



The Paul House

Before entering the Paul house, take note of the outside decorations, the circle of axe heads on the wall and the boot-scraper on the step made from horseshoes and a hoe blade.

As the home was the real centre of pioneer life, we are fortunate to have a log dwelling where a family of twelve grew up. It stands as if the lady of the house had just stepped out to feed her chickens. The stove, sewing machine, and knitting basket are reminiscent of the hours of toil and pleasure every woman put into caring for her family. The big family bible was part of every pioneer home.

This log house was built in 1879 and was located 12 miles west of Portage la Prairie. The original owners were the Joseph Hamilton family who lived in the home from 1879 until 1920.

The logs were cut, peeled and squared just south of the Assiniboine River in the Hood Bridge locale by John Wark, father of Mrs. Joe Hamilton, and the house was built by John Wark, Joe Hamilton and Adam Smith with the help of their neighbours. The house was built north of the present CNR track. When the G.T.P. was surveyed and it was discovered that the rail line was going to pass through the farmyard, Mr. Hamilton moved the 18ft x 24ft log house to the south. This placed it on the north side of the present Trans-Canada Highway where it remained until it was moved to the museum.

Mr. and Mrs. Alex Paul moved into the house in 1920 and remained there until 1962. The house was vacant for approximately seven years and in 1969 Mr. and Mrs. Paul donated it to the museum.

Some items of interest in the house include the photo of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hamilton, the original owners; the wedding picture of Mr. and Mrs. Alex Paul, donors of the house, photos of the Yuill family, and the 1928 mantle clock. Note the old wood burning stove in the middle of the room that heated the house. There is also an old treadle sewing machine and a spinning wheel.

When entering the kitchen, take note of how low the door frames and the ceiling are. Note the “perk” over the door used to hang wet clothes to dry in the winter and the pulley system used to raise it. The kitchen contains a butter worker, a dough box, a woodstove, with several irons that had to be heated on the stove so there would be two or three going at a time. Also notice the large round metal tub used for making curds and whey, the sausage press, the cream separator, a washboard on the wall, sock stretchers, an old rocket washer from the 1880’s, and the ice box. An odd looking tool hanging on the wall by the door is a pot scraper.

The upstairs is not accessible for safety reasons.