seventeen days, is a credit to the manager of the team. No better behaved bunch of athletes ever represented Winnipeg in a championship affair than the Falcon players. They took everything seriously and were very faithful in their training at Toronto. They would not drink the Toronto water, or anything stronger than tea or coffee, did not smoke, and returned to bed early every evening. Even after winning the championship there was no celebration by the players, as might be expected from the tamest kind of team. The afternoon of the first day somebody walked into Slim Halderson's room smoking a cigarette, and he was hardly in*

*before Slim told him, very politely, that no smoking was allowed in that room, and to kindly throw away the cigarette."*

Their winning the world championship was confidently anticipated by the people of Canada, who eagerly followed every dispatch and news item on the Olympic games. The boys did not disappoint their admirers. Continuing their steady ways, they defeated the strong United States entry in a hard, close seven-man game by 2-0 and carried through to glorious victory and the first Olympic Hockey Championship. Their club spirit had brought them to the pinnacle of hockey fame.

The Swedish and other European teams (Belgium, France, Czechoslovakia and Switzerland) appeared on the ice in togs similar to those used in Soccer Football with no protection. In their style of play it was a rare occasion for any player to come in contact with another but after watching the Canadians in practice and learning how powerful the shooting of the Canadians and Ameri-

cans really was, the Swedish goal-keeper turned up bandaged in all the absorbent cotton he could round up. When the Swedes managed to score their lone tally on the Canadians all the players on the Swedish team rushed to the Falcon men to thank them profusely for their generosity in allowing them to score a goal.

The able Hebbie Axford, President of the club, accompanied the team to Antwerp along with that most capable of hockey club secretaries, Bill Fridfinnson, both of whom gave unselfishly of their services to the club for years. Billy Hewitt of Toronto made a very popular manager for the Falcons on their Olympic trip. Just before the big game of the Olympic series between the Canadians and the United States' team, Bill Fridfinnson got into a tight corner. An officer of the American army of occupation offered to bet (on behalf of some of his American army friends) the small amount of one thousand francs against the Canadians. Bill, having no intention whatever of taking the offer, thought to



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pull a fast one and said, "make it ten thousand francs or nothing." The officer went away and Bill thought there would be nothing more heard from him. Imagine his surprise, however, when the American returned shortly to say that he could only get eight thousand francs. Still with no intention of betting, Bill held out for the ten thousand, but after the American had unsuccessfully tried again to increase the amount, he was in a quandary. Instead of pulling a 'fast one' he had made a 'faux pas,' but after consulting with Hebbie Axford, they felt that they had practically obligated themselves to cover the American money, which they did. Of course nothing was said to the players but Bill and Hebbie were certainly on pins and needles throughout the game and breathed great sighs of relief when the game was over and won.

***Olympic Victors' Homecoming*** – The boys visited Paris while en route home and their stay there is particularly remembered by a delightful dinner given them by Mr. and Mrs. R.D. Waugh (a former Winnipegger, Mr. Waugh was at that time Commissioner of the Saar Valley).

Upon their return to Canada they were royally welcomed at Montreal and in Toronto were banqueted and presented with silver-headed canes.

Arriving in Winnipeg on the 22nd of May, they were tendered a great Civic welcome and the public demonstrated their pride and intense appreciation by turning out to greet them in vast throngs that seldom (if ever) had been seen on other occasions in the City. Great preparations had been made by the City Council and the sporting fraternities. Crowds lined the streets from the C.P.R. Depot (the immediate vicinity of which presented an enormous milling mass of enthusiastic humanity) down Main Street and along the great wide (Portage) Avenue to Wesley College, waiting to witness a mile-long parade, and the cheers of the multitude echoed and re-echoed along the line as the Falcon boys, seated in open cars, wended their way along the designated route. Frank

Fredrickson, by the way, missed this glorious homecoming, having gone directly to Iceland to do some flying for the Government of the little northern island.

A halfday holiday had been proclaimed in the City of Winnipeg and everybody who could possibly get out was there to cheer their champions. The jubilant shouts of the crowds, combined with the spirited playing of the City's best bands, placed at intervals among the brilliant floats carrying members, in uniform, of various local hockey, baseball, football, lacrosse and other sports, made a memorable spectacle. The boys received the ovation of their proud fellow-citizens with becoming modesty and all along the route it was, "Hello, Falcons," and, "Hello, Slim," "Good old Mike," and, "Hi! Wally," "Atta boy, Bobby," "Hello, Konnie," "Nice going, Steamer," and "Hello Chris." Little folks, big folks, all seemed to own them as their personal friend. Their names were on every tongue.

The Club members were banqueted and the team presented with tokens of esteem by various organizations and service clubs. Tammany Tigers Athletic Association gave a dance in their honour and presented them with souvenirs of the occasion. A reception for the victorious Falcons was promoted by the Jon Sigurdsson Chapter IODE. The dinner tendered the Falcon club by the T. Eaton Company on the 25th of May, 1920, to celebrate their victorious return from Antwerp, was a sparkling, colourful affair. Not the last and by the same token, not the least, was the great civic banquet at the Fort Garry Hotel, which local sportsdom and civic officials had been planning for weeks, and where, at the numerous tables set and decorated beautifully, sat a vast assembly of lovers of the sport. At the long head table, the great hockey machine heard their praises 'sung' and the pride and appreciation of the citizens conveyed in glowing terms. The hearty congratulations of all accompanied the presentation of beautiful gold watches, suitably inscribed, the gift of the City of Winnipeg to the Falcon Hockey Team, the World's Olympic Champions.



Main Street, Winnipeg, 1874, towards the Red River and St. Boniface on the left and Fort Garry on the right. Reprinted from *Canadian Illustrated News*, November 28, 1874.

1. A.G. Bannatyne's house
2. St. Boniface College
3. Archbishop's Palace
4. Cathedral
5. Grey Nun's
6. Custom's House
7. Dr. Schultz' store
8. Grace Church
9. Fort Garry
10. Canada Pacific Hotel

# In the Red River Valley

*Part III, Chapter Four*  
 By Jóhann Magnús Bjarnason  
 Translated by Thelma Guðrun Whale  
 Continued from Spring/Summer, 1995

## Part III, Chapter IV O'Brian and Godson

When Mr. Island had read this for my cousin and me, he stuck his notebook into his pocket with the greatest composure and gazed at me silently for a few moments as if to find out how I had reacted to hearing it.

"This is the statement that the monk Bernard wrote about a month before he died," said Mr. Island.

"It is a remarkable narrative," said my cousin, placing her hand under her chin. But she was a long way from understanding it in relation to Arnór's trip to America.

"How did you find out," I said, "that Arnór Berg was this man's nephew? And how did you find out the name of the man's sister and where she could be found?"

"I shall tell you that," said Mr. Island, smiling. "When I read the letter that was with the statement, I saw how I could find her. I went home to Iceland on the advice of the abbot and with financial aid from him. But the Icelandic seaman's sister had died three or four years before. She had been a widow for some years. Her son had gone to America in the summer of 1881, the same year she died. But her married daughter was still in Iceland, living in the country. I found and talked to her and she told me all about her brother's journey. Since then, I have, you may say, followed in his footsteps, until he moved out of this house."

"What is the name of the abbey where the seaman Mr. Berg died?" I asked.

"I must keep that secret for the time being," said Mr. Island.

"But you can tell me the abbot's name?"

"No, not really, as it now stands," said Mr. Island, smiling.

He must have thought me singularly inquisitive.

"I must live with that."

"Are you not convinced, after having heard the monk's story, that it is to your friend Arnór's advantage that I find him as quickly as possible?"

"Yes," I said.

"And you are, perhaps, familiar with some of what is mentioned in the statement," he said frankly.

"Yes, I recognize much of what is mentioned there," I said.

"No doubt your friend Arnór has told you about the treasure?"

"He did mention it to me."

"And he has searched for the money?"

"Yes," I said.

"And never found it?"

"No."

"Of course not," said Mr. Island. "But now I believe he has had in his hands one or more of the letters his uncle wrote home in the last winter of his life."

"He had one letter," I said, hesitantly.

"Which one?" asked this wise man.

"The one written in the fall of 1869," I said.

"And of course he read it to you?"

"He let me see it."

"And read it?"

"Yes."

"More than once?"

"At least once."

"And of course, his Irish friend also got to know its contents?"

"Yes."

"And, perhaps Arnór has showed it to more people?"

"Certainly Miss Trent had to know the contents."

"Miss Trent?" said Mr. Island, emphasizing the words and looking hard at me. "Who is she?"

"She is the niece of the William Trent who asked Arnór's uncle to look after his money on the day he died."

"Now I hear that your friend Arnór has not been entirely idle since he came to this country," said Mr. Island, smiling with satisfaction. "And perhaps he has already found the treasure, even though you don't know about it." He said it slowly and quietly, looking straight into my eyes.

"No," I said, "unfortunately, it is not yet found – about that I am absolutely sure, – and there is little hope that it will ever be found." I said it somewhat sheepishly, and he noticed it.

"Let us be hopeful," he said, "for nothing is so carefully hidden that it will not be found sometime. But now be so kind as to take me to the Irishman's because I want to know quickly how he takes this matter."

A few minutes later we set off west to old O'Brian's house. Mr. Island walked slowly and ponderously. He talked the whole way and encouraged me to get a higher education or to learn some trade.

O'Brian was at home when we got there and was quite well-dressed. As soon as he saw us coming into the front yard, he opened the door and called me by name.

"Mr. O'Brian," I said, "allow me to introduce Mr. Island. – Mr. Island," I glanced towards him, "this is Mr. O'Brian."

They shook hands and greeted each other very cordially, and they looked into each other's eyes a moment, like loving brothers who have not met for a long time. And, I noticed

immediately that O'Brian was entirely without the jokes or banter which he usually had ready at hand. I guessed that either he was ill or else saw immediately that Mr. Island was too serious a man to take kindly to Irish jesting.

"Please come in," said O'Brian. He showed us into a small room where he kept his papers and accounts, read the newspaper and smoked his pipe in the evenings. He usually called this room his 'reading room,' in jest of course, and I had often sat there with him on Sundays and talked with him about anything and everything. There were three chairs in the room and one little table. Mr. Island and O'Brian sat down at the table opposite each other and I sat down not far from them.

"I have come here, Mr. O'Brian, to talk to you about a matter which is in my heart," said Mr. Island.

"Welcome to my home, Mr. Island," said O'Brian. "I shall be happy to listen to what you have to say. And I hope that your visit will be of some benefit to you. What is this matter of yours all about?"

"It is about a young man who is a compatriot of mine and is called Arnór Berg."

"What about him?" asked O'Brian, his eyes becoming rather sharp.

"I must know, as soon possible, where he lives so that I can talk with him and tell him something which is very important to him. And now I am told that you, Mr. O'Brian, are the only person in Winnipeg who knows where this young man is. And it is my main errand to ask you to tell me his address."

"May I ask, Mr. Island, what you wish to tell Arnór?"

"It is about a letter his uncle wrote to his mother a few days before he died."

"Do you have that letter?"

"No, it is kept by an abbot in an abbey south in Minnesota. Arnór's uncle died in that abbey."

"May I ask the abbot's name and where in Minnesota the abbey is?"

"I must tell no one at this time," said Mr. Island.

"Forgive my curiosity, Mr. Island," said Mr. O'Brian, his eyes becoming still sharper, "may I know why you must not tell anyone the name of the abbot or the abbey?"

"Mr. O'Brian," said Mr. Island, slowly and distinctly, looking straight into O'Brian's eyes, "I swore an oath not to tell anyone but Arnór about where the letter is kept or what is in it. To Arnór only, – and no one but him, – have I permission to tell that."

"I must ask you to forgive me, Mr. Island, though I tell you I think this is somewhat of a mystery and more than strange."

"I will explain it better, Mr. O'Brian," said Mr. Island. And he told O'Brian, from beginning to end, the same story he had told my cousin and me. And he read the monk Bernard's statement, – not in Icelandic, but in English. He read well and distinctly and I heard from it, – as in his speech to O'Brian, – that he was proficient in the English language.

When he had finished the monk's story, he said, "Mr. O'Brian, I have let you hear this because I know you are a good friend of Arnór's. And I hope you realize it is in his best interest for me to meet him as quickly as possible. And, I know you will be so good as to tell me where he lives, that is to say, if you know."

"I know where he lives," said O'Brian, "but unfortunately I must not, at this time, tell anyone."

Mr. Island was visibly astonished. He had really not expected such an answer. "Mr. O'Brian," he said coolly, "will you please tell me why you must not let anyone know about Arnór Berg's current address?"

"That I shall gladly do, Mr. Island. I have pledged, by my honour, to keep secret the young man's whereabouts for the time being. And we are then even, you and I, on this matter. You must not tell the abbot's name and I must tell no one Arnór's address."

"But don't you see, Mr. O'Brian," said Mr. Island, smiling gently, "it can be a great loss to Arnór to keep his address from me?"

"How can that be?"

"He will then not receive the letter which the monk Bernard mentions in his narrative."

"Arnór need not receive that letter until it is certain that it will be to his advantage and satisfaction to accept it."

"The letter is in many respects very important," said Mr. Island, "and it tells how to go about finding the treasure."

"Can you let me hear the part of the letter which mentions the treasure?" said O'Brian.

"No, by no means can I do that."

"The two of us have then entered into a great dilemma," said O'Brian, smiling.

"And by what means can we get out of this dilemma?" said Mr. Island cheerfully.

"The two of us must deal with this matter, Mr. Island," said O'Brian, after a short silence, "and let us leave the abbot and Arnór out of it for now."

"And how can that be done?" asked Mr. Island.

"I will tell you something, Mr. Island," said O'Brian, looking directly into the eyes of the man he was addressing, "I have full power of attorney from Arnór Berg, – and that in writing, – to deal with this secret on his behalf. I have the letter his uncle wrote in the fall of 1869. Arnór is at present studying down south in the United States. It was I who advised him to do so. And he and I feel it is important that he not be disturbed unnecessarily before he graduates. But if I have information that the treasure may be found, I will let the young man know and he will come north and take possession of his share of the money. The letter I have very clearly explains where the treasure can be found and we have followed those directions in every detail, but always in vain. I have read the English translation of the letter again and again, and always understand it in the same way and have come to the conclusion that the treasure was never buried in the place described in the letter. Now I will make a request, Mr. Island, that you obtain the letter the abbot is keeping and that we compare the letters and find out if we are any the wiser then. And if, after such a comparison, we learn where the money is, we send a telegram to Arnór and ask him to come north with Miss Trent who, in reality, owns the larger part of the treasure. How does that sound to you, Mr. Island?"

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"I am happy to tell you, Mr. O'Brian," said Mr. Island, "that this plan of yours strikes me well in every way. I shall write to the abbot tonight, tell him how things stand and ask him to send the letter by registered mail. As soon as it is in my hands, I will meet you and compare it with the letter you have."

"I'm very pleased with that," said O'Brian, "and I have nothing to add except that I propose that the youngster there," — he pointed to me, — "be present when we compare the letters and that we meet in his room in the crooked house."

"I agree with everything," said Mr. Island, smiling.

Likely both of them realized that I would have nothing against this proposition, at least, it was agreed to without any comment.

Shortly after, Mr. Island said his farewells and started off towards the south of town.

"My dear son," said O'Brian to me when Mr. Island was gone, "now I can tell you that at last I am sure there are at least two true men in this world, and one of them is this Mr. Island."

"And who is the other?" I asked.

"Myself, son," said O'Brian, bringing his hand up to his chin momentarily. "And would it not have been proper for me to be called Ireland? What do you think of that?" And he clapped me on the shoulder in a friendly way.

"Forget that," I said, "and tell me instead what you think of what Mr. Island told us."

"I can't say anything about it, my son, until I know what is in the letter the abbot has. But in the monk's statement, there is one detail that awakens my interest. And that is that one of the men who took the sick man from Fort Garry to the abbey in Minnesota was called Godson. It occurs to me that this could be the same man who was helping Mrs. Colthart to have part of an Icelandic letter translated into English. And that man is, as you know, the brother-in-law of Mr. Tapman, the detective." And O'Brian gave me an odd look as he said it.

Now I thought about what my cousin and I had seen and heard of Mabel Campion that spring. I decided it would be right to tell him

that story from beginning to end. And I did. He listened very attentively.

"My, you certainly are close-mouthed, inquisitive as you are, my son," said O'Brian when I had told him all I knew about Mabel Campion. "Had you told me this immediately in the spring, then much would have come to light which is still hidden in darkness. The only time I saw the girl, she looked as if some terrible weight rested on her mind. Is she still in the crooked house?"

"Yes," I said, "and it doesn't look as if she is going to move away from there at present."

"She will likely stay as long as you are there," said O'Brian, smiling.

"What foolishness are you speaking now, Mr. O'Brian," I said.

"I am older than you, my son. But where is the girl working?"

"She works at the Albion laundry."

"Exactly! — But now I am thinking of finding this Mr. Godson as quickly as I can. I want to get to know the man and find out what he is like."

"Do you know where he lives?" I asked.

"I know a man who knows that."

"Would that man tell you?"

"I think so. — Will you come with me to see Godson?" said O'Brian.

"Gladly," I said. "When are you going there?"

"I can't go there tomorrow," said O'Brian after a moment, "but I want to go the day after. And you should be at my place not later than seven on the evening of that day."

I said I would not fail him. A short time later, I took my leave and headed home.

I went to work the next day. When I got home that night, I noticed that Mabel Campion did not look quite as happy as she had in the weeks before, and I felt her looking at me almost arrogantly now and again. I asked her if she was sick, but she did not answer me. A little later, my cousin asked her the same question. "No, dear," she said, "I am not sick." And she stroked my cousin on the cheek. I saw that her eyes were full of tears. My cousin took her in her arms and kissed her. "She is still not completely well,"

my cousin told me later that evening.

I went over to O'Brian's the next day at the appointed time. We left his house as it was getting dark. O'Brian wore a long dark coat and a black broad-brimmed hat and walked with the knotted oak staff he had held when we landed in our adventure in Elmwood. We walked fairly quickly along Princess Street, for crippled though he was, O'Brian always walked briskly. The weather was fine and cool that evening. I remember there was a stiff breeze and the moon shone through the clouds.

When we got to William Street (now William Avenue) we walked west on that street and soon arrived at a large, ramshackle old house that stood close to the sidewalk on the south side of the street. On a tablet above the front door stood: 'Boardinghouse — room and board for three dollars a week.' The letters were beautifully done and would certainly attract people's attention.

"If the food here is as delicious as those letters are well-made," said O'Brian as we got to the house, "then it is cheap. But if it is as poor as the house is unsightly, then the cost is far too high."

O'Brian banged on the door with his knuckles, for doorbell there was none. An elderly woman came to the door. She seemed to know O'Brian. He asked if Godson was home. She said he was up in his room and was not feeling well.

"Kindly tell us where his room is," said O'Brian.

The woman asked us to come in and go upstairs and said that Godson's room was on the left next to the stairs as you went up.

We walked up quickly. Every step creaked and groaned. O'Brian knocked quietly on the door of Godson's room, but no one came to the door. Yet we heard someone inside. After a while, O'Brian opened the door himself and walked into the room with me close behind.

It was a small room. The bed was by the wall. There was a table and chair and an old trunk, and also a water jug and basin on an old wash stand in the corner of the room.

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Light came from a small coal-oil lamp on the table. A tall, thin and very sullen man was sitting on the chair with the daily newspaper in his hand. It was Godson.

When he had closed the door behind us, Mr. O'Brian said cordially, "Good evening, Mr. Godson," and extended his hand.

Godson did not take his hand. He sprang to his feet in haste and threw the newspaper on the floor. "What is this?" he said, crossly. "You burst into my room uninvited! Are you drunk or what?"

"Forgive me, my good Mr. Godson," said O'Brian. "I knocked on the door but you paid no heed."

"I was not going to open the door to anyone tonight," said Godson. "I am quite ill and need to rest. And this room is no public office or meeting room."

"My name is Patrick O'Brian. And I have urgent business with you, Mr. Godson."

"Poppycock!" said Godson spitefully. "You have no business with me. I don't know you, — have never seen you before and never

heard of you."

"Nevertheless, I have heard of you, Mr. Godson," said O'Brian. "You have gained fame for your excellent work on the stage. I hope that you continue to perfect yourself in that lovely art. But, as I said, I came here because I have urgent business with you."

"What do you want?" asked Godson. He sat down on the bed, and gestured for O'Brian to sit on the chair. I sat down on the old trunk.

"I came here to get some news from you," said O'Brian, when he was seated.

"News from me?" said Godson very crossly. "What are you looking for?"

"I have to ask you about a man you knew slightly several years ago."

"Then you are a secret policeman," said Godson, angrily. "I suspected that as soon as you burst into my room. That is their old method, to come into a house at night — to enter by a window, or down the chimney or up through the floor, like the devil. I know a secret policeman when I see him. He bears

his distinctive mark, clear and indelible, on his forehead and his cheeks. I hate all spies and bloodhounds and I have summoned them all to the judgment of the Lord. No, I tell you once and for all, you will never get any news from me about either man or dog."

"Calm yourself, my good Mr. Godson," said O'Brian very good-naturedly. "You have me on the wrong charge. I can assure you that I have nothing to do with the police, and I hope I need never have dealings with them. But it is important to me and several of my friends that you tell me the truth concerning a man you took from Fort Garry to an abbey somewhere in Minnesota, in 1870. That man was an Icelander, Berg by name, who had been shipwrecked near the mouth of the Nelson River in the fall of 1869."

"I know where you are going, you villain," said Godson, more angrily than before. "You are trying to drag me into your dirty business. You contend that I and Mrs. Colthart are secretly looking for the treasure which a crazy Icelander is supposed to have buried in the ground near the crooked house on Point Douglas. No, Mrs. Colthart has never believed the treasure ever existed except in the mind of this crazy man, and I believe it even less. The woman has tried all she could to persuade her niece to be sensible and separate herself from this silly treasure hunt which has dragged her into this foolishness. For that reason you bear a grudge against the woman and hate me because I am her good friend."

"Mr. Godson," said O'Brian coldly, "don't tire yourself by telling me anything about your and Mrs. Colthart's participation in this affair, because I know all about it. I know you took Berg, the castaway, from Fort Garry to an abbey in Minnesota. I know he asked you to look after two letters that were to go to Iceland and never reached there. And I know that you and Mrs. Colthart got an Icelandic girl to translate one of the letters Berg wrote to his sister."

"You are a spy and a bloodhound!" shouted Godson, getting to his feet.

"Go slowly, my dear Mr. Godson," said

O'Brian, gesturing for him to sit still. "I also know that you know what is in the letter Berg's nephew possesses — you know what that letter says about how to go about finding the treasure."

"You're lying! I don't know that," said Godson, angrily.

"But I have seen you at midnight digging in the spot mentioned in the letter. And I later saw that you had measured the length from there to the crooked house with expert precision and knowledge."

"You are lying again!" said Godson, striking his fists together.

"And now I shall tell you what I want to know," said O'Brian. "It is this: What did Berg, the castaway, say to you just before you parted with him at the abbey? And what did you do with the letters he entrusted to you?"

"You are the worst scoundrel," said Godson, vehemently. "You are implying that I stole the letters."

"You can lay that interpretation on it if you wish," said O'Brian, with great calm. "But I want to tell you that I know more about your involvement in this than you think."

"Shut up!" said Godson, gnashing his teeth.

"I know, for instance," continued O'Brian, "that last year you became acquainted with a young girl who had the habit of walking in her sleep. You and Mrs. Colthart made many attempts to hypnotize her. You compelled her to gain entry into the crooked house and told her to look for the hidden treasure when she was sleepwalking. And you ordered her to do other things, some of which are of such a nature that would cause the blood to freeze in the veins of some people if they found out about it. Would you like the boy with me to hear some of it?"

Godson made no reply. He sprang to his feet, ran at O'Brian where he was sitting on the chair, and took him by the throat.

O'Brian was not a bit slow. In no time he had leaped from the chair and grabbed Godson's wrists. It took but a moment. Godson's hands quickly became useless. O'Brian

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brought him down, drove his knee into his belly and pressed him down mercilessly.

"Now I am angry," said O'Brian. His eyes seemed to be burning with fire.

"Help!" shouted Godson piteously. "Help! Help! Murder! Killing! Murder! I'm being killed!"

It was easy to see and hear that Godson was very much afraid. He moaned and pleaded pathetically. I began to feel uneasy and feared that O'Brian was becoming heavy-handed, and I was going to ask him to spare Godson. But just then, two men came into the room and got O'Brian to let him go.

Godson flung himself backwards on the bed as soon as he was free. He said nothing. But his eyes showed terrible hatred and rage.

"Upon my word, this is a wicked man," said O'Brian when we were out on the street.

It was the only time I had ever seen O'Brian in a rage.

Three weeks passed. — Then one evening, just before sunset, as I was setting off for the west of town, I saw Mr. Island and Mr.

O'Brian walking east on Disraeli Street. They were walking slowly and talking together. I waited outside until they arrived. They greeted me cheerfully and I guessed that the letter had come. I invited them in and showed them to my room.

"Did the abbot send the letter?" I asked when we were seated.

"That he did," said Mr. Island, "and I have finished translating it into English so that Mr. O'Brian can understand it. Now I am going to ask you to read it to yourself while I am reading the translation aloud. And tell me if you don't think the translation is correct."

He then began to read the English translation for O'Brian. He read it sentence by sentence and waited until I had gone over the same sentence in the original. I shall say immediately that the translation was, in every way, as well-done and accurate as could be.

The letter itself was exactly as I have set it down here. I have changed nothing except the spelling in a few places. And I have put in the punctuation.

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5 vols. Reykjavík: Menningars-  
jóður; Winnipeg: Þjóðræknis-  
félag Íslendinga í Vesturheimi  
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Matthiasson, John S.  
"Adaptation to an Ethnic  
Structure: The Urban Icelandic  
Canadians of Winnipeg."  
In *The Anthropology of  
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University of Iowa Press,  
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*Sigfus Thorleifsson, Stony Hill, Manitoba  
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in Winnipeg, Manitoba*

# Poetry

By Maria G. Arnason

## Móðurharmur

*Nú vakir sú hrygð, er í sálunni svaf,  
Er sat ég við glédinnar djúp.  
Ég trega þá gjöf, er sá tók, sem að gaf,  
Og taumlaus er þrá mín og gljúp.  
Sem Rakel, eg harma minn sárþreyða son,  
Er sviftu mig örlögin hörd.  
Með honum er dáið mín dýrasta von,  
Og daganna yndi á jörð.*

*Þau tildrög, sem lágu að látinu hans,  
Mér lifandi í hug eru skráð.  
Þá augnablik slik snerta ævileið manns,  
Ei af verða fótsporin máð.  
Að leið hann og dó fyrir land sitt og þjóð,  
Er linun í sorg minni víst.  
Þó sviður hún líkt eins og logandi glóð,  
Um land er í stórviðri brýzt.*

*Hann kvaddi mig fullur af fjöri og möð,  
– Til Frakklands þá vegurinn lá. –  
Sem hetja í blöðugum hildarleik stóð,  
Unz hneig hann – með fölva á brá.  
Og dómnum mætti hann möglunarlaust,  
Sem maður, og kvartaði' ei hót.  
En vorid hans bliða þá breyttist í haust,  
Og blómið var slegið við rót.*

*Með kvalssárum trega ég komu hans beið,  
Og kulda að hjartanu sló.  
Því fram undan eygði ég öræfaleið  
Og ógnandi, hylðjúpan sjó.  
Það var eins og alt hefði mælt sér þar mót,  
Sem mannlifið grátlegast veit;  
Því hervaldið all frá hjarta míns rót  
Með harðjöldi drengina sleit.*

## A Mother's Grief For Her Son

*Now awake is the sorrow, that in the soul slept  
While happiness lingered with me  
I mourn the gift that God took tho He gave  
But timeless my longing will be  
Like Rachel, I grieved for my loving son  
As quickly I learned the hard way  
My dearest hope died when he was taken away  
While grief and loneliness stayed.*

*The events that lead to his untimely death  
Cannot be forgotten soon  
Like a flicker of an eye will touch man's life  
So the foot prints will not be removed  
He died so young, for our country and home  
Is solace in my sorrow I find  
Though the pain burns deep, like a fire inside  
My mind cannot unwind.*

*He said good-bye with a cheerful heart  
To France with the others he was gone  
He fought in battles; he did his part  
Lay injured with face pale and drawn  
That Judgment he met, he complained not at all  
Like a man he shed no tears  
It was then his spring was turned into fall  
And the flower at the root was pierced.*

*I united with sadness his homecoming then  
A chill creeping inside me  
Before me lay a steep dreary road I must tread  
And an awesome bottomless sea  
It seemed as if forces had a meeting proposed  
As the human heart in distress can perceive  
The war in its merciless, arrogant way  
Put to test our faith and belief.*

Og stundin var komin. – Ég særðan hann sá  
Og sjúkan, á kvalanna beð.  
Og hvergi í heiminum hjálpi var að fá,  
Sem hvíld eða fróun gat léð.  
Að sjá hann – mitt deyjandi, blessaða barn –  
Það brjóst mitt með skelfingu sló.  
Og útsýnið breyttist í hræðilegt hjarn,  
Þars húmið og vonleysið bjó.

Það augnablik kom, er í síðasta sinn  
Ég sá hann – er dauðvona lá  
Á heimili sjúkra. – Ég hrædd gekk þar inn,  
Og hjarta og svið mínum brá.  
Ég grátbændi herrann – og hjarta mitt bað  
Og hrópaði á Drottinn í neyð.  
Ég vissi ei í kvöl minni stund eða stað,  
En striddi – og vonandi beið.

“Góða nótt!” hvíslaði hann. – Kvöldsólin hlý  
Til hvíldar þá hraðaði sér,  
Og skuggarnir lengdust. – Ég skildi ekki  
í því,  
Að skaparinn tæki hann af mér.  
“Við sjáumst á morgun” þá mælti hann lágt.  
Ég man hvernig augun hans gljúpu  
Þá fylgdu mér eftir, með fjarandi mátt,  
Svo fögur og stilt og svo djúp.

Það kvakaði söngfugl – á grænleitri grein  
Við gluggann – sinn vonanna óð.  
Og árdegisgeislinn í gullstöfum skein,  
Sem guðfagurt eilífðar ljóð.  
Um loftið barst hreimþiður hljómur. –  
En þung  
Var hrygð mín, sem ekkert fékk breytt.  
Sitt dauðastríð háð hafði æskan hans ung.  
– Um annað ég vissi ei neitt.

Í brjósti mér dreyrði hin dauðsára und.  
Mér duldist hins alvísra ráð,  
Og fanst eins og Guð hefði gleymt  
mér þá stund  
Og gleymt sinni miskunn og náð.  
Ég gat ekki beið. Hvert bænarað þó.  
Sem bærdist í örmagna sál,  
En hjartfölgin bæn var hvert hjartaslag þó.  
Hann hefði víst skilið það mál.

The time had come, I looked at him  
Suffering where helpless he lay  
Nowhere in the world aid could I find  
That comfort could bring me that day  
To see him failing, my wonderful child  
Smote my heart with torment and pain  
The outlook changed to a barren place  
Where shadows of loneliness reign.

The moment was here, when the very last time  
I saw him where dying he lay  
To a hospital room – afraid I walked in  
Lonely, forlorn and dismayed  
With terror and fear in my soul I prayed  
I called to God in my pain  
In my grief, I knew not the time or place  
I struggled and hoped in vain.

Good night, he whispered as the evening sun  
To its rest, hurried to the sea  
The shadows they lengthened, I understood not  
Why the Maker should take him from me  
I will see you tomorrow, he softly said  
I remember his eyes like a beam  
Following me with fading strength  
So beautiful calm and serene.

Outside his window, a songbird sang  
His song of love and home  
The sunset rays in gold letters shone  
Like God's beauty of a lovely poem  
Around me the peaceful sounds seem to roll  
But my sorrow nothing could end  
The battle of death, his young heart had fought  
Was all I could understand.

My life seemed empty; I felt unreal  
God's plan, I could not see  
I felt like God had forsaken me there  
And forgotten His mercy for me  
I tried to pray – but each prayer then  
Was locked within my soul  
But each heart beat was a silent prayer  
That God understood I know.

En meðan að beið ég – með bliknandi kinn –  
Við bjarmann af deyjandi von,  
Gekk himneskur læknir í herbergið inn  
Og hvíldi minn elskaða son.  
Frá sárum og kvölum hann sofnaði rótt,  
Er snart hann hin líknandi hönd,  
Frá langþreytu dagsins er leyddi hann hljótt  
Að ljóssins og friðarins strönd.

Svo geymir þá eilífðin ástvininn minn,  
Og alt það, sem með honum dó.  
Ég trúir – þótt falli mér tárin um kinn.  
Ég trúir. – En sakna hans þó.  
Ég veit: Að af holsárum hold hans var þjáð,  
Að hvergi fanst líkn eða fró,  
Að alvaldur hvíldi hann af einskærri náð,  
En ævilangt syrgi' ég hann þó.

Og faðir og systkyni flétta með trygð  
Úr fegurstu líjunum krans,  
Og vefa með tárur og höfugri hrygð  
Of hjartfölgna minningu hans. –  
Þótt hulín sé framtíð í fjarmóðu hjúp,  
Og fjötri oss jarðlífsins bönd,  
Vor þrá stefnir öll yfir eymdanna djúp,  
Að eilífðarvonanna strönd.

While I was waiting with tears on my cheek,  
By the glow of a dying hope  
A heavenly physician walked into his room  
And gave rest to my loving son  
Free from the suffering, he quietly slept  
When touched him, the healing hand  
From torment and pain the Lord led him each step  
to the light of that beautiful land.

So keepeth the eternal, my precious boy  
And all that which with him died  
I believe – tho the tears fall fast on my cheek  
I believe – tho I miss him and cry  
I know from the pain he was wasting away  
Nowhere could healing be found  
God, in His mercy, gave him rest that day  
But forever with sorrow I am bound.

Father, brothers and sisters too  
With sorrow and heartache inside  
They wove of memories, a beautiful wreath  
That will always remain in our lives  
The love that you gave, the happiness too  
When we were all happy and gay  
All through life's journey, we'll remember you  
Our loved one, who is just away.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE: THE VALOUR AND DEATH OF AN ICELANDIC-CANADIAN SOLDIER

Many young Icelandic-Canadians, some immigrants themselves and others the offspring of immigrants from Iceland, fought valiantly in a foreign war for their newly-adopted country in World War I. One of these was Sigfus Thorleifsson, who was born in Iceland and as a child accompanied his family to Canada, where they homesteaded near Lundar, Manitoba. After enlisting in the Canadian military Sigfus was stationed in France, where he, along with other Icelandic-Canadians, participated in the horrendous encounter with the Germans at Vimy Ridge. Sigfus survived Vimy, but later received serious wounds and was evacuated to Britain, where one leg was amputated. After his later return to Canada he was operated on for the removal of shrapnel fragments, but did not survive the ordeal. Maria G. Arnason, a friend of his mother, wrote the following poem, originally done in Icelandic, as a tribute to Sigfus. It could be about many of the other Icelandic-Canadians who fought for their new land. – *John S. Matthiasson*



● Olafson House  
 – the book has similar sketches of Petursson House  
 and the Warwick Apartments

# Book Reviews



## WINNIPEG LANDMARKS

*Text by Murray Peterson*  
*Illustrated by Robert J. Sweeney*  
*Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer, 1995. Pp. 63.*  
*Reviewed by Lorna Tergesen*

Winnipeg was one of the fastest growing cities in North America during the first decade of the twentieth century. The Icelanders in the city were heavily involved in the construction industry. The author of this book has quipped, "I am not of Icelandic descent, but I'd like to be." Murray Peterson is the chief researcher for Winnipeg historical buildings, and has a deep respect for the work of those early Icelandic builders, contractors and apartment block owners.

Many of the buildings included in *Winnipeg Landmarks* are considered heritage buildings. The book does not focus on the city's Exchange District, but rather views Winnipeg from its suburbs. Most of the buildings included are in existence today. Peterson

finds the history of these buildings very interesting and revealing. The stories that he tells reveal who owned the buildings, who built them and what the status of the buildings is today.

Of particular interest to readers of *The Icelandic Canadian* are the Olafson House, the Petursson House and the Warwick Apartments.

During the late 1890s the Winnipeg economy was booming. Companies such as the Olafson Flour and Feed Company grew to fill an entire city block. To reflect his status, the company's founder, Gisli Olafson, in 1895, built a new brick and stone house on William Avenue. Olafson chose the picturesque Queen Anne style which was becoming popular in the city's affluent neighbourhoods.

By the turn of the century, the streets north of Portage Avenue and west of Arlington Street were where the Icelanders tended to concentrate. This was the city's West End and where, in 1914, Bjorn Petursson, a hardware merchant with a store on nearby Simcoe Street, built a magnificent brick and stone home on Alverstone Street.

Prior to 1920 more apartment buildings were built in Winnipeg than any other Canadian city. Among the blocks - as the apartment buildings were referred to in those days - constructed during this period was the five storey Warwick Apartments. The Warwick was designed by architect W.W. Blair and built by Sveinn Brynjolfsson and Company

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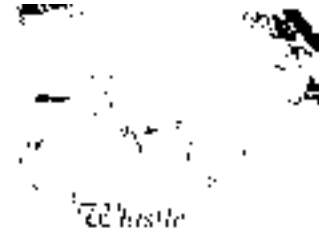
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in 1908-09. The original owners of the block included William Alsip, a local brick and lumber entrepreneur, as well as Blair and Brynjolfsson.

The illustrations in the book are done by Robert J. Sweeney. Sweeney is an industrial designer who deals in both architectural and graphic design. He designed the book. The book's format is very suited to its topic. The architectural drawings are very clear and concise, each telling their own stories.

*Winnipeg Landmarks* makes for a very good souvenir to take home from the city of Winnipeg. An added bonus for those with Icelandic connections are the highlights made of some of our Icelandic forefathers hard work.



Whistle and the Legend of the White Horse

### WHISTLE AND THE LEGEND OF THE WHITE HORSE

By Kathleen Arnason  
Illustrated by Judy McInnes  
Gimli: Saga Publishing Company, 1995.  
Reviewed by Kristine Perlmutter

Following the success of her children's book *The Story of the Gimli Huldufolk*, author Kathleen Arnason began to receive invitations to do readings and to share her stories with others. It was in the process of preparing for such a visit to the elementary school in St. Francois Xavier (just outside of Winnipeg, Manitoba) that she formed the idea for *Whistle*. A local landmark of the White Horse Plains area, in which St. Francois Xavier is located, is a statue of a white horse connected with a well-known legend. Arnason's desire to preserve Manitoba's history and share its rich heritage with her young readers led her

to compose a new story loosely based on *The Legend of the White Horse Plain*.

For readers unfamiliar with the original legend, a synopsis of it precedes the story. This provides the reader with valuable background information. Teachers using it with classes will find discussion of the legend itself a valuable pre-reading activity. The connection of story and legend move the book beyond merely a satisfying story about a young filly's fanciful journey to follow the irresistible call of the ghostly white stallion and the cooperative efforts of her animal friends to help her on her way. Learning history via story and legend makes it accessible and memorable.

This is an attractive picture book. The soft, sensitive illustrations by Judy McInnes provide visual images that are both ghostly and familiar. This is an appealing and effective treatment for a story based on a legend, with its blend of fact and fiction.

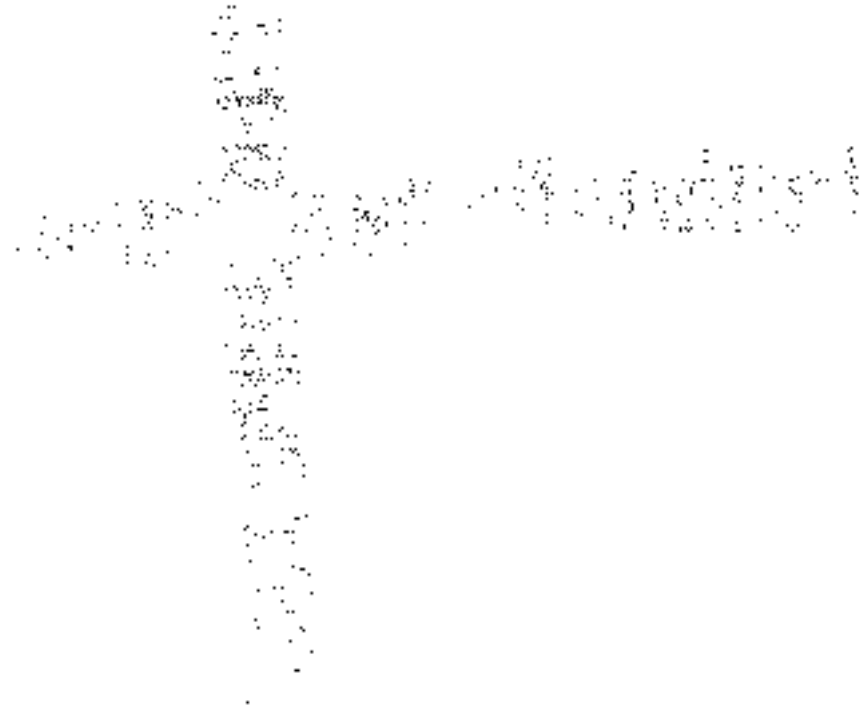
The story raises issues relating to love, friendship, loyalty, cooperation and even immortality. Questions and extension activities suggested at the end of the book can be used to stimulate discussion. For school use, they lead naturally to research projects related not only to Manitoba history and to legends but also to the environment and the natural world.

The book concludes with the sentence, "Now the legend of the White Horse will live forever." With *Whistle and the Legend of the White Horse*, Kathleen Arnason has helped to make certain that the legend will be valued, remembered and passed on.

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# CONTRIBUTORS

MARIA G. ARNASON was a friend to Guðrún Sigfúsdóttir, the mother of Sigfus Thorleifsson. Her poetry appeared in Icelandic Canadian publications including the weekly, *Heimskringla*.

SHIRLEY THORDARSON McCREEDY is a Winnipeg music teacher and active in several Icelandic Canadian organizations. She is presently the Regent of the Jon Sigurdsson Chapter IODE. Now the familiar essays editor of *The Icelandic Canadian*, she fulfils a long-time desire to publish her father's story of the Falcons.

KRISTINE PERLMUTTER is a resource teacher with the Fort Garry School Division in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and interview editor for *The Icelandic Canadian*.

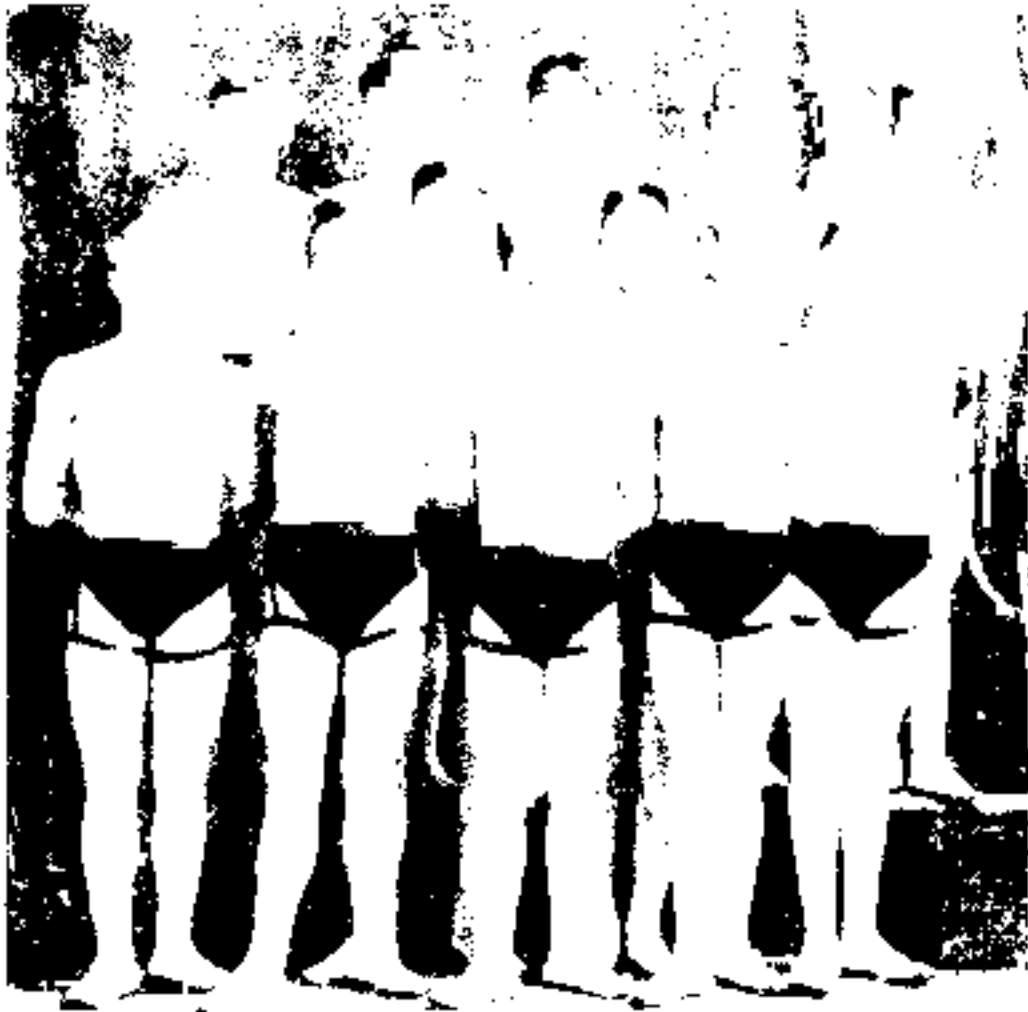
HAL SIGURDSON is a freelance sportswriter residing in Vancouver, British Columbia. A former resident of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Hal's name is a familiar one to readers of the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

LORNA TERGESEN is the secretary of *The Icelandic Canadian*. She is well-known throughout the Icelandic community. She has been involved in numerous Icelandic organizations and has served as President of the Icelandic Festival of Manitoba.

FRED THORDARSON (Johann Fridrik, 1890-1966) was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba. His parents were Erlendur Þórðarson born in the Eyjafjörður region of Iceland and Signý Björg Erlendsdóttir of Húnavatnssýsla, Iceland. Fred and Norma Thorbergsson were married in 1917, and lived in the west end of Winnipeg all their lives. They had four children: Dorothy, Margaret, Shirley and David; seventeen grandchildren and thirty great-grandchildren.

Fred had a long and successful career in banking, having worked at the Royal Bank (and its predecessor) for 44 years. He was the manager of the branch at Sargent and Beverley, then at Sargent and Arlington, and finally at Sargent and Sherbrook, all located in the heart of the Winnipeg Icelandic community. A life-long member of the First Lutheran Church, Fred served on the board for many years. He was an active sportsman, having played for the Vikings and early Falcons. He was on the executive of the 1920 Olympic champion Falcon Hockey Club, and continued to work in an executive capacity for the club until its demise in the late 1930s. His story, *The Romance of the Falcons* exemplifies his dedication and loyalty to his family, friends and church.

THELMA GUÐRUN WHALE was born in Winnipegosis, Manitoba to Kristinn Vigbald Stevenson and Margrét Ísleif Guðmundsdóttir. She holds degrees in Arts and Education from the University of Manitoba. She is now a retired educator and is keeping up her Icelandic (her first language) through reading and translation. In addition to *Í Rauðárdalnum*, she has translated *Eiríkur Hansson* and *Brasilíufararnir*.



*Íslenskir glímumenn á þjóðhátíð Vestur-Íslendinga í Winnipeg árið 1914 / Icelandic wrestlers at an Icelandic-Canadian celebration in Winnipeg, 1914.*

*From back row (left to right):  
R. Patrik, G. Stefánsson, S. Jakobsson, B. Olafsson,  
B. Pétursson, D. Guðmundsson, K. Oliver,  
A. Johannesson, Á. Tromberg, J. Kristjánsson,  
S. Olafsson, O. Kristjánsson.*

*The back page*

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