

SASKATCHEWAN – WHY DID THEY COME HERE?

Educator Notes

Saskatchewan Gr 8 Social Studies Outcome Focus:

IN 8.2 Appraise the influence of immigration as a factor in Canadian cultural diversity.

- a. Research reasons for diverse peoples choosing Canada as a home (e.g., economic opportunity, economic hardship or war in the country of origin, reunification of family, escape from religious or political oppression).

Historical Thinking Concepts:

- Evidence – How do we know what we know about the past?

Guidepost 1: History is interpretation based on inferences made from primary sources. Primary sources can be accounts but they can also be traces, relics or records.

➤ *Student makes insightful inferences from primary sources.*

- Cause and Consequence – Why do events happen and what are their impacts?

Guidepost 3: Events result from the interplay of two types of factors: 1. historical actors who are people (individuals or groups) who take actions that cause historical events and 2. the social, political, economic, environmental and cultural conditions within which the actors operate.

➤ *Student identifies the interplay between the actions of historical actors and the conditions at the time.*

Suggested Student Learning Tasks

A. Focus on the Evidence

1. Have students think about what they already know about immigration and reasons why people have come to Saskatchewan past and present. They can record their thinking on the student document provided.
2. Review with students the definition of a primary source when considering historical study and introduce the idea of working with interviews as a primary source to learn more about the reasons some people came to Saskatchewan in the past.
3. Distribute the interview segments and biographical information for Stan Gomulczak from the Saskatchewan Archives website at <http://www.saskarchives.com/immigration-historical-thinking>

4. Each person or group should have one interview segment to study closely. As the students read and think about their segment, they can record their thinking on the chart for Stan provided on the student document.

5. After debriefing each segment with the larger group to get a more complete picture of Stan and his immigration story, discuss what appeared to be his reasons for coming to Saskatchewan.

Interview Segment #	
What does this passage suggest about Stan?	What does this passage reveal to us about his reasons for leaving his home and choosing Canada as his new home?
What did this source not tell you about Stan's immigration journey to Saskatchewan?	What questions do you have about Stan and his experience that are not answered here?

B. Going Deeper With Interviews

- Students will be studying the immigration stories of 4 other people who came to Saskatchewan at different times in our history by reflecting on interviews conducted with them in the 1970's, from various oral history projects collected by Saskatchewan Archives Board.
- Access interviews for student study at <http://www.saskarchives.com/immigration-historical-thinking>. Each interview segment includes a brief bio and an excerpt from a longer interview. Included in this collection are:
 - William Howes
 - Eva Bond
 - Charlie Quan
 - Isak Simon Elik

3. Circulate the interviews to smaller groups of students (or individual students). They will be using a similar thinking and reflection process as they used with Stan's interview in order to consider the evidence in the interview. Students can record their thinking on the chart for their interview found in the student document.

Interview With Eva Bond	
What does this passage suggest about Eva?	What does this passage reveal to us about her reasons for leaving her home and choosing Canada as her new home?
What did this source not tell you about Eva's immigration journey to Saskatchewan?	What questions do you have about Eva and her experience that are not answered here?

4. Debrief the learning from the 4 interviews as a large group. Discuss with students what they learned about diversity in reasons for coming to Saskatchewan, based on the evidence in these interviews.
5. A summary of their learning about reasons why people came to Saskatchewan could be compiled together as a large group, using the chart in the student document as a guide. Or, this could be completed by students as an individual summative piece of evidence to assess their understanding after a larger group discussion and sharing of the evidence from the interviews.

Analyzing the Reasons Why People Came to Saskatchewan

Name	Reasons for Coming to Saskatchewan
<u>Stan Gomulczak</u>	
<u>William Howes</u>	
Eva Bond	
<u>Charlie Quan</u>	
<u>Isak Simon Elik</u>	

6. Further reflection on what they learned and connections made after considering the evidence in the interviews could be explored using the prompts provided on the last page of the student document. These could be discussed as a large group, or completed as individuals and submitted as a summative task.

- I notice that some people came for similar reasons. An example would be.....
- When I think about all the interviews, I noticed an example of a major difference in the reasons why people came to Saskatchewan when I think about.....
- After considering the evidence from the interviews, the most interesting reason for coming to Saskatchewan was.....
- Interviews can be challenging to use when studying the past. One thing I found challenging about using interviews to find out information about why people came to Saskatchewan was.....
- Using primary sources like interviews can be interesting when studying the past. I found the interviews helpful in learning more about why people came to Saskatchewan because.....

C. Ideas For Extending the Learning

1. Create a historical time line of when people came to Saskatchewan, where they came from and their reasons for coming.

Saskatchewan Archives Board's *Saskatchewan Settlement Experience* virtual exhibit at <http://www.saskarchives.com/sasksettlement/>.

Multicultural Canada: <http://www.multiculturalcanada.ca/Encyclopedia/A-Z/d3>

Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan: <http://esask.uregina.ca/home.html>

2. Research Pier 21 and its connection and importance to immigration in Canada and those who eventually came to Saskatchewan.

<http://www.pier21.ca/research/oral-history/listening-gallery-clips>

<http://www.pier21.ca/stories/search>

3. Research the changes in Canada's immigration policy over time and learn more about the limitations and requirements people needed to be aware of if they wanted to come to Saskatchewan at different times in our history.

Historical and Current Overview:

<http://mapleleafweb.com/features/immigration-policy-canada-history-administration-and-debates>

SASKATCHEWAN – WHY DID THEY COME HERE?

Think of people who have moved to Saskatchewan from other places. What reasons did they have for leaving their homes and moving here?

What has made Saskatchewan an attractive place for people to move to at different times in our past?

Using Primary Sources: Finding Out Why People Came Here

An interview is an example of a **primary source**. A primary source includes things such as oral testimony, letters, maps, photographs, radio and television broadcasts as well as artifacts such as buildings, clothing or tools. They were created by someone who was involved in or observed events being studied. Primary sources provide first-hand evidence of what people were thinking, how they lived and what was happening around them. (*Shaping Canada: McGraw Hill Ryerson 2011*)

Consider the portion of the interview with **Stan Gomulczak** (Gum-ul-chack) that you have been given to work with. After reading it and discussing it with others, summarize your thinking in the chart below.

Interview Segment #	
What does this passage suggest about Stan?	What does this passage reveal to us about his reasons for leaving his home and choosing Canada as his new home?
What did this source not tell you about Stan's immigration journey to Saskatchewan?	What questions do you have about Stan and his experience that are not answered here?

After considering the entire interview, what can you conclude about the reasons Stan had for coming to Saskatchewan?

Interview With

William Howes

- William was born in England in about 1883.
- He emigrated to Canada in 1904.
- He homesteaded in the Battleford district.
- He served in the military during the First World War.
- After the war, he farmed under the Soldier Settlement plan in the Carragana district.

What does this passage suggest about William?

What does this passage reveal to us about his reasons for leaving his home and choosing Canada as his new home?

What did this source **not** tell you about William's immigration journey to Saskatchewan?

What questions do you have about William and his experience that are not answered here?

Interview With

Eva Bond

- Eva was born in England in about 1903.
- Trained as a teacher in London's St. Catherine's College, Teacher's Training College.
- She emigrated to Canada in 1923, through the Fellowship of the Maple Leaf organization, an organization that helped arrange for teachers to come to the West.
- Left from Liverpool and landed in Quebec City, and took the train to Regina.
- First school she taught at was Waterfield School; also taught at Camp Lake School, at Lonesome Pine School, and at Leask School.
- She taught in Saskatchewan until 1928, when she returned to England due to ill health.

What does this passage suggest about Eva?

What does this passage reveal to us about her reasons for leaving her home and choosing Canada as her new home?

What did this source **not** tell you about Eva's immigration journey to Saskatchewan?

What questions do you have about Eva and her experience that are not answered here?

Interview With

Charlie Quan

- Charlie was born in a village in the province of Kwangtung in the southern part of China in 1888.
- He emigrated to Canada in June, 1913.
- He landed in Vancouver, and he worked in Vancouver and Victoria for a few months before moving to Saskatchewan.
- He worked for and operated restaurants in rural Saskatchewan, and then in Toronto, where he retired to live with his wife and with his eldest son and family.

What does this passage suggest about Charlie?

What does this passage reveal to us about his reasons for leaving his home and choosing Canada as his new home?

What did this source **not** tell you about Charlie's immigration journey to Saskatchewan?

What questions do you have about Charlie and his experience that are not answered here?

Interview With

Isak Simon Elik

- Isak was born in Sevastopol (Sebastopol), Crimea, Russia, on March 28, 1889.
- He worked as a pharmacy assistant in Russia.
- He emigrated to Canada in 1913.
- He first settled in Winnipeg, where he studied to become a pharmacist, traveled some, studied optometry, and worked as a pharmacist.
- In 1927, he moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where he operated a drug store on 20th Street.

What does this passage suggest about Isak?

What does this passage reveal to us about his reasons for leaving his home and choosing Canada as his new home?

What did this source **not** tell you about Isak's immigration journey to Saskatchewan?

What questions do you have about Isak and his experience that are not answered here?

Analyzing the Reasons Why People Came to Saskatchewan

Name	Reasons for Coming to Saskatchewan
Stan Gomulczak	
William Howes	
Eva Bond	
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I notice that some people came for similar reasons. An example would be.....

When I think about all the interviews, I noticed an example of a major difference in the reasons why people came to Saskatchewan when I think about.....

After considering the evidence from the interviews, the most interesting reason for coming to Saskatchewan was.....

Interviews can be challenging to use when studying the past. One thing I found challenging about using interviews to find out information about why people came to Saskatchewan was.....

Using primary sources like interviews can be interesting when studying the past. I found the interviews helpful in learning more about why people came to Saskatchewan because.....

Saskatchewan Archives Board, Transcript from SAB Tape R-500
Oral History Interview with Stan Gomulczak
Interviewed by Ted Zarzeczny, Sr.
Interview in English



Stan's Journey: Part 1

Stan:

I was 13 years of age when Germany declared the war upon Poland, November 1st, 1939. February 10th, 1940, I was taken out by Russian army to the depth of Russia. The Poland was split in two. Germans came from west and took the possessions on the River Bug, which was 9 kilometres west of the place I was living. My place was nine kilometres, as I said, to the east, so Russian armies occupied the eastern part up to the River Bug, [where] I was living. It was said by some that policy of Stalin was to occupy Poland and keep it. So his policy was to resettle Poland with Asiatic people, and took about 2 million of Polish people to Siberia, and to gain the free labour. We were taken out on Feb. 10th about three o'clock in the morning, transported about 15 kilometres to the railroad station, loaded on the box cards, very small box cars, about 50 people each, and I remember that night, the temperature was about 33 below zero centigrade. Quite a few had frozen fingers, frozen ears, and small children were also bitten by frost. Now the men were separated in the different box cards, so there would be no problem of interference from our side. Now as I was boarding the box car, I saw the next car in front of us. The Russian soldiers slammed a steel door, and one woman was crying because her child was left outside, and her head was split in half, so she was dead right there. It took about five days to reach the eastern Polish-Russian border. Now the train stopped, until today I don't know for what reason, and he backed and went forward quite a few times, across the border. Now we are loaded and transferred to Russian trains on wider tracks, and then remained on that train for 28 days through Russia. There were giving us water once in a while and hardly any food. Sometimes the doors were locked for as long as two days.

Saskatchewan Archives Board, Transcript from SAB Tape R-500
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Interview in English



Stan's Journey: Part 2

Interviewer: Could you remember which year was that?

Stan:

That was 1940. Yeh, by the way, we crossed the border Feb. 15th, 9:15 in the morning. Now we were taken to Siberia, which is about 300 kilometres past the Ural Mountains and put to labour in the forest. There were about 705 people brought into that camp. First few months, we weren't pushed to do hard work. We were more or less being settled in log cabins, few families, 2, 3, sometimes 4 smaller families placed in a one room cabin. As spring arrived, we were put to work in the forest, which sometimes is hard to describe in the English language because the phrases were used in Russian. That is, to take the pitch out of the pine trees, the red pine trees, by de-barking the very thick bark all around the trunk of the tree, and then by cutting with the hook knife a long groove, a long vertical groove, placing a wooden trough on the bottom end of it, then every – about three days, you cut the two side cuts, starting from the top, through which the sap, the pitch of the pine seeped down, and then to the small cup on the bottom, placed underneath the groove. Now mostly the men were doing the work. Women were gathering from the cups and hauling in big wooden buckets over the broken, fallen trees, swamps and putting in wooden drums, barrels, which are also constructed at that camp. There are also huge pine trees cut down and drawn or split about a metre long, cut to big blocks and then split, then drawn to strips about 3 inches wide which been taken away and used for stucco purposes, as we use a wire mesh in this country. Now the children were taken to school up to 14 years of age, and anybody over 16 were sent to work. I found myself – I been 15 – so I wasn't forced to work, either to school, so I was kind of a free boy.

All the work that was done was the piece-work, called “norma”. To produce the “norma” a day, for which certain amount of money was paid to you, was almost impossible.

Would take about a week to do the norma, for which we got 7 rubles. Now the snow, in winter time, was getting four to five feet high and still the people were chased to de-bark the trees in that deep snow. We used skis and also the snowshoes. Now the people, I mean the women, had to go to work ‘til 60 years of age, the men 65. We had a doctor in the camp, the Russian doctor, which he could relieve anybody who was sick, relieve from work duty. But you had to have a fever. If you had no fever, you had to go to work. I remember my mother had a piece of forest designated for her working about four feet of snow, and she was falling down, exhausted, but she was still forced to go to work and she was sick. So she went to the doctor, she had no fever so she was still forced to work. But could not come to work, so they put her for three months (would be wrong for to say to put to prison, because we were in a prison camp, but she was put to jail.) In a few words it’s hard to describe the conditions of the camp because it would take more than a tape or more than a day. But it seems to me, and that was the statement of anybody that was there, that the Russians brought us in, not to resettle us in Russia, but to put us to death, but still get everything out of us they could get.

One year passed, and spring arrived. Then we had the news from some people that were remained in Poland that the Germany attacked Russia. AND apparently the front was going through the place where I was living. Now during the war, German and Russian war, the things deteriorated to the point that they even stopped giving us any food. So from there on, was really getting bad. We started gathering any food that we could find in the forest, that is mushrooms, and until this day, even, I can go to the forest and pick out all kinds of mushrooms and eat them. I know them quite well, and the low-bush cranberries which could be preserved without the sugar, we are taking them about twenty pounds at a time, going to the forest with a pocket knife and debark the birch trees, make a container, even cook the water in the bush, cook the berries, make a tea out of the berries, get the juice out and then drink it, and then fill your stomach with the

mushrooms. And that's the food we had to live on for the next month. Then it was going towards the fall when finally we were liberated.

Saskatchewan Archives Board, Transcript from SAB Tape R-500
Oral History Interview with Stan Gomulczak
Interviewed by Ted Zarzeczny, Sr.
Interview in English



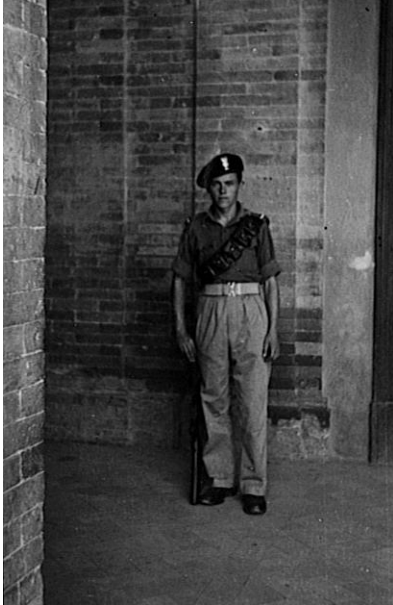
Stan's Journey: Part 3

All the people during that time, they always had hope. They always said it's impossible that things could be that bad, it could deteriorate to the point that the people were put to death. Even the God will not permit this. So the people had the high hopes and they thought that it's impossible that anybody for the things, for the conditions could exist on this earth. But during the course of our stay, which lasted 19 months, about 19 months, out of 700 few in that camp, only about 180 survived after 19 months. A few months after the war, that is German-Russian war, General Sikorski, which was a Polish leader outside of Poland in London, made a non-aggressive pact with Stalin and formed the army to fight the common enemy, which was Nazi Germany. So the commanding chief in that camp ... called a meeting, general meeting of all the people and proclaimed that each person is a free, and he was inviting us to seek the citizenship of Russia and we'll live good, as the Russian say that if you work good, you're going to live good. Those words were repeatedly heard every day. And then we could travel from one place to another. A lot of families were taken from one place, after about two years of war, and placed in an different factory in a different place so they could not have the communications between them. And while we were going to Russia, we met thousands of people sitting in the stations waiting for their trains, and we also saw the hunger amongst their own people. So we knew right away what was coming. The reason for that is that the people would not get together, not to get organized and have.... Sometimes it's hard to explain to the people living in the free world what kind of system it is. If you start talking communism or the Russian communism, Russia has so many police and so many spies that there's always a spy

among you. And even the family or the members of the family are spying against their own families. And you never know that one night, even saying a word of criticism against the government or against the system, the people does disappear out of sight. After a while you'll find out they were put in the work camps for five, ten, fifteen, and as much as 25 years. And I can't make any quotations but I heard terrific numbers of the Russian people sent to camps for a long period of time because they were one way or another, disagreeing or complaining about the system, about the government. So we were brought and we were told, and we could see this, not to complain or not to say a word. And in the Russian saying, [*the transcriber could not make out the Russian words.*] That means, "Very well and very good" all the time.

Many times I hear demonstrations going in Canada, especially the last few years. People demonstrate, people rebel, especially the young people, against the government, against the system, against society. And all the time, every time I see things like that, my thoughts go back and the only thing I can say, just go and see how it is to live someplace else. Then you'll know how lucky you are to live in a free society that you can protest, and you can live, and have a free, freedom of speech and feel free. Until this day, it's hard to explain how I feel about authority. Every time I see a policeman or any officer of the law, something happens in my body. I fear, and I can't help it, but I still get that fear in me. And yet I know that he's not an enemy of mine or there's no harm coming, but I still have that feeling, maybe because I was still young, and I could not overcome that fear.

Saskatchewan Archives Board, Transcript from SAB Tape R-500
Oral History Interview with Stan Gomulczak
Interviewed by Ted Zarzeczny, Sr.
Interview in English



Stan's Journey: Part 4:

After about 19 months being in that camp, we finally had a chance to leave. The Russians did not provide any transportation. As I mentioned before, the commanding officer of that camp, he was a soldier, he told us we had a free hand to travel or to go any place or to resettle in any part of Russia. So one delegate from our camp went out and purchased a train car, a box car. Again, for which we had to pay quite a big sum of money. We did not have much money, but we picked up all the remainders of any clothing that we had, especially the shoes from leather or any ... cloth and we sold them to Russians and then purchased that car. Then we packed that car so full that there was no room, or we could barely close the door. Then there was no provision for food or money for any food to buy, as usually there is not food to buy in Russia, because everything at that time was given to the worker by coupons only. Now that was fall, and we had about 30 kilometres from the camp to the railway station. My mother was sick in bed and my father was barely walking. So I took all our possessions, mostly bedding and some clothing and walked all day and night. I made two trips to the train and back and with the second trip again, we, that is my father and I, we led my mother by shoulders and hands to the station.

Then the doors were locked, and we were supposed to be a free people, but we still were under guards We traveled in that box car to the southern part of Russia where the Polish army was forming. That was [*transcriber could not make out the place name*] near Caspian Sea. For 68 days in that car, now there was no food, we weren't given any food. The only thing we could get [was] what we could find along the way, or get out

from the car, get our own water, or get coal for our heating, we had a box stove in the middle of the car with a chimney going straight out and the corner of that car we had a few blankets hung across and a hole chopped through the floor for toilet purposes.

And we were again about fifty people in that box car. It took us 68 days to arrive to the point because we were many times ... put as long as a week on the side tracks and left there. On arrival to the point of destination, we met some Polish authorities then, and some army posts, Polish army posts. Then that's the first food we were given, which was canned milk and some buckwheat soup and that was the first time since we left, or since the beginning of the war, we attended the Polish mass. We were brought in the *[transcriber could not make out the place name.]* That was a district of Turkestan. And for 3 months we weren't put to any work or given any food. So many people died, and how many I don't know, because we lost the contact of the whole group. We were separated with the small, two or three families, to the different places. And we lived there. Then we heard that they were admitting men to the Polish army. So my father left about three weeks ahead of me. Then after, I started out with a friend of mine, which was about a year younger, tried to join the army. So we walked about a day and a night. It wasn't very far. It was about 14 kilometres. But we made it. We came through the gate and then again we were given food and I was admitted to the army, but the other friend of mine, he was sent back, because he was too young.

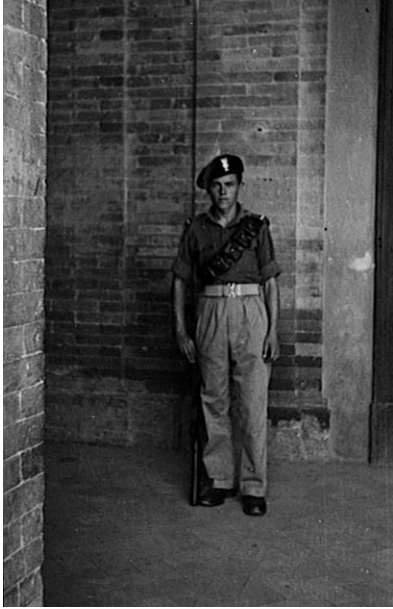
After three weeks we were taken on the ship across the Caspian Sea. Then we came to Iraq. And we were trucked through Iraq, Syria, Transjordan and Palestine. In Palestine we were regrouped again and I was put in the young Polish soldiers' school, in which I remained for approximately 2 ½ years.

Saskatchewan Archives Board, Transcript from SAB Tape R-500

Oral History Interview with Stan Gomulczak

Interviewed by Ted Zarzeczny, Sr.

Interview in English



Stan's Journey: Part 5

There, there were Polish schools organized and I entered the school and finished my high school there, until I reached age of 18 years of age, and I was taken to a regular army again. And that was the time when the troops landed in Sicily in Italy. And we were put to the front in Italy. The year 1944, there was a big front and the whole of Polish army of the second war in which I was serving under General Anders, affiliated with the 8th British army. We went through Monte Casino, first Camp Basso, Monte Casino, then the Po Valley all the

way to Austrian border.

In 1944, May 15th, the war ended, and we remained a little while in Italy, hoping that we can go to Poland. But the Yalta agreement turned differently. Half of the Poland was given back again to Russians. So on the English side, they were demobilizing us but slowly, because they were afraid of revolts and some kind of disturbance of the Polish army. *(At this point in the interview, Stan asked to make a correction.)* The war ended May 15, 1945. Then we remained in Italy until the fall of that year. Then slowly, units after units, we were shipped across the sea to Britain. In Britain, instead of being demobilized or sent back home, we were put back to work. The English authorities said that we were not prepared for civilian life. So they formed a Polish resettlement corps, which was supposed to be preparing the person to work and to enter the working force. We were called in smaller groups and trucked to different places to dig potatoes, work in the garden. Myself, one time, we were taken by truck to about 25 miles distance from the camp and put in a huge barn where about four feet of manure was accumulated in the barn, given for us for cleaning out. We were quite weak because the food at that time was

quite scarce. Britain itself at that time was on the verge of bankruptcy. All the food was rationed in the whole of Britain, so even our pay we could not buy food. Then shortly after, we had a chance to go back to Poland, but not as soldiers or as a free man, but go back to the same place, to the same regime as we came out from, before we entered the army. Because at that time, the Russians control the whole of Poland. So there were a few soldiers that the rest of their families were still in Poland or they had some knowledge of them so they returned. But most of them stayed on.

Then during the fronts, we were going – we were fighting with Australians, with the Australian army, American army and the English. Some of the countries were willing to give us a chance to immigrate and to have a new home. The soldiers that were serving in the Polish Lancers and they fought in Africa with Australian armies, Australia agreed to take all the soldiers to Australia. But then we heard that Canada is admitting some immigrants. Because there were telling us that 52,000 farmers were seeking for help on the farms.

Saskatchewan Archives Board, Transcript from SAB Tape R-500
Oral History Interview with Stan Gomulczak
Interviewed by Ted Zarzeczny, Sr.
Interview in English



Stan's Journey: Part 6

We heard that Canada was admitting people, or the men only with the good health, and there were conditions. He had to have a clear record, first of all, then he had to be single. You could not be wounded or disabled. No more than grade twelve education. And not older than 36. Well, I was in that category. And I passed the medical. Then, about a day later, after I passed, I found myself on the ship *Aquitania*, from Southhampton going to Canada. I arrived to Canada June 10th, 1947. Under the blue sky, the port of Halifax, still in army uniforms. From the ship we were taken... loaded on the trains, and still the same thing over again. We were escorted by the RCMP in locked passenger trains. We could not leave the train or get off the train. We came through Montreal and could not speak to anybody. We were taken on the station that there was a wire mesh on ... both sides of the tracks. So we could only speak to them across that wire, and some relatives, or even some friends that people had, they could not meet. Because the fear was that we'll get lost and then there'll be a problem for authorities to find or to ... place them in proper places of work, as each one of us was assigned to a certain farmer, and I should also mention that we had to sign a contract for two years' farm labour on the farm, not less than forty-five dollars a month. Then we found later that nobody else paid anymore than \$45.00 a month. That is with the board and room.

I found myself in Prince Albert working for one farmer, who I worked [with for] one year of time. Then, as this farmer was retiring, or on the verge of retirement, I was transferred to a different farmer, about eleven miles east of Prince Albert. After working another year for him, I was trying to bring my parents to Canada from England. My father was

also serving the Polish army during the World War Two, and he remained in England. My mother and younger brother was in Africa, and after the war, they were brought to England. So the farmer I was working for signed affidavit for their arrival to Canada. So I was stuck with him for a while waiting for their arrival. They could not pass the medical or weren't young enough to be working or to enter the labour force of this country. They could not come. So then, the knowledge of this, I left the farm and went to work in the carpentry trade in Prince Albert. I took a contract and built the first home on my own in vicinity of Prince Albert....

**Saskatchewan Archives Board, S-C19, Howes, William
Transcript of a Tape Recorded Interview with Mr. William Howes, Carragana, SK
Conducted by D.H. Bocking, June 12, 1963**

D.B.

Why did you decide to come to [Canada]?

W.H.

From England?

D.B.

Yes

W.H.

I was apprenticed to electrical work. I served my apprenticeship. I liked my work and I wanted to get out and get more experience when my apprenticeship was finished and I answered an ad from a firm in Woolich. The Boer War was on at that time and things were more or less booming there. And I took this job and I seemed to get along very satisfactorily. I was always a student of theory and they were up against some problems and actually were being sued by the burrough because they couldn't complete their contracts. And I was able, with my little bit of theory, to do the thing for them and saved them a little bit of money, and they raised my wages.

D.B.

What would you have been getting there?

W.H.

I shouldn't tell you that. I wanted a journeyman's wages. Improver's wages were standard at about seven pence an hour; that's 15 cents an hour. But he balked at that when he hired me and said, "I'll give you that if I find you're worth it. But I'd like to start you at four pence an hour." This is the same as when apprentices get their first job. I said, "No." He said, "Well, I'll make it five pence. Did you ever have any experience in a certain line of telephone communication work?" I said, "Yes. I just came off that." He said, "Well, we're up against a problem. We're being sued. If you can unravel this problem we have I'll have no trouble raising your wages. But you can only work there at nights and Saturdays." Well, it was easy for me. He gave me an apprentice to work with me and I got along good on the job.

But then the war ended. 50,000 men were discharged from Woolich Arsenal in one week. Everything went flat in that country. Nobody hired any extensions in electrical work. Building all stopped and it seemed it was going to spread all over that part of England. There was maybe 10 men working there when I was hired. I saw them all go and I was the last, then my turn came. I got another job and I went to Kensington. The traveller, he lost his job and he took me to Kensington. We got a job there and the same thing happened there. There would be maybe 15 men working on that firm doing wiring

work. But bit by bit it slowed down until there was only two or three of us; my turn came. Now I was out of work and I felt it terribly.

I was 7 weeks out of work. I couldn't get a job anywhere. I didn't complain to my father, but I saw my savings were going, my boots were wearing out and I just had enough to buy my ticket to Canada, which was booming at that time.

D.B.

How much did your ticket cost?

W.H.

I think it was \$50.00

D.B.

That would take you how far?

W.H.

To Winnipeg

D.B.

Did you pack up many goods to take with you?

W.H.

No, I didn't have very much. I had brought my clothes. I left the few little things that I had gathered up with my folks. Their home was in Monmouth, the capital town of the county. They looked after that. I told them I would be back pretty soon. But I didn't get back.

D.B.

Do you remember the name of the boat you crossed on?

W.H.

Yes, it was the Corinthia.

D.B.

Were there lots of passengers? Was it crowded?

W.H.

There were three parts to the passengers. I was Second Class. Three parts of those were electricians. It seems that electricians got hit more than anybody else, with this unemployment.

D.B.

Your meals were provided? You didn't have to bring any food?

W.H.

Yes. We had a nice time.

Note: William Howes worked at a number of jobs in Manitoba and Saskatchewan before he took up entry on a homestead near Swarthmore before doing military service during the Great War. After the war, he settled and farmed near Prairie River/Carragana, part of the Porcupine Soldier Settlement.

Saskatchewan Archives Board, S-C83. Bond, Eva.

Excerpt of a Transcript of a Tape Recorded Interview with Eva J. Bond, about her early teaching experience.

Interview conducted by John Henderson, August 24, 1977

JH:

Could you start off with what you were mentioning about how you became interested in coming to Canada in the first place...?

EB:

Yes. Well, it really started when I was at college in St. Catherine's College in London, at Teacher's Training College. While I was there, Bishop Lloyd of Saskatchewan came to give a lecture. His idea was really to encourage Christian teachers to come to teach in the rural schools of western Canada. Now I was very, very interested. He showed various slides. When he departed, I determined that that was for me. Now he did explain that anybody who was interested in going to Canada should contact the Fellowship of the Maple Leaf in London, an organization that helped arrange for teachers to come to the West.

I made an appointment to see the Reverent P.J. Andrews. He had a very interesting interview with me. At the end of this, he told me, "I think you are very suitable but you are too young." By the way, I was 18 at the time. So that was that. I returned to college and thought about it, feeling very disappointed of course. When I had an opportunity to go home to discuss it with my father and my eldest sister (my mother had died when I was a child) they both said, "No, you are much too young, it is too difficult an adventure for someone so young." That was that.

I was rather deflated but determined that that wasn't the end. I prayed very hard. I felt that it was a job that needed doing and maybe I could do it. To make a long story short, I had another interview with this Reverend Andrews and he, I suppose, decided that I was the right material after all. On August 4, 1923, at the age of nineteen and a half, I left England for the West with the blessing of my family.

Now at Liverpool I met a group of Maple Leaf teachers, all of whom were experienced. I had no experience other than my college training and practice teaching. I had no certificate to show anybody because I had only written my final exams a few days before and the results wouldn't be out for a month or so. However, undaunted, I started out. It wasn't the most comfortable journey in those days but we finally, after eight days, reached Quebec City. From there we got on the train and headed west and I finally arrived at Regina a few days later.

Now there was ... an Anglican clergyman who was in charge of ... the Fellowship of the Maple Leaf in the West and he obtained a suitable boarding place in Regina for us. He took us to the Legislature to get our standing ... I soon realized it meant checking our qualifications. When it was my turn, the only thing I had to show was myself and a

college report signed by the principal. Then I was asked to swear an oath of allegiance to the King which rather amazed me, as I had always been a loyal subject. However, it didn't worry me until – and I swore this oath, a rather interesting procedure – but what did worry me was when they charged me \$5 which I couldn't afford, as I only had \$20 to my name and didn't know a soul in Canada. But that was the drill and so it went.

Now, although I didn't know anyone in Canada, I had had an introduction to a lady and gentleman who lived near Ridgedale in Saskatchewan, who were homesteaders. I had this introduction in England and I corresponded with this lady whose name was Mable. She got in touch with me in Regina and explained that there was a school going, not too far away from where they lived. So, although I had had other offers of schools on the prairie... it was the bush that appealed to me. I got on the train and went.... I arrived late at night, that was the end of the steel in those days. As a matter of fact, the conductor had to shake me because I was fast asleep. However, I rolled off the train and there to meet me was Mable's husband, whose name was Roland. He was very nice. What rather surprised me, it was dark but there were stars out, but he looked exactly like King George V, complete with beard, about the same stature. He was dressed in homesteader's clothes, which I have never seen the King in. He had a buggy waiting. He loaded my baggage and we rattled down a hill. It was only three miles to a district, Riverstone, where the homestead was. It was everything I had imagined – a long cabin, dark, bush all around, the door opened, lamp light streamed across the ground and Mable welcomed me with a very English voice. So I was thoroughly happy I had got to the West....

Now Mable explained to me that this school that was vacant was at a place called Waterfield, about 20 or 25 miles through the bush from Riverstone. A few days later she drove me over in the buggy and I was introduced to the trustees and they appointed me to be their teacher. I didn't stay there immediately but I went back and picked up my baggage. I guess it was something like the 28th or 29th of August when I became the teacher of Waterfield School....

Saskatchewan Archives Board, S-C21. Quan, Charlie
Excerpt of a Transcript of a Tape Recorded Interview with Mr. Charlie Quan,
Toronto, ON

Interview conducted by A.M. Nicholson, August 16, 1964

CQ:

... I was born in a village in the province of Kwangtung in the southern part of China. My father won a military title from the government through the examination. Because of his good nature and his title he gained respect from the people in our village. He received no pay from the country... Also [he operated] a store in order to support my family, including my mother, two brothers and four sisters... Living with him in the store the accommodation was fine. I had a big piggy bank with a lot of coins but never spent one of them. I began to realize my father's situation. At my age of 13, after seven years of schooling, I had my father's consent to leave home for Singapore with the ambition to help my father. I worked in a store. My wages was four dollars a month for the first year. Every year [I] raised two dollars a month for the next three years and one dollar more for a month, another next three years. During those seven years I sent money to my father and still saved some to go home....

AN

....It occurs to me that going from China to Singapore when one was 13 was a very courageous thing to do, particularly when the motive was to help your parents [and] the other members of the family at home. Would you say something about the conditions in China and also about your work and your general life in Singapore.

CQ:

The conditions in China were difficult. There were too many people in a village and I was anxious to help my parents. In Singapore I worked in a Chinese drugstore.

AN:

Earlier, Charlie, you mentioned that in your first year in Singapore you earned \$48, the second year \$72, \$96 the third, \$108 the next year, \$120, \$132, and by the time you were [leaving] there you were earning the magnificent amount of \$144. Would you remember how much you were able to send home to your father in those days?

CQ:

I remember I sent \$10 the first year and \$40 the second year. The third year my father had special needs so my employer in Singapore gave me an advance on my future earnings so that I could send home \$200...

I returned from Singapore and got married. Then I went to Hong Kong. On arriving, with the help of two ladies, I managed to get by and found a job after. Three years were spent in Hong Kong.

AN:

... What were you doing [in Hong Kong]?

CQ

I was a waiter in the Astor House for three years.

AN:

What sort of wages would you be receiving at that time?

CQ:

Wages would be about \$15 a month.

AN:

And how often were you able to get back to the Village while you were there?

CQ:

About three times.

AN:

When was your son born, Charlie?

CQ:

1912 when I was in Hong Kong; got home for a visit after I heard he was born.

AN:

And when did you come to Canada?

CQ:

I left China on June 13, 1913, arriving in Victoria in July. [Note: Charlie was 25 at this time.]

AN:

Did you have to pay a head tax in those days?

CQ:

Yes. Five hundred dollars.

AN:

And how much was the boat ticket, do you remember?

CQ:

About two hundred dollars.

AN:

And how did you manage to raise the \$500 head tax and the \$200 ticket?

CQ:

My father sold a piece of land.

AN:

What work did you first do when you came to Canada, Charlie?

CQ:

I washed dishes in Victoria, picked potatoes in Vancouver for about three months.

AN:

How did you happen to come to Saskatchewan?

CQ:

My cousin who owned a restaurant in Canada wanted me to become his partner.

AN:

And where else did you live in Saskatchewan?

CQ:

I was also in Cadillac and in Consul before returning to China on a holiday.

AN:

In what year would this be that you made your first trip back to China?

CQ:

I was on the ocean on November 11, 1918, the day World War 1 ended.

AN:

Had you been able to save enough money to make the trip back home by that time?

CQ:

Yes. Conditions were good in Saskatchewan these years, with so many immigrants coming.

AN:

How long did you stay in China when you went over?

CQ:

I stayed one year. When my daughter was born.

AN:

How old would your son be at that time?

CQ:

He would be seven and had started his school.

AN:

When you returned to Canada, where did you settle after this visit?

CQ:

I went to Vanguard for ... two years and then I went back to China for my second visit ... [in] 1924. And I stayed for two years which was the limit then.... Canadian immigration would not permit me to remain home more than two years. So the [youngest baby boy] was born shortly after I returned to Canada. Although he lived to be 14 I never saw him. The depression and drought set in and I never got back to China during the time of the Japanese war. My wife and our children moved to the city. He became sick and we lost him.

AN:

When you returned to Canada, where were you prior to moving to Somme?

CQ:

I was in partnership at Hazenmore, Willow Bunch, Arcola.

AN:

In what year did you go to Somme?

CQ:

In moved there in the summer of 1930.

AN:

How did you happen to go so far north?

CQ:

People were going north to homestead in the bush country. Some of my friends said there was need of a café at Somme.

AN:

How large an establishment did you have at Somme?

CQ:

I was all alone. I baked pies, cakes, and made the ice cream in summer, washed the dishes and waited on the tables....

For 30 years in the restaurant business I was around Aneroid, Cadillac, Consul, Vanguard, Hazenmore, Willow Bunch, Arcola, Somme, and Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, and Toronto, Ontario. The longest period was spent in Somme. Somme was a new town surrounded by plenty of bush inhabited by only a handful of people, and business was in general poor. I had to stay there for 10 years before I had a chance to go out. I remember pretty well that I sold only a piece of pie one day at noon, and a chocolate bar for a five cent piece the next day at 10:00 in the evening, just before closing time. Bread and potatoes were my only food, hard wood my bed, and rain and snow my drinking water.

In very cold days the water in the rear part of my store froze. I slept beside a wood burning stove in the front. I did not care how much of the hardships, I only cared for the living on my family in China....

**Saskatchewan Archives Board, S-C54. Elik, Isak Simon.
Excerpt of a Transcript of a Tape Recorded Interview with Isak Simon Elik**

Interview conducted by D.H. Bocking, December 21, 1970

DB:

We are interviewing Mr. Isak Elik. Now, Mr. Elik, would you start by telling us where you were born?

IE:

I was born in Sevastopol, Crimea, Russia, in 1889, 28 of March, and I went to public school and high school in that city.

DB:

Were your parents well-to-do people?

IE:

No, they weren't well-to-do people. They just had a little grocery store in Sevastopol.

DB:

But you were fairly well educated for that time, were you not?

IE:

Well, I attended public school and high school and then at the age of about 16, I move to another city also in Crimea – Kerch. In Kerch, I continued my high school and I joined a pharmacy and registered as an apprentice. Then I worked for three years. In between, after working for about three years I served in the Russian Imperial Army. I had such an educational standing I didn't have to serve four years, I just served about a year and half. After that I went and worked again another three years in the pharmacy. In between I traveled – I went to Vienna and stayed there for about a year, and before that I went to Turkey and I took up languages. I spoke French and German fluently. In 1913, I emigrated to Canada.

DB:

Why?

IE:

Because of my educational standing and my accomplishment of assistant pharmacist, I would be eligible to go to University in Russia, but it was only a two percent norm. That means that out of 150 only 2 Jews would be accepted. And that's why I figured I would have to wait about 100 years before I got there. So I emigrated with the thought that I had a good educational standing from Russia, and I emigrated to Winnipeg in 1913.

DB:

Did you have someone to come to?

IE:

Yes, I came to some of our friends from the city, and it was kind of a depression in 1913 and for three months I couldn't find work, but they were willing to help support me, and then the first job I ever had was in Dauphin, Manitoba, on a farm. I had never seen a farm in my life as I was brought up in big cities like Sevastopol, Odessa, and so on. So for about a summer or so I worked there until the farmers couldn't stand me because I didn't understand the workings of the farm. So I came back to Winnipeg....

...And then I wanted to go into pharmacy. I got a lawyer and he went over all my qualifications and made affidavits and so on that my qualifications were sufficient to qualify for university. I was accepted in the university....For two years The School of Pharmacy was affiliated with the University. I had to serve also in a drug store. I saved enough money to go to college but I had to put in two years apprenticeship, then two years University in between...I worked for two years at a Liggett drug store at a salary of \$3.50 a week.... Then I graduated. I think it was in 1917 or something like that. Then after graduation there was a shortage of druggists and I was offered a job...

Note: In the 1920s, Isak moved to Saskatchewan, where he eventually owned his own pharmacies in Saskatoon.