

Homecoming
Bain, Aitkin Co., Minnesota

June 4 & 5, 2005

BAIN - MEGARRY FAMILY

William and Florence Abbie Parshall Bain

William Bain's grandparents, William and Mary Mackenzie Bain, immigrated to Canada with their six children from Forres, Scotland in 1834. Forres is located near Inverness, Scotland. They settled on a farm in Chatham Township near Montreal (Quebec) Canada. William's father, Robert Bain, married Christianna Hendrie who was also a Scottish immigrant. Robert and Christianna left Canada with their six children around 1866 and moved to Rock County, Wisconsin. Two more children were born in Wisconsin. In 1871-2 the family settled in Webster County, Iowa where their last child was born.

When William was a young man, he went to work on the farm of William Parshall in Iowa. The Parshall ancestors emigrated from England in 1620 and lived in the state of New York until William Parshall's ancestor moved to Pennsylvania and then Ohio. William Parshall was married in Ohio. The family continued west in the mid-1850's and eventually settled in Iowa. The Parshall's had six daughters and William Bain married Florence Abbie Parshall in 1881. Eight of William and Florence Bain's nine children were born in Iowa, the ninth being born on their homestead in Minnesota in 1905. Their first child died in Iowa at age four of cholera.

William Bain was born 19 November 1861 near Montreal (Quebec) Canada. He became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1908. His wife, Florence Abbie Parshall, was born 28 March 1862 in Richmond (Washington) Iowa. She died 31 May 1927 in Bain (Aitkin) Minnesota. William left Bain with his daughter, Mary and her husband, William Megarry, in 1938 and continued to live with them until 1948 when he was moved to an elder care facility near St. Cloud, Minnesota. He died 1 April 1952 and was buried next to his wife in the Waukenabo Cemetery, Waukenabo, Minnesota.

The following is an account of the Bain family's move to northern Minnesota in November 1900. Mary Bain Megarry wrote this and other stories of her life in Bain at the request of her son, Charles Robert (Bob) Megarry. She was in her late 70's when she wrote, by hand, her recollection of her childhood and married life in Bain, Minnesota. Mary died 13 October 1985 in St. Cloud, Minnesota and is buried next to her husband, William L. Megarry who died 2 January 1949. They are buried in the North Star Cemetery in St. Cloud, Minnesota.

For the most part, I have typed her exact words that she hand wrote, but in some cases, I had to rearrange a sentence to clarify a thought.

Barbara Megarry Monnier, granddaughter, 18 March 2001.

Memoirs
Of
Bygone
Days

By Mary Bain Megarry



**Mary Bain Megarry and her father, William Bain
December 1944 St. Cloud, Minnesota**

MINNESOTA GEOGRAPHIC NAMES
Their Origin and Historic Significance
By Warren Upham
Reprint Edition
Minnesota Historical Society 1969

AITKIN COUNTY

This county, established May 23, 1857, and organized June 30, 1871, was named for William Alexander Aitkin, a fur trader with the Ojibway Indians. He was born in Scotland in 1785; came from Edinburgh to America in his boyhood; and about the year 1802 came to the Northwest, being in the service of a trader named John Drew. Aitkin married into an influential Indian family; was soon a trader on his own account; and rapidly advanced until in 1831 he took charge of the Fond du Lac department of the American Fur Company, under John Jacob Astor, with headquarters at Sandy Lake, in this county, adjoining the east side of the Mississippi river. He died September 16, 1851, and is buried on the east bank of the Mississippi, opposite to the mouth of Swan river, in Morrison county, where he had a trading post during his last nine years, after 1842.

The name of Aitkin county was at first erroneously spelled Aiken, with which it is identical in pronunciation, and it was changed to its present spelling in 1872 by an act of the legislature.

TOWNSHIPS AND VILLAGES.

Information of the origins of township names was received from Thomas R. Foley, Jr., real estate and insurance agent, and Carl E. Taylor, court commissioner, both of Aitkin, during a visit there in May, 1916.

AITKIN township bears the same name as the county. Its village, also bearing this name, was founded in 1870, as a station of the Northern Pacific railroad, which in that year was built through the county; and the next year, in the county organization, it was made the county seat.

BAIN township, and its railway station of the same name, are in honor of William Bain, the hotel owner, who is one of the proprietors of the station site.



MOVING TO THE HOMESTEAD

Imagine taking a family with small children out to a homestead absolutely bare of improvements, not even a house to go to. That is what my parents did. The youngest child was three. There were six children ranging in age from 3 to 16. As I look back as I write this tonight, I will always remember that this experience had to be one I could never forget and even so, I am glad for my pioneer days. I believe it gave me great strength and courage to face the events that transpired during those days of "ups and downs" with more "downs than ups". It all helped me to face life as it came to me over the years later on.

There were six of us to feed and clothe and winter staring us in the face. It was November 1900 that mother left Marshall, Minnesota with three girls and a little boy to go to Aitkin, Minnesota by train. Dad and the two older boys plus a cow and two horses were to come along with our household effects in the emigrant car or, in other words, a plain boxcar. We arrived a couple of days ahead of father and the boys, and got lodging at the Willard Hotel and waited until the others arrived.

As soon as the emigrant car arrived, father and the boys started to unload and assemble the wagon in preparation of loading the household goods and food supplies for people and animals. The horses and cow were put in a stable in connection with the hotel where they were fed and watered. We all went down to the railroad track not far from the depot to see what it was all about. As a child, I couldn't imagine my father and brothers, along with the animals, had traveled together in a boxcar. It was about three in the afternoon when they gave word we were ready to start for our destination. If my mother had any misgivings, she kept it to herself but I do not believe she knew at that time the hardship and struggles that were before her.

I remember that a big sack of whole wheat that came from the farm was kept separate from the other feeds; the wheat mother cooked hours on end on the back of the cook stove for breakfast food and as yet I remember how good it was. Mother also had her sour dough starter for her bread tucked in a safe place. Bless her, she was a good manager or we would never have lived to tell the tale. I've always regretted she did not live to see the better times we have enjoyed. She never knew much but hard work all her life. Field corn was brought along for food too. Mother used to make dishpans full of hominy. So much for food.

At last we were loaded. I was put in one corner of the wagon on boxes and Willie on the opposite side. Dad and mother rode on the spring seat on a double box wagon, which seemed high in the air. The girls each had a corner in the back. The boys were to walk and ride occasionally to rest. The cow was tied to the back of the wagon. As we slowly moved down main street heading north, we were ignorant of the wilderness we were going to but in spite of that there was excitement no less, not realizing we were going into a country of wild animals and hard times unknown to most of us. Progress was slow as the road we had to travel on was very primitive. It was known as the Tote Road. The loggers had hewed out trees and brush just wide enough for a wagon to scrape by the trees. There were chuckholes full of mud and more mud. It didn't take many miles of that until fatigue commenced to show up but no one must complain, but the tears ran silently and occasionally we children slept. We had to ford the White Elk Creek as those days no bridges were built over small streams if they could be forded. Along the Tote Road our first

crossing of the White Elk was near where the White Elk joined the Big Willow River close to the Megarry residence at Waldeck, Minnesota.

About every 12 or 15 miles, people who came before us had established places for accommodations where the loggers and lumberjacks could stop over night to rest and have their meals. They also stabled and fed the animals. The first one we came to was the Sutton ranch and my father thought maybe we should stop for the night. Progress had been slow. We were tired and hungry. Upon inquiry, my father was told there was no room at the inn. Evidently these places where one could stop for refreshments or lodging were called ranches and were usually named after the owner of the place. As many as I can remember were the Sutton, Waldeck, Seavy, Allen, Boyd and Polly ranches. A barn man would come out and take care of the horses and cows and rubbed them down for the small sum of probably 50 cents per team. My father, when we later on took over the Allen ranch for three years, mowed hay by hand to feed all these horses. Forty tons one season I remember. You may be sure mother was there helping to shock and stack it along with the help of the boys. Later on I will describe how they did this.

These ranches had big log buildings, usually one story long for accommodations for the V.I.P.'s but the lumber jacks were housed in a building called a bunkhouse. Ladies and children also slept in the house. When dad returned to tell us we had to go on you can guess the disappointment, so onward we went. Previous to our coming to Minnesota, my father had made a trip to Aitkin and filed on our homestead claim. It was 160 acres, four forties long. An unorganized township 50, range 26.

Continuing with our trip north, we arrived at the Chapin home. Father had made arrangements for us to stay there until a house could be built. We arrived there about midnight. They willingly got out of bed and greeted us with open arms. We all were hungry but with mother's help we were fed well, of course. Fried potatoes and deer meat was on the menu. The men tended to the animals and brought in the bedding and we were housed for the night. These homes were not very large. We left most of our things at Chapins and moved up the road to Fred Baker's where we stayed for three weeks. Bakers had two children. The house was full of people. The neighbor men, Chris, Art and Sam Siebert, experienced woodsmen from Sweden, along with Baker and Chapin cut the logs on the site the house was built on and had a home (such as it was) for us to move into in two weeks. Dad went back to Aitkin for nails and tar paper while they did the logs. I'm sure he brought more supplies for all the families.

It was a happy day when we moved in the log cabin you see in the picture (page 9). It seemed spacious after being with so many at Chapins. It snowed that night and it was cold. The logs were frozen and after we had a good fire going in the old box stove, the frost came out of the logs and the place was dripping. By morning there was frost all over and the walls looked like a Christmas tree. It had turned colder in the night. I do not know the dimensions of the house. The kitchen and dining area was nearest the end where the door was. The kitchen stove and box stove sat in the middle of the one and only room (no partitions) back to back. There were three beds, one on each side of the back and one in the middle. Mother and dad in one, we three girls in the other and the three boys in the next one. I was the middle one for the duration of the first house and also in the other until my oldest sister was married. I believe that may be the reason I never grew tall.

The neighbors were very kind to us. We had potatoes and vegetables given to us that came mostly from the Sieberts. The Sieberts lived on West Lake near Waukenabo Lake. There were four men and a sister, Mrs. Ree, who had four children, John, Martha, Art and Isabel who lived together along with the Siebert's grandmother too. The grandmother developed TB and as time went on, Art and Mrs. Ree died also. The Ree children were taken to Arizona to get to a warmer climate. Dr. Wilson, who had a cabin on a point on Waukenabo Lake, used to come up from Iowa to hunt and fish in summer. He cared for them during the summer. It was he who suggested the Ree children, who were pretty well grown, go to Arizona. They lived there for about six years and returned back to Waukenabo healthy. The families are buried in the Waukenabo Cemetery.

Back to our first year in the log house. It was a long cold winter. My father bought a logging sled and cut some logs and hauled them to the Mississippi River 12 miles to a log landing near Watson's place. They were stamped with an iron stamp given to him by the DeLaittre Lumber Company. These logs were scaled by their scaler and in the spring, they were pushed into the Mississippi River and floated down stream with thousands of other logs from up river where they were sawed into lumber by the mills at Brainerd or Little Falls. The scaler sent in the account to the lumber company and a check was sent to us in time. It was a busy time all the coming years.

The forest had to be cleared for a garden and as much of a crop as one could get in the one season. Some of the garden things were planted in between the stumps. No tractors to doze them out. It was difficult with just a team, an ax and a crowbar. There was a school about a mile from us and the older ones went, but many times if dad needed help, the boys were kept out of school. Nettie Butler from Aitkin was their first teacher.

Before I go any further, I will go back to the house. The stovepipe ran up through a hole in the roof. An elbow connected the two stoves. Dampers controlled both stoves. One could shut off the heat if it got too hot. Mother was particular about baking bread. The damper to the cook stove had to be just right. No thermometer. She just opened the oven door and tested the heat with her hand. One gets to know this by experience and I did it that way many years too. Certain kinds of wood were better than others. Of course, all of it was green and didn't burn very well, but the natives put them wise. After struggling with the green wood, we learned that dead tamarack wood was dry and burned well. Mother liked that for her bread, as it was quick. In the summer we found pine knots from the decayed logs that had fallen down. These made a real hot fire and would last longer than tamarack. They were solid and full of pitch. I have covered the area mile for mile in search of them and they were plentiful. I was glad to do it as mother especially liked them for baking and her bread was the best ever. Cutting wood for the house was a big job. Pine knots are a collector's item now. It has been years since I have seen one.

The schoolhouse was a little log house, which burned down about three years later. A new schoolhouse was built a year later. That was about the time we moved to the Allen Ranch. I was privileged to visit school and that was the day the Allen Ranch burned which I will write about later. The logs were smooth, had plenty of windows and a good smooth floor. It was much nicer than our house and located in a nice shady spot with lovely Norway pine surrounding it. The desks were long, seating two easily and three smaller ones could manage. There was only a bench for a class to sit on. The teacher had a rather nice chair, but a homemade table for a desk.

There was a small blackboard and a shelf for the water pail with a common dipper. Nails were pounded into the logs to hang up the coats. The boys in school usually carried the water, which was carried from the Allen Ranch. They carried in the wood for the teacher. Besides our four from home, there was Lottie, Maude and Gertrude Allen in school.

The teacher's salary was about \$30.00. She had to build her own fire and scrub the building. Her board was \$10.00 per month. Her father used to drive up with a smart pair of bays (a driving team--they were not work horses) to take her home about every two weeks. She taught several years and when we heard the bells on the horses we knew he would arrive in great style with his lovely cutter. She always brought us a treat from Aitkin. I also remember she wore glasses with a gold chain that pinched on her nose. That seemed the height of elegance to me. Her father ran a butcher shop in Aitkin and she brought generous rolls of bologna as she realized that we Bains did not have much meat. It was a real treat to us, and you may be sure we accepted it.

There were not many books in the school, McMasters Readers, McMasters arithmetic, history and geography. Later on when Bain came into existence, spelling books, physiology and civil government came into being. That was when I was in the fifth and sixth grades. Our school terms were very short sometimes. We did well if we had five months. Teachers got discouraged, lonesome and quit and none took their place. More people moved in and the school grew in attendance. The year I was thirteen, I was the only one left in the district and couldn't have school. By that time, others had moved out. You can see how much education the others in our family got. They had to get out and work.



The Bain Family

Left to right: Florence Parshall Bain, Etta, the twins, Willmar & Windell, Mary, William Bain and Willie.

BAIN HOMESTEAD PICTURE

First homestead home of the William Bain family. Taken in the spring of 1901. We had moved into this home in the middle of November, therefore no clean up. We had no money to buy a rake, etc., so it was the children who picked the sticks by hand to clean the yard. Then mother swept it with a broom she had fashioned from willow branches. The sticks etc. were burned in the wood stoves, which were in the middle of the house, as you will note by the stovepipe. There were no partitions but mother separated the various beds by hanging blankets, which served as partitions. We lived in this house before a new hewed log house was built, just to the left. There was a basement under the last house where we kept canned fruits and vegetables. Before that we had an outdoor cave, which was dug in the side of the hill and walled up with logs. The roof was covered with several feet of dirt. It was warm in winter and cool in summer. That, along with our well, served as our only refrigeration. A young neighbor had just purchased a picture machine, which moved from left to right, probably the beginning of movie machines. He took this picture.

ADDENDUM TO THE DESCRIPTION OF THE HOMESTEAD PICTURE



Bain Hotel 1911



Florence Abbie Parshall Bain
In front of Bain Hotel 1911

The Bain Hotel was built in the fall of 1910 in Block 1, Lots 10, 11, and 12. The Bain family's second log house (hand-hewn logs) was torn down, log-by-log and rebuilt on the back of the hotel. It served as their living quarters, plus the kitchen was used for cooking meals for the hotel trade. These were mostly lumbermen and workers and some transient trade.

There was a "bunk house" above the kitchen with six beds in one large room. The hotel had six bedrooms upstairs, a dining room, lounge, and a washroom area. This arrangement was similar to the Allen Ranch. There was one bedroom downstairs for William and Abbie Bain. The Bain's lived there from 1910 to 1918 when the hotel burned in the 1918 fire.

The second log house was built on the same land as the first log house and had a foundation. The first log house still stood not far away but was used for storage. Many years later, Mr. & Mrs. Holmquist bought the property. They built their house on the foundation that remained after the second log house was torn down.

MY WINTER IN A LOGGING CAMP

It was the winter of 1901 or 1902 that my dad was offered a chance to work in the woods skidding logs with his team. The logger's name was Skinner. Mother was to do the cooking for the lumberjacks. I am not too sure of the number of men, but believe it was something like 20 or 30 men. The camp was located just north and west of Swatara in the Hay Point area. We left the homestead for the winter. The older children were to stay at Mr. Skinner's ranch and work for their board and room. The two boys and the girls were to go to school and live in a cabin next to the Skinner ranch and store. They were to eat there, wash dishes and chop wood for their board and use of the cabin. The girls washed dishes and waited on table for Mr. Skinner at his boarding house or ranch. This ranch was located on the Big Willow River. It was formerly the Tibbits ranch.

When we arrived at the camp, the cook was preparing the meal for the dinner or evening meal. He was carving a quarter of beef on a very dirty floor with an ax. This shocked my mother and she immediately took charge. She had the "cookee" scrub the floor with very hot water and Lewis Lye. The water was scalding hot and hot water was always in abundance in any logging camp. The water tank was a big wooden barrel with a pipe running from the barrel through the firebox in the cook stove. As the cook stove fire seldom went out, the supply of water was continuous as long as the "cookee" kept it full of water.

There was a helper for mother called a "cookee". His duties consisted of keeping the food box full, also the water barrel, to set the table and to wash the dishes, scrub floors and help to prepare the vegetables. The dishes were tin dishes; also the utensils were tin. The forks at that time were three tines. The cookee washed and scalded the dishes in a wooden sink, which had a drain for the water to run outside. A big wooden plug stopped the drain. When the knives, forks and spoons were washed and scalded, the cookee put them into a big grain sack. To dry them, he shook the sack back and forth and when he thought he had done it enough, he dumped them out on the counter to finish drying.

My mother baked all the bread and lots of it because sandwiches were sent out to the men in the woods each day. They ate beside a huge fire, sitting on logs to eat. The cookee, on a homemade sled, hauled lunch out. A big box held the shot cans full of soup. Sometimes the men would fasten the sandwiches on a sharp stick and toast them over the fire. What was left over was usually fed to the moose birds that always visited logging camps and became very tame and were liked by all. The left over pancakes from breakfast were left on the table and the men took them as they left the kitchen for a midday snack, now called a coffee break.

The camp consisted of the cook shack, bunkhouse, blacksmith shop, and stables for the horses and office quarters for the foreman and the timekeeper or bookkeeper. The camp had a commissary with a goodly supply of snuff tobacco (plug and dry), underwear and socks, etc. The camp was about 40 miles from Aitkin. Tote teams of four horses with teamsters went about every two weeks for supplies, plus hay for horses. The cook shack had two long tables with benches to sit on. There was a large cook stove with kitchen utensils hanging from a rack above the stove.

Everything was crude but very handy. Two double deck bunks were in the corner, the lower bunk for mother and father and the upper ones for my brother and me.

The lumberjacks were very quiet while eating, as it was a standard rule in logging camps that no one was allowed to talk during a meal. Whenever the men came in to eat, we children were put in the upper bunk to be out of the way and we knew we had to stay there and be quiet.

Every Sunday my father took us to the bunkhouse to visit the men. It was a treat for them and us too. We were something special to the men. They were always pleased to see us, and everything was in order for our visit. We generally went back with some little token, money or some hand made toy. I can well remember a jumping jack, which would dance when we pulled a string. They loved to carve as a great many of the men came from Sweden and they are great wood carvers.

I am sure this was a long winter for my mother as she was separated from part of her family and worked very hard. She was up from 4:00 in the morning until late at night. But this was a good living for us while we were up there. There was a large enough check to buy food and clothing for us for the summer.

By the time we arrived back home at the homestead, it was a grand rush to clear more land, cut wood and prepare the ground to plant our garden. But before this was started, my parents made the long trip to Aitkin to bring supplies enough to last us for weeks. A lot of our food and clothing was bought through mail order houses such as M.W. Savage Co., which was located between Minneapolis and what is now Farmington, Minnesota. Incidentally, M.W. Savage owned "Dan Patch", a very famous racehorse at that point in time.

And so ended our winter in the logging camp. Little did I know at that time that I would be closely connected with logging for a great number of years of my life. Memories are wonderful. I am happy I am able to remember so many of the events that took place over that span of years.

MY FIRST CHRISTMAS

It was the Christmas of 1904. We were invited to go to Headquarters Camp for supper and a Christmas party for all the neighbors. Mother taught me a song, which I was to sing. It was "Jolly Old St. Nicholas". I was the only one in the family willing to do anything for the program. Many preparations were made the day before. Because I was in the program, my mother made me a dress out of red plaid outing flannel. My sister Florence had sent me some red plaid ribbons, which went on my braids. Mother wanted to do my hair up in rag curlers but I liked braids and so it was.

We started out about 6:00 in the evening to drive to the camp on Esquagamah Lake. The supper was put on for over 100 people, some who worked for the DeLaittre Lumber Company who gave the party. I know everyone had enough to eat. The Christmas tree filled the room to the roof and it was beautifully decorated and there were presents for everyone. I do not remember what I got, maybe because I was too excited. The candy and nuts were done up in sacks made out of coarse red and white cheesecloth. The DeLaittre Company furnished all of this. I got through the song o.k. and did about as well as the rest of the people who took part in the program. DeLaittre and his wife, Maggie, were our host and hostess. They lived at headquarters camp for the years that the company logged there. They were good friends of ours for many years. They later moved to a camp about halfway from Bain to Swatara. The camp was on Stony Brook, which flowed into White Elk Creek. I went up there to stay with them for a week but I got homesick and they had to bring me home.

Transportation was not in a fancy car by any means. The old farm team was hitched to the logging sled, which Dad had made. He filled the wagon box with new hay and we put quilts over it and covered up with quilts. Mother heated rocks in the oven and wrapped them up in newspapers and they kept us warm. I do not remember what time we left that night but I'm sure it was late at night when we arrived home. We were soon lulled to sleep by the crunch of the sled runners on the frozen snow and I'm sure that sugarplums danced through our heads. I, for one, thought it one of the most remembered Christmases of my early childhood.

Money was scarce and even though we had loads of trees to choose from, we never had a tree but once in our own home. We had no Christmas decorations but we cut pictures out of catalogs and mother made a paste of flour and water and dipped the ends of the branches in it for snow. She had some rickrack she strung on it along with some cranberries and popcorn. A present was a home knit pair of socks and mittens to match. Mine were fire red and whenever I came home from school I could hardly wait to get them rolled down to scratch my legs. Oh how they did itch but they were warm.

These are memories that come to mind these days when I have little to do. I shall try to share a few more as they come to mind. My next may be the 4th of July celebration of 1904 or 1905.

JULY 4, 1904 or 1905

There is one time in a year when we all honor Old Glory and renew our thoughts about the year when the Revolutionary War came to an end, which gave us freedom from monarchies. That is celebrated each year on the 4th of July in many and varied ways, such as people flocking to the lakes on highways that are bumper to bumper with cars. My thoughts tonight take me back to July 3, 1905.

The next day was July 4, our holiday. Dad had promised he would take us all to the big celebration that had been talked about for weeks by both young and old. This time it was to be a celebration long remembered by those who planned for weeks ahead to unite the neighborhood with one festive day of the year. A big pavilion was built on Waukenabo Lake not too far from the spring. It was to be used as a platform for speakers of the day and the program prepared by the former teachers of the community for the children's part of the celebration. Yours truly recited a poem, "Little Baby Blue". Not a bit patriotic but rather sad. Can't say it added to the program much, but it was something to look forward to and gave a tiny backwoods girl a little more confidence in public.

People for miles came early enough for a grand picnic dinner. No one sat at tables. It was a ground affair and neighbors sat together and some shared their meals and kids made exchanges. The community donated treats, which was homemade ice cream (by hand), lemonade by the barrel and candy in 25-pound pails. I'll never forget the candy!! This was my first from a store. It was so good and for the very first time I could have all I wanted. It was set out on a bench along with the lemonade and everybody helped himself. Many grubby hands went into those pails of candy but who thought about that when it was free. To this day, it is one of my favorite candies and it is very hard to find. It was pink, blue and white coconut bonbons. The type we have does not taste nearly so good as it did to me that day.

The program was very good. The usual talks by politicians. One of the main speakers I recall was a man who lived with us off and on for many years. He was a Civil War veteran and of course gave a talk on the famous battles and especially on Sherman's march to the sea. That day kids got history of the Civil War first hand as he was a good speaker. I believe I loved him as much as I did my father and I'm sure my father didn't have as much influence on shaping my life as that old man. He was a gentleman if there ever was one and we kids welcomed him whenever he came to see us. He had a homestead about four miles from us and was a widower. His former home was Dundas, Minnesota. He was a postmaster and after his wife died, he came up into the woods. Mother did his washing and baked his bread for which he paid her generously. He was 15 when he joined the army and was the drummer boy marching through Georgia. He was kind and generous and put us in our proper place whenever we were doing something he did not approve of. He was a great influence on everyone in our neighborhood. His name was Antoine Shabino. Somehow he never was a successful candidate for any public office and it was through him I got my first knowledge of politics. Taft was a Republican candidate for president. He attended all the caucuses etc. He tried to give me a lesson on what it was all about.

I sort of got carried away from my subject, but as I sit here tonight, his face and voice are as vivid in my memory as if he were right here. After the speeches, there were games, such as horseshoe,

softball, races, etc., the usual. Firecrackers were legal in Minnesota and you might know, some joker slipped a big one under the speaker stand as Shabino was delivering his finest speech. There were the usual pranksters in those days too. If my memory serves me right, the young blades may have had a few fistfights over whose girl was whose. I believe my brothers were connected with one. People went swimming and boating and some actually did some fishing. The man who owned the property where we had this picnic was George Keath. He was an uncle of my brother's wife, Eda. That was long before Guy Keath came to Bain. People from far and near came that eventful day to join with people they knew and to make new acquaintances. If I am not judging wrong, I'd say there were 100 people there that day. They all came in wagons and those from Aitkin came in buggies.

Darkness came and dancing started and then fireworks were set off from a boat out in the lake and continued until well into the night. No fancy orchestra for music--a couple of men with a violin. I can't remember but only one. His name was John Rulan. I do not know when we left for home. I believe perhaps Willie and I were put to bed in the wagon box long before this ended. We were exhausted but glad it didn't rain that day to spoil the fun. We were afraid for days it would be raining and we couldn't go. I consider this day as one of the highlights of my childhood. I hope you have enjoyed it as much as I have when going through thoughts of the long ago.



This candy is similar to the coconut bonbons Mary enjoyed at the 4th of July celebration.

THE LOG BUILDING



The Allen Ranch

William Bain	Mary & Gladys Bain	Florence Parshall Bain	Willie Bain in sled	Etta in long coat	Rest are boarders, names unknown
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The original house where this one stood burned to the ground. I believe I was about 7 years old. This place was known as the Allen Ranch. In the early days there was one of these so-called ranches about every 12 miles. They were on the Tote Road leading from Aitkin to the logging camps farther north. The owners of these ranches had barns large enough to hold three or four four-horse teams, which drew wagons in summer and huge sleds in winter.

Getting back to the fire--we who were in school saw it from the window and everything broke loose. School was dismissed for the day. It was a huge one-story building and it didn't take long for it to go.

There was a storeroom built on the back where Mrs. Allen stored her food supplies. It was the last to burn but they tried to save as much as possible. I remember a huge wooden box of crackers being thrown out along with a big wooden box of ginger snaps, which broke open. You've guessed it--we kids gathered all we could take and had a feast eating them along with snow, as it was wintertime. That was my first taste of "store bought" cookies.

After the fire, things were cleared away and this building was built on the same site. Mrs. Allen moved to Aitkin shortly after that and built a hotel, which was known as the Allen Hotel. It was located where the turkey processing building now stands. Eugene and Minnie Ratcliff came and took over the ranch and stayed there about 2 years and we moved from the homestead to the ranch.

The travelers who passed over the Tote Road ate and slept at these ranches. Mother cooked for many lumber jacks as well as transient people. My father fed and took care of the horses and the bunkhouse, which was separated from this building. There were six bedrooms upstairs and two downstairs, a lounge, dining room and a kitchen built on the back.

There was no electricity so there were many lamps to clean. I also had the brass spittoons to clean and beds to make to say nothing of the stacks and stacks of dishes to wash. I learned at a very early age to do all these things and it was hard work every day. We lived there from 1907 to 1911.

The Soo Line was built from Duluth to Thief River Falls that year (1910) and of course the supplies then were shipped by rail and the mail route was discontinued also. The railroad passed through the east end of my father's homestead. A land company surveyed and plotted a town site and named it Bain. The Megarry's had the Star Mail Route, which went from Waldeck, Minnesota to Merna, Minnesota--later Shovel Lake. They always stopped for dinner six days a week--3 days going up and 3 days returning. That was where I got to know your father. I served him food long before we married. The last trip north on the Route was near his 21st birthday.

This building was occupied after we left by Gertrude Allen and her husband, Tom Sweeney. They farmed there for several years. The Bain fire disposed of it in a hurry on October 12, 1918, after they had gone, of course.

That is the story of the log building.

Mary Bain Megarry
Summer 1978

We are pleased to learn that the neighbors and friends of Mrs. Allen will unite in aiding her to build a new house on her ranch at White Elk. Mrs. Allen is a hard working and deserving woman, and her loss, caused by the recent fire, was a particularly severe one.

March 4, 1902
Aitkin Ind. Age (newspaper)

ANIMALS I'VE KNOWN AND LOVED

My recollections of a faithful old horse that came to Minnesota in the emigrant car from Iowa in 1900 is a very fond one. Her name was Fannie. The person who owned her before we got her had abused her with one of those harsh old bits, which had split her mouth so bad that when she drank water, half of what she took in oozed out. It was my job to run down and hold her mouth on each side so it would not run out so bad. The boys and dad were not always patient as it took her so long to get enough, but with my help she seemed to sense what I was doing and she never forgot to reward me by giving me a little nudge with her mouth when she was through.

The horse we had to go with her was a black horse. We called him Colonel. He was as gentle as Fannie and I learned to ride bareback on him. Once in a while he would get a bit rebellious. I used to ride him in from the pasture. I would lead him by the nose to a stump, and then climb on his back. One day as I did that, he headed for the barn at a gallop. I had no control of him except by voice. He paid no attention to me saying "whoa" and ran into the barn and swept me off his back. I didn't get hurt but I took a bridle with me after that.

He was the favorite of my younger brother too and he learned to ride him also. The day Willie was drowned, a man who worked for Dad, Birch Crabtree, took Colonel and rode to his home for the weekend. When Willie went to get the cattle that night, he rode a clumsy old bronco called Mike and we think they attempted to cross White Elk Creek and Old Mike stumbled and Willie fell off and was drowned. I've always said that if he had had old Colonel it would have never happened. Birch Crabtree always blamed himself too. But, as I was so fond of my little brother, I naturally felt that way too. Anyhow, life was never the same for me after Willie died and when Old Colonel gave up and died one night...*[This sentence ended like this, so the thought she had was obviously not completed in writing]*. We used to ride him to school, tie up the bridle and give him a slap, and he would go home by himself.

Aitkin Independent Age
April 14, 1908

WILLIE BAIN WAS DROWNED SUNDAY

APRIL 12 — 1908

Willie Bain, the ten-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Bain who have charge of the Allen ranch, was drowned in a brook there Sunday night about six o'clock.

The boy took a horse and rode off to drive the cattle home and in crossing a brook in which the ice was still intact the horse broke through and it is thought fell onto the boy and pinned him down in the water until he lost consciousness. The horse came home wet and without the rider and search was immediately made for the missing boy but it was an hour before his body was found in the brook.

The father was away from home in Dakota and the mother was almost crazed with grief, but Miss Ida Henry who has been teaching in that district and boarded with the family, lost no time in applying all means she knew of to resuscitate the boy but after working with the aid of the others present for some time gave it up as hopeless.

Miss Henry and an 18-year-old brother of the drowned boy started for Aitkin, arriving at three o'clock in the morning, and arrangements were made for the burial.

Our old dog Nellie was loved by more than just us kids. Dad used her to trail the wounded deer and was able to find them for the hunters that came up from the Cities and stayed at our house. Dad used to get \$10.00 for every deer she trailed each time he took her out, and that was nearly every day during the season. She grew old and couldn't finish one day, as she seemed to have developed arthritis in her legs. She gave up and looked so pitiful, my dad carried her home. That was the last time he ever took her out. She had many batches of pups and we never had any trouble giving them away as they thought her pups might develop the same talent as their mother. She was a German shepherd and many a time I spent in the doghouse with her, playing with her pups. That is where I learned where pups came from. Probably was a mid-wife to Old Nell.

I think maybe you have seen the picture of me with old Peerless. We called him Peerless as he was the same color as Peerless tobacco. He sure was my pal until I was married and moved across the way. He never failed to come to see me every day.

Once I had a little runt pig for a pet. Dad gave her to me because he didn't think she would live. I fed her warm milk with a spoon and raised her until she was ready to be butchered. That was a sad day for me. I called her Dolly, as she was my doll. I dressed her in doll clothes, rocked her to sleep and she would sleep on the bed and was a lovely pet. She followed me all over the place. She is not the one in the homestead picture though. One day we went to the garden and she wasn't allowed to go, of course. It was my job to take her to the barn. I did not put her in the barn and as we had no fences our animals were allowed to roam at will. Mother had baked a batch of bread and had pulled it out of the oven to cool on the oven door. We went to the garden. Well, Dolly got hungry and smelled bread and as our screen doors were just cheesecloth stretched over a frame (mother made the doors), you can well guess what happened. We had baking powder biscuits that night because there was no bread. She was not popular with anyone at our house after that and mother declared war on any more of my pets in the house from then on.



**Mary Bain & Peerless -
1913/1914 in front of the
Bain Hotel**

FIRST ENCOUNTER

Not many people came to our home in the early days of our homestead. The roads improved and travel became easier. The day I have in mind was a chilly day in November. Hunting season was anytime after the weather got cold. No game warden to fear. This day an older man and a chap about 15 years old drove into our yard and asked if they could stable the horses in our barn. My younger brother, Willie, and I were always on hand but out of sight whenever any strangers came around our place. We were shy kids and kept pretty much out of sight, if possible, to observe what went on. We were peering around the corner of the house, taking close notice of the young man who wore rubbers over his shoes! We had never seen anything like that before and it struck our funny bone and, of course, we were full of giggles over seeing something new. We ducked back and forth from the corner of the house trying to see and not be seen. The older man was James Read who had a homestead about a mile from us. They were not living there permanently, therefore the reason for leaving the team in our barn. Little did I know that the young man I was peeking at would one day be my husband. I was 10 at the time and no young man of 15 would have paid any notice of a 10 year old even if he could have seen her.

He didn't have much to say to my father. He was paying more attention to his gun and anxious to be on their way to hunt deer. I can't remember if they got any deer or when they returned. As I grew up we had occasion to see the Megarrys up to Merna, Minnesota. We would go to the mailbox and wait out in the woods out of sight until they were gone. Eventually we did meet at the parties in the neighborhood. After we moved on the Allen place, I saw William nearly every day, except Saturday and Sunday, at lunchtime when he was carrying mail. They ate lunch at our house and I waited on table. At that time he was interested in my older sister and paid no attention to me. Too young.

That spring the mail route was stopped, as the railroad was to carry mail from then on. He came up to Bain and asked my father for a job, which he gave him. He hewed ties until it was too late to haul them into the timber landing. He boarded at our place and again I was working in and out of the kitchen. I was 15 and he was 21. He stayed all summer peeling posts, etc. and became interested in logging. That winter he went to Shovel Lake and built a camp. The cookhouse burned in less than two weeks. He persevered and rebuilt. The season was successful. The next fall he built a store in Bain on a lot next door to my dad's hotel. He built the store in 1911 after the winter the camp burned. He slept in a bedroom in the store but ate at the hotel.

All the time he kept close track of me by letters when he was gone or by just coming out into the kitchen after supper to help with the dishes when he was in Bain. From then on he took me to all the dances and parties. I was teaching the two years before we were married but walked home every Friday night and he would take me back to school on Sunday night with my dad's team. The first year I had eight miles to walk home and in winter it was dark before I reached home. Can you imagine walking eight miles every Friday just to see a guy? The next year I only had four miles to walk. Sometimes he would come and get me if the weather was bad.

My school was out in June 1915 and I decided before I left my mother I would give her a vacation. I paid her way to Iowa to see my sister Jessie for a month. With the help of a good hired girl, I cooked and ran the hotel for that month. We were married August 7, 1915 after she came home.

Bain before the 1918 fire



Original school house. It survived the fire.



Mary Bain Alice Parker in front of school house 1912



Blacksmith shop south of Wm. Street opposite Block 4

Original sch. house Block 3 Lot 17

Chas. Megarry house on 1st Ave. across from Block 4 lot 21



Charles Megarry house under construction

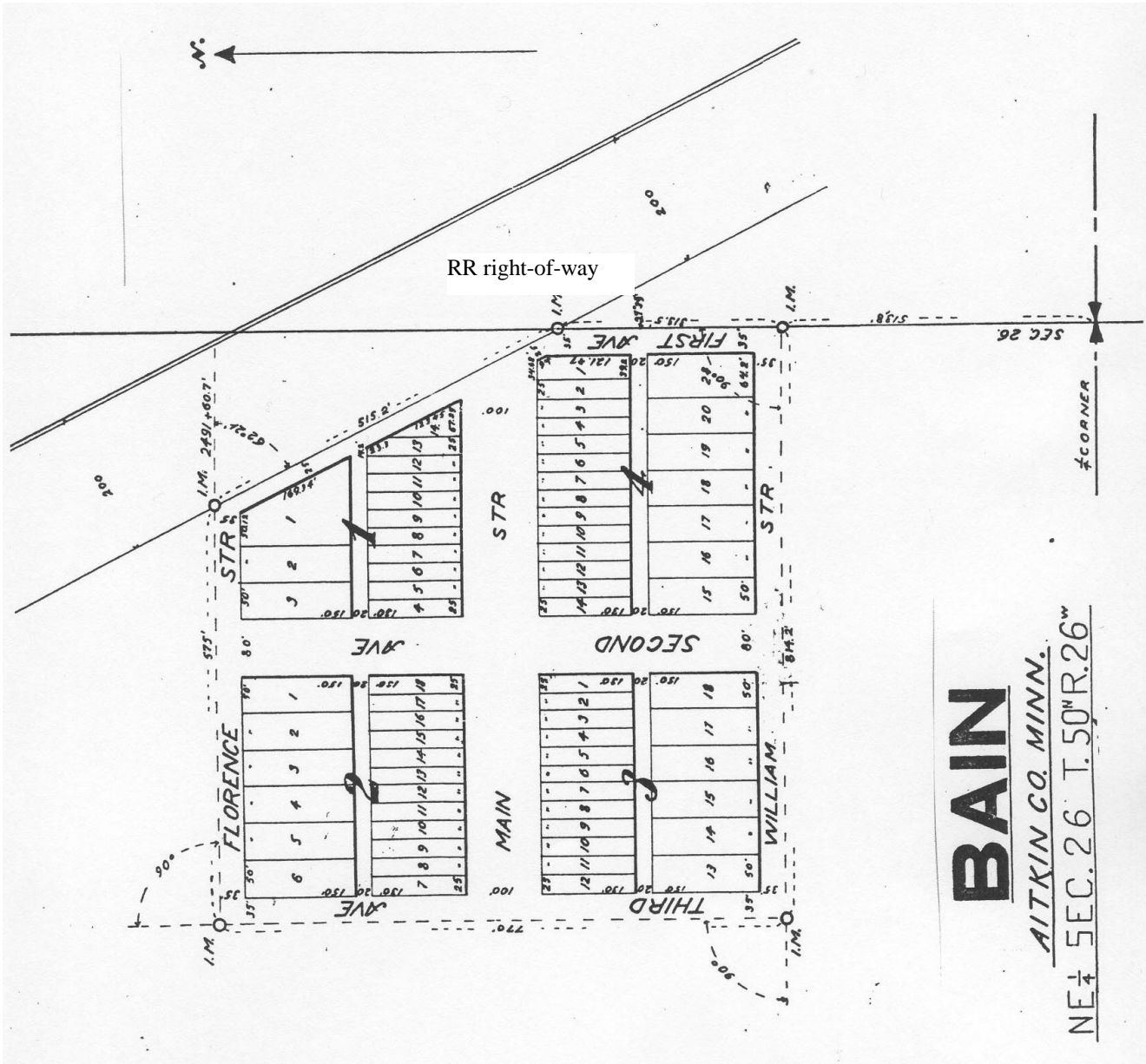


Bain depot



Charles Megarry house

Bain before the 1918 fire



Block 1
 Lot ? Hache house
 Lots 10, 11, 12 Bain Hotel
 Lot 14 Megarry store
 Depot east of Block 1 by RR tracks

Block 2 - ?

Block 3
 Lot 17 Original school house

Block 4
 Lot 1 Waldeck's store
 Across from lots 20, 21 was the Blacksmith shop on south side of William Street

BAIN
 AITKIN CO. MINN.
 NE 1/4 SEC. 26 T. 50^N R. 26^W

MISS MEGARRY PASSES AWAY

Surrounded by Her Parents and Brothers, the Great Change Comes

On Tuesday morning Sept. 17, 1912, a few minutes after the midnight hour, Emma Jennie, only daughter of Frank B. and Anna L. Megarry of Morrison township, aged 19 years and 8 months, passed from this earthly life to that which is immortal. Her trust was in Jesus and her last request to her parents and brothers was to meet her in heaven.

Five years ago last March she was taken with measles from which she never fully recovered, the weakness developing into throat and lung trouble which nothing mortal could hinder from its fatal work. Though suffering from ill health for so many years, only a few minutes before she passed away she said her life had been nothing but happiness. She leaves five brothers, Willie, Frank, Charlie, Harry and David who with her parents watched around her as she entered the Spirit world.

Her life was a blessing and her memory is sweet. "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

The funeral was held from her late home this afternoon, and the remains were tenderly laid in the bosom of Mother Earth in Wankenabo cemetery. The family is highly respected, and in their great bereavement they have the comfort that comes from the genuine and sincere sympathy of



Dora
Chute
Biddie
Watson
Selma
Newstrom
William
Megarry
Leatha
Taylor
Charles
Edlund
Eulalia
Taylor
Frammt
Taylor
Alice
Parker
Emma
Megarry
Frank
Megarry

the friends who have been their neighbors.

CARD OF THANKS

To the many friends who extended their aid and sympathy during the illness and death of our dear daughter, our gratitude and thanks are hereby recorded.

H. B. AND ANNA L. MEGARRY.

TWO LIVES LOST IN BAIN ACCIDENT

A double tragedy in which the lives of Frank Megarry and Edward Higgins were sacrificed at Bain last Saturday shocked the people of this county, in which the news was rapidly spread.

The men were sinking a well to supply water for a highway camp. A curbed well had been dug about 45 feet when a drive point was to be used. Young Megarry was in the bottom of the well and Higgins, in attempting to go down with the point, fell into the pit. He struck on a platform, breaking his neck. The heavy pipe point was dropped and this struck Megarry in the face and caused instant death.

Coroner Spalding was telephoned to and instructed the removal of the bodies and went to Bain as soon as possible. Albert Culver was working near the well and made the discovery of the awful fate of the men.

Frank Megarry was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. F. B. Megarry and was 23 years of age. He was a splendid young man of the best of character and active in business. All who knew him were his friends, and his passing has caused universal regret. He is survived by his parents and three brothers, a sister having passed beyond about a year ago.

Edward Higgins, was from Superior and unmarried. His mother at Kilbourn, Wis., survives him and the remains were sent there for burial, after reaching Superior. Little is known of him here as he had been in the county but a short time.

The funeral of Mr. Megarry was held at the family home at Waldeck Tuesday and Rev. A. L. Richardson and Rev. C. C. Sutton conducted the service. The burial was at Waukenabo. Mrs. Richardson, Mr. and Mrs. Hense, Ralph and Gwendolin Sutton and Miss Kempton attended from here.

Frank Megarry and Edward Higgins Meet Death in a Well Accident at Bain

One of those distressing accidents which shock an entire community occurred at Bain last Saturday morning, and the news quickly reached Aitkin where one of the victims was well known.

Frank J. Megarry and Edward Higgins the young men whose lives were suddenly taken, were sinking a well to be used to supply water for the workmen engaged in constructing the new North and South highway through Aitkin county, to build a part of which they had a contract.

From Coroner Spalding who went to the scene of the accident as soon as he could get away, we learn that the young men had dug a well about 45 feet deep, and from that point were about to drive a well point. Megarry was at the bottom of the well, and Higgins was about to descend with the point, when he stumbled and fell into the pit, and it is supposed that in an attempt to save himself, he let go of the point to use his hands, and the point went hurtling to the bottom where it struck Megarry in the eye, instantly killing him. Higgins evidently struck on his head when the first platform was reached, for when found he was lying there with his neck broken. Albert Culver, who was working near, had called to the men, and receiving no answer went to investigate, and found them both dead.

Frank J. Megarry was born in South Dakota, September 1st, 1891, and came to Aitkin county in 1897, where his life has since been almost entirely spent.

He was a bright, capable boy, full of enterprise and scorned to take a mean advantage. His parents and brothers miss his help and counsel sadly. Struck by the swift hand of death, ere he reached his full bloom of manhood he fell where duty seemed to call a member of the great army of industry who have subdued the wilderness and leave their silent impress on the material things among which they lived.

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Mary Bain Martha ? Nov. 1910



Clark sisters, Dora & Ella Mary Bain



Mary Bain Grace Allen 1913



Mary Bain Charles Megarry Wm. Megarry

William Megarry's
Sunday school Class

Taken in front of the
first Bain school house



Harry Megarry William Megarry Florence Bain in doorway Gladys Bain Mary Bain Megarry Mayme Saunders Rev. C.C. Sutton in front of Bain Hotel
7 August 1915



William & Mary Bain Megarry
August 1915 Duluth, Minnesota



Bain Hotel William & Mary Bain Megarry in front of the first Megarry store 1915



1915 Waldeck's store Megarry store school house Bain Hotel



Standing/kneeling LtoR: Wm. & Mary Bain Megarry, Eda Keath Bain, Windell Bain, Walter Bovee (hat), Florence & Wm. Bain.
Sitting: Kermit Bovee, Dorothy Bain (baby) 1916



Nellie Peddycoart Grace Waldeck Bess Jean & Ronald Megarry Mary & Francis Megarry

ca. 1922-24



L to R: Gladys Bain, David Peddycoart, Eva, Ruth, Lois, & Irene Peddycoart, Nellie Peddycoart, Florence Bain, ? , William Megarry



L to R: F.B. Megarry, Eva Peddycoart Ruttger, Irene Peddycoart Hunt (with black tie/scarf), Child ?, Mary Bain Megarry, lady with hat ?, Lois Peddycoart, Nellie & David Peddycoart, William Megarry, Gordon & Gladys Peddycoart Gray, Charles Megarry



Standing: F.B. Megarry, Anna Stewart Megarry, William Megarry, Charles Megarry, Harry Megarry

Sitting: Emma Megarry, David Megarry Mrs. Pete (Grace) Waldeck

1910 Waldeck, (Aitkin) MN

A letter from Eva Peddycoart Ruttger (b. 1903 - d. 1994) to Francis W. Megarry (b. 1918 - d. 2000) recalling her days in the Bain area.

July 1991

Dear Francis:

Our family traveled by train from Watseka, Illinois to Aitkin in 1909 or 1910. We stayed in Aitkin for just a short time, then went directly to the Waldeck Ranch. We stayed there while my father was working on some remodeling of a house for us to move into. The Waldecks were at the Ranch before they built the store and post office in Bain. The post office was in the front of the big house and that is also where they had a little grocery store--this was in Waldeck, MN. At this big house (also known as the Waldeck Ranch), they took in boarders. They housed mostly loggers, lots of river traffic and several new settlers like my family. Nearby Waukenabo did not have a post office or stores of any kind. It was just an area -- a way to designate where homes and little farms were located. I don't know now what people even did to bring them to that area...people like the Bookers, the Lodges, the Welches. The Welches had built a big home with big barns. They took care of lots of transients who came through the area or worked there for awhile. The Welch family was very close to my family. We had all settled in the Waukenabo Township.

Getting back to the Waldecks...long before the big fire, the Waldecks had decided to build a store and post office in Bain. I suppose that was about 10 miles away from the ranch. Above the store, they had very comfortable living quarters. Grace Waldeck continued to run the Ranch and he managed the Bain property. He had an old-maid relative come to stay with him at Bain and she was the housekeeper. I can see her now...she was very severe looking and very old-fashioned, even for those times. Grace Waldeck had a huge garden at the Ranch and it involved a lot of work. She always had hired help with the gardening, canning, kitchen work and other tasks. Alice Parker and Selma Newstrom worked for her. Selma later married the banker at Palisade, Ole Olson. I also helped her a lot, but not so much as a hired helper, but as a friend. She would pay me a little every now and then and also gave me nice presents. Mrs. Waldeck would always take people in who needed a place to stay, but as the years passed, she did less and less in the "hotel" or "inn" business.

I do remember Shovel Lake but not Jacobson. I had only heard the name. I do not remember anything about William Megarry delivering mail to those places from the Waldeck post office. I did not know Mary Bain when she lived at the Bill Bain homestead, but we became very close friends after our family moved into Bain. We were just young girls at the time. William and Florence Bain had built the hotel in Bain. The teachers also stayed there. My sister, Lois Peddycoart, was a teacher in Bain, as was Bess Megarry's sister, Charlotte Phillips. But I don't recall they stayed at the hotel. Lois came to teach after the fire of 1918 in the nice new brick school that had been built. I think Charlotte taught the upper grades and Lois the lower ones. I believe Lois stayed with William and Mary Megarry part of the time, and also with Bess and Charlie Megarry. Maude Dilley also taught there...but that would have been before she married Harry Megarry.

Yes, the Waldecks were in Bain quite awhile before the 1918 fire. But they never rebuilt after the fire. In Bain, they did run the store across the street from the Megarry store. The Megarry store sold Mackinaws, boots, clothing, groceries, etc. The Waldeck store was mostly a grocery store and post office. The Megarry store, as I recall, was a one story building. The Bain Hotel was the largest building in town, as I recall. The Waldeck store/post office was a two story building, with the kitchen on the first floor but their living quarters on the second floor. I recall what a lovely home that was--a parlor and 3 bedrooms. I don't remember what William & Mary Megarry did after the fire and until they rebuilt the store and a new home. They would come to Bay Lake to visit our family.

Francis, what month of 1918 were you born? It seems to me you were a tiny baby several months old at the time of the fire. At the time your mother was expecting you, it seems to me they lived in the "living quarters" at the back of the Megarry store. The grandparents (*Wm. & Florence Bain*) lived at the hotel, and the grandmother did the cooking. She was a very good cook. But your family never lived in the hotel with them. Before you were born, I spent many hours working on a pretty little bedspread for you. I gave it to your mom to have on hand when you were born.

Vance Sherril worked for the Waldecks at the Bain store. As far as I know, he did not marry until later. He did a number of things for Mr. Waldeck...mostly fill in where needed in the store or post office.

"Uncle Pete Waldeck" was walking through a field of corn when he died of a heart attack sometime after the fire, as I recall. This is kind of fuzzy to me, but Mrs. Waldeck later sold the ranch and later on, married again. William Boyd, her second husband, had been an old childhood sweetheart. He lived in Swatera and had lost his wife earlier. Swatera is up above Shovel Lake on the Soo Railroad. I am quite sure she never went back to Bain after the fire. Pete Waldeck came back down to the ranch and they lived there until his unexpected death. After Mrs. Waldeck married Mr. Boyd, I went to visit them. I think they were of retirement age when they married, or at least middle aged. They had a lovely home in Swatera. After Mr. Boyd's death, Grace moved to Selma Newstrom Olson's home and Selma cared for her until Grace's death. I think that would have been in the late 1930's.

You mentioned remembering someone by the name of Graham in Deerwood. That would be Nellie Graham (I don't remember her maiden name). Before she married Ralph Graham, she worked for you grandmother, Anna Megarry, at their home, which was near the Waldecks. She became a good friend of both Bess & Mary Megarry. After she married Ralph, she moved to Deerwood and we too, then became good friends. Neither Ralph or Nellie were 'good looking' but they had the most beautiful little daughter, Donna. My, she was so pretty. In fact, they had a family of very good-looking children. Ralph was the barber in Deerwood for as long as I can remember. Even when we lived in Deerwood, that family was still there. We left Deerwood in 1935 when we bought the resort on Gull Lake, Sherwood Forest. Nellie died after that.

Do you remember hearing your mother (*Mary Bain Megarry*) talk about teaching in the Wagner School which was a short distance west of Bain? This was before she married. In those days, a person didn't have to go to school longer than the 8th grade before the school board would come around and ask you to teach the younger ones. If you had a little high school training, it was almost like having a master's degree today. You were sought after in a profession that desperately needed help. The Wagner School was a one room schoolhouse with one teacher for all of the students. Usually the teacher also took care of all other jobs at the school, too, such as stoking the fire, bringing in the water, cleaning the building, etc. It seems to me the Wagner family lived close by and had three boys, so maybe they helped your mom with some of those chores. Your mother was two or three years younger than I, and would have been very young when this was all taking place.

Francis, some of these memories are very vivid but others, I have to search my mind to recall. Maybe my recollections are not always as exact as I hope or as they reappear in my mind. But, as near as I can tell, this is the way it was. One thing I do remember with great feeling is how much I loved your grandparents. (*Francis B. & Anna Megarry*) Your grandmother was the sweetest thing that ever was! Your grandfather was such a devout Christian. I can still see him coming to Sunday school every Sunday and always with his Bible in his hand. They lived about a half mile from the Waldeck Ranch and even had a little store out front for a while.

It has been a joy for me to think about these olden days and try to share some of my memories with you. I hope I have been able to answer your questions and cover some of your family's history in the early part of this century.

Lovingly,

Eva Peddycoart Ruttger

A TRAGIC EVENT - 1918

The autumn day began innocently enough. For two months we had had little rain. Everything was tinder dry. Heavy foliage in the forest, lots of leaves were blowing about, even the grass was brown and brittle. It was quiet and very sultry and hot. Little did we know what an evil thing was hovering over us. This was Saturday, October 12, 1918, Columbus Day.

The usual crowd came and went at the store in Bain, Minnesota. For some unknown reason, no one loitered as they usually did on Saturday morning. The only people in the store at 10:00 a.m. were Knute Baty and Mrs. Goff. At this point in time, Walter Bovee came rushing into the store and said, "Bill, come with me. Let us go up the railroad track to take a look at the peat bog fire". This bog had been smoldering away for about two months but in spite of a warning from the fire warden that there might be a danger of fire if we should get a high wind, no one paid any attention. As soon as everyone became aware of the anxiety of Mr. Bovee, they began to gather in groups and took notice that the wind was increasing rapidly in velocity and smoke was seen rising above the tree tops, something like a big black cloud. It looked menacing. Upon the return of William and Mr. Bovee, they said, "The fire is headed our way. We must band together to see if we can head it off". Everyone came with tubs, buckets and every available thing to carry water. Two pumps provided the only water near where the fire might come. Everyone was busy doing something. The team was harnessed and hitched to the plow to try to plow a firebreak. The wind, the wind!! It had reached tornado velocity by noon. One could hardly walk against it. By this time the smoke was coming nearer and nearer with the wind fanned by the heat from the flames as high as the trees. We knew we were in danger. Everyone running here and there with wet sacks pounding the patches of fire and running scared, I'd say. With buckets, tubs and only the hand pumps one might as well be filling teacups with an eyedropper. Someone said, "You are wasting your time." A girl, whose name I can't remember, said, "They're a place to start." Her brown eyes glared at the man and she said, "Moses didn't even have a lard bucket." No matter how tough the odds, no matter how hot the fire, lard buckets were a place to start.

A local freight train was due ahead of the passenger train. Mr. Bovee wired to Palisade to warn them of the fire but it was too late. The train was coming. It came and sailed right by the depot and on up into the fire and stopped. A fire warden happened to be on a speeder and he told the engineer if he expected to save himself and his engine, he had better break loose from his train and go on. He told him the bridge ahead was burning and would be safe yet to cross. They both left in the engine. The smoke was too thick to get a signal from the depot. He broke loose from his train, opened the throttle and left blowing the whistle and went without orders to Swatara. Mr. Bovee telegraphed to Palisade and told the agent there that the remains of the train were on the main line but to send the passenger train on to Bain to take everyone out. We knew by this time we must leave.

Someone came and told me to get over to the depot, that all the women and children were gathering there in preparation for going out on the train. If we stayed we would burn up. As I looked back I could see that the Bain barn was on fire. Balme's¹, Hache's² and the section house were on fire, too. The freight was on the track and knowing the engine had gone, I crawled under the

¹ Balme's were a Norwegian family.

² Hache's were a German family. Their daughter, Hertha, became Mrs. Carl Carlson. Carl worked for Megarry Brothers.

freight cars with my baby and joined the crowd. No one was at home in the hotel but some of the boarders. They carried the piano out and set it on the street. It burned up. William grabbed the case of the charge accounts and closed it and set it out in the street. As it was metal, it did not burn. The last thing William did was to put the post office records in a mail sack and ran down and put it into the creek.

We all knew by this time that it was useless to try further to save anything. Someone told William that the baby and I were going to burn up in that train. He came running over to the train where we all were. He wanted to go back but as we looked out, the store, hotel and other buildings were red-hot flames, sky-high. I hung onto him until the train came. The railroad officials were very kind and said we'd better hurry as the peat was already burning between Bain and Palisade. That was true for one could spit on the windows as we moved away and they would fairly sizzle, it was so hot. They took a few of the boxcars on the front end of the passenger train and backed up to Palisade. A few of the people had managed to put a few of their possessions in the boxcars. Those were the only things except what I mentioned before that were saved. Everyone was ordered to get on the train.

I knew if William would stay, there was not much he could do. It was autumn and hay fever season. I knew he would not live in the smoke that would follow. They finally persuaded him to go with us. No one stayed in the village except two fellows by the name of Charles Fisher and Newt Baty. They managed to save Charles Megarry's home.³ The roof caught on fire a couple of times. They climbed up with water and put it out. This building stood in the largest cleared spot in town and this clearing saved the house. Neither of the men was ever very well after that experience. They both had breathing problems.

We were a sorry looking group of people when we arrived in Palisade. Everyone crying, people hungry as no one had time for lunch. Not even a handkerchief to our name. Kleenex wasn't heard of at that time. You who were not there will ever know what a tragedy, such as a fire, can do to human beings. It being Saturday, I was cleaning the house, scrubbing etc. I had on the worst dress I owned; it was ugly. My hair was long and up in a pug with hairpins to hold it in place but with that wind, nothing would hold it. It was flying wild and no comb! I grabbed an old cap and put it on. The old cap kept the hair out of my eyes so I could see. This particular cap had been too close to our box heater and had a burned hole in it. When I got to Palisade, the people thought it had caught on fire that day. Someone came with a comb and diapers for the two babies and they also saw the need for hankies. Many tears were shed that day!! The people were most kind and fed all of us. My father (William Bain) was in Iowa with a carload of potatoes, which he was trying to sell. He took off from Iowa and left what was remaining when we phoned about the fire. Mother had gone to Palisade with Mrs. Waldeck to attend a Columbus Day celebration. I am glad neither of them were there to see their places of business go up in flames. I assure you it was not a pretty sight. Mrs. Waldeck started to go to Bain when they got the news but couldn't get any further than the Beebe place. Maude and Harry Megarry were not at home when the town burned. She was called home for the funeral of her brother so they escaped that.

³ These men thoughtfully put Bess Phillips Megarry's wedding dress in the well because they thought it would be safe there. However, it burned up but the house was saved!

Mother, Gladys and Windell's family were given shelter at Keath's in Waukenabo. Mrs. Waldeck went back to the ranch at Waldeck. Dave Megarry came up to Palisade from Waldeck and took us down to Megarry's. No one slept much that night. The men tried to get into Bain that night but too much fire and smoke. They were able to get into town the next day.

Fires broke out all over the neighborhood and in various places. Crews from Aitkin, including the National Guard were ordered to fight them. For more than three or four days, Mrs. Megarry and I made sandwiches. The town of Aitkin sent out cartons of bakery bread and sandwich meat. We worked hard making sandwiches and coffee. We were tired but glad to be busy to keep from thinking of the horror of the fire. We even dreamed of fire. As usual, the looters were around but the National Guard sealed off the road for a week. No one but the ones who lived there had a right to go into town. The baby and I stayed at Megarry's in Waldeck until they had started to organize to get buildings up for people to live in Bain. We stayed at the Charles Megarry's for a month.

After the rains came it was so smoky it was almost impossible to do much. It was Armistice Day, November 11 when I went up to dig in the ashes to see what I could find. There was my new stove, black, with the top melted down over the lids. And underneath was a kettle with the potatoes I had put on to cook for lunch. They were black, but there. I found my gold watch melted into a ball. It had been given to me when I was 10 years old; a bracelet--useless and no good.

The fire burned in places for a long time. A carload of coal was left on the tracks and it was difficult to contend with that. We had no part of removing that, as it was railroad property. They moved a boxcar in for a depot and boxcars made into homes for their employees.

Fortunately we had a good credit rating with the wholesale houses in Duluth and Minneapolis. They phoned to us and gave us unlimited credit to get started in the store again. None of the two camps we had, one east and one west of Bain, were burned and the timber that had been cut was intact and ready to be hauled in when snow came. That meant we would start again.

The flu epidemic of 1918 struck all of the people about two weeks after the fire. I did not get the flu. Neither did Mr. & Mrs. Megarry, but William was very ill for about ten days. It was something that shouldn't have happened at that time. We had enough worries to contend with and lots of things to attend to. It was a worrisome time for us. Every day news came that one more of our friends or acquaintances passed away. I remember one evening the doctor came to the Megarry door and asked for help. He was stuck in the mud down near Waldeck's. While he was there, he gave some advice for care of William and sent medicine the next day. The rains brought bad roads. It was difficult to get back and forth. In fact, any place for that matter. Teams from Aitkin hauled lumber and shacks of all kinds were hastily built as winter was approaching. The post office was established on Charles Megarry's porch. Trains resumed their daily routes. After a long building was put up for our store, it was business as usual again.

It was December 16 when we moved into our shack. We had been with Charles and Bess after William got better. Our place was a dining room, kitchen and two bedrooms built on the back part of the store. Be it ever so humble, it was home! We had two beds, a cot and two chairs. Francis slept in a big box. There being no hotel or no place for people coming into town to eat, we soon had them knocking on our door asking if I could make some sandwiches. Everyone encouraged us to do this for a business. A carpenter built a long table that would seat ten people along with benches which we used until we could afford to buy chairs. We had a chair at each end. My stove was a cast off from one of the camps. I dare say, I'll never forget the old Iron Duke. It was a monster. A huge cast iron stove with hearth in front, an oven with a door that swung out from the side. No grate. When I baked bread, I had to put in three stone jars for the pans to sit on. So many came to eat, I baked bread every day. No bakery bread available at that time. We got up at four in the morning to get the men on the landing and out to camp to haul timber. I

baked pies and doughnuts for 9:00 a.m. lunch for men who loaded timber. There were huge kettles of soup and stews and roasts. No fancy food, mostly carrots, cabbage and potatoes we had raised on the farm. The root house did not burn so we had our vegetables. The lumbermen liked rutabagas and we had plenty as we raised about 300 bushels that year.

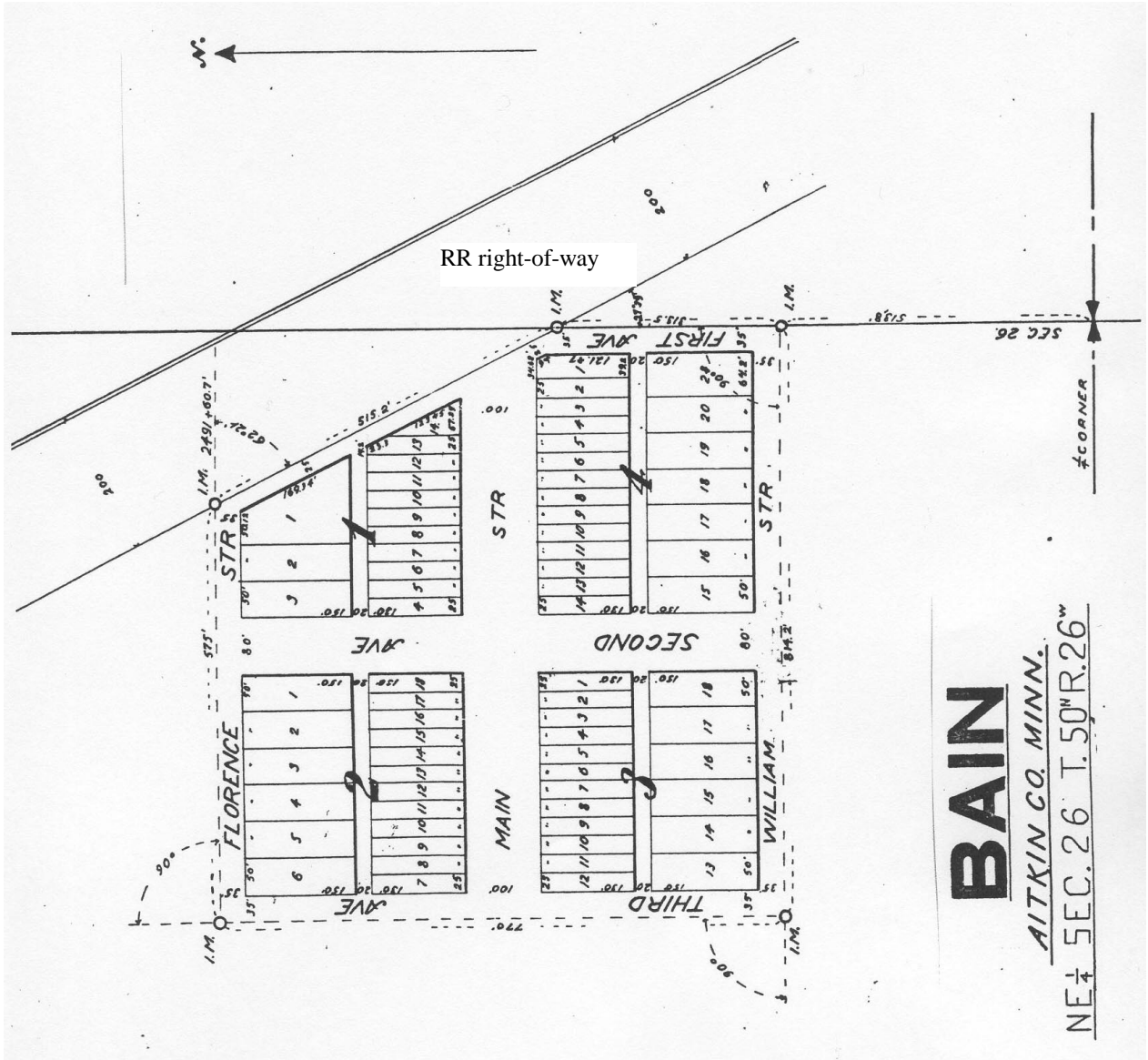
It was freezing cold and with that old Iron Duke, we stayed warm, but it was dreadfully hot in summer. Imagine heating wash water on that old stove and washing on the board with only five windows in the whole place for ventilation. Looking back over the years, I am at a loss to know how we ever endured it. But there was time to laugh, too, in spite of everything. We did enjoy life for we didn't know much about anything else, so it really didn't matter. We had our minds set that with good planning, saving and hard work, there would be better days ahead. With that in mind, we didn't look back and pressed on. The floor in the shanty was of rough boards but by the time I left there it had been scrubbed so much the boards were smooth. It was a big day when the boiler was put on the stove and with good Lewis Lye and a stiff broom the floors were cleaned. We found a very good girl to help me and she lived with us for two years. Poor Francis, such a place for a baby. We had an airtight heater in the dining room and the old Iron Duke in the kitchen. I managed to keep him warm by climbing out of bed at night to stoke the heater but in spite of that, in winter the water pail was frozen over every morning. Good old tamarack wood made a good hot fire but it wouldn't last all night. My mother knit Francis some heavy gray socks that came up over his knees and they were a great help. Our coffee for the store came in huge wooden boxes, 100 pounds at a time. I lined one of those boxes with a thick quilt and that was his playpen.

In 1922 we moved into a little house that had been built for Harry and Maude. We lived in it until we built our home in 1925. The new store was built in 1922. Mrs. Boatman took over feeding the transient people who came into town. I can tell you I was glad but I still had to cook for some of our own men. I don't believe anyone in the slums of New York lived in any worse place than that long old shack. Even the old log cabin was warmer and cooler than that old shack!

I forgot to mention we were engaged in a war and armistice came on November 11. That ended the war but rationing of sugar and flour did not stop until the following summer. Imagine trying to cook with only a limited amount of flour and sugar. We were granted more than others because we were helping to feed the public. Everyone except a few was very cooperative.

I have made the big mistake of not doing this earlier in life. My memory would have been better as well as the composition and grammar. But in plain simple words, I have tried to give the bare facts without any frills. At least I've tried to share with you something of the past. Looking back over the years, I have few regrets and I am aware that the space of time I have lived in has certainly seen many things happen and more has taken place than at any time in history. I am glad I've been privileged to live in this century.

BAIN AFTER THE FIRE



BAIN
 AITKIN CO. MINN.
 NE 1/4 SEC. 26 T. 50^N R. 26^W

Block 1

- Lot 11 Town Hall
- Lot 12 Harness and leather shop
- Lot 13 William & Mary Megarry house
- Lot 14 Megarry store after 1923
- Depot by tracks east of Block 1
- Sawmill east of depot and RR tracks

Block 2 ?

Block 3

- Lot 17 Original school house

Block 4

- Lot 1 Vance Sherril store
- Lot 21 Harry & Maude Megarry house
- Temporary Megarry store and residence east side of 1st Ave. across from lot 21 and north of Charles & Bess Megarry house east side of 1st Ave. across from lot 21
- Megarry barns south of Chas. Megarry house
- New School - south side of William Street across from Block 4



Depot on the left.

In the background, mid-picture, are two unidentified buildings.

To the right of these buildings is the Charles Megarry house. In front of that is the temporary Megarry store and residence. To the right of that is the Vance Sherril store.



Depot



Sawmill

Oxen and cart on 1st Ave. across from the Chas. Megarry house. Vance Sherril store in the background.



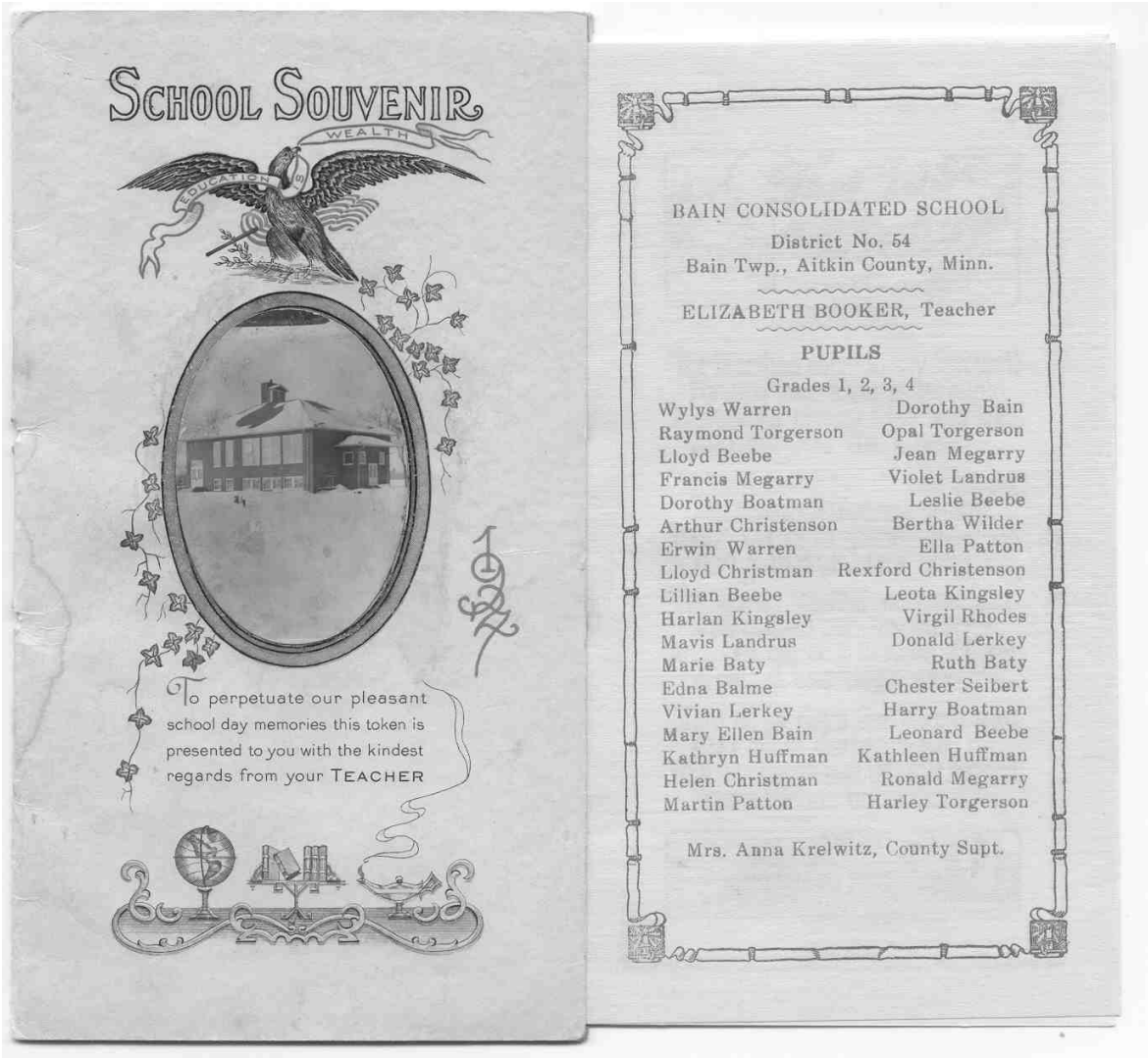
L to R: Lena Boatman, Mrs. Rudolph (Madge) Erickson, Berta & Herman Hache

New school built after the fire. Located on the south side of William Street, across from lots 17-21.

There were two rooms. Grades 1-4 in one and grades 5-8 in the other



The school was the center of all the social activities in town. The community room was in the basement. The furnace, tanks for the indoor toilets and a food serving area were also in the basement. This was the site of basket socials for lunch, ladies aid meetings as well as plays and school presentations.



Year of booklet - 1924-25 or 1925-26 or 1926-27



Spring 1926 Mrs. T.R. Stewart

Front row from left:
 Girl Jean Megarry Boy Francis
 Megarry Girl Dorothy Bain



Spring 1926 - Mrs. T.R. Stewart

Second row from front:
 Girl Jean Boy Francis
 Megarry Megarry



Spring 1928 Dorothy May Davis
 Teacher

Top left:
 Boy
 Boy
 Francis Megarry
 Jean Megarry

Second row from front:
 2nd boy from right - Ronald Megarry

Front row on left - Bill Bain



Temporary William Megarry store and home after the fire. In the front part was the store, storage and a bunkhouse for boarders. In the rear was a dining rm., kitchen and two bedrooms.

The location for both these homes was on the east side of First Avenue, across from Block 4, lot 21



Wm. Megarry Store & home Chas. Megarry home
Maude Dilley Megarry, Mary Bain Megarry, Bess Phillips Megarry, Jean Megarry, Francis Megarry



Megarry store built in 1923 Located in Block 1, lot 14, Main Street



Interior of the Megarry store. L to R: Wm. Megarry, Mr. Gebbhard-clerk, Henry (Hank) Landrus, William Baty c. 1925 - 1928



L to R: Harness shop, Wm. Megarry home, Megarry store. Stuccoed in the late 1930's.

Picture from Hertha Hache Carlson



William Megarry Pat and Earl Dolan Frank Winger in front of the temporary Megarry store after the fire.

Residents of Bain and their occupations as remembered by Francis W. Megarry (b. 1918 - d. 2000), son of William and Mary Bain Megarry. Lived in Bain 1918-1937

Herman & Berta Hache - Laborer (Block 2, NW corner of town)

Daughter - Hertha

Mr. & Mrs. Oscar Balme - Laborer

Daughter - Edna

Son - Oscar Junior (Auckie)

Mr. & Mrs. William Geisdorf -Section foreman on Soo Line RR (Block 1, lot 1 on corner behind Megarry store)

Daughter - Bertha

Son - Charley

Fred Geisdorf - Blacksmith

_____ Zimmerman - Housekeeper, companion of Fred Geisdorf

Wallace and Mrs. Ward - Sawmill, truck driver (Lived east of RR tracks, dead east of Megarry store)

Daughters - Ruth

- Virginia

- Dorothy

- Patsy

Sons - Gerald

- "Bud"

Carl & Emma Christianson - Megarry Farm Boss (Lived south of Wards on east side of tracks)

Daughter - Emaline

Sons - Arthur

- Rexford

- Jimmy

Ralph & Blanche Stewart -Laborer; Mrs. Stewart -school teacher

Daughter - ?

Son - Burton

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Bovee - Depot agent

Daughters - Maxine

- Gloria

Sons - Kermit

- Vartone

- Forest

Charles & Bess Megarry - Contractor; logger

Daughters - Jean

- Patricia

Sons - Ronald

- Richard

Charley Fisher - Megarry handyman, caretaker

Frank Winger - Clerk Megarry store

Mr. Gebhardt - Clerk Megarry store

? Terhaar - Depot agent after Bovee

Denny Dolan - Megarry Barn Boss

Earl Dolan - Logger, laborer - Megarry Bros.

Mr. & Mrs. Baird - School teacher; Farmer; Land Developer

Charlotte Phillips - School teacher

Dorothy Mae Davis - School teacher

Lois Peddycoart - School teacher

Pearl Hanson - School Teacher

Elsie Northrup - School teacher

Rose Balm - School Teacher

Mabel Fowlds - School teacher

Mr. & Mrs. _____ - Confectionary store

Mr. & Mrs. _____ Violet - Laborer; Road laborer
 Daughters - Ruby
 - Dena
 - Lillian
 Sons - Willie
 - Harold
 - ?

Fred & Olive Allen - Road and Logging worker
 Daughter - Doris
 Son - Paul

Mr. & Mrs. Thurston - Laborer
 Sons - Ronald
 - ?
 - ?
 Daughter - ?

Mr. & Mrs. Frank Dixon - Farmer; laborer
 Sons - ?
 - ?
 Daughter - ?

Mr. & Mrs. M.L. Clark - Jitney driver; freight hauler
 Daughters - Dora
 - Ella
 Son - Chris

David & Nellie Peddycoart
 Daughters - Eva
 - Lois
 - Irene
 - Gladys
 - Ruth

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Landrus - Logger; construction worker
 Daughters - Mavis
 - ?
 Son - Raymond

Mr. & Mrs. Gene Baty - Laborer
 Sons - ?
 - Gene
 - ?
 - ?
 Daughter - ?

Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Kingsley - Carpenter
 Daughters - Eria
 - Leota
 - ?
 - ?
 Sons - ?
 - Raymond
 - Harlan

Arthur & Alice Christman - Clerk and then operator of Megarry Store
 Sons - Lloyd
 - Clifton
 Daughters - Helen
 - Joyce

Gladys & Lukes Petron - RR Fireman; laborer

Daughter - Madelyn

Sons - Severin

- Kenneth

- James

- Michael

Joe & Dorothy Sheryak - Megarry Store Accountant

Daughter - Julie

Sons - David

- William

Harry B. & Maude Megarry - Megarry Supt.

No children



L to R: Wm. Megarry, Harry Megarry, Mary Bain Megarry, Maude Dilley Megarry, Francis B. Megarry, Bess Phillips Megarry, Anna Stewart Megarry, Charles Megarry
July 28, 1918 Waldeck (Aitkin) MN



Charlie Fisher and Megarry children. Charlie helped save the Chas. Megarry house during the 1918 fire.

AITKIN INDEPENDENT AGE - 1921

Mrs. F.B. Megarry, Universally Loved and Respected, Suddenly Stricken Saturday Last

Anna Loffer Megarry was born in Clarion County, Penn., June 30, 1859. Her mother was a member of the Lutheran church, and her father, Loffer Stewart, was a Presbyterian, but the whole family went to the father's church. After fitting herself to be a public school teacher in the schools of the state, she came west to what was then Dakota Territory and obtained a school in what is now LaMoure County, during the year 1884. In 1889 she became the helpmate of Francis B. Megarry of Leola, McPherson county, South Dakota.

Six years later, Mr. and Mrs. Megarry and their four children moved to Clay County, Minnesota. In 1897 the family moved to Morrison township, Aitkin County, where they have resided ever since. In all the trials incident to the chequered life of a pioneer, Mrs. Megarry bore her share of the burden courageously and cheerfully. She loved to help in the spiritual and moral uplift of those around her. Faithful as a wife, and devoted as a mother, the family she has left will each arise and call her blessed.

About five years ago Mrs. Megarry had a slight stroke of apoplexy, which caused her to realize that another attack might follow. Last Saturday, December 10, while doing her regular household work, in her usual happy mood, a hemorrhage started on the brain, which caused a state of coma within a few hours and before the light of the peaceful dawn of the last Lord's day had driven the darkness away, the soul of this good woman had passed to the Sabbath that knows no end. At her last attendance at public worship, she stood up to witness her faith in Jesus Christ her Savior and to confess him before men.

For twenty-four years Mrs. Megarry has been an indispensable factor in the social and religious life of Morrison community and church. She held every position of honor and trust in the Morrison Methodist church of which she was a member. If ever there was a Christian who deserves the Master's plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant," this one does.

Those who remain to mourn their loss, are her husband, Mr. F.B. Megarry, four sons, William, Charles, Harry and David. Also three grandchildren, Francis, Jean and Ronald. Two children, Frank and Emma preceded their mother to the better land.

The funeral service was held Tuesday afternoon (*Dec. 13, 1921*) at 2 o'clock at the home by Rev. C.C. Sutton, for many years their pastor, and Rev. James A. Geer of Aitkin. Mrs. Olgot Henderson, Mrs. J.C. Thorpe, Miss Violet Henderson and Mrs. Hanson rendered three comforting hymns. The casket was covered with floral tokens from friends very widely scattered. The attendance was very large and the feeling of sympathy for the mourners very deep. Friends came from a radius of some fourteen miles to pay their last respect to the memory of the departed lady.

The remains were interred in Waukenabo cemetery on the banks of the beautiful lake of that name.



Logs on sled in front of the Megarry Store



Truck with sled and logs near depot in Bain



Harry & Maude Megarry's house Block 4 lot 21 William Street

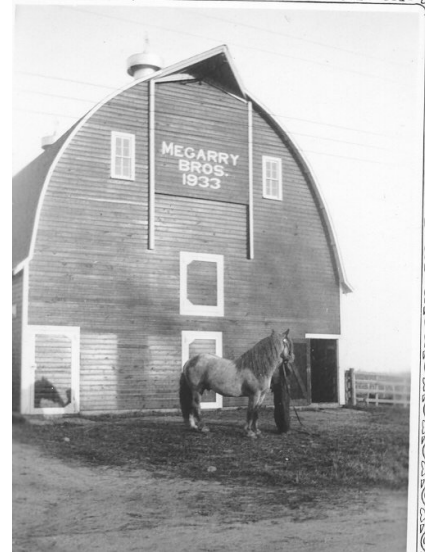
Francis W. Megarry

Jean Megarry

Charles Megarry house on 1st Ave.



William & Mary Bain Megarry's house. Block 1, lot 13 on Main Street. Built in 1924.



William Bain with his Percheron draft horse in front of the Megarry Barn located south of William St. and east of 1st Ave.



William Bain in front of Megarry Store on Main Street. Harness shop and town hall in background



William Henry (Bill) Bain son of Windell and Eda Keath Bain. c. 1926

In front of Wm. Megarry house, Block 1, lot 13 Main Street. Harness shop in background on lot 12



Unknown group in front of Vance Sherril store Block 4, lot 1 Main St. and 1st Ave.



Lottie Buttermore, preacher in Bain. She conducted Sunday School and summer Bible classes



**L to R Bain Family 3 June 1927
Day of funeral for Florence Abbie
Parshall Bain:**

Jessie Mary Florence
William

Windell Gladys Etta
Wilmar

Florence Abbie Parshall Bain



AITKIN INDEPENDENT AGE - June 1927

**FUNERAL OF MRS. BAIN HELD FRIDAY, LARGELY ATTENDED
PIONEER FAMILY BRAVED OBSTACLES AND WON SUCCESS--FIRES BROUGHT TRYING EXPERIENCES**

The funeral of Mrs. William Bain, well-known woman of this county, was held Friday at the family cemetery in the township of Waukenabo. Friends came from near and far to pay last tribute, in spite of poor road conditions. The Rev. C.C. Sutton a friend of the family for many years, preached the sermon and a choir rendered "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," and "Nearer My God To Thee."

Mrs. Bain's death occurred on Tuesday of last week (*31 May 1927*) after a long period of illness and suffering. She was 65 years of age, having been born March 27, 1862 at Washington, Iowa. She was married to William Bain on September 10, 1880, and with her husband and children came to reside in Minnesota in the year 1900. As the wife of a pioneer in the wilderness, she shared all the hardships and satisfactions of success, which came in those early days to the hardy settlers, who overcame all obstacles. Although there were no good roads penetrating the forests of that period, these brave people carried out their intention of building a home and clearing a farm. The terrible fire of 1918 ruined much of their material prosperity. The post office of Bain is named after this enterprising family.

Mrs. Bain's health began to fail soon after the trying times endured during the year of the fires. She was given every attention of medical skill. Her condition became critical about a month before her death, and at that time her children were summoned. She passed on peacefully trusting in the sacrifices of a Savior's love. She leaves behind her grieved husband, five daughters, Florence, Etta, Jessie, Mary and Gladys, and two sons Willmar and Wendell. There are sixteen grandchildren and one great grandchild. One son, William, lost his life in the treacherous bottoms of the White Elk creek and another son died in Iowa before the family came to Minnesota.

Thus, the Lord gave and the Lord took away a wife and mother's tender devotion. Through all the years when health failed, faith failed not. "Her children arise to call her blessed; her husband also praiseth her. She hath lived; she hath loved, and her task is done."



Francis Bennett Megarry 1923



L to R Adults:

Harry & Maude Dilley Megarry, Melba Madison Megarry & David Megarry, Bess Phillips Megarry & Charles Megarry, Mary Bain Megarry & William Megarry

Children: Bob Megarry, Jean Megarry & Patty Megarry in front, Ronald Megarry, Francis W. Megarry

Day of F.B. Megarry's funeral - 19 July 1929 Bain, MN

THE AITKIN REPUBLICAN - Thursday, July 25, 1929

**LAST RITES HELD FOR F.B. MEGARRY LARGELY ATTENDED
ESTEEMED PIONEER SUCCUMBED TO LONG ILLNESS--WAS EARLY LEADER IN SCIENTIFIC DAIRYING**

The funeral of Francis Bennett Megarry, esteemed pioneer resident of Bain, was held Friday afternoon (19 July 1929), with services at the home and at Waukenabo cemetery, where interment was made. The Rev. C.C. Sutton, for many years an intimate associate of Mr. Megarry officiated, and he was assisted by the Rev. Fletcher of Littlepine, pastor of the Bain community church. Hundreds of friends from all over the county paid a last tribute. Mrs. J.C. Thorpe and Mrs. W.A. Henderson sang requiem hymns. The pallbearers were: Messrs. Windell Bain, Patrick Ryan, Ivan Bovee, W.A. Henderson, Carl Christianson, and Arthur Christman.

A native of Ireland, in Mr. Megarry's personality were combined many of the lovable traits of that Celtic race. His birthplace was Walnutvale, County Antrim, in the Northern part, and his birth date was April 21, 1858. It was in 1884, as a young man of 26 years, that Mr. Megarry came to the United States to seek his fortune in a land of which he had heard glowing accounts. He went directly to the plains of South Dakota, where everything was new and wild, but this country proved not to his liking, and 1897 he came to Aitkin County, accompanied by his wife, and they settled on a homestead in the forest. But Aitkin County then was not the Aitkin County of today as old-timers vividly recall. It was not an area of good roads made prosperous by the jingle of cream cans. Mr. and Mrs. Megarry found some real pioneering in those years when times were none too good. However, farming was always Mr. Megarry's chief occupation and interest, and he was determined to win out. He was one of the first advocates of scientific dairying and many came to look upon him in later years as the father of the dairy industry in Aitkin County. The last active years of his life were spent in building up an excellent herd of Holstein cattle, one of the first headed by purebreds in this vicinity.

About four years ago, Mr. Megarry made his first trip back to the old home in Ireland. Many readers of this paper will recall interesting accounts of this trip, which were published. The visit in his native land was one filled with interesting experiences. He saw many changes in the 40 years that had passed since he left the Emerald Isle, and he expressed the opinion that most of them had been for the better. The condition of the working people, long downtrodden by lordly landowners, was greatly improved, Mr. Megarry found, and he departed with happier memories than those, which he had carried with him in youth. He failed to find some old acquaintances whom he had expected to meet, finding that they had preceded him across the Great Divide, but he met others whom he had never thought of seeing again. Among the happiest reunions was the one with an old teacher who had been his mentor 50 years before.

Always a church worker and a champion of better living and loftier ideals, Mr. Megarry espoused good causes with all the fervor of which a man of his nationality is capable. He was scholarly and gave much time to serious thought and to reading. He was especially well informed in history and along the lines of economics, having become interested in these as a youth, in Ireland, when he thought that something should be done to improve the condition of the tenants. During his residence here he was an advocate of good schools, and it was consistent with his generous character that he believed money could not be more wisely spent than in giving the youth of the land every opportunity. He rigorously opposed any endeavors to stint on school appropriations.

Mr. Megarry's wife preceded him in death, passing away on December 11, 1921. Before her marriage to Mr. Megarry on June 3, 1889, she was Miss Anna L. Stewart of McPherson County, South Dakota. The early years of their marriage were spent at Leola, in McPherson County. Two children also have passed on. Miss Emma Megarry died in 1912, and Frank Megarry died in 1914. Left of the family are four sons, who are well-known construction contractors and merchants: William, Charles and David of Bain, and Harry of Northfield. Two sisters also survive, Mrs. Anna Wadsworth of Lisburn, Ireland, and Mrs. Emma Verner of Newport, England. There are five grandchildren.

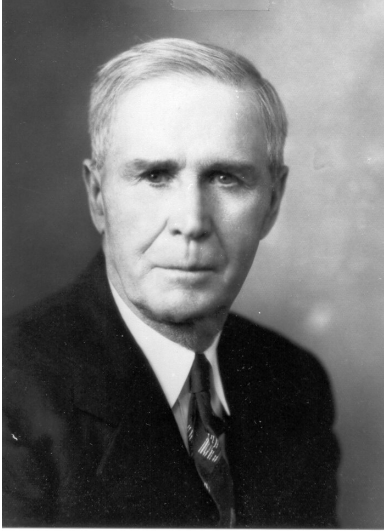
Mr. Megarry's illness dated from three years ago this coming November when he suffered a siege of influenza which left him in a weakened condition. From this, heart trouble and anemia developed as complications, and medical science could not aid him. He gradually lost ground and last February he gave up the active struggle to prolong life, becoming reconciled to the approaching time when he would be called upon to enter eternity. For five months he was confined to his bed, growing weaker all the time, and on Wednesday of last week (*17 July 1929*) he succumbed. Thus was ended a life of noble service and influence, and those near and dear to him mourn, while many others, among them many who knew him only slightly, deeply regret that he could not be spared to round out a few more good years, although he had lived one year over the allotted three score and ten.



William & Mary Bain Megarry
Francis W. 13 yrs. Bob 5 yrs.
Bain, MN 1931



L to R:
William Megarry, William Bain, Mary Bain Megarry,
Francis Wm. Megarry, Charles Robert (Bob) Megarry
St. Cloud (Stearns) MN 1944



William Bain 80 years old
1 April 1941



Four Generations 1941

Francis W. Megarry
William Bain

Barbara Jean Megarry
Mary Bain Megarry

St. Cloud (Stearns) MN

AITKIN INDEPENDENT AGE - April 1952

Last Rites Held For William Bain

Funeral rites were held Thursday, April 3, 1952 from the Colberts Funeral Home at St. Cloud and from the Seavey Funeral Home in Aitkin at two o'clock the same afternoon for William Bain, Aitkin pioneer, who passed away at St. Cloud April 1, 1952, at the age of 91. Officiating at the Aitkin service was Rev. Russell Huffman of St. Cloud, assisted by Rev. Allyn Hanson of Aitkin.

Joe Steeg and Donald MacGregor sang Abide With Me and Rock of Ages with Mrs. Steeg at the organ. Active pallbearers were John Hillman, Cecil Holmquist, Harold Chute, Gerald Ward, Henry Landrus and Art Christman. Honorary pallbearers included John Packer, John Johnson, Charles Rhodes, B.R. Hassman, Jim Ryan, Carl Christenson, Dan Keath and Andrew Magnuson. Burial was at Waukenabo cemetery beside his wife.

William Bain was born near Quebec, Canada, on Nov. 19, 1861, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bain. When he was five years old, they moved to Iowa, there he lived until the year 1900 when he, with his family, moved to Minnesota and settled in Aitkin County.

He was married to Florence Parshall on Sept. 10, 1880. Nine children were born to this union, five of whom survive him. They are Jessie (Mrs. Eugene Chilcote, Oskaloosa, Iowa); Etta, (Mrs. Earl Dickinson, Seattle, Wash.); Mary, (Mrs. Wm. Megarry, St. Cloud); Gladys, (Mrs. L.J. Petron, Superior, Wis.); and one son, Windell Bain of St. Paul; 20 grandchildren and 38 great grandchildren.

Mr. Bain and his family were early pioneers of northern Aitkin County, and knew the hardships of hewing a home and a living out of the wilderness. Later they operated the hotel in the little town of Bain that was named after him.

Mrs. Bain passed away in May 1927. Since then Mr. Bain has spent his later years with his daughter, Mary, Mrs. William Megarry. The past four years he has lived most of the time at the Slocumb Rest Home at Avon.

Mr. Bain was extremely fond of horses, dogs and children. Until just recently he had kept his interest in his family and the world in general. His strength had failed noticeably however, since his ninetieth birthday which was celebrated last November. About ten days ago he contracted influenza which proved to be the cause of his death.

Record of Appointment of Postmasters

1832-1971

National Archives Film #M-0841

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Waldeck	Grace Waldeck	3 March 1898
	Isaiah M. Frost	8 April 1914

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Waldeck	Grace Waldeck	17 Aug. 1915
	Louise M. Chute	15 July 1916
		Discontinued effective 31 Dec. 1917
		Mail to Bain

Bain	Peter T. Waldeck	1 Feb. 1911
	William Megarry	15 Dec. 1917
	Mary Megarry	1 Jan. 1934
	Alice Christman	24 June 1938
	Jennie Thurston	1 June 1943
		Discontinued effective 15 Nov. 1944
		Mail to Palisade 14 Oct. 1944