

## THE WILLIAM BENJAMIN AND MARTHA MATILDA HALL FAMILY

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### LOT 1, "THE HERMITAGE"

William B. Hall was born at Fort Eric, Ont. On July 1833, His ancestor, John Hall of Coventry, England had emigrated to Massachusetts in 1630. William lived at Hall's Mills, seven miles west of London, Ont. until as a surveyor, he moved in 1858 to the Red River Settlement, In 1859 he received a land grant of River Lot 1, from the Hudson Bay Co. in Headingly where he became a pioneer farmer. William built a small log cabin on the property and being sufficiently well established on the 20th September 1861, at Cleveland, Minnesota he married Matilda Talbot, who was formerly of London, Ont. Matilda Martha was the daughter of Freeman Talbot, whose father, Richard Talbot of Limerick Country, Ireland, had emigrated to upper Canada in 1818 and settled in the London area. Freeman Talbot worked as a farmer, surveyor and contractor until 1856 when he left London with his wife and his family, and settled in Cleveland, where he became a prominent citizen and later was elected a state senator.

William returned with his bride from Fort Abercrombie by stage coach to the Red River by birch bark canoe down the Red River to Fort Garry and finally by buggy to settled in their log home which was later incorporated as a wing of a new ½ storey home. In this home they raised their family of 4 boys and 5 girls of whom seven lived to maturity. The homestead was to be known to succeeding generations as "The Hermitage."

"The Hermitage" from the day it was built had been noted throughout the west for the generous hospitality. Many a homesick bride from England or eastern Canada were cheered with fruit, flowers and vegetables from Mrs. Hall's famous garden. Always an open house and refuge, they gave encouragement to people, and especially for anyone who needed help. The home was also noted for its beautiful balls when waltzes and polkas were danced by ladies and gentlemen in full evening dress. Mrs. Hall had known all the stress and hardship of the pioneer days. During the rebellion of "69 and 70", her husband was hunted by Riel's men, and had to go into hiding. Her house was run over with a band of Riel's men who carried off every bit of food, leaving her and her young children without any. Being angry because they could not find Mr. Hall, they threatened his wife and terrified the children.

William Hall was the pioneer nurserymen of Manitoba. He was extremely interested in experimenting with fruit, vegetables, trees and shrubs of every kind. His name became known all over Canada and soon he was supplying nursery stock for most of the settled communities throughout the West. Most of his nursery stock was imported from Le Seur, Minnesota, transported by barge on the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. William B, Hall helped organize the first Provincial Agricultural exhibition held Oct. 4th, 1871. In 1878 at the Provincial Show, he displayed his "Totofsky" apples as large as oranges of which he was the first to plant this tree in Manitoba. In 1880 the Dominion government obtained an exhibit of fruit grown at the Hermitage and displayed them in Toronto and Ottawa. In the Provincial Exhibition of 1885, William B. Hall took firsts for apples, native fruits, pickles, and jellies. William B. Hall was appointed to Manitoba's new board of Agriculture in 1885.

Letters could be address simply to "The Hermitage" and they would reach their destination. Canoes gave way to the large Assiniboine river Steamers, carrying their loads of settles into the west and cargoes of produce back to Winnipeg. The Hermitage was a port of call for fuel and for over night stops.

William B. Hall was one of the first group of men who in 1864 journeyed to Pembina to receive the degrees of Craft Freemasonry and was also a signatory of the petition to form a lodge at Fort Garry. At the inaugural meeting of the Northern Light Lodge, Nov. 8, 1864, he was chosen senior deacon. He was Justice of the Peace for many years. During the Riel Rebellion he took up arms in defense of the Government, suffering loss and deprivations from the rebels during the memorable winter of "69" and "70".

In 1880, William B. Hall was appointed a member of the new Board of Education. He belonged to the Church of England and was a member of the synod since its formation and belonged to the executive council of the Dioceses. Until his death, was Rector's Warden of Headingly Holy Trinity Anglican Church. William and Matilda had a family of 4 boys and 5 girls of whom 7 lived to maturity. William died 22nd June 1902 and Matilda 18th June 1913 and are buried at the Headingly Holy Trinity cemetery.

## WILLIAM SYRENUS AND MARY HALL

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### LOT 1, "THE HERMITAGE"

William S. Hall was the oldest son of William and Matilda Hall. After their death, he carried on the tradition of his parents. He continued to farm and was active in the community. In 1912, he served on the first Charleswood Council and later was the Reeve of Municipality. He was a prominent member of the Agricultural Society and a founding member of the Headingly Agricultural Society. As with his father, he entered many fairs with his produce.

After the school burnt down in 1910, he was instrumental in the quest that a new school should also be built on the south side of the river as it would be a shorter distance for the children of the area. He asked that it be named "PHOENIX". He was chairman of the school board from 1910 until his death. He was a member of the Headingly Holy Trinity Anglican Church where he held the position of Church Warden.

On 12th Feb, 1917, William S. Hall married Mary Jones. Mary was born in Wales and in 1912 joined her family in Headingly. They had two children, Wilma and William Benjamin. On Jan. 27th, 1920, William and Mary heard an explosion in the dining room. William went to check but Mary could not follow as she was met with a wall of smoke. Mary and her little daughter Wilma escaped, but Mary was unable to reach her husband and son and two men who were sleeping upstairs. The fire was caused by a mixture of coal and snow which formed a gas and exploded in the heater. William, his son Benjamin perished in the fire along with John Marigold, a friend from Toronto and William Rogers, a Headingly boy who worked for the Halls. All were buried at the Headingly Holy Trinity Cemetery.

Following the fire Mary moved a small white house from the north side of the river. Mary and her daughter Wilma lived there for a few years. This house still stands today at "The Hermitage" 7199 Roblin Blvd. Mary passed away 12th July, 1958 and is buried in the Headingly Holy Trinity Cemetery.

## KUYPERS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

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The archaeological site known as the Kuypers Site is situated on the south bank of the of the Assiniboine River at Headingly. The University of Manitoba and University of Winnipeg conducted a joint archaeological field school in May and June of 2002 at the Kuypers Site. Two previous excavations and several surface collections have been conducted at the site in the past. In 1972, the University of Winnipeg conducted an archaeological field school at the site and in 1980 Brandon University and the University of Winnipeg conducted a joint field school at this site.

The Kuypers Site is believed to be an area that was sporadically but repeatedly occupied by bison hunters for thousands of years prior to the arrival of European explorers and settlers. The shores of the Assiniboine River would have provided shelter, bison and plant food for people in the past and their activities here are well represented by the recovered stone tools and bison bones that have been butchered and processed, and small pieces of Aboriginal pottery. Based on the types of artifacts found at the site and the rather thin distribution of these artifacts over such a large area (1km<sup>2</sup>), in addition to the fact that the artifacts are typical of a number of time periods, it is evident that this site was used on multiple occasions, although probably not intensively.

A series of scroll bars visible on the ground, on aerial photographs and typographically, indicate that the site was formed by the lateral migration of a meander of the Assiniboine River during episodic flooding (Figure 1). These scroll bars present interesting features in relation to the pattern of artifact distribution across the site. The oldest signs of the site occupation is represented by Oxbow projectile points, scrapers and other types of stone cutting tools, and these are all located on the oldest point bar. (the scroll bar which is the furthest from the river). A more recent Aboriginal occupation (ca. 1000 AD) was weakly represented by three pieces of Aboriginal pottery, which were located on the most recent point bar. The archaeological investigation of the Kuypers Site has intrigued geologists who are investigating the changing course of the Assiniboine River. The discovery of occupations buried within specific scroll bars and the excavation of datable bone and wood material from the site can contribute to a better understanding of the development of the river. The Manitoba Geological Survey of the Manitoba Department of Industry, Trade and Mines sent a portion of a bison bone that was recovered during the archaeological excavations for the radio-carbon dating. The bone provided a date of 3610 ± 120 years Before Present (BP). An additional radiocarbon date of 3950 ± 120 years Before Present was obtained for the site from bone specimen that was collected during the 1980 excavations (Morlan et al 2000:164). In addition, the projectile point styles suggested that the site was Middle Precontact (ca1000 BP – 4000 BP).

One of the more interesting features was a lens of burnt bone located in two different adjacent excavation units in one of the forested areas of the site. The 15 cm-thick lens of calcined bone (calcined- heated to such high temperatures that the bone turns white) was composed of thousands of small pieces of charred bone fragments that covered an area of approximately 0.5m<sup>2</sup>. This feature is believed to be the remains of bone processing where the de-fleshed bone was smashed and boiled for the removal of the marrow and fat. The

marrow and the fat from the bone are high in nutritional content and were a particularly important part of the diet of bison hunters. This type of bone processing feature is typical of bison hunters and is referred to as a "bone-boiling pit." These features have been found at other archeological sites where bison hunting was known to have occurred.

Close to two thousand artifacts were recovered by the 2003-field school and probably double that number were previously found at previous excavations.