

MS 41

"DUCK LAKE FRUIT RANCH

which I held for the following five years
The ranch consists of of paper water lot acres
mainly by a grant of 1894 with some
exceptions now residents of the ranch
of the pump on the property of the
large the lake and the stream

Written by:
**JW Fowler for
George Elliot.**

... of most of these was to
develop the ranch only the
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MS 91
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My connection with the Winfield district dates from the beginning of 1909 when I took over the management of the "Duck Lake Fruit Ranch" a position which I held for the following five years. This Ranch consisted of fifteen 10 acre lots owned individually by a group of men who with one or two exceptions were residents of Calgary. The leading one of this group was J. W. Humphrey, E. B. Curlette, A. L. Folke, Wayne H. J. Robie and F. G. Brown.

The original intention of most of these was to develop their lots and later become residents of the district. Only Messrs Robie and Brown however retained their interest the others named sold out at the end of five years at which time the syndicate was dissolved.

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Up to about 1920 the Winfield district was known
 as Woods Lake. The name Winfield was chosen
 at a meeting of the United Farmers Local ^{about 1920}. A number
 of names were suggested and after several ballots
 taken the final choice was between Winfield and
 Wooddale, the former being chosen by a very
 small majority.

At the beginning of the period mentioned between the
 Rainbow Ranch and Duck Lake are the old
 Vernon Road (the present road along Woods Lake was
 opened during the summer of 1909) were those of Sherman
 Jones, A. D. Monsees, W. W. Robinson (the old Half
 way house), J. A. MacKichan, Jack Metcalfe, and
 the old buildings on the Knox ranch, where
 Mr. Draper lives now consisting of a log shack
 and barn. The barn was burned during that summer,
 the shack was torn down several years later.

On the Dry Valley road there were the old McLure
 Ranch buildings. On the flat - E. J. McCarthy's, Fred Baker,
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It was in the spring of 1909 that the Okanagan Valley Land Company took over the interests of Maddock Bros. the promoters who had carried out the development up to that time. Mr. Wilkie of Toronto representing the Eastern capitalists, spent some weeks here at that time.

The first local manager of the new company was Fred ^{Starr} of Calgary who later was succeeded by Frank Rayburn. H. E. Maddock remained for a few months in charge of land sales.

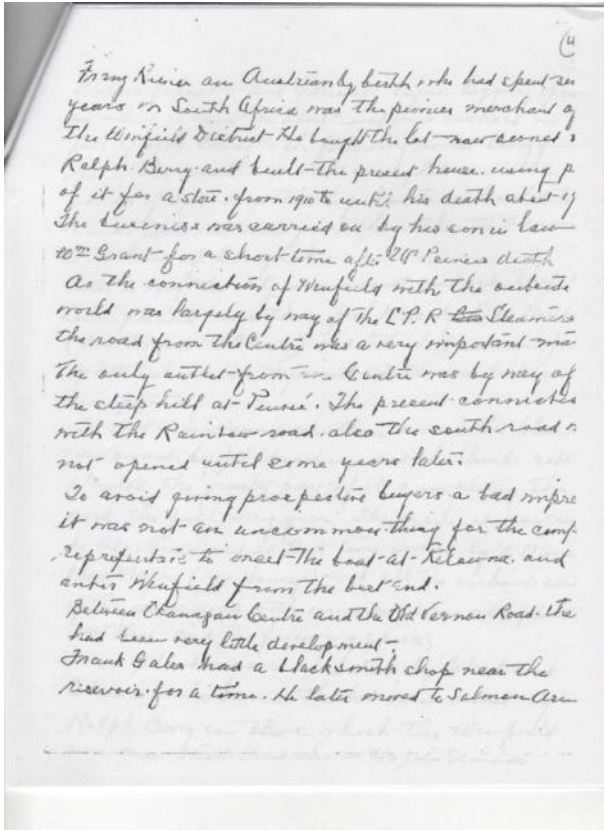
The main line of the irrigation system had been completed by Maddock Bros. but considerable work remained to be done on the laterals. A good deal of this was not finished to be of much practical use that season.

While the old store at Ocoola had been built a year or two previously it was not then occupied and the business of the whole district was carried at Okanagan Centre. Mr. Gordon Strickland at that time carried on a general store business. In the following year Messrs. A. Code and McLeod bought an interest in the business and for a time the firm was Code, Strickland and McLeod. Mr. Strickland went out after a few months and McLeod later. Mr. Code carried on until his death a few years later.

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Franz Reiner an Austrian by birth who had spent several years in South Africa was the pioneer merchant of the Winfield District. He bought the lot now owned by Ralph Berry and built the present house using part of it for a store from 1910 until his death about 1913. The business was carried on by his son in law Wm. Grant for a short time after Mr. Reiner's death.

As the connection of Winfield with the outside world was largely by way of the C. P. R. Steamers the road from the Centre was a very important matter. The only outlet from the Centre was by way of the steep hill at Purves'. The present connection with the Rainbow road, also the south road were not opened until some years later.

To avoid giving prospective buyers a bad impression it was not an uncommon thing for the company representative to meet the boat at Kelowna and enter Winfield from the best end.

Between Okanagan Centre and the Old Vernon Road there had been very little development.

Frank Gales had a blacksmith shop near the reservoir for a time. He later moved to Salmon Arm.

(5)

Messrs Johnston and Carswell began logging operations on what is now the Land Companies orchard in the fall of 1909. Owing to the following winter being quite open the work was not completed until the winter of 1910-11 as the logs had to be hauled to Wood's Lake and were from there taken to their mill at the head of Long Lake.

Prior to 1909, the only commercial orchards that had been planted were those Jack Metcalfe, E. W. Newton (now Frank McDonalds) and I think Sherman Jones, J. MacKichan, Max Major and A. D. Monsees had done some planting.

In 1909, Wm. Lennox who then owned the block now owned by J.H. Aberdeen and the Shanks Estate planted the greater part of it completing the work the following year. The orchard now owned by Mr. Greer and at that time owned by Mr. Monsees, Max Major's (now Harveys) and all the orchards south of the cross road with one exception were planted in that and the following spring.

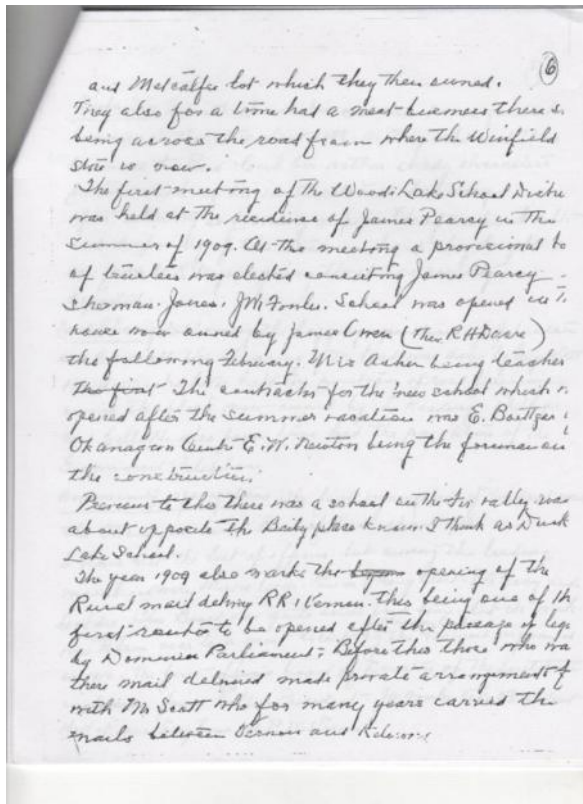
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and Metcalfe lot which they then owned. They also for a time had a meat business their shop being across the road from where the Winfield Store is now.

The first meeting of the Wood's Lake School District was held at the residence of James Pearcy in the summer of 1909. At the meeting a provisional board of trustees was elected consisting James Pearcy, Sherman Jones, J. W. Fowler. School was opened in the house now owned by James Owen (then R. H. Dacre) the following February, Miss Asher being teacher.

The contractor for the new school which was opened after the summer vacation was E. Boettger of Okanagan Centre, E. W. Newton being the foreman on the construction.

Previous to this there was a school on the Fir Valley road about opposite the Baily place known I think as Duck Lake School.

The year 1909 also marks the opening of the Rural mail delivery RR1 Vernon. This being one of the first routes to be opened after the passage of legislation by Dominion Parliament. Before this those who wanted their mail delivered made private arrangements for it with Mr. Scott who for many years carried the mails between Vernon and Kelowna.

Oceola Store Burnett & Hammerton carried on a general business in this store about 1909-10. They sold out their business to Reid & Cook two rather shady characters from south of the international boundary after collecting as many as possible of the book debts and disposing of the stock on hand they bought a car from W.R. Megaw giving the store as security and departed.

Land Clearing Following the logging operations of Johnston and Carswell the clearing of the land was done by George Watt. Mr. Watt who later held the position of road foreman owned the block now owned by L. Reading, Phillips and Gill. He also for a time had the pay station of the Government Telephone.

Community organizations The first organization of this kind was the Okanagan Centre Board of Trade about 1910. I have not the list of officers but among the leading members were Messrs. Code, Reiner, Harry Gleed, T. A. Gray and Goldie. This Board was quite active for a time, but its work was taken over to a great extent by the Okanagan Centre Farmer's organization in 1912. The first board of Directors of the Institute included James Collier, President - J.W. Fowler Vice President - H. H. Evans Secy Treas - M. P. Williams

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