

ALBERT and MARGARET BEIRNES

I, Cliff Davidson, submit this in memory of my grandparents, Albert and Maggie Beirnes, early pioneers of the Asquith district.

Albert was born Aug. 5, 1872 in Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A., the eldest son of Irish parents Sam and Mary Beirnes. Maggie was born in 1866 in the town of Palmerston, Ont., one of five girls born to Mr. and Mrs. E. Case. The Case and Beirnes families later moved to the Muskoka country of Ontario. It was there that Albert and Maggie met and were married at Ace Lake, Ont. on Aug. 10, 1893. Maggie's dad and mother moved west in 1893 and settled in the Warman district.

In 1894 Albert and Maggie came to Saskatchewan and I presume it was because of the location of their relatives that they came to the Saskatoon and Warman area. They

did not take a homestead at this time, but spent the next two years working in the area then decided to return to Ontario. Their first child Ethel, was born in 1895.

They lived for the next seven years, farming in the summer and logging in the winter. Three more children were born making a total of four, two boys and two girls.

In 1903 they returned to Saskatchewan and filed on a homestead, SE 22-36-10-W3 four miles west and two miles south of Asquith. Later Ed Beirnes, a younger brother of Albert's, homesteaded the southwest quarter of that same section. Albert and his cousin John built similar houses on their adjoining farms. These houses stood on a hill about 200 yards apart, Johnnie's to the north, Albert's to the south. The wagon trail used by settlers going further west passed between these two houses. These houses were 30 miles from Saskatoon, about a one day drive with team and wagon. Because of their location and the hospitality of the Beirnes family, who were never known to turn anyone away, their houses became great stopping places and landmarks to the settlers moving further west. They were always referred to as the two houses on the hill. Today my grandparents' house is gone, but John Beirnes' house still stands five miles west of Asquith and about a quarter of a mile south of Highway No. 14.

As the years rolled by their farm grew and prospered. They purchased more land. They had a large herd of cattle and horses, a threshing machine, a car and were planning to build a new home, but Grandpa never lived to see it. He died in 1926, at the age of 55.

Their son George, who was 24 years old, took over the farm. He built the new home on the SW 23-36-10-W3. In December, 1928, George and his mother moved into the new house. I was quite young at the time, but I remember how proud and happy my grandmother was of that new house. My grandmother did not live long to enjoy the luxury of that home, for which she had waited so long and worked so hard. She passed away in 1930 at the age of 64.

There were five children born to the Beirnes.

Ethel was born in 1895. She married Earl Marlatte and they had three children, Muriel, Clarence and Raymond who still live in Saskatoon. Ethel died in 1973.

Celia was born in 1897. She married Francis (Frank) Davidson in 1917.

George was born in 1902. He remained a bachelor and farmed the land until 1976, then retired to Asquith. He enjoys good health, and spends most of his time hunting and fishing.

Ada was born in 1905 and died in 1905.

The land that my grandparents homesteaded and bought still remains within the family and forms part of the farm owned by their great-grandsons, Gordon, Lee and Glen Davidson, sons of Wesley and Pat Davidson.