

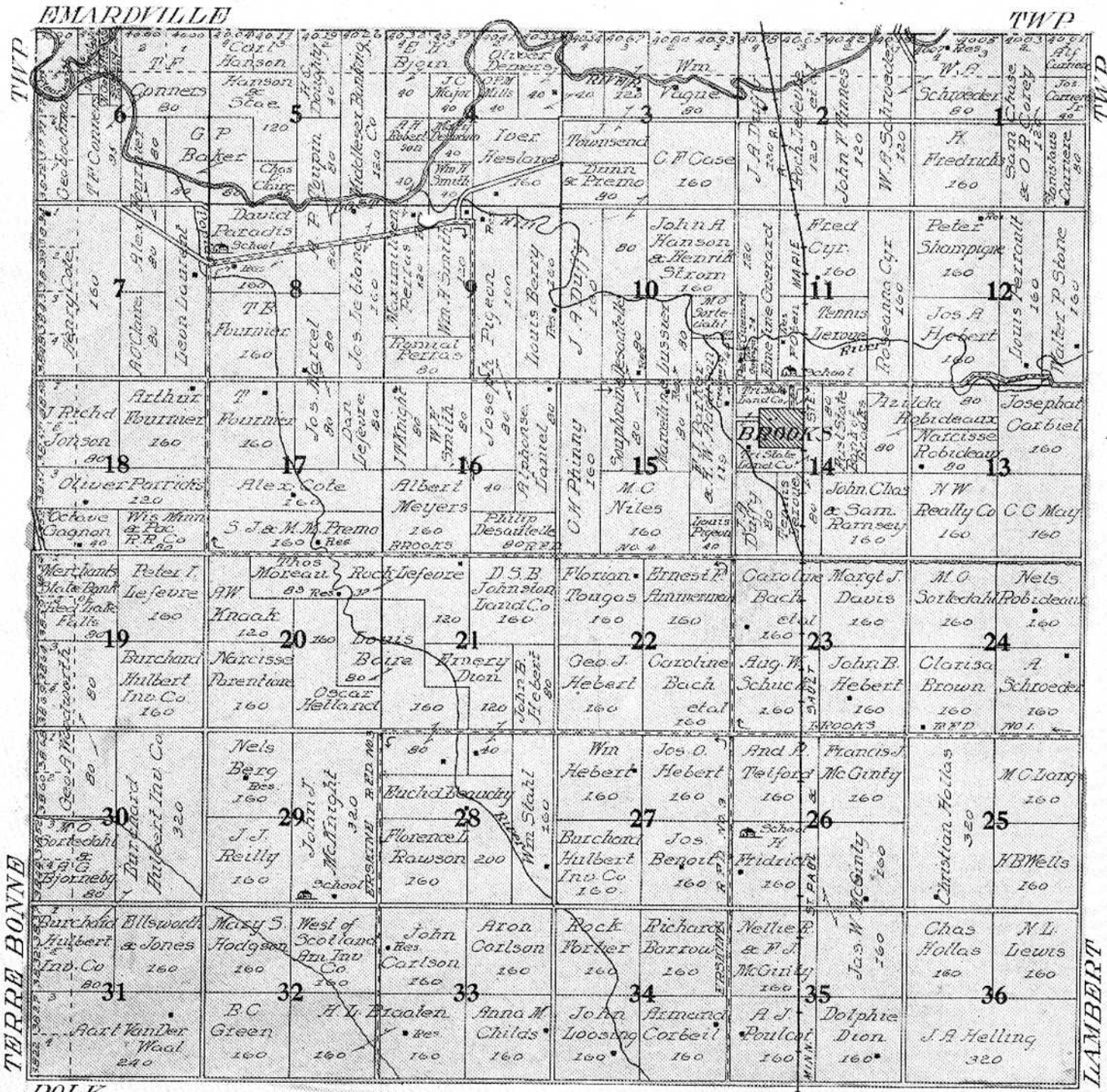
MAP OF

TOWNSHIP 150 N., RANGE 42 W.

of the 5th P. M.

 Scale 1 1/4 inches to 1 mile

POPLAR RIVER TOWNSHIP



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Poplar River Township was organized in 1884 and held the first town meeting on November 4. First officers elected were Frank Oban, Charles Cyr, and John Audette, supervisors; Olivier Meurier was elected the assessor; Lizzie Little, town clerk; and Rock Fortier, treasurer.

Poplar River lies directly south of Emeraldville township and was settled mostly by French Canadians. Brooks community was organized and settled in 1904 in Section 14, the northwest quarter.

Cyrille Lussier homesteaded in Poplar River township on Section 15 in 1878 and served as Poplar River township treasurer from almost the time it was first organized

until his death in 1935.

The first school was located on the north side of Hill river and built in the late 1800's.

Another early settler was Joseph Pigeon who homesteaded in Section 9 in 1879. Joseph served as township chairman in early years, and as treasurer for School District 141 from 1903 until his death in 1934.

The Robidoux farm in Poplar River was first owned by T. L. Sletton in 1882. It was bought in 1890 by Narcisse Robidoux, Sr., who came from Montreal, Canada. Narcisse was secretary of the school board for many years. His son, Peter, served in various offices of the town board for forty-

three years.

Other early settlers names on the records are Guerard, Perras, Toupin, Oban, Audette, LaChance, Cyr, Meurier, Poirier, Boire, Paradis, Premo, Fortier, Barrow, McGinty, Mercil, Fournier, Vague and Hebert.

All records of Poplar River were burned in the Brooks fire in 1918.

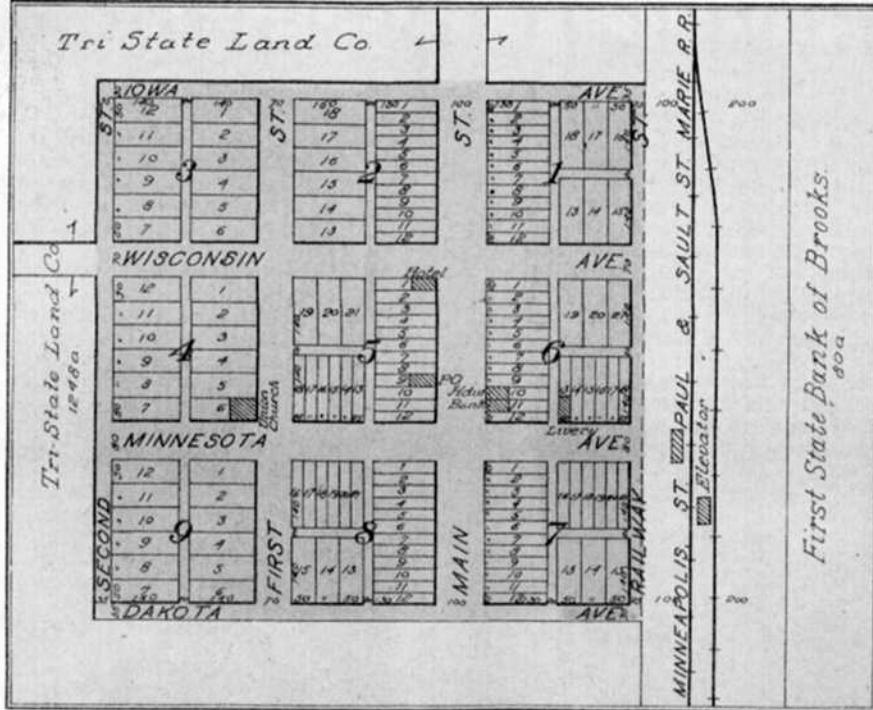
Present board members are Gilbert Genereux, Harvey Riendeau, and Paul Wilkens, supervisors; Lee Nielson, assessor; Dwight Robidoux, town clerk; and Clifford Noyes, treasurer.



Poplar River School picnic about 1913



Joseph Pigeon homestead on the Hill River about 1879



Birds-eye view of Brooks shot from the elevator looking west.

The Community of Brooks was present in spirit long before the first buildings were built on the original townsite in 1904. Traditionally, as with many other towns, Brooks' commencement was largely due to the coming of the railroad. Located along the Soo Line it rose rapidly and by the time the main business section of town burned on the main street in May of 1918 it had become a prosperous little farming community consisting of two general stores handling merchandise, a grocery store, a bank, hardware store, butcher shop, a blacksmith shop, a livery barn, lumber yard, two saloons, a community hall, and a good size hotel, to accommodate travelers and salesmen.

In 1926 the Brooks Cheese Factory was started by the Aurelius J. Parenteau family. It has remained the major industry of Brooks throughout the years and is still

widely recognized today.

Serving area farmers' and residents' needs throughout the first half century, the Village of Brooks was governed by the Poplar River Township board. In 1955 the village was incorporated. Instrumental in its incorporation were Aurel J. Parenteau and Ronald J. Paradis who had to conduct a complete census of the Village and map out the area to establish city limits. Appointed at that time by the county auditor, Mr. Parenteau and Mr. Paradis served as the first official officers of the Village taking charge of scheduling elections first on the issue of incorporation and secondly on the election of officers.

Aurelius J. Parenteau served as the first mayor. He has since been succeeded by David Perreault, Emery LaCoursiere (who won by the flip of a coin because of a tie vote), Aurel J. Parenteau, Wallace Cham-

pagne, and Ronald J. Paradis throughout the 21 year history since its incorporation. After 21 years of operation, James Sabourin, who started as village clerk still serves at present as a council member. He is the only original member of the first organized board.

In 1973 a State Law was passed designating all incorporated communities throughout our state as Cities. So in 1976 the City of Brooks still remains a very prosperous little community serving area farmers and residents, hosting a Farmers Union Oil Co., Brooks Farmers Co-op Elevator, Brooks Credit Union, Paradis Store (Bryan Paradis, prop.), U.S. Post Office (C. R. Gagner, Postmaster, L. M. Mercil, Rural Carrier), Parenteau's Brooks Cheese Factory, Judy's (Olson) Beauty Salon, The Cozy Bar (Ronald Hince, prop.), A. I. Hamrum Accounting Service, Third Base Supper Club (Milo Larson, prop.), Perreault's Plumbing & Heating, Dick's (Delage) Gravel Service, Paradis Standard & Antiques (R. J. Paradis, prop.), Herb's Trucking, St. Joseph's Catholic Church (Rev. L. A. Wieseler, pastor), and Brooks Senior Citizens Homes, a housing complex. The present city population consists of 172 active community minded people.



West side of Brooks Main Street before the 1918 fire. Big Store, Bray's Saloon, Laniel's store and Post office, Lambert Building, LeRoux Saloon and Pool Hall, Demonaz Store and Hotel.



East side of Brooks Main Street