

## *May the Best Shelterbelt Win*

Others beyond the Forest Nursery Station and the CPR saw that shelterbelts would improve living conditions on the harsh prairies. Land companies viewed tree planting as a means of making the prairie more appealing to settlers. They believed a good shelterbelt would increase a farm's value, not only to prospective buyers, but also to future generations, who would enjoy the shade and comfort provided by the trees. As an incentive, some companies and municipalities sponsored shelterbelt competitions.

### 🌲🌲🌲 HASLAM LAND COMPANY SHELTERBELT COMPETITION 🌲🌲

The Haslam Land Company of Winnipeg had extensive land interests in what is now southern Saskatchewan. They believed a well-maintained shelterbelt would add greatly to a farm's value in the treeless countryside.

The land company collaborated with the Dominion Forestry Branch to sponsor the first shelterbelt competition in the West. They awarded cash prizes totalling \$1,000 to those settlers who showed the best results for their 1904 tree planting. Contest rules stated tree plantings must be over 1 acre and shelterbelts over 10 feet wide, and hedges trimmed with no gaps. The rows were to be well cultivated, and trees vigorous and healthy. The company believed that farms prepared and planted under Norman Ross's supervision had the best chance in the competition. Still, all farms were eligible regardless of where they obtained their trees.<sup>32</sup>



A large potato patch is protected by a mature shelterbelt, ca. 1900. A properly located shelterbelt created the perfect environment for vegetable gardens. (Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan R-A6155)