

# Individual Report for Kristófersson, Sigurður Sept 2009

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**Individual Summary: Kristófersson, Sigurður**

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Sex: Male  
Father: Andrésson, Kristófer  
Mother: Sigurðardóttir, Sigurveig



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**Individual Facts:**

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Birth: 09 Jul 1848 in farm Ytri-Neslönd, Neslondum, in the beautiful Lake Mývatn district in Northern Iceland [1, 4]  
Emigration: 1873 in Canada? [1]  
Farmed: Bet. 1877–1881 in huskavic, Grund, Ytranes í Víðinesbyggð  
Property: Aug 1880 in Filed first homestead in Icelandic settlement of Argyle, N. of Baldur, S.of Grund [4]  
Also Known As: 1887 in New Iceland; Sigurður Christopherson  
Death: 27 Mar 1921 in Crecent, B.C., Canada [2, 5, 6, 7]  
Residence: 15 Apr 2008 in Homestead 2 still at 2215 Christopherson Rd, Surrey. Crescent Rock is now Ocean Park  
Name: Kristófersson, Sigurður [1, 2, 3]  
Religion: Lutheran [8]  
Sex: Male  
Occupation: Argyle, Lisgar (County), Manitoba, Canada; Postmaster, Farmer, Emigration Agent [1]

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**Shared Facts: Taylor, Caroline Nee**

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Marriage: 22 Jan 1877 in Netley Creek, , Manitoba, Canada [5]  
Sealed to Spouse (LDS): 18 Feb 1998 in Glennview, Cook County, Illinois, USA [10]  
Marriage Fact: 1877 in First couple married at Gimli, Marnitoba, Canada [9]  
Children: Christopherson, Jón Sigurdur  
Christopherson, William Christopher  
Christopherson, John  
Christopherson, Halldor  
Christopherson, Sigurveig Veiga  
Christopherson, Súsanna Sigurðardóttir  
Christopherson, Kjartan  
Christopherson, Lily

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**Notes:**

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Person Notes: Source: The Baldur High Scool Centennial Committee, 1967?  
Blue cover possibly compiled and photocopied by the Baldur High School students.  
50 - 100 pages, in good to mint condition.  
2 staples and a masking tape type of binding.  
Page 2 gives credits, but no dates. One. One drawing/comment leds me to believe it was don in 1967.  
many crude drawings and 10 pages  
28 pages of photos with captions.  
Maps of the old/current settlements and descriptions of them, like Rock lake.  
  
Page 17  
"He named the country Grund (Plains) and Bru (Bridge)"..."...On account of floods at Gimli in 1878-79 and 1880 farmers had to drive their stock to other districts to be fed during the winter. In July 1880 Christian Johnson and Sigurdur Christopherson set out to look for greener fields. Their friend Everett Parsonage who had lived in New Iceland, wrote them of a

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promising land in Southern Manitoba. These two men traveled by row boat to Winnipeg and by steam boat to Nelsonville where the closest land office was. From there they walked to Pilot Mound and after three days' journey, they got to the home of their friend Everett parsonage.

Venturing north, these three men followed Oak Creek to what is now Bru. There a tent was pitched by messieurs Parry and Esplin, indicated a little life. From there they traveled west to 12-6-14, and camped. Mr. Parsonage rode his pony south to the hill (west from where the Lutheran Church is now), turned around and galloped his horse back and told his comrades he had found paradise. Four or five sections were claimed immediately. They returned to Nelsonville to file the claim. Mr. Christopherson filed on S.W. 12-6-14. On Sept 25, 1880, Skafti Arason, wife and two small children, Skuli Arnason and family, G. Nordman and Sigurdur Christopherson left Gimli for their new homesteads.

Cabins built on their ox-drawn sleighs brought these sturdy Vikings over the frozen prairie sea of snow and after two weeks of traveling in very cold and stormy weather, they reached their promised land. They camped close to Christopherson's haystack until the weather turned milder and then their building began.

later that spring the settlement grew to eight families with the arrival of Mrs. Christopherson and children, Mr. and Mrs. Hearn, Mr. Halldor Arnason, Mr. Thorstein Johnson and Mr. B. Josephson. By 1881 these families had land ready for a crop, homes and stables built and plenty of hay. In 1883, many Icelanders came directly from Iceland with practically nothing but courage and a vision of a better life in Canada...."

"...New Years Day, 1884, at the home of Bjorn Sigvaldason..."

"...The new community was named Frelsis, meaning absolute independence..."

also description of first picnic at Jones' Lake in 1884,,,

also nationalist; Peter Strang wrote...

also One Sunday at Grund, 125 bicycles were counted...

End Source: The Baldur High school Centennial Committee, 1967?

his surname became Christopherson upon immigration.

became a well known emigration agent as well as a leader amongst Icelandic settlers in both New Iceland and Argyle. He married Caroline Taylor, niece to John Taylor, an Englishman who was a great helper to the Icelandic settlers, mainly in New Iceland, Manitoba. Mormon census states b. = 1850.

Had great faith in the future of Canadian and British institutions.

source

<http://trees.ancestry.com/pt/Event.aspx?tid=3276086&pid=-1635659813&sid=-1635634787&eid=176147932&pg=0&se=1>

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### Life in Iceland

Added by skitang6 on 11 Nov 2007

Information from "Come into our Heritage RM of Argyle 1882-1982"

Sigurður was born on July 9, 1848 in Neslondum, Myvatn, Iceland. His father, Kristofer Andresson died in 1865, during a typhoid epidemic. The whole family had been very sick at the time and their mother, Sigurveig Sigurdurdottir, was unconscious and very low. A kind neighbor helped the three older boys bury their father. The eight children, Kristveig, Sigridur, Sigurjon, Sigurdur, Hernit, Lilja, Pjetur and Sigurborg never ceased to wonder at their mother's endurance and courage. She worked from early morning until late at night, at the same time training her children to help as much as possible, in order to provide them with the bare necessities of life. While knitting or mending, or making 'shoes' for their feet, she would teach them to read and commit to memory prayers and hymns. Sigurdur worked for a neighboring farmer, but wages were poor. Late every fall he went up the mountains searching for sheep that had not been found the first time of fall roundup. These trips were fraught with danger and hardship. Any sheep found so late in the fall and winter were equally divided between the owner (all sheep are marked in Iceland) and the one who found them. In this way he made more money than his wages. When he was 25 years old, he managed to save enough to pay his passage to America. He saw it was not possible to live in Iceland except in poverty and he thought how much better it would be to live in a country where grain, fruit and vegetables would grow. No one from their part had emigrated from Iceland and everyone thought it a foolish move.

### Early Life

Added by skitang6 on 11 Nov 2007

Information from "Come into our Heritage RM of Argyle 1882-1982"

Caroline (Carrie) Taylor was born May 11, 1856, the daughter of William Stuart Taylor and Isabella Slimmons. Her early childhood was spent in Kingston, Ontario, later the family moved to Lansing, Michigan. When Caroline was nine years old, her mother died, leaving five daughters. There followed a sad period when these five little girls in heavy mourning (black dresses trimmed with black crepe) lived with their grief-stricken father. Strangers would stop them on the street and ask them whom they mourned, and the girls would burst into tears. Carrie, in later years, had a strong aversion to mourning, especially for children. Uncle John Taylor and Aunt Elizabeth came to the rescue and took the girls to live with them in Haliburton, Ontario. When their father remarried, Carrie and Anna returned home, Susie and Jane remained with their aunt and uncle and Elizabeth married. The next few years saw Carrie attend High school and graduate as a teacher. When she was 16 her 'hair went up and her skirts were lowered' and she went out to teach at a country school. She also apprenticed as a dressmaker, soon becoming good at sewing and cutting out garments which required much tucking, ruching and gathers in those days. On a trip to visit her aunt, uncle and sisters in Haliburton, the last night of the journey was spent at Kinmount. Next morning at breakfast, the waitress drew her attention to the window, and looking out, she saw an Icelander for the first time, a beautiful young woman with long golden hair and pink and white

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complexion, wearing a simple blouse and dark skirt. This happened to be Gudney, wife of Fridjon Fridrikson. She was to become Carrie's lifelong friend. As she continued on her journey, little did Carrie realize how much this encounter would change her life. Her Uncle John was doing missionary work for the British Bible Society and when she told him about the Icelanders at Kinmount, he was very interested and lost no time in going there to see if he could be of any service to them. He met Fridjon Fridrikson and Sigtryggur Jonasson, and was much impressed by the sincerity and honesty of these fine people. He set about helping them get financial help to see them through the rugged winter; provision was also made for a scouting party to go west in search of a more suitable site for settlement. Carrie returned to Lansing in the spring, and in the fall she went to Manitoba with her father, his wife and three children. They joined Uncle John's party at Sarnia. Traveling by boat, they arrived at Duluth after nine days, and stayed that night in a hotel. They went by train to Glinden and stayed all night in a roundhouse, then went by train to Fisher's Landing on the Red River. Here they went by train to Fisher's Landing on the Red River. Here they went on board a riverboat, the 'International'. The river was very low. After nine days they reached Garry (Winnipeg). There they lived on a flatboat until the rest of the journey could be made. Here they met Dr. Schultz who was interested in this new colony.

### Emigration to America

Added by skitang6 on 11 Nov 2007

Information from "Come into our Heritage RM of Argyle 1882-1982"

A few days before Whit Sunday 1873, Sigurdur had farewell to family and friends who had accompanied him to the seaport town of Husavik. There he boarded a small sailing vessel called 'Hjalmar', that was leaving for Norway. Among those who took passage on the same boat were Gudrun and Gudfinna Aradóttir (Sisters of Skafti), and Jon Halldorson. They carried their baggage down into the boat and then helped to haul the boat out into deep water. They sailed at 10pm. The next morning the mate handed them small portions of butter and sugar which, he told them, must last a week. They were also served with bread, meat and coffee three times a day. The sea became rough and the girls and some of the men became seasick. On Whit Sunday there was a southwest storm with driving rain, it was difficult to manage the boat. At mid-day they were east of Lauganesi and that was the last they saw of their homeland. Two days later the weather was delightful and they found it interesting to watch a large number of whales that were swimming around the ship. All were in good spirits. The girls ventured on deck and were amused when Sigurdur and Jon each hemmed a handkerchief for them, but did not consider it fine sewing. At 1pm, Trinity Sunday, they came in sight of Norway. Upon reaching the harbor town of Christianson, the Agent of the S.S. Co. arranged passage for the young Icelanders on the S.S. Harold. The food was much better on this ship, and although the days were monotonous with no amusements, the weather was good. On June 30, 2 am they arrived in New York. It was a dark night, but the city was shining with lights, the most beautiful sight Sigurdur had seen in his life. The young Icelanders then had their first taste of railway travel from New York to Milwaukee. From there the men set out looking for work.

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He found the weather unbearably hot and found it hard to sleep at night, he became ill. In July 1975 (1875?), Skafti Arason and Kristjan Jonsson arrived in Milwaukee from Kinmount. They were on their way to Manitoba to look for land. Sigurdur joined them and after deciding on the Keewatin district north of Manitoba for the Icelandic Immigrants, the three men took work on the CPR in East Selkirt until October when the Icelanders from Kinmount joined them.

### Life in Canada

Added by skitang6 (ancestry.com) on 11 Nov 2007

Information from "Come into our Heritage RM of Argyle 1882-1982"

Sigurdur met Carrie Taylor here in Kinmount and they were married on January 22, 1877. Because the Icelandic Settlement was under smallpox quarantine, they stood on one side of Netley Creek (the quarantine line) and the Metis minister stood on the other side. Sigurdur had taken a homestead and named it 'Hasavik', there they farmed for four years until moving to Argyle Municipality. Two sons were born at Husavik, Jon Sigurdur and William Christopher. In the spring of 1881, the move was made to their new homestead of 'Grund', NE 10-6-14 in Argyle. Their household effects, stove, dishes, and a precious box of books, were shipped to Portage la Prairie, but were lost in transit. They lived in a tent and Carrie cooked over a campfire all summer until a small one-room cabin was built. In 1882, a third son was born, Halldor (named for Halldor Briem who had married Susan Taylor). There were no doctors; Rebecca Johnson came from Winnipeg to take care of Carrie who was so sick. Four more children were born at Grund over the next few years. Those years were busy ones, their hard work would bring many joys and rewards, but there would be worries and sorrows as well. Sigurdur was on the first town council of Baldur, and it was Carrie who suggested the name for the town. 'Carrie Ave' was named for her. Both took an active part in community life. Their doors were always open to friends and strangers. Many families would stay with them or on Sigurdur's pre-emption (Little Baldur) until they could get their own homes built. One day a prairie fire came racing toward the farmyard. Every hand was needed to fight it. A spot that was burned off was selected and the baby Sigurveig was wrapped in a blanket and left on the spot, while Carrie helped to beat out the fire, then rushed back to find her baby safe. A few years later they lost their nine year old daughter, Lilja, to appendicitis. A longer log house was built, with a lean-to built the full length for the store and post office which they had at Grund. The post office was there until the late 1920's. Sigurdur went to Iceland as an immigration agent. On one of the trips he was gone almost a year. This was an anxious time for Carrie with so much responsibility. When he returned he brought a large party of settlers, many of them his brothers, sisters, young cousins, and his little mother Sigurveig, who although she was blind, was so cheerful and happy to be America. She was interested in the big oak trees, and was delighted when she was taken to the garden and felt the size of the pumpkins and other vegetables. She lived only a short time. In 1893, three weeks after her arrival she passed away at the age of 80. Her funeral was held outdoors. The grounds were crowded with people, many of them just over from Iceland and still wearing their Icelandic shawls and caps. A new house

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was build in 1896; in 1904 a large barn. Sigurdur continued much colonization work, making more trips back to Iceland, and also some into the Swan River area of Manitoba. He had also built up a real estate and insurance business, with Carrie working as his secretary, well able to carry on his business when he was away. In 1903, Sigurdur was finally struck down by ill health and was confined to bed for months. The following winter he suffered a relaps, so on his doctor's advice, he and Carrie traveled to the west coast. She never thought that she was leaving her home for good and would be called a 'pioneer' once more, but that's exactly what happened. On a previous trip, Sigurdur had bought a piece of land on the seaside. One day when the west coast climate had made him stronger, they walked up to this property, a beauty spot with overgrown orchard, they fell in love with it. Sigurdur began clearing the brush and soon had a site cleared for a small house. They named it 'Itriness', the name of his parents' farm in Iceland. As at Grund, their doors were always open. Many old friends stopped for a visit; new friends and neighbors never failed to call if passing by; some of their children moved west to live near them and so they spent their last years happily at Itriness. Sigurdur died on Easter Day, March 27, 1921. He is buried in Grund Cemetery in Argyle Municipality.

#### Carrie's Death

Added by skitang6 on 11 Nov 2007

Information from "Come into our Heritage RM of Argyle 1882-1982"

Carrie died on December 9, 1923. The day of her funeral was like a summer day, sunny and warm, 'just like Carrie's character', it was said. She is buried in the Grund Cemetery in Argyle Municipality next to her husband.

#### Frelsis Lutheran Church (Grund)

Completed in June of 1889, Grund is the oldest surviving Icelandic Lutheran church in Canada and a designated Provincial historic site. It is located between the villages of Baldur and Glenboro, approximately 180 kilometers southwest of Winnipeg. The pioneers who built the church had originally settled in the short-lived "State of New Iceland" on the western shore of Lake Winnipeg. Battered by outbreaks of scurvy and smallpox, and facing shortages of food and shelter, some of them began looking elsewhere for a new and less hostile home. In August of 1880 one of their leaders, Sigurdur Kristofersson (later anglicized as Christopherson), traveled to the region north of Pilot Mound and registered the first homestead on a piece of land which he called Grund (Grassy Plain). Guided by John Taylor, an English missionary and brother-in-law of Christopherson, the first settlers left Gimli on March 15, 1881 and reached their destination on March 31. Upon arrival they congregated in the vicinity of Christopherson's farm. It was near this spot that the church was built eight years later.

Initially religious services were held in private homes or recently built schools, but soon the pressure of a burgeoning population forced the settlers to organize on a more formal basis. Two distinct congregations were established: the "Frikirkja" on January 1, 1884, and the "Frelsis" on July 25, 1885. Work on the new church, intended to be used by both congregations, began in 1889 on a two-acre piece of land purchased from

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one of the settlers for \$10.00. All the labour was performed by volunteers under the direction of carpenters Byring Hallgrimson and Arni Sveinson. In 1896 a steepled belfry was added to the structure to accommodate a newly acquired 230-kilogram bell. The organ, still in working order and originally standing on a platform against the east wall, was purchased in 1911. Several outbuildings, including a stable and a home for the minister, were built shortly after the completion of the church, but were torn down in the 1930s and 1940s. A small cemetery, serving as final resting place for some of the original pioneers, is located some three hundred metres to the east.

For many years Grund served the members of both the Frelsis and Frikirkja congregations, but in 1910 another church was built at Bru, a few kilometers northeast of Grund, to service the needs of those living in the eastern part of the settlement. This church was best known for its stained glass windows and fine organ. Four years earlier a third congregation, the Emmanuel Lutheran, had been formed in Baldur and in 1907 its members built the Baldur Emmanuel Lutheran Church. With the construction of these two structures, and the serious rural depopulation that coincided with the depression and the dust bowl of the 1930s, the membership at Grund began to decline. In 1965 the Frelsis congregation merged with that of the Emmanuel Church. Nine years later Grund was declared a provincial historic site and maintenance of the property was turned over to the Manitoba government. Unfortunately, the survival of Grund came at the expense of Bru, which was eventually moved to Cypress River where it now serves as a restaurant.

Directions to the Church (Roy has a map):

From the junction of Elizabeth Street (Highway 23) and Oak Creek Road in Baldur drive north on Oak Creek Road for approximately 9.2 km. Located on the right-hand side of the road, the church is hard to miss. Almost all of the route is over a gravel road. While driving through town you will pass the Emmanuel Lutheran Church on the left. The excursion will take you through an area of scenic hills and pothole lakes created during the most recent period of glaciation.

Two other Lutheran churches in Manitoba are worth a visit.

1. Bethany Lutheran, located approximately 3.2 km north of the junction of Highways 10 and 45 and approximately 1 km east.
2. Hecla Lutheran in Hecla Village on the shore of Lake Winnipeg.

Further Information:

Come into Our Heritage, Baldur, Rural Municipality of Argyle, 1981.

From Ed Fader? From Calendar?

**Ýranes**

by Stefania Morris,

Luke and Carrie Humber welcome you to Ýranes. Carrie's grandparents, Sigurður and Caroline Christopherson, came here in 1904. They had bought

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80 acres of ocean property and built a small house which is still part of the present building.

Sigurður was born July 9, 1848, at Neslandum, Mýatn, in Iceland. He was the oldest of seven children. His father died in a typhoid epidemic while the children were very young. Sigurður came to Canada when he was 25 years old. Sigurður along with two other men went from Kinmount, Ontario, to the Keewatin district to find new land for the group of Icelanders. The land chosen was New Iceland. The men worked on the railroad until the Kinmount people came in October.

Caroline Taylor, better known as Carrie, was the niece of John Taylor who was doing missionary work with the British Bible Society, and Carrie who had met the Icelandic people including Sigurður, asked her uncle to try to get financial help to see the Icelandic people through the winter.

Sigurður and Carrie were married January 20, 1877. Because the Icelandic settlement was still under quarantine for Smallpox they stood on one side of Netley Creek, the quarantine line, and the minister stood on the other side. Carrie was a schoolteacher and was the first teacher in the district. Sigurður had taken a homestead and named his place Hœsav'k. They farmed there for four years then he went and scouted for new land in the Argyle district. There they built a home and called the farm Grund. They had the post office and later a church was built there. The Grund church is now a heritage building. Sigurður and Carrie were very active in the community. Carrie chose the name for the town of Baldur, and there is a Carrie Street named after her. Sigurður made many trips to Iceland as an immigration agent. He brought out all his brothers and sisters and his then blind mother who, even though she could not see the oak trees, was very interested in them, also the pumpkins and vegetables in the garden. Later Sigurður set up a real estate and insurance company with Carrie as secretary.

In 1903 Sigurður was struck down with ill health and was confined to bed for some time. On doctor's advice he and Carrie traveled to the west coast. They had bought the ocean property and when walked up to the over grown orchard they fell in love with the place and built their home of - Ýranes - the name of his parents' place in Iceland. Sigurður's health improved after he came out here. Ýranes, the same as Grund, always had an open door. In earlier years, Icelandic picnics were held there and seniors from the Icelandic home Hsfn were brought out for outings.

Sigurður died March 27, 1921. Carrie, the English girl who learned Icelandic and became an Icelander, lived until December 9, 1923. Christopherson Road still bears their name. Many of the Christophersons family moved out here as well as many other Icelandic people.

DOC\_0008\_Ytranes-1

**From:** Ed Fader <e.fader@shaw.ca>

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**Date:** May 18, 2006 10:58:25 PM PDT

Hi Roy

Some History of the Christopherson family in Ocean Park. Enclosed is a picture of the house taken around 1910 and still remains on the property. That is the house where Carrie and Luke Humber lived.

Ytra-Nes, meaning Outer Ness was a 90-acre waterfront estate bought in 1904 by Sigurdur Kristofersson from Iceland. Located near Crescent, the land had been previously owned by a Scotsman and was the site of an ancient Indian fort (mound). The property also had fruit and walnut trees. Over the years, Icelandic neighbours established themselves nearby, including the Sveinn, Brynjolfsson, Kristjan, Runolfur, Anderson, Bjornson and Stoneson families. In 1912, Ytra-Nes became the home of son and daughter-in-law John and Vala Christopherson and the new home, built prior to 1907, has remained in the Christopherson family ever since. Presently the home of granddaughter Carrie Humber, Ytra-Nes was among the places visited by President Vigdis Finnbogadottir of Iceland during her trip to British Columbia in 1988. Source: 1995 Icelandic Heritage Calendar, Icelandic League of North America. Carrie's father moved his family from Elgin to the homestead in 1925 when his mother died. The property was later divided among the seven Kristofferson offspring, and Veiga Dawe and her husband lived in the house. Mrs. Dawe was a substitute teacher at Crescent School. Carrie and her Mother moved back to be with Aunt Veiga when she became frail. Carrie notes that her grandfather first moved from Iceland to Argyle, Manitoba, to escape the famine and the volcanoes in his home country. He encouraged many Icelanders to settle in North America. Carrie's aunt had wanted the road named Argyle, rather than Christopherson. Source: Carrie Humber to Shirley Stonier DOC\_0001\_Christopherson info\_Surrey

Original PDF document of text above, see PDF\_0015\_00.09\_OP18 *Ocean Parker*, September, 2000 Special Heritage Edition

PDF\_WEB\_0016\_Christopherson-1 (from Kormakur Hognason) Sigurdur went to Iceland as an immigration agent. On one of he trips he was gone almost a year. When he returned he brought a large party of settlers, many of them his brothers, sisters, young cousins, and his

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mother Sigurveig to be America.

Pending additional text from publication of Nelson Gerrard's book that will have a chapter of Kjartan Christopherson and family.

From Nonni Jonssons WebSite

<http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~swanriver/icelandicindex.html>

The Swan River Valley is located in north-western Manitoba, Canada, close to Saskatchewan, about 300 miles north-west of Winnipeg. Like all the other valleys on the great prairies of central North America, this valley is merely lower flatland along the rivers limited on two sides by hills formed in the gradually rising landscape. Deep valleys are non-existent except where there are high mountains, and therefore there are no actual valleys on the vast prairies, but rather wide depressions along riverbeds. The Swan River Valley lies between the Duck Mountains to the south and the Porcupine Mountains to the north; while Thunder Hill stands like a gable on its west side. All these hills are low, they are the first stage in the rising landscape from western Manitoba to the Rocky Mountains. Although the hills are low they add a sorely needed diversity to the lowest and flattest areas in Manitoba.

Around 1898 many Icelandic families were living in the Argyle district, some were recent arrivals from Iceland who were unable to obtain land because most of the homestead lands were already taken and the price of available land was too high. These people were eager to find farmland to move to, and they were working on several plans. Sigurður Christophersson, farmer at Grund in the Argyle district, had been much involved with matters of immigration. In the summer of 1897 he travelled to the Swan River Valley to take a look at the land available there. When he returned he praised the quality of the land and encouraged landless Icelanders to move there. His reports may be read in the Icelandic newspaper Lögberg. (You will have to install a DjVu plugin). 24 June 1897 page 1 and 29 July 1897 page 8. Or in English here. In the winter of 1897-1898 a meeting was held at the home of Skapti Arason, a farmer in the Argyle district, to discuss moving to the Swan River Valley. Sigurður Christophersson was asked to make another trip to the valley to inquire about land for a few families. While he was there he made arrangements for A. J. Vopni's quarter.

Here are the two Newspaper Ads placed by Sigurdur and without Komakur's translation would probably be unknown in this day and age. From the Icelandic Newspaper Lögberg 24 June, 1897, page 1

translated by Kormákur Högnason

Swan River Valley

On 27. May we left from Winnipeg in order to survey land in the northern part of Dauphin county and in the Swan River valley, which lies from north east to south west between Duck Mountain and the Porcupine Mountain.

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From the town of Dauphin we drove (by buckboard) north through Dauphin county to Sifton, but from there we rode (by horse) north to Pine River and west into the Swan River valley.

In Dauphin county we didn't see any unsettled land, that we really liked, the land generally lies low and is also in many areas sandy and rocky and forested. We don't mean to imply that there is no good land in Dauphin county, but to state that the good land is almost all claimed and we wish that Icelanders had gotten their share of it.

The Swan River valley is completely unsettled at present, and the main reason, first and foremost is that the land has not been surveyed and furthermore it has until now been located very far from a railroad; but now neither element is a deterrant and it can be taken for granted that, the entire valley will be settled within a short time.

When we arrived two miles west of the northern corner of Duck Mountain the land began to look prettier, there we walked on beautiful prairies surrounded by forest. Four miles from the mountain we arrived at very beautiful prairies, they are so well shaped for field cultivation (agriculture) that we had no complaint to make. There are also the finest fields and pastures and beautiful forested tracks along rivers and streams. What we surveyed the most were township 36 and 37, R.26 and 28, and there, where we traveled, the thickest forest was on the south-east side of the river (Swan River). That river is about 200 feet wide, where we travelled along side it and the river banks are close to 100 feet high. We arrived at three other rivers, whose names we didn't know but there are beautiful forested tracts growing along side them. There is therefore plenty of good wood in the valley for building houses, for firewood, fence making, etc. The soil is good everywhere, black soil, 7 to 18 inches deep and below there is brown clay.

There is a lake in the northern part of the valley called Swan Lake and we were told that it is full of fish, and that is true, because there is fish in every river. There is plenty of good water everywhere, the water is clear in the rivers and we also found spring water in a few places.

There is a large number of elk and moose in the mountains on both sides of the valley.

This valley lies 35 miles to the west of Lake Winnipegosis and 70 miles from the end of the Dauphin railroad; but there is little doubt that this railroad will be lengthened in the near future, and then it will reach across the valley.

Presently there is no driveable road north to the Swan River valley, but the government has determined the road location and we hope that this road will be constructed this summer.

We expect a more detailed assessment of this area to appear in Lögberg within a month; but this brief survey should nevertheless be sufficient to show Icelanders that this is a good opportunity - perhaps the best opportunity ever to present itself in the future of this country - to obtain a good farm in a good community.

Finally we want to repeat again, and we hope that men take notice, that this valley will be densely built within a few months after the land has been surveyed. Icelanders will therefore not obtain this land unless they react right now.

## Individual Report for Kristófersson, Sigurður Sept 2009

**Individual Summary: Kristófersson, Sigurður**

Sex: Male

Father: Andrésson, Kristófer

Mother: Sigurðardóttir, Sigurveig



Notes:

Located in Winnipeg 23. June 1897.  
S. Christopherson  
P. Símonarson.

From the Icelandic Newspaper Lögberg, 29 July, 1897, page 8  
Swan River Valley

As was mentioned in the issue of Lögberg, published on the 1st of this month, we left Winnipeg on 26. June to survey land in Swan River valley. We travelled on the Manitoba & North Western railroad west to Yorkton and from there we drove (by buckboard) north east to the valley. The road from Yorkton to Fort Pelly, nearly 50 miles, is especially good, but it is in many places difficult to travel the nearly 75 miles from Fort Pelly northeast to Swan Lake. Not even minor road repair has been performed in that region (the Pelly Trail) and yet there has been a considerable traffic over many years, both by Indians and the white men (Fur traders) who have conducted trade with them. We had small horses (Indian ponies) during the journey, and when we arrived in the north we rode through the valley. This valley lies southwest from a fairly large and attractive fishing lake, called Swan Lake (Álptavatn), it is about 30 to 40 miles wide and approximately the same length. Two separate mountains lie on either side of the valley, Duck Mountain (Andafjall) on the southeast side and Porcupine Mountain (Broddgaltafjall) on the northwest side, the former is 2500 feet and the latter is 2400 feet above sea level. The bottom of the valley forms a 1900 feet high plateau, called Thunder Hill (Þrumuhæð). All of these mountains are covered by a forest, that in many places has very tall trees. Two large and attractive rivers run along the entire valley and into Swan Lake, the one in the west is Woody River and the one in the east is Swan River. Many creeks and brooks run down the mountains and into the two main rivers. We soon realized that we would not be able to travel across the entire valley at this time and since it did not escape our notice that the south-eastern part lends itself better to developing a community we decided to pay less attention to the north-west part. We carefully surveyed the land area between Woody River and Swan River, from Thunder Hill all the way down to the lake and a large part of the land that lies between Swan River and Duck Mountain; all in all we covered 17 townships. Between Woody River and Swan River are many exceptional grassy sloughs, in particular toward the north and near the lake. These sloughs were in many places wet, partly due to the fact that the grass plexus is so dense that the water can't escape, nor can the sun dry it, furthermore there was nearly constant rain during the time we were traveling there. Our guide said, that all these fields are usually dry during the latter part of the summer. The grass was everywhere superb in both growth and quality.

The land along the north-western side of Swan River is very attractive for field tilling, it lies high and is dry, and the soil is good - the soil is in general good everywhere we went with the exception of two or three patches that were sandy. In some places the sides of the rivers are covered in forest but in most places this is just new growth, that requires little effort to remove,

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Notes:

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and some places are completely devoid of forest. There is however plenty of good woodland further away from the river, so nobody needs to fear a lack of sufficient and good wood. We were especially pleased with this land for field tilling and for livestock (mixed farming), because those who will be fortunate enough to acquire the land along the river will be able to use the fields that lie further away for many years. In township 35, range 29 a large creek, called Thunder Hill Creek; runs into Swan River, along side this creek is a very attractive and good land suitable for any purpose, the pastures there are exceptionally attractive.

The most attractive place that we saw during our journey was undoubtedly between Rolling River (Roaring River) and Duck Mountain. There is a hill just west of the mountain, called Minitonas Hill, it lies 1500 feet above sea level, and Rolling River (Roaring River) runs along the west side of the hill and Favel River runs along the east side of it. The land around this hill and down along the rivers is of good quality and particularly attractive. The entire area has obviously been covered by forest until recently, but the wood has been completely destroyed by fire over a large region. This region may be described as a single savanna, high and dry, with small but attractive forest belts along the rivers. In our opinion the pastures in this region are scarcely sufficient should the land be used exclusively for livestock, however they are well suited for field tilling or both together (mixed farming). We met land surveyors at Minitonas Hill. The man in charge stated that he had never in his life surveyed a more attractive land, and quite honestly we don't doubt that he was telling the truth.

There is plenty of wood in the entire valley and in some places the saw wood is so good that a sawmill would be well viable. The most common trees are poplar and spruce. But we did see tamarack and birch in a few places and along Swan River there was a considerable number of maple trees.

There is plenty of good water everywhere. All the rivers and creeks have a sand bottom and the water is therefore clean and clear. We found many ice cold and silver clear springs.

Fishing is in all the rivers and abundant whitefish catch in the lake, as would be expected since a navigable river runs out of it north to Lake Winnipegosis. That river is called Shoal River and it is only 14 miles long.

At present it is costly and difficult to move west to Swan River valley, however it is not nearly as difficult as some would think. As we already stated there is an excellent road from Yorkton to Fort Pelly and from there it's only an additional 30 to 40 miles to the location that we liked the best, and the road is quite useable during this time of year. The Government of Manitoba has decided to clear a roadway, this Fall, west of Dauphin and into the valley, all the difficulties involved in getting there will therefore disappear by next summer. However, if Icelanders are to acquire these land areas, they cannot wait for this roadway, they must react immediately and secure the land. Hon. Thos. Greenway has made attempts to have a few townships in the Swan River valley set aside for Icelanders, but that will apparently not go through. The most that Hon. Clifford Sifton has done, in this matter, is to permit those Icelanders who wish to be absent from their land longer than the law stipulates in order to earn money, this prerequisite

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### Notes:

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may turn out to be of considerable value.

In conclusion we want to stress that we liked the land so much that we don't hesitate to urge Icelanders to react immediately and acquire land there. If a few band together and go as a group, then the Government of Manitoba will undoubtedly provide them with a guide and offer them a subsidized fare on the Manitoba & North Western railroad.

The undersigned are willing to answer letters and supply all relevant information.

Winnipeg 26. July 1897.  
M. Paulson, S. Christopherson,  
618 Elgin ave, Grund  
Winnipeg. Man.  
END NEWSPAPER ADS

Relationship Notes: This would confirm that Carrie and my GGGrandfather were married during the epidemic at the creek's edge.

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### Sources:

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- 4 O.J. Thorsteinson, Grund Church Booklet, J.D. McFarland, Historic Resources Branch, Property of Pauline Einarson Christopherson.
- 5 Family Search U.S. Social Security Death Index, Morman Church - The Church of Jesus Christ, [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).
- 6 Bristish Columbia Archives, Vital Event Death Egistration, Reg. # 1921-09-285600, GSU Microfim # 1927296.
- 7 British Columbia Death Index: 1872 to 1979, not online. Actual text:Name: Sigurdur Christopherson  
Birth Date: abt 1849  
Birth Place:  
Death Date: 27 March 1921  
Death Place: Crescent  
Web address:<http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?db=britcoldeath&h=121390&ti=0&indiv=try>.
- 8 Mormon Church - 1881 Canadian Census, Turtle Mountain, South Western Extension, Extension, Manitoba.
- 9 Caroline Cartwright, Caroline Cartwright College of San Mateo Thesis, "The Stoneson Brothers and the city they built:", The Icelandic Canadian, Spring, 1960, p. 33.
- 10 [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com), isberg\_Kanaski tree.