

Mrs. Weightman Makes a Fresh Start

Mrs. Elizabeth Weightman, a widow from northern England, and her children, arrived at their homestead in the spring of 1882 after a fifty-six day journey from Edinburgh, Scotland.

They crossed the ocean on a crowded ship, then took the train to Lake Huron, where they caught a steamboat to Duluth, and another train to Brandon. At Brandon they bought the usual homestead supplies: oxen, a wagon, a plow, a tin stove, a tent and two cows.

They decided to search for land and headed south of Brandon with a few other newcomers. On the second day out, news reached the party about land recently opened for homesteading, so a delegation sped ahead on a horse-drawn wagon towards the Land Titles Office in Deloraine. The rest continued with the oxen and supplies. High creeks and wet ground slowed them down – on a particularly bad day they travelled just five kilometers.

The reward came when the group returned from the Land Titles Office with the papers entitling them each to a homestead. Two long days later the Weightmans found their plot of land. They were home.

As quickly as possible they broke some land and planted a few acres of oats and some potatoes. A sod barn was erected and a modest frame house was built – not quite finished for the coming of the first blizzard, but quite an improvement over the tents that had provided their only shelter up until this point.



The Weightman home became a “Stopping House” and the first Post Office in the region. They called it “West Hall” after their farm home in England.



A school, also called West Hall was built on the Weightman property. Their original farm yard is not occupied, but visible in the background