

## Homesteaders in Erie Township, ND: The First Settlers

### Compiled by Steve Pueppke, October 2018

Erie Township's 36 square miles of land were unpopulated until about 1880, when the first stream of homesteaders arrived and began surveying the unplowed prairie to assess its suitability for farming. Each square mile or section of land contained 640 acres that could be subdivided into four 160 acre plots. These so-called quarter sections were just the right size to support a good sized farm in those days, and so almost all of the newcomers staked out a claim on a quarter section of land and set out to break up the sod and plant crops.

The claims were registered with the federal land office. If a settler lived on the land and maintained it for the required period of time, the federal government would grant him (or occasionally her) title to the land and thus ownership of the farm. This sometimes happened, but many of the early settlers renounced their claims and moved on after a just a few years. In other cases, the claimant apparently never even resided on the land.

We know the name of each of the claimants and the dates of filing thanks to records held by the General Land Office of the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Other records do exist, and sometimes they are at odds with the BLM database, but we will rely on official records from the BLM to sort through several questions. Who were these early settlers and where did they come from? Did they arrive as individual families—or as groups of acquaintances? If they departed, how long did they stay, and where did they go? And how many remained, proving up their claims, and providing future generations in Erie?

In theory, the township's 36 square miles of land could be divided into 144 quarter sections of land for settlers. In reality, the federal government reserved Sections 16 and 36 for sale to support schools, and the odd numbered sections were conveyed to the railroad as an inducement to lay track into newly settled areas. Like the school lands, these were sold, sometimes to relatives of the original homesteaders. The remaining 16 square miles—64 quarter sections of land—were available for homesteads, and a total of 57 individual claimants filed for this land in Erie Township. The difference between the numbers 64 and 57 is a reflection of the fact that some settlers made multiple claims.

Here in alphabetic order are those 57 names, the date of filing for each claim, and the section of land in which the claim was located. This information is from the BLM. The fourth column has the previous residence for each claimant. This information is from my research. Here are the main conclusions based on the data:

- The whereabouts of 11 of claimants is unknown. We do not know where they came from or where they went, and so they are lost to us. Most of them have common Anglo-Saxon names that make it very difficult to trace them, and so it is unlikely that they will ever be identified.

- More than half of the claimants were immigrants from Canada, in every case from the Province of Ontario. They were of either Scots or Irish ancestry, and as we shall see, many knew each other and sometimes were related to one another. Erie and vicinity was the initial US destination of most of these immigrants.
- Although Germany was a major source of farming immigrants to North Dakota, only six German families homesteaded in Erie. There were just a few other immigrant families, from Switzerland, England, and Scotland. Many of these individuals immigrated to the US long before Erie was settled, and so in contrast to the Canadians, their initial American home was in states such as Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. The Dakota prairie was not their first American home.
- The American homesteaders were mostly not from more settled parts of the agricultural Midwest, but rather from the east. Included were Pennsylvania families (including the village of Erie's founders), families from Michigan (some of whom knew each other), and apparently unrelated families from Massachusetts and New York. These geographical distinctions are not clear cut, because as the table below shows, a number of families moved from place to place before they homesteaded in Erie Township. Some returned to their former homes after they left Erie, but others simply moved on.

Erie Township's original homesteaders are listed on the following pages according to the section of land that they claimed. I have added information on real estate and personal property taxes for the years 1885, 1886, and 1887. This information is available from the original records, which have been preserved. I have also included information on the ownership of each homestead as of 1893 and 1906 and according to plat books for Cass County.

**Table 1. The 57 persons who filed for homesteads in Erie Township between 1881 and 1900.**

Name	Year filed	Section	Came from
Bartley, John M.	1881	14	Canada
Bissett, Charles	1884	32	Scotland via Canada
Blackburn, John	1884	6	New York
Brown, James F.	1882	24	
Buck, Frank	1883	12	Germany via Michigan
Burdick, William P.	1885	8	
Cameron, Elizabeth & John	1889	26	Scotland via Canada
Cary, Herman	1882	4	
Churchill, Charles	1887	10	Pennsylvania via Illinois
Churchill, George S.	1887/1893	2/14	Pennsylvania
Clark, Burr A.	1883	2	Michigan
Conan, William J.	1881	34	Canada
Cuthbertson, John Jr. & Sr. heirs	1896/1899	20	Canada
Ellis, William	1882	32	Canada
Fowler, John	1898	30	Canada
Framke, Herman	1881/1900	2	Germany via Wisconsin

Gloor, Maria and Jacob	1884	2	Switzerland
Goodspeed, John	1882	4	Michigan
Green, Louis S.	1904	24	
Haight, C. Wesley	1883	10	New York via Michigan
Harold, Henry	1887	2	Germany via Wisconsin
Hill, George H.	1889	30	Canada
Hill, Wallace C.	1898	32	Canada
Hislop, Benjamin	1882	22	Canada
Jenkins, James	1896	20	Canada
Jenkins, Thomas W.	1883	20	Canada
Laidlaw, Peter	1884	13	Canada
Laing, Walter	1884	20	Canada
Lakey, William H.	1883	6	England
Markey, Jacob	1887	24	Switzerland
Mathews, John	1887	12	Germany
McGill, Charles	1882	22	Canada
McKee, John	1883	14	Canada
McLean, Archibald H.	1884	32	Canada
McLean, Hugh	1893	6	Canada
Miller, Charles W.	1882	10	
Miller, Silas	1881	34	
Morrow, Magdalene	1883	28	Ireland via Canada
Morrow, Robert	1883	28	Canada
Morrow, Robert H.	1883	28	Ireland via Canada
Morrow, Sarah	1883	30	Ireland via Canada
Morrow, William	1883	28	Ireland via Canada
Mosher, Alfred	1884-1895	18	New York
Murray, James B.	1881	26	
Nutting, Harry F.	1896	34	Iowa
Oakes, James W.	1882	8	
Pelton, Charles A.	1882	24	Massachusetts
Powlison, Eugene Q.	1882/1894	4	Arkansas via Michigan
Reynolds, Fred W.	1884	8	
Rutherford, John	1896	8	Scotland
Schroeder, Henry	1887/1892	22	Germany via Minnesota
Serr, George	1883	26	Germany via Pennsylvania
Sharpsteen, Augustus	1893	6	Michigan
Smith, Sidney G.	1882	34	
Thompson, Walker D.	1893	12	Pennsylvania
White, Oscar	1889	26	
Williams, Amos S.	1893	10	Pennsylvania

## Section 2

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Henry Harold 1887  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Henry Harold  
1886 Real estate taxes – Henry Harold  
1886 Personal property taxes – Henry Harold  
1887 Real estate taxes – Henry Harold  
1887 Personal property taxes – Henry Harold  
1893 Plat map – S. Mitchell  
1906 Plat map – Rieka Mechtel

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Jacob and Maria Gloor 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – Mary Gloor  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Mary Gloor  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – Mary Gloor  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Frank Lynch  
1906 Plat map – Herbert Guest

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Herman Framke 1881  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – C. Babcock  
1906 Plat map – E. A. Marsh

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – George Churchill 1887  
1885 Real estate taxes – G. S. Churchill  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – G. S. Churchill  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – G. S. Churchill  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – G. Churchill  
1906 Plat map – Geo. S. Churchill

**Henry Harold** was born in Germany in 1842 and came from Wisconsin to Erie Township. He lived on his Erie homestead just until 1887, when he and his family moved to Hunter. He farmed there for many years but died at Reynolds, ND, in 1934. Henry was related to another homesteader through his wife, Mary Gloor (or Glohr), who was a Swiss native and the daughter of Jacob and **Mary Gloor**, whose US home was Green County, WI. Jacob was a soldier in the Civil War and died in 1862, leaving Mary to care for their mentally ill son, who was also named Jacob. The Gloor homestead in Erie Township was in the name of both the elder Mary and Jacob Jr. Mary Gloor was residing with her son-in-law and family as of 1885. The second homestead remained in the Gloor family until about 1890 but apparently never had permanent dwellings. I do not know the fate of Henry's mother-in-law, but Jacob Gloor Jr. died in the Fargo Poor House in 1900.

**Herman Froemke**, as his name was properly spelled, immigrated to the US with his parents when a small child. He had been born in 1856 in Bavaria. The Froemke family settled in Buffalo County, WI, and lived there until shortly before 1880, when they moved to the Mapleton-Prosper area of Cass County. Herman married shortly thereafter and filed a claim in 1881, but if he lived there, it was not for long. The family lived in the Sheldon, ND, area for a number of years but eventually resettled near Yakima, WA. Herman died there in 1916 after falling from a wagon and breaking his neck. There were a number of children born in North Dakota, but none had any known connections to Erie.

The village and township of Erie exist as Erie because of **George Churchill**, who came to the township and gave it the name of his former residence: Erie, PA. Wanting a railroad siding near his homestead in Section 14, he and his partner Frank Williams tricked the railroad into moving the site of the proposed village of Rush River to Section 16, where the village of Erie was soon founded. George had been born in 1862 in rural Crawford County, PA, but was living in Erie, PA, for some time before he came to Dakota. He married a young school teacher, Lulu Knapp, while living in Erie, and served in several township offices. The Churchills left in 1899, moving to Casselton, where he had business interests, but he kept the land until at least 1906. George lived to the age of 96 and is buried in Casselton.

## Section 4

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Eugene Q. Powlison 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – E. Q. Polison  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – E. Q. Powlison  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – E. Q. Powlison  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – E. Q. Powlison  
1906 Plat map – E. Q. Powlison

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Herman Carey 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – Perkins  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – E. L. Dows  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – Edwin L. Dows  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – David Dows  
1906 Plat map – George H. Phelps

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Eugene Q. Powlison 1894  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – E. Q. Powlison  
1906 Plat map – E. I. Paulison

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – John Goodspeed 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – John Goodspeed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Goodspeed  
1886 Real estate taxes – J. R. Goodspeed  
1886 Personal property taxes – John Goodspeed  
1887 Real estate taxes – John Goodspeed  
1887 Personal property taxes – John Goodspeed  
1893 Plat map – E. L. Dows  
1906 Plat map – George H. Phelps

**John Goodspeed** came from Thornapple, Barry County, MI, which was also the home of homesteaders Wesley Haight (Section 10) and John Blackburn (Section 6). He had married Ida Billington there in 1880 and was living in Wheatland just a few months later. The Goodspeeds lived in Erie for just a short time. Their departure may have been related to their divorce, which occurred in 1886. Goodspeed moved to Grand Forks some time prior to 1915, and his wife evidently returned to the east. As of 1930, John was living there and living with E. L. Dows, to whom he had transferred the land by 1893. I do not have much more information, but we know that he did not die in ND.

**Eugene Q. Powlison** and Augustus Sharpsteen (Section 6) were cousins from Kalamazoo County, MI. Sharpsteen's wife was from Galesburg in Kalamazoo County, and so they probably knew John Goodspeed and the other homesteaders from this area. Eugene was born in Arkansas in 1849. His parents lived there for a short time before returning to their earlier home at Galesburg. Eugene came to Wheatland in 1880, took out his homestead in Erie Township, but according to his biography, farmed for only a year. He then became a grain buyer and later opened the telephone exchange in Wheatland, where he lived and also worked as an undertaker. Eugene died in 1917 and is buried in Wheatland. Eugene's parents and several of his siblings lived in the vicinity of Erie and Wheatland and were well known in the early days. His second wife was Susie Mosher, sister of Alfred Mosher (Section 18), who we will meet soon.

We know literally nothing about homesteader **Herman Carey** and the mysterious "Perkins," both of whose names are associated with the NE quarter of Section 4.

## Section 6

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – William Lakey 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Roderick Cameron  
1886 Real estate taxes – R. Cameron  
1886 Personal property taxes – A. Cameron  
1887 Real estate taxes – A. Clandening  
1887 Personal property taxes – B. C. Rose  
1893 Plat map – Security Trust Co.  
1906 Plat map – S. B. Clary

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Augustus Sharpsteen 1896  
1885 Real estate taxes – Peter Blair  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – Peter Blair  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – A. Sharpsteen  
1906 Plat map – M. A. Baldwin

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – John Blackburn 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – John Blackburn  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Wm. Sampson  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – W. H. Sampson  
1887 Personal property taxes – W. H. Sampson  
1893 Plat map – W. H. Sampson  
1906 Plat map – J. W. Rutherford

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – Hugh McLean 1893  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Hugh McLean  
1906 Plat map – Hugh McLean

The sole British homesteader in Erie was **William Lakey**, who was born in Devonshire in 1854 and emigrated to Wisconsin in 1872. After a short stay in Casselton, he homesteaded in Erie. Mr. Lakey was married in 1882 and then moved to a farm near Buffalo, where the family remained for the rest of their lives. He died in 1916, leaving four children, none of whom had a known connection back to Erie.

**John Blackburn** was one of a trio of homesteaders from Thornapple, Barry County, MI. He was also born near Rochester, NY, in 1852 and later moved to Michigan, where he must have known Wesley Haight (Section 10) as a young man. He was working in Thornapple as of 1870, married there in 1878, and lived in Erie for a short time. Blackburn was divorced from his wife and returned to Rochester, NY, where he died in 1913.

**Augustus Sharpsteen** was Eugene Powlison's cousin from Kalamazoo County, MI. He was born in Thornapple, MI, in 1859 and homesteaded in Erie for just a short time. Augustus moved to Fargo and was listed in the 1895 city directory as a farmer. By 1905 he was listed as a teamster. Augustus' brother Herman farmed in Dows Townships, and his son John married in Cass County in 1902 and is known to have lived in Yakima, WA, but Augustus disappears. I am not sure if he remained in North Dakota, moved to Washington State, or for that matter relocated to somewhere else.

**Hugh McLean** was among a contingent of homesteaders from Bruce County, Ontario. He was born there in 1861 and married Annie McDonald while still living there in 1891. Soon thereafter, the McLeans came to Erie and remained there for the rest of their lives. She died in 1935, and he passed away one year later. They are buried in Erie Cemetery. Hugh and Annie McLean did not have children, but Hugh's brother Donald was an Erie resident, and his sister Kate married Roderick Cameron, who owned the NW quarter of Section 6.

## Section 8

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Fred Reynolds 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – W. P. Burdick  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Hugh McLean  
1906 Plat map – Anna B. McLean

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – William Burdick 1885  
1885 Real estate taxes – W. P. Burdick  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Wm. Whitman  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – W. S. Whitman  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – D. McLean  
1906 Plat map – H. A. McLean

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – James W. Oakes 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – H. Pollison (Powlison)  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Mrs. A. King  
1906 Plat map – John W. Rutherford

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – John Rutherford 1896  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes -- none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – J. Rutherford  
1906 Plat map – John W. Rutherford

Two of the homesteaders in Section 8, **Fred Reynolds** and **William Burdick**, stayed for only a short while and are unknown to us. I suspect that **James W. Oakes** was the same J. W. Oakes listed in the 1880 census as a merchant living in Wheatland, and that he is the James W. Oakes who was living with his wife Gertrude and son Harry in Spokane in 1900 and 1910 and in Los Angeles in 1920 and 1930. I suspect, but we cannot be certain.

**John Rutherford**, born in 1839 and a native of Scotland, offers us one of Erie Township's more interesting homesteader stories. According to multiple sources, John came to the US in 1888 or 1889, much later than most of the other settlers. His brother James had emigrated earlier to Ontario, where he married and eventually settled in Bruce County—home of so many immigrants to Erie Township and vicinity. I am not sure of the exact timing, but James Rutherford brought his family to Dows Township sometime around 1890, and John must have joined him there. John Rutherford filed a claim for a quarter in Section 8, and although he is listed as owner of the land as early as 1893, he seems not to have lived on the homestead. At any rate, James Rutherford died in February of 1899 and John married his widow Hannah that October and became the stepfather for James' large family that included 17 children, not all of whom lived to adulthood. John and Hannah Rutherford lived in Dows Township. John died in 1917 and is buried in Page.

## Section 10

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Charles W. Miller 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – C. W. Darling  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – A. H. Laurance  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – Not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Geo. S. Churchill  
1906 Plat map – G. S. Churchill

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Amos S. Williams  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – A. S. Williams  
1906 Plat map – Frank L. Williams

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – C. Wesley Haight 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – C. W. Hate  
1885 Personal property taxes – C. W. Haight  
1886 Real estate taxes – C. W. Haight  
1886 Personal property taxes – C. W. Haight  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Wm. Albert  
1906 Plat map – Wm. Albert

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – Charles Churchill 1887  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Chas. Churchill  
1886 Real estate taxes – Chas. Churchill  
1886 Personal property taxes – Chas. Churchill  
1887 Real estate taxes – Charles Churchill  
1887 Personal property taxes – C. Churchill  
1893 Plat map – George S. Churchill  
1906 Plat map – Dietrick Albert

**Wesley Haight** was the third of three homesteaders from Thornapple, Barry County, MI (the others were John Blackurn and John Goodspeed). Wesley, who had been born near Rochester, NY, in 1844, came from Michigan in 1880 and worked as a blacksmith in Wheatland before moving to Erie, where he homesteaded and also worked as a blacksmith. He left sometime after 1885, first to Oregon and then to California, where he died in 1930.

The other two traceable homesteaders in Section 10 (Charles Miller is not among them—he disappeared early on and I am unable to find him) were linked to George Churchill (Section 2). **Charles Churchill** was in fact his uncle. Charles came to Erie from Morrison, IL, where had been farming. Charles and his family returned to Morrison after just a few years in Dakota. He died and is buried there. **Amos Williams** was the father of George's partner, Frank Williams, who helped found the village of Erie but did not file a claim. Amos was a grain buyer from Erie, PA, and unlike his son, likely did not come to Erie. I suspect that Amos was the homesteader of record on behalf of his son.



## Section 12

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – John Mathews 1887  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – John Mathews  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – John Mathews  
1887 Real estate taxes – John Mathews  
1887 Personal property taxes – John Mathews  
1893 Plat map – John Mathews  
1906 Plat map – Hannah Mathews

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Frank Buck 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – Frank Buck  
1885 Personal property taxes – Frank Buck  
1886 Real estate taxes – Frank Buck  
1886 Personal property taxes – Frank Buck  
1887 Real estate taxes – Frank Buck  
1887 Personal property taxes – Frank Buck  
1893 Plat map – Frank Buck  
1906 Plat map – Walker Thompson

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Walker Thompson 1893  
1885 Real estate taxes – Tim Olero (crossed out)  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Walker Thompson  
1906 Plat map – Walker Thompson

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – Walker Thompson 1893  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – W. D. Thompson  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Walker Thompson  
1906 Plat map – Walker Thompson

**Frank Buck** was born in Germany in 1848. He immigrated from Mecklenburg in 1870, coming to Detroit, MI, and then to Jamestown, ND, for a short while before homesteading in Erie Township. Although the land was in Frank's name as late as 1893, he and his family moved to Hunter sometime between 1884 and 1887, where he farmed until his death in 1920. Frank Buck had 10 children, eight by his first wife and two by his second. Many of them remained in Cass County.

**John Mathews** was born in Germany in 1837 and immigrated to the US in 1871, settling at Dearborn, MI, where daughter Emma was born in 1877. The Mathews family homesteaded near the Buck family in Section 12 and knew them well. Mrs. Mathews, whose given name was Hannah, worked as a midwife. John, who died in 1901, and Hannah, who died in 1904, are both buried in Erie Cemetery. Their daughter Emma married Marshall Sloan, who with his wife lived in Erie for many years.

There is no evidence that Frank Buck and John Mathews knew each other in Germany, but the fact that they both lived in/near Detroit, MI, before coming to Erie suggests that they were acquainted—either in Michigan or perhaps earlier in Germany.

**Walker Thompson** was born in 1855 in Pennsylvania and lived as a young man in Crawford County—near George Churchill's birthplace. Walker was married in Erie, PA, and came to Erie, ND, in the early 1880s. His wife died in 1891, and I suspect that on the recommendation of his neighbors Herman Froemke (Section 2) and Jacob Markey (Section 24), Sarah Marsh was brought from Buffalo County, WI (Herman and Jacob's earlier home), to keep house. Walker soon married Sarah, and they farmed at Erie until 1948, when both died. None of Walker's children by his first wife remained in Erie, but Floyd and Fern, his two children by Sarah, were long time Erie residents.

## Section 14

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – John M. Bartley 1881  
1885 Real estate taxes – Delemeter and Noble  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Delamater and Noble  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – G. B. Delamater & Co.  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – L. Delamater & Co.  
1906 Plat map – Dell Farm Co.

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Peter Laidlaw 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – Delemeter and Noble  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Delamater and Noble  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – G. B. Delamater & Co.  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – L. Delamater & Co.  
1906 Plat map – Dell Farm Co.

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – George Churchill 1893  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – G. S. Churchill  
1906 Plat map – Geo. S. Churchill

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – John McKee 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – J. E. Middaugh  
1885 Personal property taxes -- none  
1886 Real estate taxes – J. E. Middaugh (crossed out)  
1886 Personal property taxes – G. S. Churchill  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – G. S. Churchill  
1906 Plat map – Geo. S. Churchill

With the exception of George Churchill, who has already appeared in our narrative, Section 14 was the domain of Canadian immigrants. **John Bartley** was a Canadian who may have been related to the family of Wallace Hill (Section 32), whose wife's maiden name was Bartley. We know little about him other than he was living in Fargo as of 1883 and working as a policeman. The remaining two Canadian homesteaders on Section 14 were from Dufferin County, Ontario. **Peter Laidlaw** probably did not live on his homestead. It passed to the Delamater (not Delemeter) Land Company early on. Laidlaw was living in Davenport, ND, as of 1895 and eventually returned to his homeland, where he died in 1927. If **Jack McKee** lived on his homestead, it was not for long. Churchill and Williams, Erie's founders, induced him to sell his land and run the village's general store. McKee was Erie's first postmaster, but he left about 1890, relocating to Dwight, ND, where he ran a machine shop. Jack McKee's wife was Janet Cameron, daughter of John Cameron (Section 26), an immigrant from Bruce County, Ontario.

## Section 18

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Alfred Mosher 1889  
1885 Real estate taxes – Warren E. Mosher  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Warren Mosher  
1886 Personal property taxes – Warren Mosher  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – Ward Mosher  
1893 Plat map – Warren Mosher  
1906 Plat map – Alfred Mosher

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Alfred Mosher 1895  
1885 Real estate taxes – Alfred Mosher  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Alfred Mosher  
1906 Plat map – Alfred Mosher

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Alfred Mosher 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Alfred Mosher  
1886 Real estate taxes – Alfred Mosher (north half)  
1886 Personal property taxes – A. Mosher (north half)  
1887 Real estate taxes – A. Mosher (north half)  
1887 Personal property taxes – A. Mosher (north half)  
1893 Plat map – Alfred Mosher  
1906 Plat map – Alfred Mosher

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – Alfred Mosher 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Alfred Mosher  
1886 Real estate taxes – Alfred Mosher (north half)  
1886 Personal property taxes – A. Mosher (north half)  
1887 Real estate taxes – A. Mosher (north half)  
1887 Personal property taxes – A. Mosher (north half)  
1893 Plat map – Alfred Mosher  
1906 Plat map – Alfred Mosher

**Alfred Mosher** was born in Hoosick, NY in 1834 and married Persis Parker in Vermont. The family lived in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois before coming to Wheatland in 1880. Even after they homesteaded in Erie, they continued to spend their winters in Wheatland. Persis Mosher passed away in 1902. Alfred, who ran a mercantile business in Erie in addition to farming, died in Minneapolis in 1920. Both are buried at Erie.

Alfred and Persis Mosher had 11 children, several of whom married and remained in the area. Son Warren, who was born in 1862 when the family lived in Illinois, homesteaded near his father but was working in Page, ND, by 1900. He died in 1909. Arthur, another of Alfred and Persis Mosher's sons, was also well known in Erie. He worked in a store, served as postmaster, and was employed by the Erie State Bank. As a young man, he was also involved in road and bridge construction in the township.

## Section 20

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – John Cuthbertson Sr. heirs 1899  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – E. Helling  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – A. Hellen  
1893 Plat map – J. Cuthbertson  
1906 Plat map – Wm. Cuthbertson

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Thomas Jenkins 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – Thos. Jenkins  
1885 Personal property taxes – Thomas W. Jenkins  
1886 Real estate taxes – Thomas Jenkins  
1886 Personal property taxes – Thomas Jenkins  
1887 Real estate taxes – Thomas Jenkins  
1887 Personal property taxes – Thomas Jenkins  
1893 Plat map – Jas. Jenkins  
1906 Plat map – James Jenkins

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – John Cuthbertson 1896  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – J. Cuthbertson  
1906 Plat map – Wm. Cuthbertson

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – James Jenkins 1896  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes -- none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Jas. Jenkins  
1906 Plat map – James Jenkins

**John Cuthbertson Sr.**, was a Canadian homesteader who came from Ashfield in Huron County, Ontario. He was born in Scotland in 1823, married Elizabeth Murdoch in Canada, and farmed there until 1881, when he came with his family to Wheatland. Although John had homesteaded in Erie Township, the family lived between Absaraka and Wheatland. John died in 1895, and Elizabeth passed away 13 years later. Their son **John Cuthbertson Jr.**, who had been born in Ontario in 1862, also had a homestead in Section 20, and his family's land passed to him. John Jr. farmed in Erie and died in 1944. His son, also named John Cuthbertson, married Stella Book and farmed for many years in Erie, too.

**James Jenkins** came to Erie with his brother **Thomas Jenkins**. Like the Cuthbertsons, they had been living in Huron County, Ontario. Thomas, who had been born in 1858, soon moved on to Western Canada (he died in Manitoba in 1935), and so James farmed both homesteads. He married Magdalene Morrow, daughter of Christopher and Sarah Morrow, and a homesteader in her own right (Section 28). James and Magdalene Jenkins had five children, four of whom were well known in Erie: son Jimmy Jenkins and daughters Minnie Jenkins Warmington, Susan Jenkins Kyser, and Sarah Jenkins Brewer. James and Magdalene Jenkins died in 1924 and 1917, respectively, and are both buried in Erie.

## Section 22

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Benjamin Hislop 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1885 Personal property taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1886 Real estate taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1886 Personal property taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1887 Real estate taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1887 Personal property taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1893 Plat map – Mrs. S. C. Delamater  
1906 Plat map – Mrs. S. C. Delamater

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Henry Schroeder 1892  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Henry Schroeder  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – Henry Schroeder  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Henry Schroeder  
1906 Plat map – Henry Schroeder

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Charles McGill 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1885 Personal property taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1886 Real estate taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1886 Personal property taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1887 Real estate taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1887 Personal property taxes – G. B. Delamater  
1893 Plat map – Mrs. S. C. Delamater  
1906 Plat map – Mrs. S. C. Delamater

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – Henry Schroeder 1887  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Henry Schroeder  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – Henry Schroeder  
1887 Real estate taxes – Henry Schroeder  
1887 Personal property taxes – H. Schroeder  
1893 Plat map – Henry Schroeder  
1906 Plat map – Henry Schroeder

Oxford County in southwestern Ontario contributed five homesteaders to Erie Township, among them **Benjamin Hislop** and **Charles McGill**, who like the Hill family and Walter Laing (Sections 28 and 30), were from the small community of East Zorra. Hislop was born in East Zorra in 1856, came to Fargo about 1880, returned to Oxford County to get married in 1882, and then came back to Dakota. He remained just a short time before moving to Superior, WI, where he worked as a liveryman. He died there in 1908.

McGill was also born in 1856, likely in East Zorra. He came to Dakota in 1878 and as of 1885 was working as an “agent” in Fargo. Like Hislop, he returned to Oxford County to get married and remained in Dakota only briefly. The McGills were in Portland, OR, as of 1900, where he was working in retail. He died there in 1923. Benjamin Hislop and Charles McGill had no known family relationships to the Hill and Laing families, but it seems likely they were acquainted while living in East Zorra.

**Henry Schroeder** (1852-1936) and his wife Minnie Krüger Schroeder (1854-1944) came to Dakota from Wabasha County, MN. Both were born in Germany. They married in Minnesota in 1875 and raised eight children to adulthood, remaining in Erie until their deaths. Most of their children moved away, but their daughter Ann became the wife of local resident John Beith, and daughter, Clara (1888-1951) married Louis Bolmeier (1883-1956), nephew of August Bolmeier, whose family had extensive retail business interests in Erie.

## Section 24

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – James Brown 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – Shaddock  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Shaddock  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – Jacob Markey  
1887 Personal property taxes – Jacob Markey  
1893 Plat map – Jacob Markey  
1906 Plat map – Jacob Markey

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Jacob Markey 1887  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Jacob Markey  
1886 Real estate taxes – Jacob Markey  
1886 Personal property taxes – Jacob Markey  
1887 Real estate taxes – Jacob Markey  
1887 Personal property taxes – Jacob Markey  
1893 Plat map – Jacob Markey  
1906 Plat map – Jacob Markey

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Louis S. Green  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – L. S. Green  
1906 Plat map – Louis E. Green

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – Charles A. Pelton  
1885 Real estate taxes – C. A. Pelton  
1885 Personal property taxes – C. A. Pelton  
1886 Real estate taxes – Chas. Pelton  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – C. A. Pelton  
1887 Personal property taxes – C. A. Pelton  
1893 Plat map – Chas. Pelton  
1906 Plat map – Wm. McDonald

Neither **James Brown** nor **Louis Green** have names that are easily traceable, and so I have not been able to identify them. A Louis Green did live in Grand Forks and also in Fargo, but neither had the right middle initial and so likely were not the Erie homesteader and longtime land owner.

On the other hand, we know **Jacob Markey** well. He was born in Aargau, Switzerland, in 1846 and immigrated with his parents when he was just seven years old. The family lived for a short time in Ohio and then moved to Nelson, Buffalo County, WI. He married Minnie Tritchler in Wabasha County, MN (home of the Henry Schroeder family) in 1877 and came to Erie in 1880 or 1881. Jacob and Minnie farmed east of Erie until at least 1906, when they were divorced. Jacob lived in Casselton for a while but eventually retired to Buffalo County, WI, where he died in 1933. There were 11 children, many of whom died young, and although several did stay in ND, they did not remain in Erie.

**Charles Pelton** was born in 1847 in Great Barrington, MA. He lived on his Erie homestead until sometime after 1890, when he moved to Arthur and farmed there. Charles died in 1900 and is buried in Amenia. His wife, Margaret Lutz Pelton, survived him by 50 years and died in Sonoma County, CA, where their son and his family lived.

## Section 26

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Oscar White 1889  
1885 Real estate taxes – S. D. Warner  
1885 Personal property taxes – S. D. Warner  
1886 Real estate taxes – S. D. Warner  
1886 Personal property taxes – C. B. Warner  
1887 Real estate taxes – C. B. Warner  
1887 Personal property taxes – C. B. Warner  
1893 Plat map – C. B. Warner  
1906 Plat map – C. B. Warner

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – George Serr 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – S. D. Warner  
1886 Real estate taxes – S. D. Warner  
1886 Personal property taxes – C. B. Warner  
1887 Real estate taxes – C. B. Warner  
1887 Personal property taxes – C. B. Warner  
1893 Plat map – C. B. Warner  
1906 Plat map – Geo. H. Hill

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Elisabeth and John Cameron 1889  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – John Cameron  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – A. Cameron  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – A. Cameron  
1893 Plat map – Alex Cameron  
1906 Plat map – Alex Cameron

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – James B. Murray 1881  
1885 Real estate taxes – Unknown  
1885 Personal property taxes -- none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – Unknown  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Alex Cameron  
1906 Plat map – Alex Cameron

Both **Oscar White** and **James B. Murray** are unknown to us. The Cameron family, on the other hand, was well known in Erie.

A Scotsman, **John Cameron** was born in 1820 and emigrated to Ontario when a young man. John married Annie (Elizabeth) Cameron there in 1847, and like several other Erie Township homesteaders lived for a number of years in Bruce County before bringing his family to Erie. He died soon thereafter, in 1886, but Annie lived until 1908. The Camerons left four sons and six daughters. Their son Alex farmed the original Cameron homestead, and their son Rory farmed in Section 6 and Section 30. Their daughter Grace married Peter Stuart, who operated the “Big Store” in Erie for many years.

**George Serr** was a homesteader from Erie, PA, and presumably an acquaintance of Erie’s founders, George Churchill and Frank Williams. George was born in 1843 in Germany and as a young man lived in Erie, PA, with his parents and eventually his wife and family. He and the family are listed twice in the 1880 census, in both Erie, ND, and Erie, PA. They stayed in Erie Township, but apparently not much longer than 1885. After their departure, the family moved to Corunna, MI, where his parents had moved and some of his family were living. He died there in 1909.

## Section 28

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Magdalene Morrow 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – Margaret (sic) Jenkins  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – James Jenkins  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – James Jenkins  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Jas. Jenkins  
1906 Plat map – James Jenkins

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – William Morrow 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – Wm. Morrow  
1885 Personal property taxes – H. Campbell  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – Wm. Morrow  
1887 Real estate taxes – Wm. Morrow  
1887 Personal property taxes – Wm. Morrow  
1893 Plat map – Wm. Morrow  
1906 Plat map – Herman L. Schroeder

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Robert H. Morrow 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – R. H. Morrow  
1885 Personal property taxes – R. H. Morrow  
1886 Real estate taxes – R. H. Morrow  
1886 Personal property taxes – R. H. Morrow  
1887 Real estate taxes – R. H. Morrow  
1887 Personal property taxes – R. H. Morrow  
1893 Plat map – R. H. Morrow  
1906 Plat map – R. H. Morrow

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – Robert Morrow 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – R. B. Morrow  
1885 Personal property taxes – R. B. Morrow  
1886 Real estate taxes – Wm. Kirk  
1886 Personal property taxes – R. B. Morrow  
1887 Real estate taxes – Robert B. Morrow  
1887 Personal property taxes – R. B. Morrow  
1893 Plat map – R. B. Morrow  
1906 Plat map – R. B. Morrow

The arrival of five related members of the Morrow family marked an important event in migration from Ontario to Erie Township. Christopher and Sarah Morrow left Ireland with their family in the 1870s and settled on a farm near Goderich in Huron County, where Christopher died in 1879. Sarah Morrow brought her family to Erie Township in 1880-1881, and they took up five separate homesteads, most in Section 28. One (Section 30) was in her name, and the others were in the names of her sons **William** and **Robert H. Morrow**, her daughter **Magdalene Morrow**, and her son-in-law, who was confusingly named **Robert B. Morrow**. Long time farmers in Erie Township, Sarah's sons and son-in-law all married and had a total of 21 children, many of whom married and raised their families in the area. Daughter Magdalene married James Jenkins (Section 20), who had come from Huron County, Ontario.



## Section 30

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Walter Laing 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – Walter Laing  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – W. Lang  
1886 Personal property taxes – W. Lang  
1887 Real estate taxes – Walter Lang  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Anna Burgess  
1906 Plat map – Abe Burgess

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – George H. Hill 1889  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – Harrison Hill  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – G. H. Hill  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – G. H. Hill  
1893 Plat map – G. H. Hill  
1906 Plat map – T. M. Nelson

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Sarah Morrow 1883  
1885 Real estate taxes – Sarah Morrow  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Sarah Morrow  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – R. H. Morrow  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – R. Cameron  
1906 Plat map – R. K. Cameron

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – John Fowler 1898  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes -- none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – J. Fowler  
1906 Plat map – John Fowler

Like Benjamin Hislop and Charles McGill (both Section 22), **Harrison Hill** and **Walter Laing** came from Oxford County, which lies in southwestern Ontario, almost equidistant from Lakes Erie, Ontario, and Huron. All were from East Zorra Township, which is just north of the city of Woodstock. Harrison (and his brother Wallace, who homesteaded in Section 32) were two of the children of Henry and Jane Dolson Hill, who in 1881 homesteaded west of Erie in Rich Township. Harrison and his wife Lizzie Bartley (a possible relative of John Bartley, who homesteaded in Section 14) lived in Erie until their deaths but were childless and left no descendants.

Walter Laing was related to the Hill family through his wife, Miranda Burgess, who was the daughter of Jane Dolson Hill's sister, Anna Burgess. Walter died in 1892, when he was only in his mid-40s, and is buried at Buffalo, ND. Walter's land went to his mother-in-law, Anna Burgess and then to Anna's son, Abram Burgess, a well-known early Erie resident who married Charlotte, daughter of Robert B. Morrow (Section 28).

## Section 32

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Charles Bissett 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – Charles Bissett  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – Charles Bissett  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – H. C. Hill  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – H. C. Hill  
1906 Plat map – Wallace C. Hill

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – Wallace C. Hill 1896  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – W. C. Hill  
1906 Plat map – Wallace C. Hill

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Archibald H. McLean 1884  
1885 Real estate taxes – G. H. Hill  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – lot listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – G. H. Hill  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – G. H. Hill  
1906 Plat map – Wallace C. Hill

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – William Ellis 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – Wm. Ellis  
1885 Personal property taxes – Wm. Ellis  
1886 Real estate taxes – Wm. Ellis  
1886 Personal property taxes – Wm. Ellis  
1887 Real estate taxes – Wm. Ellis  
1887 Personal property taxes – Wm. Ellis  
1893 Plat map – John Lewis  
1906 Plat map – Wallace C. Hill

**Charles Bissett, Archibald McLean, and William Ellis** were among the Erie Township homesteaders from Bruce County, Ontario. All three were of about the same age. Bissett and Ellis were born in Canada and grew up on adjacent farms near Kincardine. Archibald McLean lived nearby and was Ellis' brother-in-law. The Bissett, Ellis, and McLean claims were all adjacent to one another in Section 32, but none of the three friends remained in Erie for very long. Charles went to Washington State before 1900, transferring his land to his brother Duncan. He died in Everett, WA, in 1925. William (1852-1929) left for Superior, WI, at about the same time. Archibald departed, too, to places unknown.

Charles Bissett may have given up his homestead and moved west, but Duncan (1859-1938) remained. He married Catherine Cuthbertson, the daughter of John Cuthbertson Sr. (Section 20), another Canadian homesteader, and they farmed in Empire Township. Their son John took over the farm after his father's death and remained there until 1950.

**Wallace Hill** (1865-1912) was the brother of Harrison Hill (Section 30), who we met earlier. He married Luella Harrington (1868-1941), and they spent their lives in Erie. Three of their children had longstanding connections to Erie: Fern Hill Bolmeier, Willis Hill and his wife Esther Bolmeier, and Clark Hill, who married Florence Morrow.

## Section 34

### *NW Quarter*

Homesteader – Sidney Smith 1882  
1885 Real estate taxes – Unknown  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – Mrs. E. P. Campbell  
1906 Plat map – Julius Weiderman

### *NE Quarter*

Homesteader – William J. Conan 1881  
1885 Real estate taxes – Unknown  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – none  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – none  
1893 Plat map – W. J. Conan  
1906 Plat map – William J. Conan

### *SW Quarter*

Homesteader – Harry F. Nutting 1896  
1885 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1885 Personal property taxes – none  
1886 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1886 Personal property taxes – Harry F. Nutting  
1887 Real estate taxes – not listed  
1887 Personal property taxes – Harry F. Nutting  
1893 Plat map – Harry F. Nutting  
1906 Plat map – William Grant\*

### *SE Quarter*

Homesteader – Silas Miller 1881  
1885 Real estate taxes – W. H. Smith  
1885 Personal property taxes – W. H. Smith  
1886 Real estate taxes – W. H. Smith  
1886 Personal property taxes – W. H. Smith  
1887 Real estate taxes – W. H. Smith  
1887 Personal property taxes – W. H. Smith  
1893 Plat map – H. F. Nutting  
1906 Plat map – William Grant\*

\*William Grant's name listed with that of Dan Cooney in parentheses.

**Sidney Smith** and **Silas Miller** are both unknown to us, but it appears that a relative of Silas, one W. H. Smith, did reside on his homestead for a few years. **William J. Conan**, on the other hand, apparently did not live on his homestead. Born in 1844 in Wellington County, Ontario, he was a physician living in Fargo as of 1880. Conan moved to Superior, WI, in 1895 and died in Milwaukee in 1926.

**Harry Nutting** was born in Iowa in 1865 and came to Wheatland with his mother in 1880. He married Luella Mosher (1866-1954), daughter of Alfred Mosher (Section 16), in 1886 and began farming in Erie in 1887. He farmed until 1899, when he and Luella moved into town, so that he could open the Mosher & Nutting Store. Harry died in 1956 and is buried with his wife in Erie.

## *Perspective*

Eleven of the original homesteader families—Cameron, Cuthbertson, Hill, J. Jenkins, Mathews, McLean, Morrow, Mosher, Nutting, Schroeder, and Thompson—remained in Erie for at least one generation and in several cases, for many generations. A few descendants are still in the area, but so many of them, too, have departed. Old timers will remember someone from most of these families, often a neighbor from their childhood. But many of the younger generation would not even recognize the names of the people who lived on the land and broke up Erie's prairie sod in the late nineteenth century.

Ten of the original homesteader families moved away early on, but not too far. Buck and Harold went east to Hunter, and Lakey and Lang fled west to Buffalo. Others relocated to Casselton, Grand Forks, Wheatland, Dwight, Arthur, and nearby Dows Township.

The remaining settlers fall into two broad categories: those who repatriated to their earlier homes and those who moved on, often but not inevitably, to the west. Among the former are Blackburn, C. Churchill, Laidlaw, and Markey, all of who eventually went back to where they came from. The latter group includes Haight (to California), McGill (to Oregon), Froemke and Bissett (to Washington), T. Jenkins (to Manitoba), and Serr (to Michigan). Three others—Ellis, Conan, and Hislop—were for some reason drawn to the small city of Superior, Wisconsin.

And then there are the eleven families that remain unknown. They thought, at least for a short time, that their future might include a quarter section of land in Erie. Some gave it a shot and some did not, but for now they have receded into the mists of time.