Biography of C. H. Hamilton — father of E. S. Hamilton
--Lavon and Alfred Hunsberger

The name of the pioneer is C. H. Hamilton whose parents were sailors and fishermen out of Halifax, Nova Scotia; Father went abroad at the age of nine years and became captain or master of the ship at the age of 17. My mother's name was Elizabeth Ann Down whose parents were lumbermen on the Penobscot River cutting the logs, manufacturing the lumber, taking it to the ocean by rafting it together and running it by ship to Bangor, Maine for sale. There is at the present time a house (I think near Enfield, Maine) which I believe is about 120 years old, made from the hemlock lumber and brick they burned from the clay and plaster they made from the limestone.

My father lost his parents when he was a baby. He was raised by his grandparents until he became nine years of age when he took to shipboard.

My mother's parents came to Minnesota in '58 taking a homestead 75 miles northwest of St. Anthony (now Minneapolis) where they spent the remainder of their days,--grandfather living to be a hundred or more.

My father and mother were married in the state of Maine where they lived for eight or nine years. Then they emigrated to Minnesota and settled near my grandfather where they spent the remainder of their days, both living to ripe old ages.

E. S. Hamilton .

Cape Elizabeth Depot near Portland, Maine.

May 31, 1861, State of Maine, U. S. A. At the age of two years I was taken to what is now St. Cloud, Minnesota by my parents where I was raised until of the age of twenty-one.

I came to North Dakota as I was of age and starting out for myself.

While working in the logging woods in Northern Minnesota, I was told of opportunities of getting free land in North Dakota.

I came from the woods straight to Sanborn, North Dakota. In crossing the Red River at Fargo, I saw large buildings with only the top or roof out of the water and many smaller buildings floating down the river or lodged against the bridge and we had a man to walk ahead of the train with hip boots to see if the track was in place for 6 miles in the vicinity of Casselton.

We landed in Sanborn March 28, 1882 where we had fine weather and people hauled their goods as far as Bald Hill Creek where they left them on the bank because the creek was too deep to ford and later coming to find the water had raised and floated their goods away. Another man hauled his goods which were many and piled them on the prairie with a big tent spread over them, went and staked his claim and on his return found nothing but a pile of ashes caused by the prairie fires. I drove for a living the first year out of Sanborn locating settlers. John Fero, Chas. Mosley, John Byington, Don Knapp and many others.

E. S.

Biography of (C. H.) Hamilton
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I carried robes and when night came I would picket one horse and crawl under the buggy until morning, eating lunch which I carried. Antelope and deer were very thick at that time. I can remember seeing a herd of 16 antelope one morning near where the town of Dazey stands. The spring of 1882 was very cold and stormy. We had a very bad blizzard for three days, beginning the 2nd of May and another the 22nd of May.

About the 20th of June, 1882, thirteen of us started out with lumber and provisions to find some land or claims as we called them then. I believe there were eight teams. We got out to the 20-Mile Camp the first day. The next day we got to Lake Jessie where we found a little shanty with a tight roof and we were glad for it was raining and we all got inside to sleep, 2 on a little bunk in the corner and 11 of us side by each on the floor,--and we covered it completely. When we wanted to turn over, one had to stand while the others turned and then lie down again on the other side. The next day was clear, however, and we got to what was called the big slough about 6 miles northwest of Jessie, later called Muru Slough and there seemed to be no place to cross. We had been stuck many times and we got so that when we came to a slough (and there were many, it was so wet) we would drive in as far as possible with one team then put on another and if they could not pull it, put on another and so on until we tgot across; and so on each load until we were all across. But this slough was one of those with no bottom and it took us almost of the next day to get all loads across, but we did then strike camp for dinner. We started out and struck our location on Section 2-12-11-14-16-148-60 or Willow Township. We struck there about 4 o'clock and had a house up with roof on to sleep in that night, making four days from Sanborn.

The next was plowing the sod and cutting it up in 2-foot lengths and putting up my shanty. I had lumber to cover the roof, and bunk that covered most of the floor, and a tin camp stove. I would build my fire in the morning without getting out of my bed. I could serve my meals right in bed if necessary.

I went back and worked in the livery barn the rest of the summer. In the spring of 1883, I came back and made four trips from Sanborn to my claim having to remove my clothes and ford many creeks and one which I had to swim across with the snow and ice floating all about.

I started for town with neighbors. About 3 or 4 o'clock it got dark. We ran up against a slough, got lost, and we kept going and going. By and by we heard a rooster crow. It was getting light in the east and upon reconnoitering around a little, found we were on top of Mr. Torgersons house or dugout about 2 miles from where we started. Another time we were on our way from town and got lost and travelled until about midnight and camped. We crawled under the wagon, but the horses seemed to be very uneasy all night. When it got light enough to see, we found we had camped on one side of the creek and the house or shack and stable was just across on the other side.

Joe Buchheit, Chas. Johnson, Herbert Safford, Lenhard Safford, Bollis Bound, Joe McCullough, Ernest Johnson, Harry Clark, Gid Sheldon,

(E S)

Biography of C. H. Hamilton
--Lavon and Alfred Hunsberger

Mrs. Root, Mrs. Ruth, A. D. Ellis, West Flick, Paul Flick, Knut Anderson, Pete Listner, Ole Monson, Willie Anderson, Mr. H. B. Sorton, Pete Cameron, Ola Reed, Bob Withrow, Emit Willson, Richard Davis, Frank Walker, Arther Know, E. W. Hagerty were neighbors.

The machinery of my early North Dakota life was similar to that of today only not as large at that time. A plow, drag, disk, harrow, seeder, and harvester was about all that was necessary although I used two mules, one horse, and four oxen as a team on a two-bottom breaking gang plow.

Wheat and oats was about all the crops raised at that time, very little barley. The fuel for the first two years was from dead willows from Willow Lake. One man, Gilbertson, who lived on the south side of Willow Lake allowed us to cut the dry or dead willows. It took some time to get them and some time to cut them into stovewood, but it did not take long to burn them. One burned his front and froze his back while firing with it. Later I bought an acre of elm and oak on the river hauled and cut it in the winter for the next summer.

I was out in a good many storms, one of which was in returning from Cooperstown; a blizzard came up when we got out six miles. There ~~was~~ were about 8 or 10 of us, but a man by the name of H. B. Sorton and I were the only ones of the party that got home, some got into haystacks, some walked around all night but we kept on by keeping our direction by the wind and got in about 2;30 A. M., some others were frozen very badly.

The schools were held mostly in shacks around the county, where the settlers would furnish the room and seven scholars. The district was obliged to furnish the teacher.

Speaking further of blizzards, I went out with a doctor one night when there was a bad storm, and we traveled many miles and a long time but it finally cleared, and I told the doctor we must be near the place. We got out and were kicking around to keep warm and the doctor struck his foot against something which proved to be the stove-pipe of the very place we were trying to find. It was 3 o'clock in the morning and I should judge about 60 or 70 below zero, and were all standing right on top of the man's residence, which was a dugout; the team and Pung, Doctor and myself all standing on the roof which was all drifted with snow, many feet deep, but he had kept putting on pipe to keep above the snow. Suffice to say, I stayed until morning.

We had a church service and Sunday School conducted by the Rev. Will Gimblett, Deceased, who drove out from Cooperstown once each month, which the people attended very well.

Married February 18, 1892 to Miss Ella C. Hagerty, in Chatfield, Minnesota.

(11.) Previously answered.
(12.) Cooperstown, North Dakota