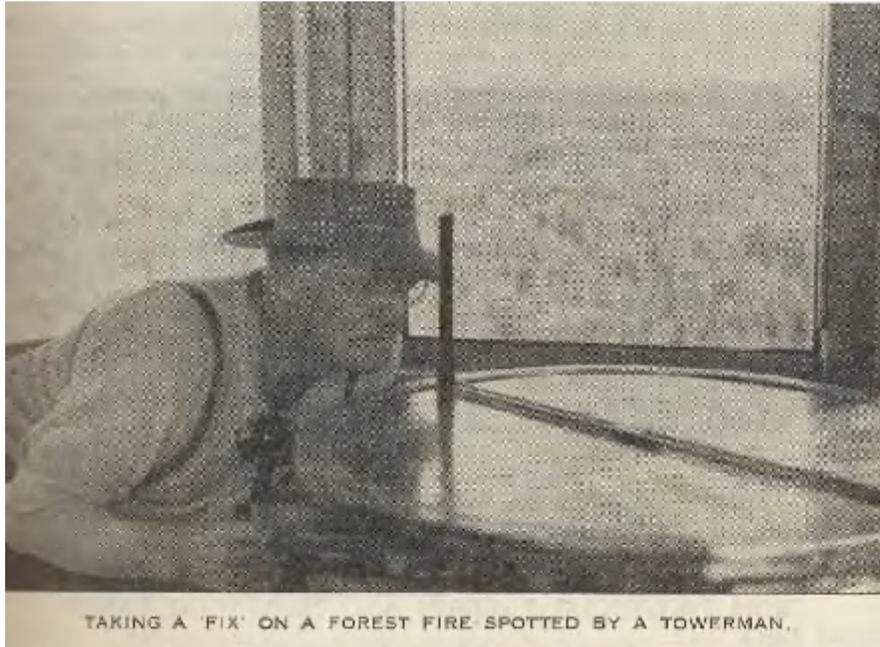


Einer Wicker



Einer was towerman at Pasquia Hills, English Cabin and at Thunder Mountain at various times during his career. He and his wife had separated, they raised 2 sons and 1 daughter, Lilly.

Einer Wicker arrived in Canada from Norway in 1922 and soon found his way to the Torch River district. He filed on a homestead there and set about preparing a place for his wife and family to live as soon as he could afford to send for them. By 1929 everything was ready so he sent for his family to join him. Early in the fall of that year disaster struck in the form of his cabin being consumed by fire. Now he had a serious problem, his family was en route and slated to arrive at Halifax in late November and he had no place to keep them. He then made arrangements with his friend, Charlie Johnson, to use his cabin to house his family until a new one could be built on the Wicker homestead. Johnson was a trapper and rarely used his homestead shack in the winter time.

On December 6, 1929 Mrs. Wicker, 13 year old Doug, 11 year old Andrew and 9 year old Lily arrived in Nipawin. They spent some time there buying supplies for their new home before setting out for the Torch River Settlement. The trip from Nipawin by horse drawn sleigh took 2 days, stopping for the night at the Dave Jacobs sawmill on the Torch River which was straight north of where the future village of Love Siding would be located. Mrs. Wicker was sorely disappointed with the new accommodations, a drafty, poorly built 10 by 12 foot shack. Einer had a crew logging saw timber that winter and since the cabin was so small the men lived in a converted chicken coop with Mrs. Wicker cooking their meals for them. The highlight of Mrs. Wicker's first winter in Torch River was meeting Mr. And Mrs. Zac Anderson who were also Norwegian immigrants.

After the logging season was over that spring Einer cleared a road to the site of their new cabin on his homestead and set about cutting the trees so construction could begin.

The next few years on the homestead were a struggle. In 1933 Einer bought an old car for a trip to Kelvington, SK. and while there he made a deal to trade the car for a cow, a hen with chicks and a couple of turkeys. He then borrowed a team of horses and the family returned to their homestead and commenced their farming operation.

In 1936 the relief camp on the Torch River was closed and in 1937 Einer bought the bunkhouse that was there and resold it to the Torch River community to be used as a community hall. Local resident Edwin Runn contracted to move the building so he and Mac Macintee, Kai Thorson, Johnny Anderson and Bunn Mathew dismantled the building, loaded it on wagons, moved it to a location near the Torch River School and rebuilt it exactly as it had been in its original location.

In 1939 Einer joined the Canadian Army and left the Torch River district. He spent the next seven years in the army and after his discharge joined the Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources. He served as towerman at Pasquia Hills, English Cabin and Thunder Mountain Fire towers until he retired. In 1961 he returned to Norway, the land of his birth and passed away there in 1965. His marriage had ended while at Torch River and his wife eventually ended up living in Prince George, British Columbia

Torch River Community Hall

In 1937, the building that was to become the Torch River Community Hall was erected about two hundred yards west of the Torch River School.

When the Relief Camp on the Torch River had been shut down at an earlier date, the bunkhouse that had been built there was purchased by an area resident, Einer Wicker, who in turn sold it to the community for \$50.00. The building was totally dismantled, moved to the present hall site on wagons pulled by horses, and re-assembled.

The building was, and still is, the location for many Christmas concerts, wedding dances, and all sorts of birthday, anniversary and other parties. Sadly, in later years it was also the location for the funerals of many of the pioneers who helped to build this community.

Einer Wicker, who originally bought the building that became the Community Hall, joined the Canadian Army in 1939 and left the Torch River district. He spent the next seven years in the army and after his discharge joined the Saskatchewan Department of Natural Resources. He served as towerman in various places until he retired. In 1961 he returned to Norway, the land of his birth and passed away there in 1965.

(From "Post Offices")

Les and Lily (Wicker) Agur

Mail was only delivered once a week in those days so, consequently, there were usually a large number of neighbors waiting to collect their mail on Mail Day. It was a time of visiting, arguing politics, bemoaning low commodity prices and cursing the weather, much like coffee row is today.

One such day 2 members of this group happened to be Hedrick Crerar, the young bachelor minister at the new Baptist Church, and local teen-ager, Les Agur, whose family had moved to the area in 1932.

Mr. Crerar, in response to something Les had said and being young and full of fun, said to Les "You're too cocky and I'm going to take you down!"

Les's first thoughts went something like "Oh no! I'm going to be made a fool of in front of all my neighbors", and he promised himself that he wouldn't go down easy.

When Mr. Crerar, who outweighed Les by at least 50 lbs, came for him Les grabbed him by his shirt-front and pulled him forward. Les doesn't recall if this was a conscious decision on his part or if it was just reaction but the end result was that the surprised Mr. Crerar lost his balance and measured his length on the ground with Les accidentally landing on top of him.

After a little scuffling on the ground with Les taking full advantage of his luck and remaining firmly on top, it was decided by the onlookers that Les was the winner. This gave him, by Les's own estimation, the undeserved reputation of being something of a fighting man and turning him into a sort of accidental hero.

In later years Les Agur became the respected and well-liked manager of the Torch River Co-op store for quite a few years during the late 1950s and early '60s.

He had married Lilly Wicker, daughter of local resident, Einer Wicker, and they had a family of 4 children in Torch River before moving to Co-op management positions in other communities including the Co-op Stores in White Fox and Smeaton

The foregoing was submitted by Marvin Torwalt www.rivertrailcountryvacations.com Be sure to check out other articles written by Marvin in this website.