

Oakville Blazes the Trail

By C. H. BURNELL

President of Oakville Co-operative Society, Limited

Early in the winter of 1911, in answer to an advertisement appearing in The Guide, two carloads of flour and feed were ordered by the Oakville Grain Growers' Association.

The shipment consisted of 297 sacks of flour at \$2.60 per sack, 61 sacks of shorts at 95 cents and 433 sacks of bran at 85 cents. The local price for flour of the same quality was then \$3.10, for shorts \$1.10, and for bran \$1.05, and on the carload we made a total saving of \$295.05 on an outlay of \$1,198.20. In 1912 we brought in three carloads, at a cost of \$1,318.40.

The mill prepaid the freight and the prices given are f.o.b. Oakville. The secretary collected the money as the members took their flour off the cars, the proceeds were deposited in the local bank and the milling company sent a draft giving us about five days to unload. This flour was sold only to members of the Grain Growers' Association of Oakville and Salem, and was the means of obtaining many new members, but eventually every farmer in the district benefited, because the local price of flour and feed was lowered to meet that of the Association, therefore, it is really difficult to quote figures to show the actual saving on any but the first shipment. This was the beginning of co-operative trading at Oakville, and served as an object lesson, building up our membership to 108, which was at that time the largest Association in the province. But while this form of buying effected a good saving, it lacked permanency, had many disadvantages and really appealed more to the selfishness of the farmers, rather than helping to bind them together. We found that altho we had been the means of reducing the price of flour and feed, we had members who, when offered mill stuff by representatives of the larger mills at a little less than we were able to sell it for, would buy outside the Association, thus making it impossible for us to order by the carload.

Co-operative Society Organized

Some of our officers were determined to go a step further and an effort was made to organize a Co-operative society. It took over a year of persistent effort and the holding of many meetings before this was accomplished. At a meeting held on March 22, 1913, we apportioned territory to different members of a committee appointed to canvass the district for shareholders, with the result that 167 shares were subscribed by 57 shareholders, with \$800 paid up.

We then called a meeting of the shareholders and drafted a set of rules following those of the Neepawa Society closely. Every shareholder must be a member of the Grain Growers' Association, and we had several farmers who would not join the Association before, who gladly paid their \$1 membership fee for the opportunity of paying from \$10 to \$100 into the Co-operative Society. We registered our rules, at a cost of \$2, in the nearest Land-Titles office, according to the Manitoba Co-operative Act. The formal application which we filed at the Local Land Titles Office was as follows:

APPLICATION TO FORM A CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

Chap. 36, Revised Statutes of Manitoba, 1902

We do hereby certify that we desire to form a Company, Association or Society pursuant to the provisions of "An Act Respecting Co-operative Associations" or "The Co-operative Associations Act."

Name—The corporate name of the Association is to be "The Oakville Co-operative Society, Limited."

Objects—The objects for which the society is to be formed are, to purchase, buy, sell and deal in merchandise of all kinds, farm products and machinery,

for the mutual benefit of shareholders and customers.

Capital and Shares—The number of shares is to be unlimited and the capital is to consist of shares of Ten Dollars each. No member shall hold more than ten shares in the capital of this society; shares payable not less than 20 per cent. cash, balance to be paid from first dividends of profits, but no first payment of less than ten dollars cash will be accepted.

Number of Trustees—The number of the Trustees who shall manage the concerns of the society shall be eight (8) and the names of such Trustees for the first year are:

Place of Operation—Oakville, Man.
Post Office Address—Kawende, Man.
Dated the
day of
Witness

The following rules were adopted for the working of the Oakville Co-operative Society, and registered according to law:

1—One man, one vote, regardless of number of shares held, no proxy voting allowed.
2—Interest on capital invested to be not more than eight per cent. and no dividends shall be payable—except out

meetings of the society, either to increase the business capital of the society, or for any educational or provident purpose authorized by the society, and the remainder shall be divided among those who have purchased goods from the society during the preceding half year, to non-shareholders, one-half the proportion of the shareholders, in proportion to the amount of purchases during the half year. All dividend tickets must be presented for settlement with vouchers of standing, within sixty days after dividend is declared by the half-yearly meeting, or otherwise void. Tickets only given on goods bought at retail prices for the use of stockholders' or patrons' families.

9—The officers of this Society shall consist of a president, vice-president, six (6) trustees and two (2) auditors. The president and vice-president shall be trustees ex-officio.

10—The president, vice-president, three trustees and one auditor shall be elected at the annual meeting of the society and three trustees and one auditor at the semi-annual meeting, who shall hold their respective offices for the term of one year and until their successors are elected and qualified—except at the first election, when all the officers shall be elected, three of the trustees and one auditor to serve six months, or until the first half yearly

but no business shall be transacted at such special meetings except that specified in the notice. The trustees shall convene the meetings of the Society, as is herein mentioned and shall cause the account of all business carried on in behalf of the Society, to be regularly entered in proper books, and shall cause a statement of the accounts of the Society, with all necessary vouchers up to the last day of the previous half year, or ten days before the half yearly meetings, to be made out and laid before the auditors not less than ten days before the half-yearly meeting of the society. All committees shall be subject to the trustees.

15—All moneys received on account of shares shall be paid to the secretary-treasurer and placed in a chartered bank—unless otherwise ordered by the Society—and shall be withdrawn only on the written order of the president, countersigned by the secretary-treasurer. The business of the society shall be conducted for cash. All patrons trading with this Society shall be furnished with receipts representing the amount of their purchases.

16—The president shall preside at all meetings of the Society and of the trustees, and in his absence the vice-president shall preside. The chairman shall sign officially all contracts, and also the records of proceedings of all meetings of the Society and of the trustees.

17—The secretary-treasurer shall attend all meetings of the Society and of the trustees, summon all special meetings of the trustees, keep a correct record of the proceedings thereof, shall sign the same officially, shall countersign all contracts, and shall on all occasions, in the execution of the duties of his office, act under the directions and control of the trustees. An assistant secretary may at any time be appointed by the trustees.

18—Every person appointed to any office requiring the receipt, management or expenditure of money, shall, before entering upon the duties of his office, give such security as may be deemed sufficient by the trustees.

19—At any half yearly meeting of the Society, the majority of the members present may assign to any officer or officers of the Society such remuneration or salary as may be deemed proper.

20—The auditors shall audit all accounts of the Society, and see that they are correctly kept, and shall present at each half yearly meeting a balance sheet of all receipts and disbursements, and also of the assets and liabilities of the Society, signed by them, together with a statement of the affairs of the Society since the last half yearly meeting and of its conditions then. They shall have authority to call for and examine all records, vouchers, papers and documents belonging to the Society.

21—Regular meetings shall be held on the first Saturday in the months of January, April, July and October, and at such other times as the Society may determine. The first regular meetings in January and July shall be called half-yearly meetings.

22—All complaints shall be made to the trustees in writing, signed by some member of the Society, and the trustees shall make such investigation and decision thereon as they shall deem proper, subject to an appeal to the next regular meeting of the Society, whose decision shall be final; and all complaints and decisions shall be entered in a book to be kept for that purpose.

23—That this Society shall have an official seal.

24—Order of business:—
(1) Calling the meeting to order.
(2) Reading and approving records of previous meeting.
(3) Reports of officers.
(4) Reports of committees.
(5) Unfinished business.



A scene at Spruce Bank Farm, home of R. L. Lang, Oak Lake, Man.

of profits arising from the business of the Association.

3—A division of all profits, after paying for depreciation, reserve and educational fund in proportion to patronage.

4—Any member may withdraw from the Society by giving six months' notice; and any member shall be excluded who ceases to be a member of the Grain Growers' Association.

5—Any member may transfer his share or shares to any other member of the Grain Growers' Association with the consent of the members of this Society, by giving six months' notice of same.

6—Upon the withdrawal or exclusion of any member he shall receive payment of the capital advanced by him, with all arrears of interest and profits, if any, within six months after such withdrawal or exclusion.

7—Upon the decease of any member, the Trustees may repay to the legal representatives of such deceased member, all the capital owned by such member at the time of his decease, together with all arrears of interest and dividends of profits, within six months after decease.

8—The net profits of all business carried on by said society after paying the expenses of management, making the proper reduction in value of fixed stock and paying the interest on the capital thereof, as aforesaid, shall from time to time be applied, by vote of the society at the half-yearly

meeting only. No member shall be eligible for office as trustee (except at the first election) who has not been a member for six months; and no member shall be eligible for the office of president (except at the first election) who has not been a trustee or first president of the society.

11—All elections shall be by ballot, and a majority vote of all the votes cast shall be necessary to elect.

12—All vacancies shall be filled temporarily by the trustees until the next regular meeting, when such vacancies shall be filled by the society.

13—The trustees shall have the general management and supervision of the business of the society, shall appoint the salesman and other employees and shall assign to them such duties and compensation as the trustees may think fit.

14—The trustees shall meet at such times and places as the society may designate. A majority of the trustees shall constitute a quorum. The trustees shall in all things act for, and in the name of the Society and all acts and orders of the trustees under the powers delegated to them, shall have like force and effect as if they were the acts and orders of a majority of the members of the Society at a regular meeting thereof. All questions at such trustees meetings shall be decided by a majority of votes. Any two of the trustees may call a special meeting thereof by giving six days' notice in writing to the secretary,