

BOTTOM OF PIPE was laid first, and formed the base for the following operations. Vertical steam boilers and engines were used for cement mixing, the track shown is not the railway track, just a temporary affairs for the mixers, etc.

Building the Winnipeg Waterline

K. W. Brandt Recalls Public Works Project of Yesteryear

It is only a few years ago — after the close of the second world war — that a Steinbach road building contractor received his first contract to

build several miles of Provincial Trunk Highway. Enthusiastic Steinbach boosters hailed this episode as another sign of the coming of age of

the town, one that would give a new outlook on the business horizon, and bring local opportunities into a bigger and more profitable field. However, ambition along this line of endeavor was not new. Early in the twentieth century K. W. Brandt did considerable drainage work for some of the surrounding municipalities, for which purpose he built his own dredge. In 1916 he began work on the Winnipeg aqueduct, easily the biggest Provincial project at that time.

When the Winnipeg wells could not meet the growing demands for water, the city fathers began to lay plans for an aqueduct to bring to the city a sufficient supply of water through concrete pipe 97 miles long, reaching from Shoal Lake, part of the Lake of the Woods to Winnipeg through St. Boniface and under the Red River.

The thought of this huge project caught the imagination of Mr. Brandt. He sold his farm just north of town, (the late Jac. F. Barkman farm), got a sub-contract on the waterway and began preparing plans for a new dredge. Together with his brother-in-law, the late K. R. Friesen, this tedious work of construction was begun. Their model was a walking dredge designed especially for the soft, swampy land.

The machine was finished in the fall of 1915, when plans were made for moving this huge 60 ton machine to the place of operation. The dredge had to be partially dismantled and moving was done during the winter months, not on big semi trailers, but on skids and sleighs. After moving and reassembling of this huge machine excavation was begun in the spring of 1916.

The dredge was then located north of Steinbach at Queen's Valley where the waterline was under construction.

Due to the concrete being poured directly into the finished ditch, the contract called for exacting specifications, consequently hand shovel-

ers had to be employed for finishing the bottom and sides where necessary. Brandt's machine straddled the ditch which measured up to 20 feet wide in place. Due to boggy terrain the dredge moved on six shoes rather than wheels. The two center shoes raising the machine, which was then moved forward through a power winch, and then reversed to bring the two center shoes into moving position for the next operation. The boom was about 30 feet long with a one yard bucket attached to the end of it. With this arrangement they shovelled about 1000 yards daily.

The second part of this contract was to turn back beyond the pipe laying machinery and backfill the earth to cover the pipe to a depth of five feet. This necessitated the digging of a new ditch beside the pipe line wherever the terrain was low. Thus during the years a number of Steinbach's oldtimers had a hand in this project. Some of those Mr. Brandt remembers are Albert Reimer, Peter Unger, Henry B. Reimer, K. D. Friesen, Henry and Andrew Sobering and Peter S. Guenther.

There were about 150 men at that particular section of the work. Construction was about a mile a year, partially due to the slow setting of the concrete, which set the pace for all machines on the job. Mr. Brandt's work started at Millbrook and it stretched 4 miles west to Plymton. Due to the rising costs of labour and materials during the war this undertaking was not a financial success.

However, Mr. Brandt's interest in engineering was wetted to a greater appetite, and his next venture found him as a tool maker with a big construction firm building the Great Falls Power Plant on the Winnipeg River. The only way to get there at that time was by rail. He took the train at Winnipeg but could go only as far as Lac du Bonnet. From Lac du Bonnet he needed a pass, which he could not get because they needed no help at that time, he was informed. Since he was determined to get there he started out on foot along the track, but he hadn't gone far when a supply train caught up to him and gave Mr. Brandt a lift to camp. After he talked to the superintendent for a few minutes he was given a pass and started working.

After this work was completed his interest turned to civil engineering. For two years he ran drainage levels for the surrounding municipalities. Then in 1926 he was given work as a civil engineer, with the Provincial Government. This work took him to many parts of the province. His last survey job with the government was on the Morden Sprague about 1940. Since then his occupation has been at the lathe, which comes second only to the outdoor work of surveying.

Mexico News

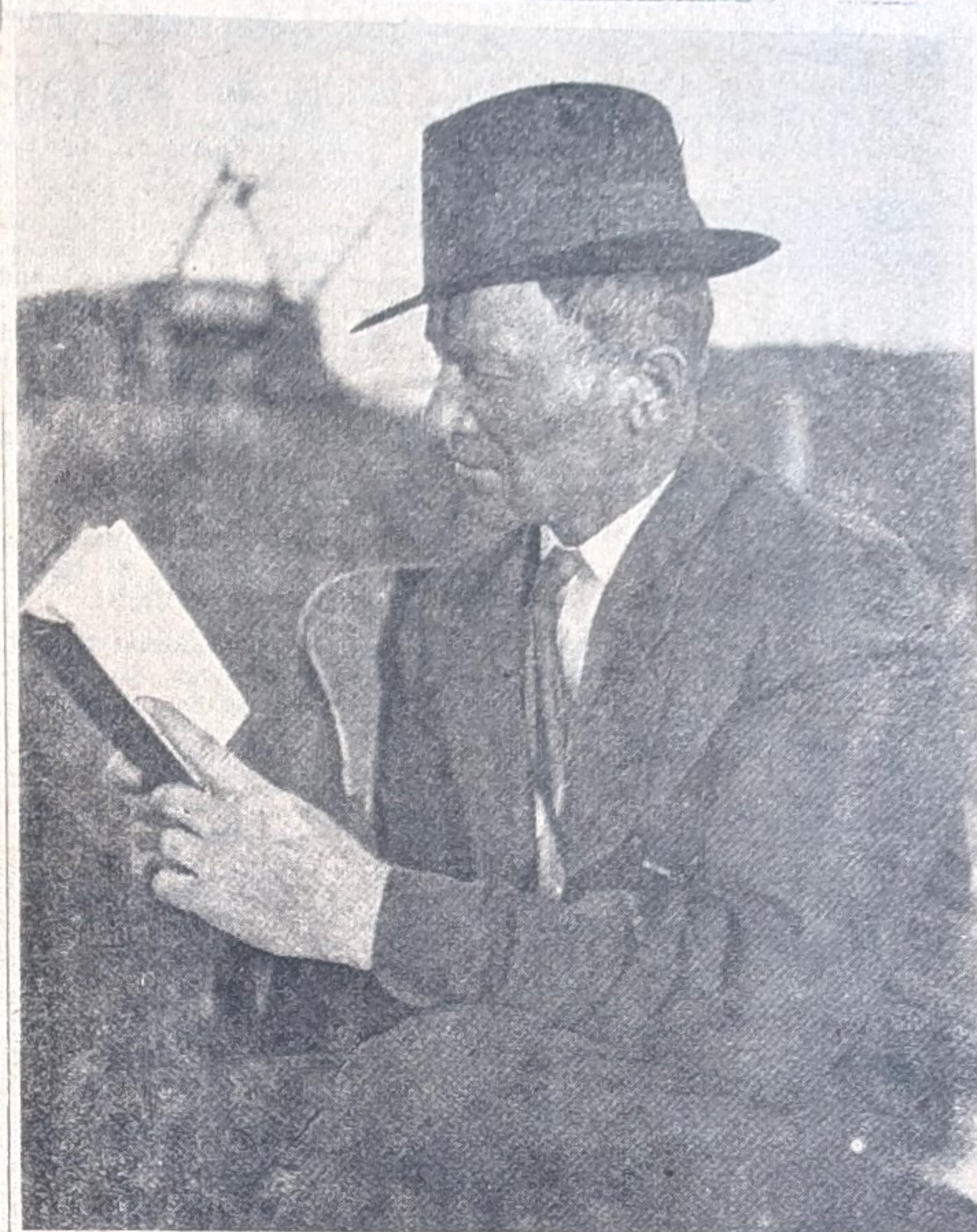
(DELAYED)

C. A. Plett's of Prairie Rose and John D. K. Plett's of Blumenort, Man., reached this colony Jan. 23.

Sunday afternoon Jan. 26, Rev. H. R. Reimer of Manitoba, held a reunion with some of his school pupils of previous years. 18 men and 15 ladies of his pupils were present.

Two baby girls arrived February 1. One at the Ben P. Peter's, named Tina and one at B. U. Kornelsen's, named Elvira.

New arrivals in church Thursday night, Jan. 27, were Mr. and Mrs.



K. W. Brandt as a younger man (around 40) studies surveying with his dredge in the background. Later he became a full-fledged surveyor and has surveyed in most parts of the province.



FRONT VIEW OF AQUEDUCT: here is a front view of the huge pipe. It is over six feet high, built of re-enforced concrete. Where the drop was sufficient smaller round pipe was used. Each section is joined to the next by a copper u-shaped joiner that allows the pipe to contract and expand a bit. The track in the pipe is to move the inside part of the form. Forms were very heavy, were built of steel. Only 3 sets of forms were used in the construction of the entire 97 miles.

Ben Kroeker, and Miss Elizabeth Krahn of Morris, Man. Mrs. Abe D. Reimer returned home with them.

The wedding of Wilmer Kornelsen, son of Mr. and the late Mrs. John B. Kornelsen and Annie, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John H. D. Friesen, took place Sunday Feb. 8. Rev. P. J. Dueck officiated.

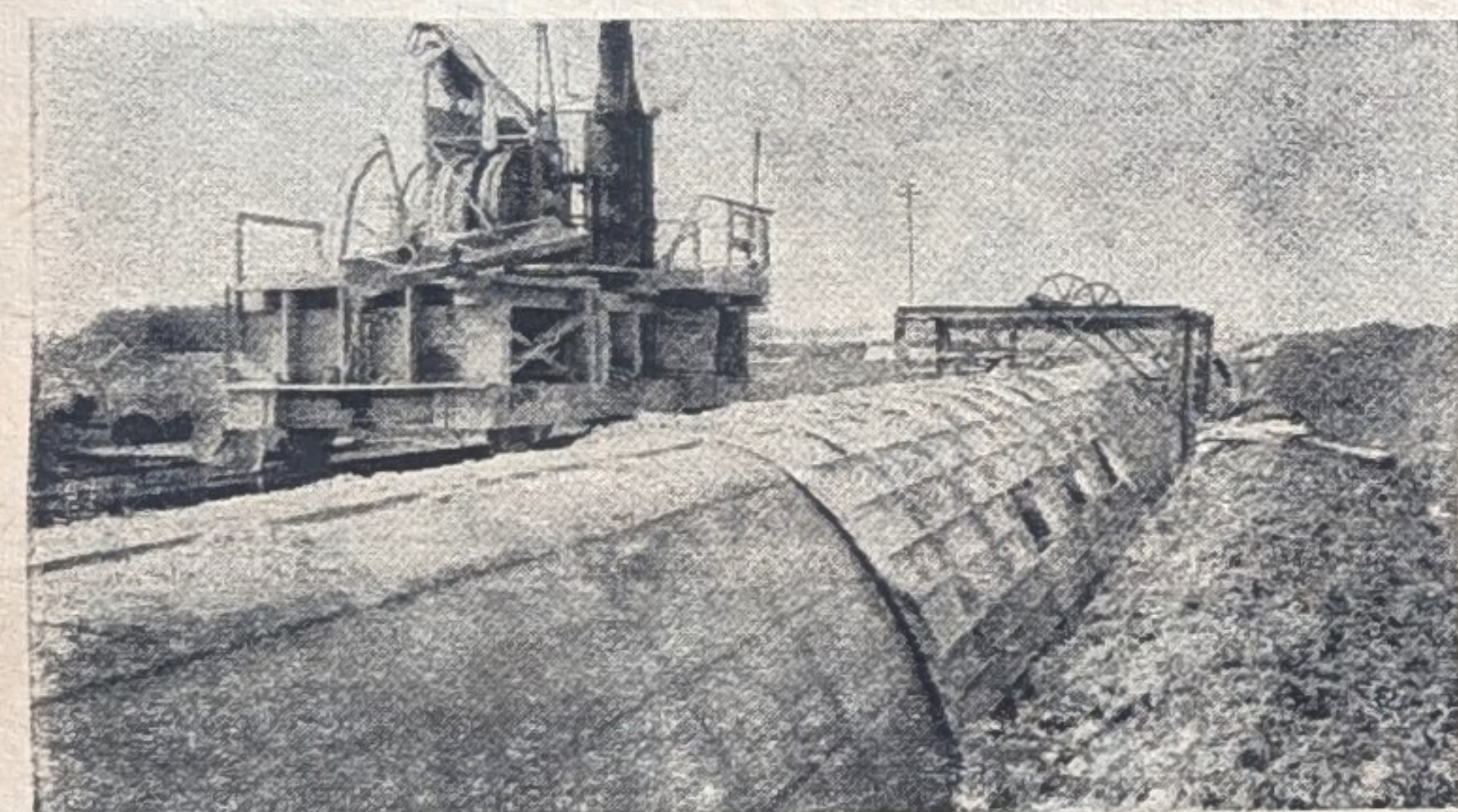
After receiving the sorrowful news of the passing of his father, Mr. Aron R. Reimer of Blumenort, Man. Ben D. Reimer, left for Canada to share in the family's sorrow. Sunday afternoon, a funeral service was held, in remembrance of the deceased. Ben's Feed Mill is mixing

700 bags of feed a month.

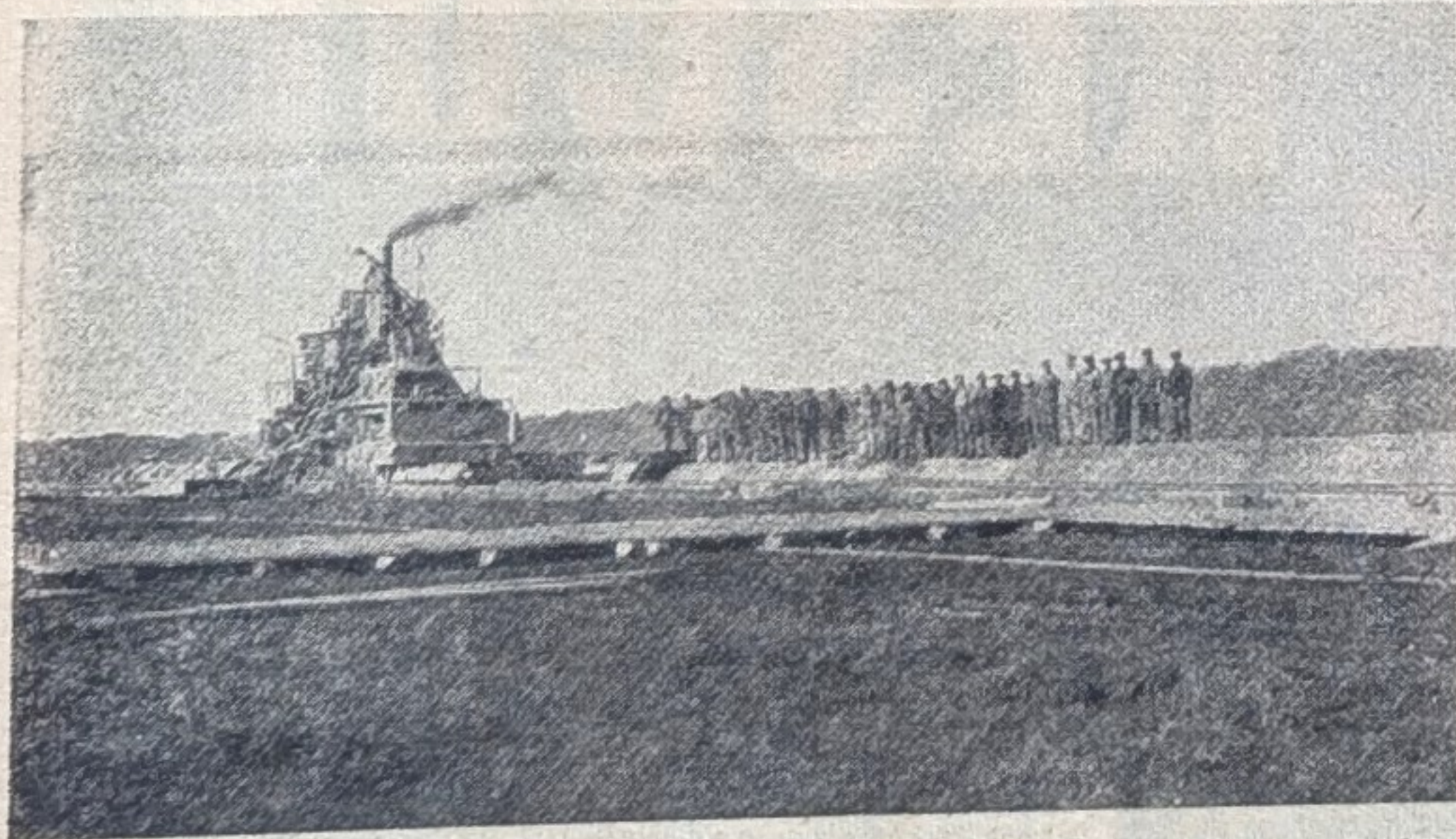
In the south-eastern part of the colony, a well, 209 ft. deep, has been made for the purpose of irrigation. Fifty acres shall be watered with this. This is the third irrigation well.

Saturday, Feb. 14, Mr. and Mrs. A. K. Penner and Mr. and Mrs. P. D. K. Plett of Blumenort, Man. arrived here. Rev. and Mrs. B. R. Dueck, returned home with them.

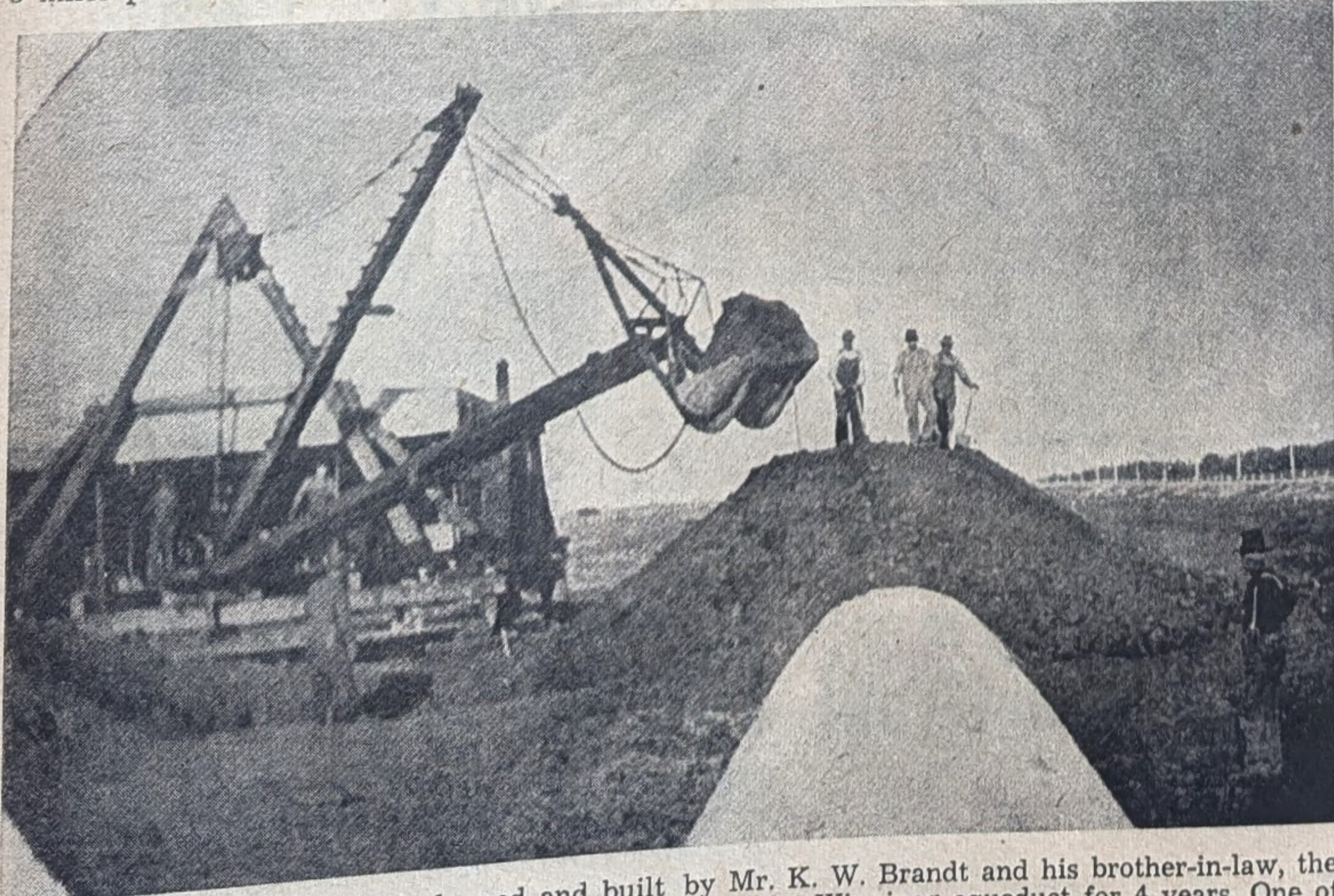
The above mentioned want to take Mrs. P. P. Reimer to the hospital at Campo 45, for medical treatment.



TOP VIEW OF PIPE — The table-like affair towards the back is the hoist that pulled off the outside shell and moved it to a new position.



Here is the largest mixer used on the job and some of the men (standing on pipe). Water runs through this pipe at about 3 miles per hour.



This walking dredge was planned and built by Mr. K. W. Brandt and his brother-in-law, the late K. R. Friesen, back in 1914-15, and was used on the Winnipeg aqueduct for 4 years. One of the fastest moving dredges used on the project, it shovelled about 1000 yards of earth per day.



Repairs were many and numerous: On this photo Pete Unger, K. D. Friesen and far right Albert Reimer of Steinbach are at work on the bucket of the K. W. Brandt machine. Names of the other two men on the picture could not be recalled by Mr. Brandt.