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When Bob Kirk moved from Lot 46 Kildonan across the Red River to the Middlechurch Home in 1977, he left his beloved residence of more than sixty years.

Now ninety years of age, Mr. Kirk recalls happy memories of suburban life in North Kildonan, and of a long business association with the Swift Canadian Co. Ltd. He retired in 1953, after serving as office manager and auditor for the St. Boniface packing plant for forty-one years.

The house he left at 1842 Henderson Highway is one of the oldest remaining in the area. A two-story log house, it was built about 1871 by Donald Matheson. The building is the contemporary of a similar log house, located on the Seitz property at 2112 Henderson Highway, presently in a controversial position.

R.J. Kirk joined Mr. Swift's company in 1908, in Omaha, Nebraska. He recalls the founder's ingenuity in arranging for the first refrigerated box cars to be built for shipping fresh meats a long distance, to the eastern United States market.

In 1912, when Swift Canadian Co. Ltd. bought out the D.Y. Griffin packing plant in Elmwood, Bob Kirk was selected to manage the office affairs of the new branch. He and his young bride travelled by train from Omaha to Sioux City and St. Paul, then to Winnipeg, via the Soo Line.

On the wall of his comfortable room at Middlechurch Home, hangs a framed presentation given on the occasion of his thirtieth anniversary with the company. Below a safety-pin holding a man's tie in place, it reads: "Bob

Kirk — January 13, 1908, Office Boy. January 13, '38, Office Big Boy. Yesterday — Today — Tomorrow. He loves to fight — that's the Irish in him. He's a little Scotch — which qualifies him for the job. Here's to Bob, on his 30th year — and may the succeeding years not make any change in you. Presented by the Winnipeg Gang, Swift Canadian Co., January 13, 1938."

In 1919, \$6,500 bought the river property of Mr. and Mrs. Kirk's dreams: five acres of woodlot on the Red River, a log house and a log stable on Lot 46. Directly to the north was "Stornoway", the historic McIvor home named after the family's ancient birthplace in the Outer Hebrides Islands, off the west coast of Scotland. The present McIvor Avenue, nearby, was one of the main east-west trails of the early settlers.

Today, Bob Kirk paints a picture with his memories. "Those early mornings were often exciting," he recalls. "We stabled a team of horses, and sometimes when I went out I might find a big buck deer with two or three does in the stable with the horses. It was quite a sight to watch them jump over our six-foot fence with ease. They used to wander down to the river through the bush from Bird's Hill.

"We had a chicken house added to the stable, on the warm side facing east. We

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raised Barred Rock bantams from an incubator, just for our own family's interest. If you've ever seen those little bantam roosters strut, you'll know how attractive a breed they are.

"I had my own car, a rare sedan. It was a Buick five-passenger model. Most automobiles in those days were open touring models. For winter driving, we rigged up a hole through the dashboard, brought the heat inside, direct from the motor."

Mr. Kirk drove from North Kildonan to his office near the Louise Bridge (later to the present Swift plant in St. Boniface). "You learned to stay well back of any car that might be ahead on those gravelled roads," Mr. Kirk recalls. "Took about fifteen minutes to drive to the plant."

"In the wintertime, we had our Peguis snowshoe club. We met regularly for tramps across the virgin snow. Seems a shame this sport isn't very popular anymore. Once, we all took the train to Teulon, then snowshoed right across country to home."

In the summer, Mr. and Mrs. Kirk and their three children, Robert, Jean and Franklin, enjoyed many a family outing in the Buick sedan. They drove to Winnipeg recreation sites, to the park in Selkirk, and to picnic spots near Bird's Hill. In 1926, on his first three-

week vacation, Mr. Kirk took his family to New York City. He drove the Buick all the way and return, over gravel roads.

The Kirk family were members of John Black Memorial United Church. Mr. Kirk served as church treasurer for seventeen years.

Mrs. Kirk passed away in 1969, after a lengthy illness. For several of those years she was cared for by her husband. Mr. Kirk remained in his beloved home for almost ten years after the loss of his wife.

His son, Dr. R.J. Kirk, was in charge of the Manitoba Government's experimental fur farm, on the campus of the University of Manitoba. Dr. Kirk is married to the former Edna Werrell, daughter of another early North Kildonan family.

Mr. Kirk's other son, Franklin, lives in Tacoma, Washington. His daughter Jean, Mrs. L.C. Hagman, resides in Los Angeles.

Bob Kirk, in his ninety-first year, is in good physical condition, retains a generous measure of sight, hearing, and speech. Most of all, he retains wonderful memories of excellence in a business career, and of a warm family life in North Kildonan.