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# The Icelandic Canadian

Vol. XXIII No. 3

Winnipeg, Canada

Spring 1965

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SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL seen at his desk at 10 Downing Street, London, England, shortly after his 79th Birthday, November, 1953.

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## EDITORIAL

### *A Moment of World Awareness*

Destiny is seen in moments that seem as if not of this world. The true measure of greatness is the good it does. Achievement on behalf of humanity must be assessed in the way it has uplifted that humanity in its struggle for noble contentment and enjoyment of the wealth of gifts of God. A purpose\* may combine these attributes in one human life and raise it far above its peers of the time, nay, of the centuries.

There cannot be a lasting fulfillment of that purpose—an urge to say divine purpose arises within—unless an awareness of it has been thrust upon mankind. Each of many superb events in a long span of life creates a measure of awareness. As the events multiply it deepens and widens. Some final events may create a wave of awareness that rises in crescendo and crosses lands and seas around the world.

The funeral of Sir Winston Churchill gave rise to a global wave of that magnitude.

One feels prone to say that it was destiny which decreed, or rather directed, that Winston Churchill should escape from a prisoner-of-war camp in South Africa, aimlessly press on in enemy territory, 250 miles from friends, and happen upon a coal mine in the hands of a lone Englishman, who, because of his technical knowledge, had been kept on by the Boers. It may be destiny, an insight not given to humans to understand, that Winston Churchill could see what Neville Chamberlain could not see at Munich; could see what Roosevelt could not see as they sat with Stalin at Yalta; could see at Fulton, Mo., the postwar intentions of the Soviet Union and coin the phrase "the Iron Curtain."

---

\* "I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs." —Tennyson.

It was an hour of greatness, May 10, 1940, when Winston Churchill bared to the British people his inmost thoughts that he had nothing to offer them but "blood and toil, tears and sweat." It was greatness in another form when he, in the ruins of Berlin, being invited to see the subterranean shelter of Hitler, refused to see the "lair of the Nazi beast". The word "German" was not used. If Sir Winston were living now and there was another Hitler in our midst, he would use a similar invective.

The hour of greatest achievement happened after midnight, June 2, 1940, at Downing Street, when Winston Churchill was dictating to his secretary. He had paused; there were tears in his eyes. All at once, a chain of thoughts entered his mind—how, we know not. In his sonorous voice the words flowed freely:

"We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills."

There was a pause and then he thundered:

"We shall never surrender."

A nation, the free world, was aroused as never before.

His actions were equally moments of great achievement. As he staggered through the ruins of London after an air raid he was greeted: "Good Old Winnie."

When victory was assured the acclaim of the millions who sincerely felt that they owed their life to the great war leader soon began to quiet down. Awareness there was of what had been achieved for mankind but it had not penetrated deep enough. This was brought home in a startling way to all freedom-loving people when Churchill was defeated in the elections of 1945. It was not a repudiation of him; it was rather that the majority of people of England felt that they could, in ample security, put their hero on a pedestal and wrestle with domestic issues.

Here destiny stepped in again. If Winston Churchill had died at that time or shortly afterwards he would have been given a state funeral but only a state funeral.

More events had to take place and crises created—not to raise his stature but to place in clear relief, as if writ in granite, what Sir Winston had achieved for mankind.

There was the deceptive seizure of Czechoslovakia. There was Korea and there was Hungary. Now there is South Vietnam and Malaysia; the United Nations at the brink.

After these years of cold war and at this time of crisis, the last act in this ninety-year drama of one human life was thrust upon the world. The mortal Churchill was no more.

There was a state funeral; one of the mourners was Her Majesty, whom he had loyally served. It was the largest state funeral in England; representatives of a hundred and ten nations present; much of it directed by him who had passed on. But he did not direct the quarter million or more who passed by the catafalque nor the thousands who stayed up all night in the bitter cold to watch the final event.

Nor did he direct services in churches throughout the Commonwealth and elsewhere, nor the signing of Books of Remembrance. He did not direct a Japanese dignitary to lay a wreath on the grave nor a man working in Winnipeg in 30° below zero weather to pause on the day of the funeral and, with a foreign accent, say: "Where would we be if he had not been there?"

The final act, when dust was laid to dust, became

A MOMENT OF WORLD AWARENESS.

—W. J. Lindal



## *The Canadian Flag*

### *Democracy in Action*

It is unnecessary to discuss the wisdom or otherwise, of what took place before a committee of fifteen was appointed by the House of Commons to give careful and conscientious study to the selection of a distinctive flag for Canada. Representation on the Committee from the five parties was as follows: seven Liberals, five Progressive Conservatives, and one from each of the three minor Parties, The New Democrats, the Social Credit Party and the Creditistes.

The Committee deliberated long and carefully. Finally, out of thousands of specimen flags before it, one was selected by a large majority of the Committee. The majority recommendation was submitted to the House of Commons and after due and fair debate it accepted the recommendation by a substantial majority. The Bill, enacting the needed legislation, was duly passed by the House of Commons, and, later, by the Senate. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen of Canada, over her own signature, by a formal Proclamation declared the flag, as described in the Act, to be the Flag of Canada. On February fifteenth, 1965, the Flag of Canada was hoisted with due ceremonies on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, in Provincial Capitals, at Canadian diplomatic posts and elsewhere.

No political party can claim that its choice was adopted. The flag, which appears in color on the front cover of this magazine, became the legal and official Flag of Canada by a statute enacted by Her Majesty, the Queen of Canada, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Commons of Canada.

This is democracy in action.

## The Icelandic Pioneer Merchant and Businessman

An address delivered by S. O. BJERRING at a luncheon featuring the Pioneer Icelandic Business Men in Winnipeg, at the Mall Hotel on Tuesday, February 16, under the auspices of The Icelandic Canadian Club.

When I was confronted with a request that I prepare a paper recalling the days of our Icelandic pioneer businessmen in Winnipeg, I must have been taken off guard for I undertook to do so before realizing what detailed research the topic would require. The story has its beginning a few years before my arrival in this country, the year of 1888. The merchants concerned were flourishing before that time. However they kept operative so that in due course I became acquainted with their progress and influence in the community. My resumé will be subject to my limitations as a reporter, but in that respect I am relying on your kind indulgence.

It might be asked, what is the significance of reviewing the history of our merchants of these early years? Were they any different from any other business men of the same period?, or had they any distinguishing qualities sufficiently interesting to relate? Were they anything more than a few enterprising individuals, perhaps even opportunists, who saw a ready made market for their wares among the people whose language was their language?

Whatever the motivating drive, it must be recognized as a venturesome decision for the newcomer to this country to launch out on his own road to

independence, and he must in most cases have done so with more confidence in his heart than coin in his pocket.

The explanation might contain a certain aristocratic factor, founded on an inherited legacy of his native land, where the merchant "kaupmaður" was a person of some prestige, variable only in proportion to the scope of his operations. He was placed on a par with the educated and professional person and those in the upper strata.

This is understandable, considering that he, the "kaupmaður" was the contact with both the "high and the low" in the land. He had of necessity to be a person endowed with ability and dexterity to be equitable in his overall public relations.

Against this traditional background, having arrived in this country, our pioneer applied himself to the realization of his aspirations. Certainly he had nothing to lose but much to gain if successful, and to achieve the status of "kaupmaður" was for him a sufficient incentive. Undoubtedly he had that something inherent in his personality that recommended his trustworthiness to the supply sources on which he in turn would have to depend.

The overall record of our pioneer business man in Winnipeg is one of

success. He was a hard working, down to earth individual, who in the course of his pursuits kept close touch with the progress of the community, ever ready with his good offices and assistance, where language was a big hurdle.

As I attempt to relate some particulars pertaining to the period which would be prior to the year 1890, I have before me the picture of an emerging metropolis, about 1/20th in size of our present expanded Winnipeg, with our Icelandic citizens concentrated mainly in the area from Notre Dame to Logan and from Sherbrook (then Nena) on the west to Ellen Street on the east, with the main population centred on William Ave., Elgin Ave. (then Jemima), Ross and Pacific Avenue, with a considerable number outside these boundaries. The main business thoroughfare of this district was Ross Avenue.

Now, who were our pioneer merchants? My starting point can be right in my own locale on Elgin Avenue. A short distance down the street from the home of my foster father, Mr. Sigtryggur F. Olafsson and his brother Oli V. Olafsson, who occupied a duplex, was the confectionary store of Halldor S. Bardal, who originally started business at 181 King St., facing Kate St. Halldor later moved to a larger building he had erected on the northwest corner of Elgin and Sherbrook where he conducted a confectionary and book store for several years till the time of his death.

My two uncles were businessmen of the period, operating under the name of Olson Bros., wood dealers, cordwood being the principal fuel of the average household. They also attended to express and furniture moving.

On Ross Avenue, from Sherbrook Street east to Isabel the following business places were located:

Arni Frederickson, Groceries and Kitchenware.

G. P. Thordarson, Bakery.

Thorkelssons Grocery.

A. F. Reykdals, Shoes.

Finney's Grocery.

Stefan Johnson, Dry Goods and Clothing, north east corner.

G. Johnson, Dry Goods and Clothing, southwest cor. Isabel.

Jon Landy, Meat Market, opposite Frederickson's.

Jon Landy's market came under the successive ownerships of well known citizens, such as Joe Thorgeirsson, Albert Johnson, Chris Johnson and Laugi Helgason. Some of these operated later on Sargent Avenue.

I have been informed of another market that was located on the corner of Portage and Smith Street, about the year 1890 whose owner was John Anderson. He discontinued business, moving down to St. Andrews, where he lived the rest of his life and served for many years on the council of the district. He took a prominent part in the caterers' picnic in those early days and was an enthusiast in pacer horse racing.

I remember a small candy store on Ross Avenue whose owner, named Jón was nicknamed Jón "Candy". It was probably that same store that changed hands, being taken over by Gunnlaugur Johannson, who was referred to as "Candy" Laugi, later progressing to his own grocery business on Sargent Avenue.

I can recall only three non-Icelandic stores on Ross Avenue, one of these a drug store. So it may be said that our Icelandic merchants dominated that particular territory, with their clean, tidy and generally well stocked premises, the focal point and often meeting place of friends and neighbors.

A word about customer service in those days before telephones came into popular use. This applies particularly to the grocery stores. As a regular routine, a representative, using a bicycle as his means of travel, made calls at the homes to accept orders for supplies from the housewife, and delivery was made according to instruction. I would say to you ladies present that these calls were appreciated, where in our present day they would likely be regarded as an intrusion.

Guðmundur Johnson's clothing and dry goods store, corner of Ross and Isabel, was a two story building, of his own, and one of the larger buildings in the district. The ground floor he occupied for his business while the upper floor was a meeting and concert hall and known as North-west Hall, a cultural centre for plays, conventions, etc. For a number of years it was the meeting place of the Icelandic Good Templar lodges, Hekla and Skuld, till they built their own hall on Sargent Avenue.

Many were the humorous incidents and anecdotes circulating at the expense of the man behind the counter. One such I remember is told by a customer that looked in at G. Johnson's clothing department and asked to see some winter underwear, this time the lower garment. The storekeeper, after some search through his store, came back expressing his regret that he had "entirely run out of them".

packs a little more emphasis in the Icelandic vernacular "mjær þykir fyrir, en ég er alveg runninn út af buxum".

A customer tells of buying a certain item of groceries at a price he knew to be below cost, so asked the proprietor how he expected to come out on the right side, by so doing, to which he got the reply: "Oh, its the 'turn-over' that helps." Sad to say, it did not prove sound business.

Then there is the story of Ármann Burns, a rugged, good humored type of person, and one of the first of our people to own a gas engine propelled boat, which he named the Viking. One day Ármann called in at Jón Landy's meat market to buy a steak, but told Jón he wanted something this time that he could chew for he had used the last piece for soling his shoes. Ármann had a way of punctuating his comments with some meaningful adjectives—in Icelandic.

I have a special reason for remembering Ármann Burns; he became one of the businessmen of the times, engaging in freighting on Lake Winnipeg. At the age of fourteen I happened to be his only passenger between Gimli and my destination, Hnasa. At this point Ármann suggested that I continue the journey with him to Icelandic River, and to be sure I jumped at the opportunity. Imagine my delight when Ármann permitted me to take the wheel, on a rough lake. I did not prove much of a helmsman, but nothing happened, and Ármann took over. Towards evening, while chanting a Viking song, he headed his craft up Icelandic River.

Among other merchants still to be mentioned, there is one by the name of Teitur Thomas, a brother to Guðlaugur, our pioneer jeweller. As a merchant Teitur seemed to have had

versatility, being prepared to trade in anything saleable. He had superintended the building of his own business premises, corner of Langside and Ellice, dealt in second hand furniture for a while and finally set up a jewelry store with a meat department as a side line. One of our humorists of the times listing some interesting characters, refers to Teitur in a limerick as follows:

Og þá er nú Teitur—með gullið  
og kjetíð

Svo men geta bæði prýtt sig og jetið.

Roughly ranslated, would be:

Then there is Teitur with his gold  
and his meat

The one for adornment—the other  
to eat.

One thing attracted me in the way of advertising in the grocery stores of the day. It was a large framed picture depicting a chorus heralding the dawn of a new day—the words of the message being:

A song we sing — a song of hope

The world is using Comfort Soap.

A worthy forerunner of our present day commercials!

I mentioned the bakery on Ross Avenue, under the ownership of G. P. Thordarson, long years before "vitamin enriching" was ever thought of, but I'll wager (without judging the V. E.) that no 25c loaf of today has any richer nourishment or better tasting qualities than G.P.'s. 5c loaf of the "good old days". As for "haglda brauð" and "tvíbökur" (twist rolls and rusks), cream puffs, cakes and pastry, they have never been excelled.

Then our shoe stores. There was A. F. Reykdal on Ross Avenue, Chris Christianson on Notre Dame Ave.,

both well stocked with goods of standard quality. The ladies' shoes were the high uppered, buttoned up the side type—with sensible heels. The men's shoes, often split leather, could be depended upon to provide an earful of creaks and squeaks for some time while being broken in, which often proved quite embarrassing, but then they were not in the \$20 or \$30.00 price range. Felt shoes and moccasins were the standard winter footwear for all.

In the matter of community progress we can scarcely by-pass the printing establishments of the day, nor overlook them as places of business. Furthermore, true to Icelandic characteristics, in order to get both sides of the story there were two weeklies in existence as represented by the "Heimskringla" (The Globe) with conservative leanings, established in 1886, and "Lögberg" (Lawrock, or Rock of Law), of liberal persuasion, established in 1888. Lögberg purchased the assets and publishing rights of "Leifur", which in turn had taken over from "Framfari", established in 1877 and published in "Nýja Ísland"

In the year 1894 the first "Almanak" of Ólafur S. Thorgeirsson was issued, printed by the Lögberg Press of which Mr. Thorgeirsson was part owner. Later Mr. Thorgeirsson founded his own printing establishment. May it be said, that the late Mr. Thorgeirsson has in his publication of the Almanak continuously from 1894 to 1954 made a monumental contribution of informative and historical interest to our ethnic group. After Mr. Thorgeirsson's death in 1937, the publishing was continued by his two sons, Ólafur and the late Geir, with editorship by the late Grimur Eyford succeeded by Dr.

Richard Beck up to its final issue in 1954.

The first issue of the Almanak in 1895 contains advertising of some of the prominent businessmen of the day as follows:

G. Thomas, Jeweller.

G. Olafson, Flour and Feed.

John (Jón) J. Vopni, Contractor.

A. Anderson, Tailor.

Goodman & Tergesen, Tinsmiths.

F. Swanson, Artistic & General Painter.

Baldwin & Blondal, Photographers.

It would be in order to make a brief reference to some of the most popularly known of these mentioned.

Gisli Olafson, whose first venture in business had been that of a partner of Jón Landy in his Ross Avenue meat market, decided after several months in the venture to launch out in another line of merchandising and set himself up in the flour and feed business. In that enterprise he became a most successful merchant. His premises were located on King Street, corner James Avenue. It can be truly stated that he became the most affluent person in the Icelandic business community of the day. I remember the elegant brick house he built on William Ave., a short distance east of Kate St. about the year 1895. It is still today the most outstanding residence on William Ave. I happened to be the "lawn-watering-boy" there for a while and was quite proud of being part of my surroundings. Some years later, about 1907, he had even a more substantial residence built on the corner of McDermot and Sherbrook Street. This property in recent years was acquired by the General Hospital to become incorporated into its larger complex. Gisli was one of the first of our people

to build an apartment block, which he built on the property that had been his business site. This location is now a part of the larger site of our new city hall.

Another well known name to many of us here and one much esteemed by his contemporaries, is that of Gísli Goodman, the tinsmith and furnace man of the period. He will be remembered for his genial personality. Despite his arduous occupation he was for many years the organist and choir leader in our First Lutheran Church, then located on the south east corner Sherbrook and Pacific. His partner in the early years of the business was H. P. Tergesen, later of Gimli.

I feel it appropriate to inject a reference here to an article in a recent Free Press of special interest to our group for it particularly concerns members of Gísli Goodman's family and his son Mike whom we all remember as a most versatile athlete and member of our 1920 Falcon Olympic Hockey Champions. The writer of that article is recalling the nostalgic days of the Old Arena Rink, to which many of us will mutually respond. He makes a statement that will produce a big smile when he says "most Icelandic immigrants to Manitoba, who were not living on Lake Winnipeg, lived within walking distance of the Arena Rink".

The name of Guðjón Thomas should be familiar to all old timers. We recall his places of business as first downtown on James Avenue, next on Pacific near Main, then on Main between Alexander and Logan and finally on Sargent Avenue. His business was built up on his reputation for honest and skillful workmanship and dependable merchandise. Many of us here associate his name with engagement, rings and marriage licenses.

Jón Blöndal, of Baldwin & Blöndal, No. 1 6th Avenue North, 207 McWilliam Ave. and 207 Pacific Ave., the three different addresses applying to the same location, will be particularly remembered as our early-day photographer, and old family albums of pictures and poses taken by him, will continue to provide interest and amusement to posterity for a long time to come.

The name of John (Jón) J. Vopni, will be connected with our early house building days, when he was active in that and other construction work. He built a number of stations on the CPR main line, eastward. About 1920 he was president of the Columbia Press, the publishers of Lögberg at that time located in its own building on the corner of Sherbrook and William. A few years later he founded his own printing establishment under the name of Art Press Ltd., which business is now carried on by one of the members of the family, in Winnipeg. Other members of the family are engaged in printing and publishing both in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. At one time during his active career, John served a term as a city alderman.

The business conducted under the Bardal name has been prominent since the very early days, and probably is now the only one having the distinction of surviving the vicissitudes of time and change, for it is still to the fore and prospering under successive family management. This service in the cause of the bereaved has been

continuous since established by its founder A. S. Bardal, in the year 1894.

Shortly after the turn of the century it began to be noticed that corporate competition was making expanding inroads into the business field in Winnipeg and had in itself a foreboding aspect for the smaller business house. Coinciding, as if by magic, the finger of fortune pointed in the direction of Ross Avenue, for it was learned that the Great Northern Railway of St. Paul, planned to establish terminals in Winnipeg, and in making its entry would be acquiring all the property from the western part of the city, principally on the north side of Ross and south side of Pacific Avenues as far east as Ellen Street. Though no figures are at hand concerning that transaction, there is every reason to conclude that at that particular time it was a shot-in-the-arm for our Ross Avenue merchants, affording them a profitable exit from their vocational field and leaving them a free choice as to any future course.

About the year 1905-6 there was a little stir in our close knit community, and one by one home owners began to show an interest in newer districts to the south and west along Sargent and Ellice Avenues. The former Ross Ave. merchants did not follow this movement and some of them left the city. On Sargent, however, a new set of enterprising individuals had found appropriate business locations and a fairly promising Icelandic business community seemed to be in the mak-

ing. It had the effect that Sargent came to be referred to as "Icelandic Main Street."

Here was a sort of "Printers Row" on the avenue, with the Thorgeirsson Press on the south side between Agnes and Victor Street, the Columbia Press and "Lögberg" on the north between Victor and Toronto and the Viking Press and "Heimskringla" a little further down the Avenue, corner of Banning.

There were quite a number of business places of assorted categories, Icelandic-owned and operated, that prospered for a number of years, but this was not to continue.

The pattern of things began to change, the ethnic touch to fade and evolution was casting its own mould of things to come.

As this was taking place, the most amazing event in our Icelandic community's eighty odd years happened . . . when our two competitive publications, "Lögberg" and "Heimskringla" in the year 1959, decided to bury their hatchets, and smoke the pipe of peace.

A most extraordinary accomplishment for people of argumentative tendencies.

At this sign post on the road it might be well to pause while we get our directions. We have been observing our progress along the economic route, with the type of man closely linked to our general well-being and advancement. We ask ourselves, what is ahead? The neighborly atmosphere of the past leaves us with nostalgic memories recalling its quaint customs and simple demands, when to the jingle of sleigh bells, we, the young "fry" made a run for the wood rack or sleigh to get free transportation to our friendly merchants' store. We realize how well situated we were as a community with our own type of shopping centre.

With a certain sense of loss for the colorful image that has passed into history, and with business ever assuming new patterns, we can still look forward with confidence, that posterity equally endowed as were our pioneers, will carry on their aristocratic heritage.

—S. O. Bjerring



## WHAT PRICE GLORY

An address delivered at the Annual Concert of the Icelandic Canadian Club February 16, 1965  
in Winnipeg, by the REVEREND SVEINBJORN S. OLAFSSON

I want to compliment the Committee in charge of this evening for its courage or rashness, in inviting a preacher to speak. It is generally thought that the men of the Cloth, have poor, if not very poor, terminal facilities. I promise that I will try to stay within the 35 minute limit that has been imposed upon me. I will keep in mind the fact that most people are saved in the first 15 minutes. Most preachers have an additional fault, at least one, and that is, always preaching regardless of what subject they take to speak on. A colored minister, preaching for a friend of his, arrived a full 40 minutes before the service. His friend said to him that if he wished to look over his notes or otherwise prepare himself for his sermon, he was welcome to use his study. Said the guest speaker, "I do not need to prepare myself for I can preach on any subject the congregation wishes me to speak on without a moment's preparation". When he was introduced the congregation was told that the preacher this morning was a remarkable man in that he could preach on any subject they wanted him to preach on. An old gentleman in a back pew arose to his feet and said, "I would like to have him preach on Pills". The preacher began: "Brothers and Sisters, there are all kinds of Pills; there are white Pills and there are brown Pills; there are small Pills and there are large Pills, but the Pills that I am going to preach about are the Gospills".

Judge Lindal, in a letter said that I could choose my own subject. But I noticed that in the next line he said: "I often wonder why it is that Icelanders have accomplished so much, being so few". I knew that he was being helpful. I gave this subject some thought for I have often wondered about that myself. I soon discovered that the subject was beyond my depth. There is one thing that comes to my mind, which must certainly be a part of the answer and that is, the Creator made us out of good material and in the main, put us together well. Whatever I may add to this, rightly belongs under this head. It is neither prudent nor safe to quote an Icelandic source here; therefore I shall quote, very briefly, C. S. V. Coneybear and Lord James Bryce, as Ellsworth Huntington quotes them in his book, "The Character of Races". From Coneybear: "It was indeed a migration en masse, and that, too, not of the meanest of the population . . . on the contrary, the noblest and worthiest of the land, the most peaceably disposed, and the most cultivated, formed the bulk of the migrant host." The quotation from Lord Bryce is much in the same vein. Stating that the Norse were one of the world's competent races, he writes: "The Jarls were Jarls by virtue of inherited ability and from this group were selected those who loved freedom and were adventuresome. Thus it was the best of the best who founded Iceland."

This is praise indeed. Few if any Icelanders will disagree with this. Into this "good material" is built a certain toughness, tenacity, perseverance, stubbornness, (call it what you will) that enables them to hang on when the going gets rough. The Icelandic word is "seigla". In this connection I think of the story of Jacob of old, how he wrestled with a man. After he had put Jacob's thigh out of joint, he said: "Let me go, for the day is breaking." To which Jacob replied: "I will not let thee go, unless you bless me." Tenacity thus is determined to wrest something from every difficulty. We do not need to search far to find an illustration of this. Prior to the migration from Iceland in the second half of the 19th century, frost, ice, volcanic eruption, and starvation that followed, did not deter these courageous and venturesome people. They still had enough left to dare long, difficult, and dangerous travel to Utah in 1855, to Brazil, S. A. in 1863, and to North America in 1870. It is impossible to tell before hand how an individual is going to react to adversity. It seems to me that difficulties bring out the best in the Icelandic character. This is one of their survival qualities. They have had to call upon it constantly through the past centuries. It is said of the eagle that when the storm rages it tips its wings in such a way that it is lifted by the wind above the storm. This shows resourcefulness. Icelanders have this quality highly developed. They have built their dwellings with materials at hand. They have worn shoes made from shark's skin. They have had to be resourceful or perish.

One more thing should be mentioned, education. This too is a part of the known factor, "good material". Icelanders have used the long winter nights for reading. The long winter

nights did not produce this habit. Other people live in the same latitude and have not taken to reading. One of the major reasons why our forefathers settled Iceland was that they were "peaceably disposed". This is the reason why so much writing has come out of Iceland. When education and intelligence are mingled with character the result is an unbeatable combination. They have loved education per se. Naturally, it has often been provincial, about life in Iceland; farming, fishing, fjords, and blood relatives; yet it is remarkable how they have followed world events and maintained a world view, having been mostly isolated until the present period.

There is another side to this coin, so to speak. I am trying my best not to preach to you. In spite of all my trying, a scripture text comes to mind: ". . . unto whom much is given, of him much will be required." You may wonder why Icelanders have accomplished so much being so few, I wonder why they have not accomplished more than they have. Why do I say this? Pick up an issue of the Icelandic Canadian and you will find an impressive list of names of people of Icelandic extraction under such headings as: Wins Scholarship; Award Winner; Brilliant Academic Career; Graduates with distinction; Honorable standing, etc. Naturally we are pleased and proud to see this. These are people of great promise. Our hopes soar high and we expect much from them. Many of these do not disappoint us, for they become outstanding individuals in their chosen field. But what of the many from whom we do not hear, who could have reached the top but did not? Why do not Icelanders accomplish more? The reason for this is anybody's guess. Three things come to mind. First, it is one thing to excel in book learning, grasping quick-

ly and accurately the content from a printed page, and quite another to excel amidst the vicissitudes of life. Second, is it that we are one time winners? Is it possible that many of our gifted students, having made a brilliant scholastic record, are satisfied to hide behind this image? All nations praise their great men, and Iceland no less. The easiest and most deadly way of fooling oneself is to praise dead heroes instead of trying to be one. This is a pitfall especially dangerous to us. Third, too many are lacking in motivation, in dedication to a high and worthy goal. This is a general short-coming in the world today, so we should not unduly condemn Icelanders here. "A delegation of five clergymen, representing the National Conference of Christians and Jews, studied the religious and political situation in ten countries of Europe, including Russia and Poland, and reported that they had found two nations throbbing with energy and purpose—Israel and the Soviet Union. Both of these knew where they were going and were bending all their energies toward that goal." This being a general malady over the world, does not excuse us nor do we want to overlook it. Theodore Roosevelt once said: "The leaders of the world have no unusual brilliance nor superior intelligence nor ability, but they are dedicated to their task and as a result their abilities are maximized."

"They are dedicated to their task." It is a matter of motivation, and consecration to the highest ideals. When this is done "abilities are maximized". Intellectual greatness is not the same as greatness of soul or character, for maximum result these must be combined. I wish that Icelanders everywhere had a twinge of conscience regarding this matter. Samuel Johnson said a N. T. text hung over him like

a suspended sword, namely: ". . . unto whom much is given, much will be required."

In spite of it all—Icelanders are forging ahead. It used to be that Iceland's export was chiefly fish and wool. Now this is changed. The best and costliest (to Iceland) export today is young men and women who go abroad to specialize in their chosen professions, who do not go back to Iceland to apply their trade. Iceland is crowded with specialists now. My old friend Skuli Bjarnason in Los Angeles, tells me that he knows of 3 or 4 students there who have married American women and do not intend to return to Iceland. If one knew of all that do this, the figure would be impressive. There are no less than 20 Universities in the United States that are now teaching Icelandic, Old Icelandic or Norse. There are many more that list Norwegian. It is difficult to teach Norwegian without dipping into Icelandic. Icelandic is coming into its own. We rejoice over this. But this too, makes heavy demands for specialists in these fields from the mother country.

So far this mental drain is not visible in Iceland. There life is vibrant both of body and mind. No generation in Iceland's long history has travelled the country as the present one. The youth is exceptionally active, travelling the country from corner to corner; skiing, skating, climbing mountains, swimming, etc. We all rejoice that one of our countrymen, Halldór Kiljan Laxness has won the much coveted award, the Nobel Prize for Literature. Iceland has many able poets and writers still. It is safe to say that Iceland excels all other nations in the number of books, periodicals, and newspapers printed, per capita. The nation is also gifted in the fields of music, painting, sculpture, and woodcarvings. Iceland is no

longer an isolated island in the North Atlantic, "Langt frá öðrum þjóðum", but is strategically located both in war and peace. It uses the most advanced methods on land, on sea and in the air. Reykjavik, in fashion, is the Paris of the North; in popular songs and dance, it is the New York of Europe.

What is the task before us? It is the same as it has ever been, namely, to do our level best in whatever endeavour we find ourselves engaged. But in addition to that the following is exceedingly timely. **First**, to make Iceland and its past accomplishments known to the world. Vilhjalmur Stefansson called Iceland "The First American Republic". It may well be the oldest existing Republic in the world. Iceland has done much for freedom. It has never lost its love for democracy, it has kindled the spirit of freedom in many and been a sentinel of freedom for centuries. Freedom is the truest and deepest desire of every Icelanders and has been for a thousand years. This is a story that new and rising nations today need to hear. The Sagas are a powerful handle to implement Iceland's freedom story. **Second**, to set the record straight about Leif Eiriksson is an immediate necessity. Here is a son of Iceland who won fame given to but few mortals, yet millions of people the world over are ignorant about him or his epoch-making exploits. Speaking to Icelanders about the need of writing the life

and saga of Leif Eiriksson they reply, "everybody knows that L. E. discovered America." This is far from the truth. Now is the time to write such a book because of the renewed interest in this subject created by the archaeological finds in Newfoundland. **Third**, what a story could be written about the settling of Iceland; the establishment of Althing; its golden age and then move on to tell the story of Greenland and then Vinland. Of course this is too much material for one book. I am not thinking in terms of exhaustive material, rather a fast moving and action filled story. It should be written in a popular style. What a moving picture it would make. There is only one fight in any one generation. This is a task for this generation.

What price glory? What is the glory we are talking about? The glory of Iceland's past. (It ought to be told). It is also the glory of Iceland's present. (This story we are telling in spite of ourselves). And the glory that the Creator has entrusted us with gifts of abilities. What price? The price is fabulous, nothing short of a complete dedication of all of our native powers, to the highest goals. Only thus shall we develop our abilities to the fullest degree. It is nature's law "use them or lose them". We owe it to ourselves and to our fellowmen, for ". . . unto whom much is given, of him much will be required."

**THE WHITE HOUSE**  
**Leif Erikson Day, 1964**  
 By the President of the United States of America

**A PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS Leif Erikson, Norseman, son of Erik the Red and great seafarer, in the year 1000 valiantly explored the shores of the American Continent; and

WHEREAS the intrepid exploits of the Vikings of Erikson's time strike a responsive chord in the hearts of all the American people, who as a nation are today embarked upon an adventurous exploration of the unfathomed realms of space; and

WHEREAS many of our citizens of Scandinavian descent take inspiration from and annually celebrate Leif Eiriksson's momentous voyage; and

WHEREAS the Congress of the United States by a joint resolution approved September 2, 1964, has authorized the President of the United States to proclaim October 9 in each year as Leif Erikson Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LYNDON B. JOHNSON, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate Friday, October 9, 1964, as Leif Erikson Day and direct Government officials to display the flag on all Government buildings on that day. Further, I invite the people of the United States to honor on that day the memory of Leif Eiriksson by holding appropriate exercises and ceremonies in schools and churches, or other suitable places.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this second day of September in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and sixty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and eighty-ninth.

By the President:

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

Dean Rusk  
 Secretary of State.

The Icelandic Canadian is glad to publish the above Proclamation.

All that needs to be said is that words such as "Norseman" and "Nordic" must be given their ample connotation. Carleton S. Coon in "The Races of Europe" (1938) claimed that the word 'Nordic' was the most famous word in anthropology. He went on to say that the Duke of Windsor was a typical Nordic. The word "Norseman" is only a little less famous as it does not include the Low Germans, the Frisians and the Anglo-Saxons. A Norseman founded Normandy and an-

other Norseman founded Kiev. Norsemen settled Iceland and preserved the language they brought with them—Old Icelandic or Old Norse.

In a narrower and philologically more correct sense the word "Norsemen" refers to the people of ancient Scandinavia who lived in what is now Norway, and includes the people who migrated from that area to Iceland and The Western Islands. Whether used in the wide or narrow sense the word "Norsemen" includes the settlers of Iceland.

**LARRY THOR IN NEW ROLE**



James Franciscus, star of the "Mr. Novak" series, and Larry Thor, one of its teachers, hold copy of Thor's new record album "Galloping on my Dinosaur". Its twelve songs, written and sung by Thor, are released by world famous Columbia Records on its Harmony label. The songs are published by Hill and Range Songs, Inc., (BMI). This photo was taken on location with "Mister Novak" in Culver City, California.

Larry Thor has been famous for a number of years as narrator, announcer and actor in Hollywood. He currently is one of the teachers in the well known T.V. series "Mister Novak" which appears on Canadian as well as American networks.

But it is only recently that he has burst upon the scene as a writer and composer of what he calls "Fun Songs

for Children". They are twelve in number and the following are the titles:

Sad Day, Lonely Day; The Gimme Pig; When You Hurt; Picnic; Answer Every Question; Matinee Lullaby; Scary Song; Since You Went Away; Worry Time; T.V. Song; Lullaby; Galloping On My Dinosaur.

Larry's own comments follow:

"Most of the ideas for the songs in this album have come from practical experience; it seems to me that kids and adults are really the same, but in different uniforms. 'Sad Day, Lonely Day' is perhaps the most accurate song about kids in the entire album. Kids are torn between what they want to do and what they know they have to do to keep people around. It's not a sad song; it's matter-of-fact, like kids. 'The Gimme Pig? Every child has it, is it. You almost have to forbid it. You have to stop the momentum of 'gimme'—they really need help when they are in the 'gimme' chant.

"I think feelings can be re-arranged; that's what 'When You Hurt' is about. I see people pick up a child who has been hurt and tell him to be brave. They should say, and mean, that they know it hurts and that crying may help—the kid's better off if he can hurt. 'Picnic' is a mischief song; I tried to poke fun at the idea that kids on a picnic will be what we want them to be—that is, as little irritation as possible. 'Answer Every Question' came right from my son, Cameron. We woke up early one cool morning and as he sat in the air vent, catching the heat, I asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up. 'You'll see,' he said. And that's really a multi-barrelled proposition: innocent, yet loaded.

"'Matinee Lullaby', was a musical inspiration; it came out of the lovely chord progressions. I put it into a

lullaby for the midday nap—that's when it's really tough to get them to sleep. 'Scary Song' is for Cameron and my daughter Kristina—there are verses for each of them. It starts out innocently and then the music and the story develop an ominous feel. 'Since You Went Away' is like so many children's conversations. If one child meets another they cheer the other up by talking of violence, of bad conditions. 'Worry Time' is about what kids worry most about—what they're not caught at; it's very difficult for them to deal with guilt.

"One of the chief functions of television is to give mother a rest. The kid is doing her a service when he watches; that's what 'TV' song' is about. 'Gallop on My Dinosaur' has a different attitude than the others. It's just a rollicking old song about a kid with a non-existent pal. I think we'll always be fascinated with dinosaurs and a little sorry we weren't around to ride them. 'Lullaby' is a piece of mischief. If you tell kids not to think about something, that's exactly what they're going to think about. I think it's easier for them to go to bed if they ramble around among things like crocodiles".

"Fun for Children" has been nominated for the Granny Award for the best children's record of the year.

Larry Thor (Lawrence Thorsteinson), is the son of Mrs. Kristin Thorsteinson, who now lives with her married daughter in Winnipeg, and the late Gudmundur O. Thorsteinson, who

as so many others, was inspired by the late Magnus Bjarnason, poet and fiction writer, to seek a higher education. He graduated from the University of Manitoba and taught school for many years. Another son, Chris Thorsteinson who resides in Brandon, has a weekly hour on the Brandon T.V.

Larry was born in Lundar, Man. August 27, 1916. He started in radio

work in 1937, was on various stations in Eastern Canada until 1946, when he reached Los Angeles and has been in radio and T.V. work ever since.

Larry had four children by his first wife and has three children by his second wife Jean, nee Howell: Kristina 6, Cameron 4 and Leifur Hayden in his first year.

## Represented Icelandic Society Of Edmonton



Carole Arason

Miss Carole Arason, representing the Icelandic Society of Edmonton, Alberta, was among young ladies who

represented various ethnic groups in the city during observance of United Nations Week in November. A feature of the week was a monster parade down Jasper Avenue to U.N. flag raising ceremonies at Edmonton City Hall. Riding in convertibles with suitable crests were the queen candidates of the various ethnic groups. Another feature was a smorgasbord dinner in aid of the UNICEF children's fund in the new Scandinavian Centre at which all queen candidates were honored guests. Miss Arason wore an authentic Icelandic costume with typical silver filigree, loaned for the occasion by Mrs. Harry Goodacre of Red Deer. The costume was a gift from Iceland to her mother, Mrs. A. Asmundson, and has been seen on many ceremonial occasions in Edmonton.

Miss Carole is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Arason and granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sigurdur Arason of International Falls, Minnesota.



## Vinland Ruins Unearthed In Newfoundland

National Geographic Vol. 126 No. 5 (November, 1964)

The Icelandic Canadian wishes to thank the National Geographic Society for permission to reprint excerpts from the article: "Vinland Ruins Prove Vikings Found the New World"—Ed.

While the voyages of Leif Ericsson are part of the history of the world and scholars have always known about the accounts of early Viking attempts at colonization in North America centuries before Columbus, the exact location of these Scandinavian settlements have continued to be a subject for speculation and considerable disagreement throughout the ages. Written accounts there were of these voyages and these settlements but actual concrete evidence of them has eluded historians and archaeologists until the discoveries within the past three or four years at L'Anse Au Meadow in northern Newfoundland. The ruins which have been discovered there point to this spot as the location of such a settlement nearly a thousand years ago.

The Norwegian anthropologist, Helge Ingstad, gives a fascinating account of the discovery in the November 1964 edition of the National Geographic magazine (published in Washington, D.C.). Mr. Ingstad and his wife have devoted the past decade to seeking Leif Ericsson's thousand-year-old trail from Greenland to Vinland. He expresses his feelings in this way:

"Long unrewarded, my own search had been a determined one. Years of exploration lay behind, years of combing thousands of miles of Atlantic coastline of North America, guided by the old Icelandic sagas. Finally luck

was with me, and my theory was confirmed at L'Anse Au Meadow, where our third and climactic season of work was now underway.

"Topping all was the final verdict of radio-carbon analysis from the site. The average date of ten charcoal samples from fire-hearths, pits, and the smithy worked out to the neighborhood of A.D. 900. The first Norsemen came about the year 1000, but the wood that they burned in their fires undoubtedly included much long-dead driftwood, which abounds in Sacred Bay. Carbon dating starts from the time the tree dies, not from when the wood is burned."

A similar conclusion was to be drawn from an examination of the fragments of iron found on the site.

"Careful digging yielded fragments of worked iron and of the natural, local bog iron. Several hundred pieces of slag looked like the refuse from iron smelting.

"This was important evidence in favour of the site being Norse, for neither Eskimos nor Indians in the area knew how to smelt or hot-forged iron. Carbon-14 dating assigned the smithy to Viking days. And it is very unlikely that later Europeans, coming to these shores, would have employed such a primitive smelting technique."

Ingstad's views—views which he has held for many years—on the location of Vinland are of interest:

"Historians have long accepted as fact that the Norsemen reached America. But where did they settle? Where exactly was Vinland the Good?

"Speculations have placed it in sites ranging along the whole enormous coastline from Chesapeake Bay in the south to Hudson Bay in the North. But the evidence has heretofore never survived scientific scrutiny.

Vinland was Leif Ericsson's name for the land he found on his great voyage west. Although the sagas, partly by allusion to short sailing routes to America, indicate that Vinland was a northern place, most scholars have believed that *vin* referred to wild grapes; thus they have placed Vinland rather far south on the Atlantic coast: near Boston, on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, or Long Island, among many sites.

I saw it differently. I came to share with Swedish philologist Sven Soderberg the conviction that "vin" in Vinland had nothing to do with grapes, but instead was used in the old Norse sense of "grass" or "grazing lands". From this and other reasoning, I advanced in my book *Landet Under Leidarstjernen* the theory that Vinland must most logically be looked for in northern Newfoundland."

"I also felt strongly that Sigurd Stefansson's famous Icelandic map of the late 1500's reflected sound tradition. On this chart a long projection from the American mainland is labelled *Promontorium Winlandiae*, the promontory of Vinland. It bears a striking resemblance to Newfoundland Island."

"Furthermore I read the sagas rather literally as to courses, landmarks, and sailing times. I believed that information about the sea and ships would be likely to survive uncorrupted in traditions of a seafaring people".

"When the Norsemen, coasted south along Labrador pushed by the strong Labrador current, they would almost inevitably sight and hold their course toward northernmost Newfoundland. They could hardly avoid a landfall there."

"In 1953 my wife and I had cruised in a small motorboat along the west coast of Greenland. At Sandnes, near the present-day capital Godthab, we saw where Danish archaeologists had excavated a farm thought to be that of Thorfinn Karlsefni, who was first to attempt a permanent colony in North America. One find was a quartzite arrowhead, a projectile point of a style and a material foreign to Greenland but familiar in Newfoundland and Labrador. It was thus perhaps a souvenir from the New World."

"The house site on Karlsefni's farm also yielded a lump of anthracite coal. Greenland has bituminous coal, but no anthracite; nor is hard coal found in Iceland or Norway. Did Karlsefni collect this coal in America on the long southward voyage the sagas say he made? Later, near Newport, Rhode Island, I saw anthracite in the only outcrop of this coal on North America's east coast. Is this deposit the source of the lump of coal found nearly one thousand years later on Greenland's west coast?"

Ingstad describes the historical background of these modern-day discoveries:

"Icelandic sagas that tell about the Vinland voyages presumably were written in the 13th and 14th centuries. Before that, the stories had been passed down orally from generation to generation."

"First we hear about Bjarni Herjulfsson. He sailed from Iceland soon after 986, seeking to join his father in

Greenland. Driven far southwest by bad weather, he sighted unfamiliar coastline, low lying and forest covered. Farther along, he saw still another land, also flat and forest-clad. Sailing on—it must have been northward—he found a third land, this one covered with mountains and glaciers. Without landing anywhere, he turned back out to sea and finally reached Greenland.”

“But the wild wind of mystery came singing stronger and stronger out of the west. Heeding its call, Leif Ericsson planned an expedition. He would take advantage of Bjarni’s findings, and even bought Bjarni’s ship. A saga describes Leif as “big and strong, of striking appearance, shrewd, and in every respect a temperate fair-dealing man.”

“Ericsson plotted his course to reach first the far-north land that Bjarni had seen last. That barren place, probably Baffin Island, he named Helluland (Land of Flat Stones.)”

“Leif the Lucky” sailed on southward and found low forested land and white sand beaches. This he called Markland (Woodland). It was probably Labrador. Onward he sailed for two days and nights and finally arrived at a third place—it may have been L’Anse Au Meadow—which tempted the seafarers with fine grazing grounds, salmon, and timber. The sagas tell us that Leif built “large houses” there and that he “gave the land a name in accordance with the good things they found in it, calling it Vinland. He remained a year, returning then to Greenland.”

Now came the turn of Leif’s brother Thorvald. He reached Leif’s settlement in Vinland and stayed there. He was apparently the first European to meet with the American natives, the “Skrælings.” They fought, and Thorvald was killed by an arrow.”

“Thorfinn Karlsefni was ambitious to set up a permanent colony in the new country. From Greenland he mounted a grand expedition—three ships and about 160 passengers, including women. He also brought livestock. He stayed in Vinland three years, finding the Skrælings so numerous and warlike that the settlers concluded there would never be peace. The natives’ boats were “so many that the bay appeared sown with coals”.

“So Karlsefni returned to Greenland. His wife, the beautiful Gudrid, brought back a small boy named Snorri, the first European born in America.”

“The last known Vinland voyage had the first woman leader: Freydis, Leif’s half sister, who ruthlessly asserted her authority by murdering all the other women of the party with her own axe. A fierce female, a true Valkyrie!”

Ingstad’s account of how he proceeded to intercept the trail of the Vinland voyagers reads like a modern-day voyage of discovery.

“One day, after many disappointments, I asked yet another fisherman my routine question. He scratched the back of his head and said “Well, not so long ago George Decker over at L’Anse Au Meadow was talking about some ruins there.””

“We were off at once to L’Anse Au Meadow, near the tip of Newfoundland Island. Here a few houses huddled at the sea edge. The village had only eleven families, all fishermen, people who speak English with a characteristic accent. No road reaches the place.”

“George Decker, a domineering man, but with warm humorous eyes, was there to greet us. I asked about ruins, and Decker said: “Yes, there is something like that over at Black Duck Brook.”

“A few minutes walk to the southwest brought us to Black Duck Brook, splashing through scrub willow and grass down to the shore. Cattle and sheep grazed on some of the most northerly good pastureland on Canada’s Atlantic coast. An inviting place, peaceful and untouched.”

Ingstad describes the scene in further detail, and points out how it dovetails with the account of “Leif” Ericsson’s arrival in the New World, as narrated in the sagas called “the Flatey Book”.

The excavating then began. The work was in the hands of Icelandic, Swedish and Norwegian archaeologists. “Important features of the structures excavated by these experts conform to the similar pattern of Norse culture which has been studied for a long time in Greenland, Iceland, and Scandinavia.”

By the time the first season of work had been completed “we had discovered traces of seven structures and some curious pits. We had unearthed a few very rusty nails, lumps of slag, and other finds quite unlike those known from settlements of Indians, Eskimos, or people from colonial times.”

“In 1962 and 1963 I organized new expeditions, principally financed by Norwegian scientific foundations and individual donors in my country. But I also got valuable support from the Government of Newfoundland, the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources of Canada, the Royal Canadian Air Force and Navy, and from an American, Dr. Terris Moore, through the Arctic Institute of North America.”

“For its major contribution to my last expedition, I am indebted to the National Geographic Society, not only for its financial help, but also because

the Society gave the expedition valuable scientific and practical aid.”

“The last two seasons’ work filled in many gaps in our knowledge. Anne Stine (the author’s wife) found that the big house (whose outlines had been uncovered in the excavation) measured 70 by 55 feet. It had five or six rooms, with several fireplaces and a floor of hard-packed sand and clay.”

“In most of the buildings, lower walls consisted of turf, for the obvious reason that no stone is available nearby. Wood probably served for the upper walls and roof.”

In commenting upon the disappearance of this and other ancient settlements, Ingstad points out:

“These Norsemen in the New World were in a much more dangerous situation than Columbus and his companions. Columbus had firearms. The Norse had to fight with hand weapons against an enemy superior in numbers.”

“One summer day last year a plane droned over L’Anse Au Meadow and landed in the bay. A fisherman rowed two visitors ashore. I welcomed the two well-known American archaeologists Henry Collins of the Smithsonian Institution and Junius Bird of the American Museum of Natural History. Dr. Collins, an expert on primitive cultures of Arctic America, had come to evaluate our findings for the National Geographic Society.

“I waited eagerly to hear what our guests would have to say, but I asked no questions. Henry Collins’ first declaration was prompt, brief and precise: “These sites are definitely not Eskimo or Indian.”

Ingstad concludes his article:

“After three years of digging, the field work is done. At my suggestion the Government of Newfoundland has

built shelters to protect the most important foundations.

On our last day I walk around all the excavations. They speak to me, intimately now, about a brave and simple people. I look at the empty smithy with the broken anvil, the great hall with the hearth and ember pit, and all the other mementoes of these people of the past.

L'Anse Au Meadow is rippling gold in the sunset. Northward, Belle Isle looms like a fairy castle. Farther off, day dims along the Labrador shore, where the Vinland voyagers came coasting south almost 1000 years ago. I easily visualize the scene. I can see

the smoke rising from the smithy and hear the rhythmic sound of hammering. Groups sit around fires in the houses, talking about the new and amazing land they have come to.

Think of the courage of those Norsemen, setting out to sea in open boats, wives on some voyages, compasses on none; driven by lust for adventure, and by the need to find good new land where families could settle and live.

"Thus it was that young sailors stood once under a square sail gazing wonderingly across the water where a strange coastline rose from the sea—the New World."



## Elected President of Engineers



S. J. Borgford

S. J. Borgford of Winnipeg was elected president of the Association of

Professional Engineers of Manitoba at the annual meeting in December in Winnipeg. Born, raised and educated in Winnipeg Mr. Borgford has been with the architectural firm of Green Blankstein Russell Associates since 1957, prior to which he was a consultant, also assistant professor of civil engineering at the University of Manitoba and employed by Defence Industries Limited at Montreal, Quebec. He is president and a director of the Co-Operative Housing Association of Manitoba, a director of the C.U. Financial Services and a former chairman of the Indian-Metis Conference. Mr. Borgford is the son of the late Thorsteinn and Gudrun Borgford who for many years took a prominent part in Icelandic community affairs in Winnipeg.

## THE RITE OF SPRING

Harried ghosts, they whisper in their pain;  
Demented, twisted things that crippled  
Scamper over corpses in the white light  
Of a dying moon, searching for  
Deep shadows of autumnal nights.  
Unrepentant souls that gibber with  
The fear of being seen, they scurry  
From dark to dark across woven  
Patches of the waning light, huddling  
Between the roots of trees, beneath  
The shadow of a stricken branch,  
Beside a ragged hulk of bark.  
Above them cry the voices of the damned,  
Half dead, alive, suspended in  
A life in death, a death in life  
They rub their hands and squeal their fears,  
Mourning a dirge that stirs guilty souls  
To search for a darker place. About them  
In a leper's white, Death passes  
With a silent hand until the whispers  
Clamour with each gust of wind.  
On every side descending darkness  
Infuses light until the feeble glow  
Of white-capped waves engulfed by moaning sound  
Recall Leander's fatal night.

Beneath the matted boughs a fear streaked figure prowls  
Among the dead, trembling at the sight  
And sound of his infirmity, counting each  
Brown and withered shape against  
The minute of his life. Unwilling to be born  
Again he searches carefully around the tree  
Of life. A priest of darkness who desires  
That his god be satisfied to let the world  
Limp slowly on, un-nourished by the blood and flesh  
Of age, the flesh and blood of youth;  
Willing to forgo the growth of spring,  
To keep a winter globe, a globe of brown,  
The larger murder based upon a single death.

A second figure steps from the shade  
 And casts a challenge with a golden bough  
 Of oak. The twilight space between the trees  
 Lies transfixed as marbled figures strain  
 In silent hate. So Hector strove against  
 Achilles' searching spear outside the walls  
 Of Troy, his stolen blood-stained self inviting  
 Death's sharp thrust. Pale light reflects from steel  
 Which swirls in slashing arcs. Upon their frames  
 The light and shade mould grotesque shapes:  
 Hollow sockets in a skull  
 Contend with pits of flame.  
 Swords disappear in murk, then catch  
 The light to shine as glass, ascending  
 And descending until  
 The challenger strikes home.

Cold statues on a colder stage, they pause  
 While life imprints the frosty ground with life  
 And passes through the darkened steel to stir  
 Unquiet thoughts amongst the triumph in the brain.  
 Gusting forth, the wind scatters  
 Leaves in bursts about the rigid forms.  
 The sword arm drops. Its master creeps  
 Away, already fearful of the coming rain.

—W. D. Valgardson



## THE BAND PLAYS ON

by FLORENCE PRATT

The 95 piece Foam Lake-Wynyard school unit band which has been playing to capacity audiences during the past year is more than just another school band.

It represents the united effort and dreams of many persons over the past 50 years or more, in a district from Wynyard, Sask. on the west to Theodore, Sask. on the east.

The people of the district, at one time of basically Icelandic origin, have always displayed a keen interest in music. From time to time there have been bands, orchestras and other musical activity. But none quite equalled the massed bands of the entire school unit, directed by Valdimar Bjarnason, which makes up the present organization.

"Valdi" Bjarnason of Wynyard is the son of the town's first bandmaster, Soggi Bjarnason, who conducted a 14 piece group back in 1910-11.

Since that time, until the present, thought of a band, either one which functioned or one which might function, was never far from the minds of musically interested personnel of the town and district.

During the late 1930's, under the baton of Cy Ireson, a Wynyard band distinguished itself at music festivals in the district. But a war came and the boys left to make music of another kind.

By 1950, the "let's have a band" movement began again. A few of the boys were back from the war, among them Valdi Bjarnason, who at the age of 15 had won the class B trumpet solo award at a provincial music festival.

Another on hand at Wynyard was Bud Bergthorson, also a provincial festival award winner.

With the support of several local groups, including the Lion's Club and the Wynyard Home and School Association, a band, complete with uniforms, under joint direction of Valdi and Bud, was playing both locally and at several provincial functions.

Under the baton of Valdi Bjarnason the Wynyard Lions Band won awards at a Moose Jaw band festival and a Saskatoon Travellers' Day parade.

But Bud Bergthorson left town, and many of the student personnel also drifted away.

Keeping a band together seemed a pretty up-hill task. Bandmaster Bjarnason began to have doubts a band could ever be held together for any length of time.

It was at this point, the provincial education department decided in a province-wide plan to install a music director in every school unit.

Valdi Bjarnason of Wynyard, was a natural for the Foam Lake-Wynyard Unit. He was among the first to be appointed.

In little more than three years, with the whole hearted co-operation of parents and school board alike, he has built up one of the fine "A" bands of the province, supplemented by a "B" band which acts as a constant feeder replacement source for the "A" group.

Student interest and pleasure in band activities seem to carry over into other musical interests in the community, Valdi said. Orchestras, glee clubs are receiving support and once again, plans are under way to hold a district musical festival. But the school unit band, under Valdi Bjarnason's baton, appears to be the pivot of musical activity.

## Part II.

## Address of Ambassador John P. Sigvaldason

The Address was delivered in Winnipeg, Sept. 28, 1964 — See Winter, 1964.

This part deals with the Ambassador's impression of the Far East.

Perhaps at this point I might say something about my impressions of the Asian scene. On this vast continent many things capture the imagination at first sight. Asia was certainly a principal cradle of civilization. Wherever one goes there are physical reminders of great civilizations that flourished many centuries ago.

Many of the physical achievements of these past civilizations are now in ruins and a hasty impression can be that this is all that remains. Nothing could be more deceiving. Nothing could be more unfair to the millions of people of Asia than to believe that with the passing of great empires there passed away also the mental and spiritual achievements of centuries of thought and effort. Let us be clear on one thing, the people of Asia, millions and millions of them, the great majority with few material possessions, and millions with little, if any, formal education, are still the possessors of a social and spiritual development which in any scale of value deserves approval and respect.

My most distinct impression of Asia is therefore that the Asian people possess cultural and spiritual resources that are not second to those of any other people. But if East and West are ever to meet there must be greater appreciation and understanding on our part of the scale of values of the East. Conversely there must also be

greater appreciation in the East that Western civilization is founded on more enduring things than material values.

The second thing that has impressed me greatly is the fast developing dynamism of Asian peoples and Asian society. Possessing, as they do, proud traditions of culture and achievement the Asian peoples of today are reacting vigorously to the negative circumstances of their life. Let us not make any mistake about the high intellectual quality or about the powerful physical forces which are at the disposal of Asian societies. These intellectual and physical forces are in process of being mobilized and the dynamic qualities of mind and spirit behind them present a challenge to that Western dynamism which in the past century gave material superiority to our society.

Questions of peace and disarmament are much in the forefront today. Let us, however, be careful that they do not become the concern primarily of the "have" societies. Let us realize that "have not" societies have perhaps less to lose and that Asia and Africa belong to the "have not" grouping of peoples. Universal material prosperity, even if it could be achieved, is not, of course, a guarantee of peace but a better balance than now exists is assuredly required if there is to be tolerance or goodwill. It is because of this realization that Canada along with so

many other countries has embarked upon programmes of assistance to the less-developed parts of the world. These programmes deserve the utmost support from all people of goodwill. They are an expression of the genuine desire to be a good neighbour. Equally, however, assistance programmes appeal to an intellectual awareness that in our "one world" there can be no real peace or permanent prosperity anywhere if the people in the more populated half of the world are doomed to continuing poverty or hunger.

Today service abroad particularly in the less-developed part of the world offers great intellectual and emotional compensations. Yet it is not those who go abroad who play the significant

part in the process of bridging the gap between East and West or between the "haves" and "have nots". That gap can only be bridged if intelligent policies based on mutual co-operation can find expression in both halves of the world. Bridging the gap will not be a quick or an easy process. Nor can there ever be assurance that counsels of despair will not prevail or that the forces of nihilism or destruction will not gain mastery. The only thing one can be sure of is that idealism exists in the heart of man, and that all men whether they are black, yellow, brown or white are capable of reason. It is to these inherent qualities of humanity that hope and effort must turn.

## Golden Wedding

Mr. and Mrs. Kristinn Goodman of 533 Clandeboye Avenue, Selkirk, Man., were honored in January at a banquet gathering in the Lutheran Church Hall, attended by some 200 friends and relatives. Rev. Wallace Bergman was master of ceremonies.

Speakers paying tribute to them included Mrs. Steinun Sigurdur, Mayor Ben Massey who brought civic greetings, Leifur Skagford on behalf of the Icelandic Society Bruin, and Sigurdur Goodman who presented them with gifts on behalf of family and friends.

Congratulatory messages were received from Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, Opposition Leader J. G. Diefenbaker, Lieutenant-Governor Errick F. Willis, Manitoba Industry and Commerce Minister Gurney Evans and Eric Stefanson, M.P. for Selkirk constituency. Read also was a message from

son Mundi and family of Hope, B.C. who were unable to attend.

Born and raised in Iceland, Mr. and Mrs. Goodman came to Canada in 1924 and have most of the time since lived at Selkirk where Mr. Goodman was employed at the Manitoba Rolling Mill's steel plant for 29 years.

They had ten children, of whom two died when young and a son lost his life while serving with the Canadian army during the siege of Hong Kong by the Japanese during the Second World War. They also have one stepson.

Living, in addition to son Mundi at Hope, are Soffia, Mrs. A. Cooney of Winnipeg, Thora, Mrs. G. Walsh of Ottawa, Kristjan at Sarnia, Ont., Alda, Mrs. G. Hawes of Selkirk, Emily, Mrs. M. Barnett of Winnipeg, Thorbjorg of Selkirk, and stepson Wayne at home. There are 25 grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

## The February Four Day Celebration

Around the annual convention of The Icelandic National League, attended this year by 24 accredited delegates and the Executive Board, a general midwinter celebration has developed during the years and now covers a Sunday evening and the three following days.

At a well attended service in the First Lutheran Church on Sunday evening, February 14, Dr. Richard Beck delivered an address which he entitled "Arfur or eggjan", "Heritage and Exhortation". Otherwise the service followed the usual Sunday evening Lutheran pattern—all Icelandic. Refreshments were served in the lower church parlor after the service.

The convention opened at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, February 15, at which Rev. P. M. Petursson read his Presidential Address. At noon a brief ceremony took place hoisting the new Canadian flag. Hon. Duff Roblin, the Premier of Manitoba, read a proclamation announcing that the new flag had that day become the legal and official flag of Canada. The new flag was then hoisted by Consul G. L. Johannson, and the flags of the United States and Iceland were also hoisted, one on each side of the flag of Canada.

At three o'clock in the afternoon Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson introduced the subject of having the discovery of America by Leifur Eiriksson recognized in some official way in Canada. He read correspondence with Hon.

Paul Martin and moved that this important subject be referred to the incoming executive. The motion was seconded by Dr. Richard Beck and spoken to by Hon. W. J. Lindal. The motion carried unanimously and with significant applause.

The Chapter "Frón" staged its concert on Monday evening. Dr. Sæmundur Kjartansson, who is taking post-graduate work in Minneapolis, specializing in dermatology, delivered an address in which he painted present day Iceland as it appears to him.

Mr. Björn Björnsson of Arborg delighted the audience with his mimicry—unfortunately a dying art among Icelanders in America.

Mrs. Evelyn Thorvaldson Allen, with the accompaniment of Mrs. Sigrild Bardal McKee, sang two sets of solos in her usual artistic way.

An honorary life membership in the Chapter Frón was presented to Dr. Richard Beck.

The President, J. F. Kristjansson was in the chair.

At noon on Tuesday The Icelandic Canadian Club held its annual theme luncheon—the theme on this occasion being the pioneer Icelandic business men of Winnipeg. The speaker, Mr. S. O. Bjerring, who came to Winnipeg in 1888, three years old, could speak with knowledge and experience. In his humorous anecdotes he drew upon

his memory and no doubt upon that of his wife, Guðrun, daughter of Gunnlaugur Johannson, one of the characteristic business men in the Icelandic community. The Manitoba Historical Society has asked for a copy of the address for the provincial archives.

Tuesday evening The Icelandic Canadian Club held its concert with the President, W. H. Finnbogason in the chair.

Rev. Sveinbjörn S. Olafsson, of Minneapolis delivered an address which he entitled "What Price Glory?" That address and the one by Tryggvi Bjerring appear in this issue.

The musical part of the programme, arranged by Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson, was headed by the well known artist Mr. Elmer Nordal. Laureen and Carol Westdal sang duets in their usual sweet way; Valerie Nordal, daughter of Elmer Nordal played a piano solo; and Judith Scheske, who hails from Lundar and whose mother is Icelandic, sang a solo. The accompanists were Snjolaug Sigurdson and Valerie Nordal.

Scholarships were presented to 12 students, totalling \$1400. A Canada-Iceland Foundation scholarship of \$200 was awarded to Melinda Bardal of Winnipeg who obtained the best standing in Icelandic. She is in her fourth year Arts.

The Icelandic Good Templars scholarship of \$200.00 was presented to Donald Flatt of St. Vital, who, though without previous knowledge of Icelandic, is majoring in English and minoring in Icelandic for his Master of Arts degree. His grandfather on the mother's side was Arni Anderson, a well known Winnipeg lawyer of his day.

The Icelandic Canadian Club scholarship of \$100.00 was presented to Brian T. Oleson of Riverton, by the Club President. The other scholarships were presented by the secretary of the Scholarship Committees.

The Mundi Johnson Memorial Scholarship, established by Mrs. Kristin Johnson, was awarded to Frederick A. Holm of Gimli. The George Magnusson Estate Scholarship of \$100 was presented to F. O. Josephson also of Gimli. The Jon Olafson Stal scholarship of \$100.00 was awarded to Marjorie Anderson of Libau, Man. Glen Eliasson of Winnipeg received the Harold Olson scholarship of \$100. The other scholarships, each of \$100, all from the Canada-Iceland Foundation, were awarded to Ronnie Arnason of Lundar, Carolyn Martin of Gimli, Judy Einarson of Gimli, Judith Frederickson of Brandon and Tom Magnusson of Lundar.

At Wednesday noon a luncheon was tendered to Mr. and Mrs. Sigurður Helgason by the Icelandic National League. The impromptu remarks of Guttormur Guttormson virtually "stole the show". The guest of honor, Sigurður Helgason paid tribute to the different agencies serving in Winnipeg in the best interests of the Icelandic heritage.

The final concert, Wednesday evening, was under the auspices of The Icelandic National League. An address was delivered by Sigurður Helgason the New York President of Iceland Airlines Loftleiðir. He referred to three Icelandic colonizations in America. The first was headed by Leifur Eiriksson, the discoverer of America, but Mr. Helgason points out that Eiríkur Rauði discovered Greenland, in the Western hemisphere, in 985 and

Bjarni Herjólfsson, a year or two later sailed as far south as Newfoundland.

The second colonization began in the 1870's—the main Icelandic migration to America. The Third colonization Mr. Helgason attributes to Loftleiðir in its present air-transportation across the Atlantic, and in its assistance to Helgé Ingstad which led to the Newfoundland discoveries of ancient Norse settlements. His address and no doubt that of Dr. Kjartanson will appear in Logberg-Heimskringla.

Following the address colored films from Iceland were shown.

Carol Thorsteinson and Doreen

Borgford sang solos, accompanied by Mrs. Elma Gislason, who is their music teacher. Johannes Pálsson of Geysir rendered violin selections with his usual skill and artistic technique.

Life memberships in The Icelandic National League were presented to Dr. Bjarni Benediktsson, Prime Minister of Iceland, Consul G. L. Johannsson and Mrs. Ingibjörg Jónsson, editor of Logberg-Heimskringla.

These public events, now six in number, were eminently successful, as may be said of the whole four day celebration.

—W.J.L.

### MRS. BESSIE JOBIN OF OAK PARK, MICH. RECEIVES

#### GOLD PIN AWARD

Last December upon her retirement from office, after 25 years service, Mrs. Bessie Jobin was presented with a gold pin by the Mayor of Oak Park, near Detroit, Michigan.

In The Daily Tribune of Oak Park it is stated that during her 25 years of service, Mrs. Jobin held at one time or another nearly every City Office and was Deputy Assessor at the time of her retirement in December, 1964.

Mrs. Bessie Jobin was brought up in Winnipeg and is the daughter of the late Thorsteinn and Gerða Thorlakson. She has three sisters: Mrs. Lou Johnson, widow of the late Alex Johnson of Winnipeg; Mrs. Olive Brand of Ferndale, Michigan, and Mrs. Clara A. Michaels (Mrs. W. H. G. Michaels) of 4533 Steere Drive, Shreveport, La., U.S.A.

Bessie married Fred Jobin of the Jobins of Winnipeg. They lived in Winnipeg until after World War I, then for a while in Wynyard, Sask., and moved to Oak Park, Mich., in 1927. Fred Jobin died in 1930.

They had two sons both of whom are now living in Denver, Colorado. One son, Daniel, is a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. He has recently compiled a Bulletin on behalf of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission No. 1124, dealing with the transmission character of sedimentary rocks in the Colorado Plateau.

The other son, Robert, is an attorney-at-law, and at present is in the Trust Department of one of Denver's large banks.

Both Dan and Bob have their Master's Degree from the University of Michigan. —C.M.

## BOOK REVIEW

### A BASIC WORK ON OLD ICELANDIC LITERATURE

Reviewed by Dr. Richard Beck,  
University of North Dakota

Einar Ól. Sveinsson: *Íslenzkar bókmenntir í fornöld.*—Reykjavík, Almenna Bókafélagið, 1962. Pp., 534. Numerous illustrations.

Dr. Einar Ól. Sveinsson is well known to Icelanders in Canada and the United States, both from his writings and his visits and lectures at American and Canadian universities.

For more than three decades he had been professor of Old Icelandic literature at the University of Iceland, when in the fall of 1962 he became Director of the new Manuscript Institute of Iceland (*Handritastofnun Íslands*). He is eminently fitted to fill that important position because of his vast knowledge of Old Icelandic literature, the Icelandic manuscripts included, attested by his extensive writings on the subject and his authoritative editions of many of the most significant sagas. He has also made notable contributions to the study of Icelandic folklore.

Particularly significant, however, among his earlier works are his penetrating and masterfully written studies on *Njálssaga*, *Um Njálu* (1933), and *Á Njálsbúð, bók um mikið listaverk* (1935). His definitive edition of *Njálssaga* (*Brennu-Njálssaga*), 1954, *Íslenzk fornrit XII* is a work of such magnitude that it alone would have

sufficed to place him in the front rank of leading Icelandic specialists in the Old Icelandic field.

A number of Dr. Sveinsson's books have appeared in foreign languages, the following in English: *The Age of the Sturlungs* (Ithaca, N. York, 1935), *Studies in the Manuscript Tradition of Njálssaga* (Reykjavík, 1953) and *Dating the Icelandic Sagas* (London, 1958). His penetrating and excellently written study of the turbulent Sturlung period in Icelandic history, *The Age of the Sturlungs*, has even been translated into Chinese (Shanghai, 1957 and 1959).

The work under review, an impressive study of first importance, is, as might be expected, characterized by scholarship of the highest order, rare erudition, and comparable insight. It is the first volume of a projected three-volume history of Old Icelandic literature, entitled *Íslenzkar bókmenntir í fornöld*, and is to cover the period from the beginning of the settlement of Iceland to the latter part of the thirteenth century. It is indicative of the scope of this work, and of how detailed the treatment of the subject is, that this first volume, which is largely devoted to the Eddic poetry alone, is over five hundred pages long. In fact, the volume is the first really detailed general treatment of the Eddic poems published in the Icelandic language. Small wonder that its appearance was hailed as a major literary event in Iceland. This will, in a still greater degree, be the case, when the whole three-volume series has been published. The

Icelanders will then possess in their native tongue the long-awaited definitive history of their remarkable ancient literature.

In a sixty-two page introduction the author discusses the Viking Age, the settlers of Iceland and the new social structure established there, the runes, their origin, character, and usage. All of this is highly informative, based on wide and intensive reading, and thoroughly documented.

Old Icelandic poetry has, of course, deep roots in ancient Germanic and Scandinavian literary traditions and cultural soil. This phase of the subject is dealt with in detail in a special section, as are the various factors which contributed to the growth and the form of Old Icelandic poetry. The chapter on the metrical form is likewise detailed and excellent, which is no less true of the section dealing with the language of the Eddic poems. The nature descriptions occurring in the poems, an important and interesting element, receive due consideration; the comparison with place names in Iceland, given by the settlers of the country, is especially illuminating.

The bulk of the volume consists of the special discussion, interpretation, and evaluation of the Eddic poems themselves. The necessary background for each is given, the contents concisely summarized, and then follows the interpretation, always penetrating, and often outright brilliant in its deep insight and corresponding presentation. The Eddic poems are here discussed in all their many-sided aspects, historical, cultural, and literary. Dr. Sveinsson's book has to be read in its entirety, and read carefully, for a full appreciation of his masterful treatment of the vast subject. His clear overall view of the enormous subject matter is nothing

short of amazing, for the literature on the Eddic poems and related subjects comprises, as is well known, the equivalent of a huge library. In spite of his attention to detail, the author, to use a common expression, never loses sight of the forest because of the trees.

In this work the author reveals himself as the master of a close-knit style, marked by carefully chosen diction. At the same time, especially in the descriptive passages and in the interpretations of the various poems, there is both poetic imagery and an undercurrent of deep feeling. Naturally, a considerable part of the book is strictly of a factual nature, but it always makes smooth reading, and gains stylistically and otherwise with every new reading, which is the hallmark of all truly effective writing.

In the preface Dr. Sveinsson lists some of the most important works in the field which have been of particular value to him, and throughout the volume he refers frequently to these and other sources both in the text proper and in numerous footnotes. There is neither bibliography nor index, but these will doubtless appear in the concluding volume. On the other hand, there is a list of the many and excellent illustrations, which add much to the value and the attractiveness of this excellently printed book, and there is also a list of the individual Eddic poems dealt with.

Not only all scholars in the field, but others interested in Old Icelandic literature, are deeply indebted to Dr. Sveinsson for this highly important work of his, and no doubt share with the present reviewer the fervent wish that the following two volumes of this monumental work of his will appear in the near future.

## Dr. Vigfus S. Asmundson

Vigfus Sæmundur Asmundson was born in Iceland, September 24, 1895. He and his sister Thora, at the request and expense of the late Narfi and Anna (a sister of their mother) Vigfusson, came to Canada in 1905. Vigfus stayed with his aunt and uncle on their farm near Tantallon in Saskatchewan, and Thora stayed with Senator and Mrs. James M. Douglas who lived close by. Both received their elementary education in the old Holar School near Tantallon.

Vigfus Asmundson went to the University of Saskatchewan and obtained his degree of Bachelor of Science in Agriculture in 1918. He obtained his M.S.A. from Cornell in 1920 and his Ph.D. degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1930, thesis Genetics and Poultry Husbandry. In 1964 he was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws from the University of California, at Davis, Cal.

Dr. Asmundson's career of lecturing and research work in universities extends over a period of 44 years. He officially retired in 1963 and is now Professor Emeritus of the University of California. He is continuing research work and writing reports.

This distinguished career commenced in British Columbia where he was instructor at the University of B. C. for two years, 1921-22. He was Assistant Professor 1921-1927, Associate Professor 1927-1932. He then accepted a call to the University of California, at Davis and was Associate U of Cal. 1932-33; Assistant Professor 1933-38; Associate Professor 1938-41; Professor 1946-1963; Professor Emeritus 1963-



Dr. Vigfus S. Asmundson

The official citation in the University Bulletin when Dr. Asmundson received his honorary degree reveals the subjects which he has made his life's work and the quality of the service rendered:

"Vigfus S. Asmundson, Professor of Poultry Husbandry, Emeritus, 'for his willing and capable service . . . for his distinguished research in the genetics and physiology of turkeys.'"

His research work commenced immediately when appointed to the staff of the University of B. C. In 1931 he won the Poultry Science Research prize of \$100.00. In 1942 he won the Borden Award of \$1000.00 and Gold Medal. This competition was open to both American and Canadian research workers. In 1947 he won the National Turkey Federation Award and Bronze plaque with a cash award of \$500.00.



Dr. Asmundson has written about 120 technical and scientific articles in over twenty different journals. In addition he has written almost the same number of semi-technical popular articles in poultry and agricultural periodicals. Dr. Asmundson has a chapter in a German series on animal breeds and breeding. In collaboration with a fellow professor he has a chapter in a book in which they discuss muscular dystrophy in the domestic fowl. This type of advanced research work the retired professor is continuing.

In 1935 Vigfus married Alice M.

McGrath, then of Rosedale, B. C. They have six children. The oldest is a professor at McGeorge Law School in Sacramento, Cal. The second youngest is in the University of California and the youngest in High School. Within a few years all six will be university graduates.

Mrs. Asmundson, like her husband has no intention of retiring. For relaxation she gives piano lessons.

It is only right to add that in spite of the lack of sight in one eye, Vigfus Asmundson has made a very special contribution in the field of studies and research selected. —W.J.L.

## Annual Banquet and Dance

"Are you coming to the Icelandic Canadian Club banquet and dance" is an oft repeated question early in January. The banquet was held in the Marlborough Hotel, January 15th with Harold Green's orchestra providing the music for the dance.

Mr. John Arnason, vice-president, welcomed the well over 200 guests, in the absence of the president Mr. William Finnbogason, who was not able to be present until later in the evening. It was encouraging to see such a goodly number of young couples in attendance.

Mr. Kerr Wilson's choir of some 50

young people ranging in age from 14 to 17 sang several popular numbers, much to the delight of the assembled guests.

Perhaps it is not fitting to make a mild criticism but it was felt by some that there could have been a bit more mingling amongst the guests. The executive could consider holding a reception half an hour before the dinner to meet their friends and greet new ones. There could be some sort of social dance, where the dancers change partners and thus become better acquainted.

—M. H.

## GRADUATES and AWARD WINNERS



Thora Marguerite Hocking

Thora Marguerite Hocking was born in Nanaimo, B.C., in 1946. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Terence A. Hocking. She attended Elementary and Junior High School at Parkville where she lived before moving with her family to Richmond, B.C. in 1961. When she graduated from Junior to Senior High School she won the "Best-All-Around" student award, the highest achievement award, as well as a medal for French studies.

She was one of the 232 members of the 1964 graduating class of Richmond High School. She won the B.C. Packers \$400 Scholarship for high academic attainment, leadership and participation in school activities, as well as a French award given by the Government of France. She achieved first class standing in the final exams entitling her to the Government of B.C. scholarship which paid one half of her university fees.

During the school year 1963-64, she was one of the two representatives of the Richmond High school on the T.V. program Reach For The Top. She was the publicity co-ordinator on the executive of the Student Council.

During the summer of 1964 she spent two weeks with a French family in Trois Rivieres, Quebec. This was in connection with the student exchange sponsored by the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews.

At present Thora is attending U.B.C. where she is taking First year Arts.

Thora's mother, Margaret, is a daughter of the late Alexander Oscar and Ingibjorg Olson of Churchbridge, Sask.



David Randle Wooley

David Randle Wooley, age 15, son of Mr. and Mrs. Garnet Wooley of Snow Lake School, was one of 35 suc-

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In the year A.D. 1000, Eirik's son, Leifr, who was born in Iceland, attempted to sail from Iceland to Eiriksfjord, but was driven off course in a south-westerly direction, and discovered what is now Labrador. He sailed further south and came across wooded land, probably Newfoundland.

Leifr, sailed still further south, and landed at the mouth of a river. He went ashore and found wild grapes growing in a pleasant land. He called the land "Vinland" or Wineland. This was on the east coast of what is now the New England States.

The Icelandic people can indeed be very proud of their country's part in the discovery of North America and of their contributions to the growth of Canada.

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The programme ran from July 6 to Aug. 14. The first 5 weeks were spent at the Lakefield Preparatory School which is located near Peterborough, Ont. The last week was spent in Ottawa with the student living in residence on the campus of Carleton University.

David was also presented with the James Reed Memorial Scholarship for the highest marks in Grade 11. He received a cheque for \$100.00 and an engraved medal.

David's mother is the former Lillian Anna Johnson whose parents are Kari and Anna Johnson from Baldur, Mn.

★

### PROMISING STUDENTS

Frederick Harold Ramsay and Vaughn Clair, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Ramsay of Waskada in south-western Manitoba are promising students who no doubt will be heard from in the future.

Frederick Harold Ramsay graduated with honors last spring from the University of Manitoba, before he was 21 years of age and obtained the degree of Bachelor of Commerce. He is continuing his studies at Clarkson, Gordon and Co., chartered accountants.



Frederick Harold Ramsay

Vaughn Clair Ramsay is taking the diploma course in agriculture at the U of M, and last spring won the Massey-Ferguson prize of \$50.00 for the highest marks in farm power and machinery; was awarded the Massey-Ferguson scholarship of \$100.00 for scholastic achievement; and was also awarded a Department of Agriculture bursary of \$250.00. He is at present taking the second year in the Diploma Course.

The mother of these bright students, Mrs. F. Ramsay, was Ella F. Eliasson, and the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Eliasson, who migrated to Canada in 1904, and lived in Langruth, Westbourne and elsewhere in Manitoba.

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### BRILLIANT STUDENT



Kenneth Lincoln Johnson

Highest marks in the faculty have brought major academic awards to Kenneth Lincoln Johnson of Winnipeg who is studying dentistry at the University of Manitoba. He is now in his fourth and final year.

Mr. Johnson won bronze medals in anatomy, pathology, bacteriology and biochemistry in his first and second years. Honors in third year included Certificate of Merit (Honors), scholarship, International College of Dentists (Canadian Section), the C. V. Mosby book award (for highest standing in prosthodontology, anaesthesiology, oral surgery and general surgery), the Winnipeg Dental Supply award (for highest standing in clinical surgery), and the University Bronze Medal for highest standing in pharmacology.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Johnson of St. Boniface and the grandson of the late Gudjon and Oddny Johnson and the late Thorarinn and Kristin Olson of Winnipeg.

★

### JANET MADDIN WINS MEMORIAL AWARD

Miss Janet Maddin of Winnipeg on March 2nd was named Manitoba's outstanding athlete of the year and winner of the Carl Pederson memorial award, the first track and field competitor to capture this coveted prize.

Miss Maddin becomes the fifth winner of this award which in 1961 went to Ann Murray of badminton fame, in 1962 to speed skater Doreen McCannell, in 1963 to tennis champion Eleanor O'Gorman and in 1964 to Jim Irving who is at present on tour in Europe with Canada's national hockey team.

Miss Maddin was nominated for the award by Hugh Murray, coach of the Flying M Track and Field Club to which she belongs, and Alan Miller director of fitness and amateur sports in Manitoba. They nominated her because she holds six Canadian and 16 Manitoba records and anchors a relay team which holds two Canadian and four Manitoba records. Last year she was rated the fastest girl sprinter in Canada after winning the greatest number of points. (see Icel. Can. Autumn 1964).

At the Canadian Olympic trials and Canadian senior championships at St. Lambert, Que. she ran 100 metres in 12.6, best time 12 even. At the Canadian age class championships she ran 60 yards in seven flat to win four gold medals and break three Canadian records. She was awarded the trophy as the outstanding athlete of the meet. Last September at Vancouver she placed second to Una Morris who represented Jamaica at the Tokyo Olympics.

Miss Maddin, who is 15, is a Grade 11 student at Daniel McIntyre Col-

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legiate where this year she has maintained an average of 87 per cent, plays some basketball and is a cheerleader. She is the daughter of Charlie Maddin, well-known for his work in hockey with the senior Winnipeg Maroons and now with Canada's national hockey team in Europe. Her mother is the former Herdis Eyolfson, daughter of Mrs. Kristin and the late Sigurdur Eyolfson who in earlier years lived in the Vestfold district near Lundar in the interlake district of Manitoba.

Miss Maddin, who was nominated by the Manitoba branch of the Amateur Athletic Union for the Myrtle Cook trophy, given the most outstanding female athlete in other than open events, was presented with her Manitoba outstanding athlete of the year award at the fifth Carl Pederson memorial award dinner in the Charterhouse in Winnipeg. The Carl Pederson memorial award was initiated by the Winnipeg Junior Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Pederson, a former Jacyee president, was active in youth work over the years until his untimely death in 1959.

## BURSARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

The Department of Education of Iceland is offering a bursary to a university student of Icelandic descent from Canada or the U. S. A. for study of Icelandic language and literature at the University of Iceland, from October 1st to May 1st, 1966. The bursary is for about \$1,000 (U.S. currency) and is for the purpose of paying board and room at the U. residence and for books needed.

Foreign students who study in Iceland at the university on other bursaries are invited to a free visit to Laugavatn in the last week in September, to get acquainted and attend a short orientation course, and visit famous places in Iceland, such as Þingvellir, Skálholt, Geysir, etc. The bursary holder of Icelandic descent from America is also invited to attend this free short course at Laugavatn.

This bursary would naturally be of special interest to those who know a little of the Icelandic language; it would be a great advantage to them if they had studied Icelandic with Prof. Bessason in the Icelandic Department at the University of Manitoba, as that is an ideal preparation for this course at the University of Iceland.

Applications, with the usual recommendations and record of scholastic achievement may be sent before June 20th, 1965 to:

The Icelandic National League,  
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## IN THE NEWS

### THE LINCOLN MOTOR HOTEL

Members of the Canada Press Club were the guests of the Management of The Lincoln Motor Hotel, 1030 McPhillips St., at their social meeting held on January 11, last. An excellent meal was provided and after a brief programme of two films coffee and cakes were served including vina-terta, made at the hotel.

One of the owners of the hotel is a well known lawyer Mr. V. John Swystun. The hotel is fully modern, beautifully appointed, and features a banquet and ball room capable of catering to 500 guests. There are smaller rooms suitable for weddings, meetings, etc. Ample parking space is provided.



Philip M. Petursson

Reverend Philip M. Petursson, who has served the past thirty-five years in the Unitarian ministry in Winnipeg, has taken over duties as Director of the Western Canada Unitarian Conference. Mr. Petursson was honoured on his retirement from the Winnipeg Unitarian Church last October with a testimonial dinner at which tribute was paid to his many years of service both in Winnipeg and throughout the Prairie Provinces. Among those present was Dr. Dana McLean Greeley, President of the American Unitarian-Universalist Association in Boston. Mr. Petursson has been prominent in many community activities throughout the years. He served as Chairman of the Winnipeg School Board and has been prominent in the activities of the Icelandic National League.

Mrs. Magnus Erlendson was elected president for 1965 of the Women's Auxiliary of United College in Winnipeg at the annual meeting in January in Sparling Hall, the college's women's residence. College principal Dr. W. C. Lockhart installed the new officers. The auxiliary in 1964 donated \$1,000 for women's residence furnishings and provided \$1,400 for scholarships.

### GOLDEN WEDDING

Mr. and Mrs. A. H. (Ole) Gray of 1125 Valour Road, Winnipeg, were honored by friends and family at a reception Saturday, Dec. 5, at the home of their only son Jack, wife Thorgerda and the latter's children, daughters

Earlis and Karen and son Wayne at 676 Banning St. Some 200 persons came to offer congratulations and best wishes.

Mrs. Gray, the former Fjola Kristjansson, is the daughter of the late Hannes and Ingibjorg Kristjansson who for many years lived in Winnipeg. She was chief operator at the telephone exchange at Carman, Man. where she met Mr. Gray. They were married Dec. 2, 1914, by the late Rev. Fridrik Hallgrimsson, then Lutheran pastor in the Argyle district.

They moved in 1915 to Winnipeg where Mr. Gray was employed in an administrative capacity with the then Winnipeg Electric Company. Besides son Jack they had an only daughter, Earlis, who died at the age of 15.

Over the years Mrs. Gray has been a member of the Women's Association of the First Icelandic Lutheran Church and at one time was president in addition to being active in other affairs of the church.

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## FINAL MEETING OF THE LADIES' AID LILJAN OF WYNYARD, SASK.

Last October 15 sixteen women gathered at the home of Mrs. Ruth Enerson in Wynyard, Sask. for the final meeting and writing of the last chapter on an organization that had served a rural community for 57 years and two months. It was a gathering filled with fond memories for many of the older ones there.

It was on August 8, 1907, that eight Icelandic farm women of the newly settled Grandy area, some six miles north of Wynyard, gathered at the home of Mrs. E. E. Grandy to form the Grandy Ladies' Aid, which was given the name "Liljan" (The Lily). Mrs. H. Hjorleifson (Martin) was chosen president, Mrs. S. S. Bergman secretary



and Mrs. J. Hallgrimson treasurer. This small group was to achieve much for the community in the years ahead.

Along with the three chosen officers at the meeting were Mrs. G. Goodman, Mrs. Egilson, Mrs. Hannes Anderson, Mrs. J. Johanneson and Mrs. Grandy. At subsequent meetings a constitution was drawn up and new members added. All meetings were at the homes of members and conducted in Icelandic.

They began their work by raising money for welfare work, and soon a small building was erected near Grandy school where they served coffee at dances in the school and at baseball games. Later when the school was destroyed by fire this building served as a schoolhouse for a time.

The group later purchased the Sleipnir school building and had it moved to the southwest corner of the Grandy homestead. It acquired the name of Grandy Community Hall and in it were held church services, Sunday school, entertainments and dances. Later an addition was built, then an annex to serve as a kitchen.

At the final meeting October 15 were two who joined at the second meeting 57 years ago and have been members through the years. They were Laufey Hall and Mrs. Thorunn Finnson. Present also were two others who joined in the early years, Mrs. Kristin Johnson and Mrs. Sigrid Johnson.

Main business of the meeting was to authorize sale of the hall and close the books. So ended the story of the ladies' aid Liljan and another chapter in the history of the Grandy district.

★

## HONORARY LIFE MEMBER OF CANADIAN FOLK SOCIETY

L. Halfdan Thorlaksson of Vancouver, B. C., with four others was made an honorary life member of the Canadian Folk Society at the annual concert last fall of the Vancouver branch in the Queen Elizabeth Theatre in recognition of his services to the organization over the years.

The Canadian Folk Society was originally formed to preserve the arts and skills of the various ethnic groups in Canada, and present at the Vancouver gathering were representatives of the Japanese, Israeli, Ukrainian, Austrian and other associations. Mr. Thorlaksson was one of the founders of the Vancouver branch some 20 years ago and its first president, a post he held for many years.

He was born at Selkirk, Man., the son of the late Rev. Steingrimur and Mrs. Thorlaksson. His wife is the former Lillian Graham and they have one son, Gordon. Mr. Thorlaksson is in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company at Vancouver.

In 1957 he was presented with the Knight's Cross of the Order of the Falcon by President Ásgeir Ásgeirsson of Iceland.

In 1952 he was made a life member of the Vancouver Downtown Business Association as well as of the Scandinavian Businessmen's Club there.

★

In January Lorne Kristjansson was elected president for 1965 at the annual meeting of the South Winnipeg Kiwanis Club. Son of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Kristjansson, Winnipeg, he is property administrator for the Great West Life Assurance Company at its Winnipeg head office.

### SENIOR CITIZENS OUTING

The Icelandic Canadian Club has come through a period of inertia and has been revitalized. So many have recently become members of the Club and have shown a great interest in the affairs of the Icelandic community.

The executive arranged an evening for senior citizens, on December 21st, to go on a tour of the city of Winnipeg to see the Christmas lighting in the downtown and residential sections of

the city. Winnipeg has been recognized as one of the best lit cities in Canada and it was a joy to the 90 men and women, who accepted the invitation of the Club, to view the many colorful arrangements of Christmas lights.

After the tour everyone was invited to partake of refreshments provided by the Club, at the First Lutheran Church. There was the traditional "hangikjöt" and brown bread, vinar-terta, pancakes and hot chocolate "sukkulaði". A delightful evening.

★

### GOLDEN WEDDING

Mr. and Mrs. Thorsteinn Gislason of Oak Point, Man. were honored by the Oak Point Community Club at a gathering in September on the occasion

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of their golden wedding anniversary. Eric Stefanson, M.P. for Selkirk constituency, was master of ceremonies, and the toast to the honored couple was by Frank Taylor of neighboring Clarkleigh.

Speakers also were Elman Guttormson, MLA for St. George, Paul Einarson who was best man at the wedding 50 years ago, and Jon Arnason, also of Winnipeg. Read were messages from friends as well as from provincial and federal government leaders.

Mr. and Mrs. Gislason following their marriage lived for two years at Gimli, Man., then for 31 years at Steep Rock, Man., prior to moving to Oak Point 17 years ago.

Of their six children, four are living, and all were present at the celebration. They are Dora, Mrs. Franklin E. Sigurdson, Gisli and Gardar, all of Oak Point, and Kristinn who is a corporal in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and stationed at Saskatoon, Sask. There are seven grandchildren.

★

### DIRECTOR OF EXTENSION SERVICES

Dr. Helgi Austman has been appointed Director of the Extension Service in the Department of Agriculture in Manitoba. He has been in the Department of Agriculture for 16 years and for the last 10 years was Assistant Director of Extension Service.

Dr. Austman graduated from the University of Manitoba with the degree of Bachelor of Science in Agriculture. He then went on to the University of Wisconsin where he received his Master's degree in Agriculture and then his degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dr. Austman is the son of Anna and the late Halldor Austman who resided in the Sylvan district north of Arborg.

He married Lillian Arnason, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mundi Arnason of Teulon. They have three children, a girl Signe, age 18, a boy Larry, age 16, and another boy Brian age 11.

★

### I.O.D.E. SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships were awarded this winter to two Winnipeg students by the Jon Sigurdson Chapter, Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire, and presented at two recent meetings of the chapter by educational secretary Mrs. Paul Goodman.

Given the Johanna Gudrun Skapta-son memorial scholarship of \$100 for English poetry and drama was Kenneth Gavin Hamilton, son of Mr. and Mrs. K. M. Hamilton, McMillan Ave. He had attained a mark of 93.

The Jon Sigurdson Chapter, I.O.D.E. music scholarship of \$75, available at the University of Manitoba school of music, went to Miss Roslyn Sylvia Storry, daughter of Sylvia (nee Guttormson) and James Storry, Clifton St. She attained a mark of 80.

★

### ICELANDIC FUND STARTED TO HONOUR THOR THORS

The American-Scandinavian Foundation announced in Scan of February 1965, that it had started an Icelandic Fund in honour of Hon. Thor Thors, the late Icelandic Ambassador to the United States and Canada. The Fund the announcement states, is to be used for exchange between Iceland and the United States. "It has long been planned", the announcement goes on to say, "to have such a fund for Icelandic-American exchange at the Foundation, to match similar special

funds already in existence for Denmark, Norway and Sweden."

Contributions to this special Thor Thors Icelandic Fund should be mailed to the — American-Scandinavian Foundation, at 127 East 73rd Street, New York 21, N. Y.

★

#### DELIVERS VALEDICTORY ADDRESS

Miss Jonasina (Joan) Johnson has graduated as a nurse from Misericordia Hospital, Winnipeg, Man. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Johnson, Arborg, Man.

Joan was chosen to give the valedictory address at the graduating exercises held in May of this year.

The Icelandic Canadian wishes her every success in her chosen profession. We are pleased to print excerpts from the valedictory address. Due to lack of space we are unable to print it in its entirety. —M.H.

#### PARTS OF THE ADDRESS

"On a hot, sultry autumn day, August 28, 1961, 84 young women, most of us just out of high school, entered the Misericordia Hospital School of Nursing.

As we fondly look back on that day now, little we knew what was to come, and how unready most of us were for the future. Our lives, till that day, had

been so protected, so secure, so taken care of by our parents, that humanity was something most of us knew little of.

How exciting it was to receive our first textbooks, filled with knowledge of anatomy, pharmacology and nursing arts, among a few of the many courses! How proud when we first donned our uniforms! How petrified when we gave our first bed-bath!

At the moment we don't remember the drudgery or the heartaches or the disillusionments. We've grown used to them—we can face them now or try to, like mature women. But the comradeship and the mad laughter, the pranks will always remain in our hearts.

When I sought the meaning of the word "valedictory" it was explained as the farewell address to the graduating class. However, we are not going to say "Good-Bye" for we hope that regardless of how far we are apart—we will always be together in each other's thoughts.

The thrill of the day should be divided up among many days because it will never come again. Most of us are looking back and enjoying the contemplation of the great distance we have come, not quite realizing that it is really a very small distance most of us still have to go. As we step out of the hospital to take our place in this profession which we have chosen, we



hope we shall faithfully serve as those who have gone before have served.

Thanks to the directors, doctors, head nurses and patients who helped us on our way.

To our parents—how can we express our thanks? Little we realized when we started our training, how much we would depend on them, both for our finances and for their love and encouragement. There is nothing stronger to build on than true love and we thank you Moms and Dads for giving us this love.

Thanks be to God, who has given to each of us to know a small part of the knowledge to be gained in the universe. Each makes his contribution to the whole of knowledge.

#### The Nurse's Prayer —

Lord, make me an instrument of  
your peace;  
where there is hatred, let me sow love.  
where there is injury, pardon,  
where there is doubt, faith,  
where there is despair, hope,  
where there is darkness, light  
and where there is sickness, health.  
O, Divine Master, grant that  
I may not so much seek to be consoled  
as to console  
To be understood, as to understand,  
To be loved, as to love,  
For it is in giving, that we receive,  
It is in pardoning, that we are  
pardoned,  
And it is in dying that we are  
Born to Eternal Life.

★

**W. H. VOPNI, President of Manitoba Travel and Convention Association**

Mr. W. H. Vopni, publisher of The Daily Graphic of Portage la Prairie, has been appointed President of the Manitoba Travel and Convention Association for the year 1965.

In his New Year's Message, which appeared in the Golden Boy News, the official publication of the Association, Mr. Vopni said in part:

"We start this year with the highest membership enrolment in the history of our association—2661.

"Our 125-man Board of Directors, as listed in the last issue of the "Golden Boy News" comprises a broad, cross-section of leaders in thought and action, in many phases of the business and professional life of the province.

"We now enjoy the interest, by regular membership, of the 50 Weekly Newspaper editors and publishers in the province.

"The 10 Radio and 5 T.V. stations—serving Manitoba—all hold memberships—and have been generous and active in airing the story of our Golden Boys' Movement and the attractions we have to offer visitors.

"Our Daily Newspapers continue to interpret the work of our association, to their vast audiences of readers, in many ingenious ways.

"Obviously the Golden Boys' Movement has become a strong and influential factor in the life of Manitoba, equipped and capable of making a significant contribution to the exploitation of the lucrative visitor market and to the economic progress of the province."



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