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Duel at Ile-à-la-Crosse

by Elizabeth Arthur

THE violent clash of fur trading companies in the second decade of the 19th century — provocation given, swords flashing, and blood flowing — possesses a dramatic quality that few historians of the west have been able to resist. The late A. S. Morton gave this account of one such incident:¹

A Mr. Hector McNeil, an Irishman, was sent out from it [the blockhouse] to pick a quarrel with Clarke's officers, his associates watching its course from their blockhouse. Soon McNeil the Northwester provoked James McVicar to a duel with swords. There was an element of chivalry in it all, for when McVicar was disarmed the fight ended. McNeil, however, was severely wounded.

This particular encounter, it seems to be agreed, took place in October, 1816, at Fort Chipewyan. E. E. Rich's description of the affair, however, does differ from Morton's on some points.²

An Irish bully, Hector McNeil, soon appeared from the North West house to goad Clarke and his men and to provoke John McVicar, an Irish employee of the Company, to a duel. The Hudson's Bay man was disarmed, the Northwester wounded, both were covered with blood and the Northwester (who gave every appearance of being drunk) was trying to murder the unarmed McVicar when the latter's Indian wife intervened, screaming and scratching. Clarke fetched his gun to prevent murder, Simon McGillivray set on him to take the gun from him, and a general scuffle developed. When the two parties had separated, with no serious damage done, A. N. McLeod appeared, as a Justice of the Peace, and summoned all the English to a court.

Any problem concerning the given name of the Hudson's Bay man involved in the duel was compounded by the fact that Morton's James McVicar and Rich's John McVicar were each indexed in the respective historical works under the heading: McVicar, Robert. In the text, Professor Rich correctly identified the duellist as John McVicar, but, at least at the time that he edited George Simpson's Athabaska journal, he believed that the much-better known Robert McVicar had also fought a duel with a clerk named McNeal [sic] but at Ile-à-la-Crosse, and the time, it might be inferred, was 1815 or 1816.³ Using this as his source, a local historian of northwestern Ontario, sketching in the eventful past of one of the early Lakehead settlers, made the simple statement that Robert McVicar had fought Hector McNeil at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1816.⁴ Three related questions emerge regarding the incident and the interpretation of primary sources by historians of the northwest. What were the facts surrounding the encounter at Chipewyan? What part did Robert McVicar play? Did he, in fact, fight any duel at Ile-à-la-Crosse?

The Fort Chipewyan journals for 1816-1817, like those kept in most Athabaska posts during such violent years, were defective. Errors and careless writing were frequent; several different accounts of the same exciting events were sometimes being kept by Hudson's Bay Company officers and servants, and a number of these have been preserved for the year in question, although it was the journal

kept by Roderick McKenzie that was finally approved by the Company.⁵ The "bloody affray", as he called it, had its origin⁶ when a Nor'wester, identified at this point in the narrative merely as a "stranger", encountered Mrs. McVicar while she was spreading clothes to dry on the ground behind the Hudson's Bay Company fort, and asked her whether she had ever been to Glasgow. She refused to answer "such a forward and unbecoming question". A marginal note opposite this passage, signed F. M., 1896, states that Mrs. McVicar was a Scottish woman, but certainly Rich's claim that she was Indian lends more credibility to the offence she took at the question addressed to her, unless, indeed, she came from Edinburgh.

Subsequently, as all the accounts agree, the stranger challenged John Clarke, the gentleman in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company post, but he contemptuously refused to fight with a social inferior. It was at this point that John McVicar took up the challenge. Simon McGillivray, métis son of William, "Lord of the Northwest", gave his sword to the stranger who then drew his own and presented it to McVicar. The combat lasted about six minutes, and by that time McVicar had been disarmed and his assailant was making every effort to despatch him when Mrs. McVicar ran screaming between the combatants. Her husband, far from being run through, had only been slightly wounded in the forehead. The journal entry ends with the identification of the other duellist as McNeil, an Irishman, but makes no reference to his having received any wounds at all.

Further detail concerning the duel is to be found in the depositions to which both combatants swore, a year or more after the event. John McVicar made no reference at all to his wife's role, but claimed that the duel had its origins in an altercation between McGillivray and his guest, McNeil, on the one hand, and John Clarke on the other. Again, according to this document, swords appear as the unlikely weapons used, but this time it is McNeil who is wounded in the forehead. McVicar swore that he dropped his sword when it became lodged in a wooden door frame. The deposition makes no mention of what force intervened to stop the duel at that point, but does indicate that both combatants were ordered to appear before the Justice of the Peace, A. N. McLeod of the North West Company. It also quotes McNeil as saying that, had McLeod not intervened, he would have killed his disarmed opponent.⁷ McNeil's deposition repeats no such statement, but does bear out McVicar's account to a surprising extent in most other details. He swore, of course, that he was walking peaceably around the fort when he was assaulted by the fiery Clarke; then, after some dispute, a battle took place between him and "John McVicar (a clerk of the said Hudson's Bay company, acting under the orders of the said Clarke) which was fought with swords, and ended with his disarming the said Viccar [sic]"⁸. So much is clear. Whatever the initial causes of dispute, Clarke was involved very early in the exchange; a duel did take place and, whatever the murderous intent of either participant, one was prevented by his own lack of swordsmanship and the other by the intervention of onlookers from doing any serious damage.

But underlying the study of this rather unimportant incident is far more than a tendency to romanticize, to which even historians sometimes fall prey.

The contradictions in the sources themselves reveal some of the particular problems with which students of history must deal, both in respect to fragmentary and misleading records and in respect to the application of general knowledge to a specific situation. The post journals were often carelessly written with many interlineations; deciphering them after the passage of a century and a half is often difficult; the constant repetition of names like Clarke and McGillivray in repeated violent confrontations at various posts presents a real hazard to the modern reader — all these conditions can explain some errors, especially in detail of peripheral significance. In the events of October, 1816, the problem was compounded by the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company had two employees named McVicar at Fort Chipewyan at the same time. The journals and the later depositions make it clear that it was John McVicar who fought McNeil. Those recording the events of that stormy year on Lake Athabaska made every effort to distinguish between the two men in their accounts of duties performed, periodic imprisonment in the North West Company fort, disputes with Nor'westers, and so on.⁹ In most cases, a remarkable clarity does emerge, once the reader's attention has been focused on such a small point as differentiating between the activities of the two men. Robert arrived at Chipewyan on September 18, 1816, from Bustard Lake, departed almost immediately on another mission, and was again at the fort by September 29. Meanwhile, John had remained at Chipewyan, and his activities were carefully listed. Both men were thus on the scene of battle when McNeil arrived. In later months, the pattern set in September continued. Robert was much more frequently absent; both men were at Chipewyan during March and early April, 1817. Then their paths permanently diverged. Robert was at various outposts during the summer and returned to Chipewyan in the fall. John remained reluctantly at the post during the summer of 1817, awaiting permission to leave for Cumberland House.¹⁰ This permission was finally forthcoming in August, and it was at Cumberland in December of 1817 that he made his deposition concerning the events in which he had participated. No further record of his role in the Hudson's Bay Company has been discovered, and even the journals of Fort Chipewyan, and his own account imply a lesser position in the Company hierarchy than that enjoyed by Robert McVicar.

Certainly it was Robert, a younger man, and a Scot by birth (where John was described as Irish) who rose in the Company service and became a Chief Trader in 1821. He too figured in a number of incidents in which tempers were aroused and threats of duels hung in the air. His reputation among the Nor-westers when he first arrived in the Athabaska country was already a violent one. They claimed he had been imported from York Factory as a hatchet man, "on high salary for the express purpose of killing some of their men".¹¹ In the tense atmosphere of the next few years in the west, there is little doubt that his employers gave him licence to break what would have been recognized as the law in other societies. He and Simon McGillivray clashed on at least two occasions, once in a wrestling match at Fort Chipewyan,¹² and again the following year on the Athabaska.¹³ According to his own account, he disarmed an intruder at Frog Portage on September 1, 1819, and so prevented a duel from taking place.¹⁴ His own threats of violence were illustrated during his command at Fort Resolu-

tion. "We told the Indians that should any of them attempt to return to the N.W. we would enter their Fort and lead them out by the nose and kick everyone that offered to oppose us."¹⁵ Had the Athabaska Indians been acquainted with the niceties of European etiquette, one might have expected some challenges to arise from that directive. In dealing with Edward Smith of the North West Company in 1820, as the days of "Athabaska justice" were drawing to an end, McVicar again defended his practices in securing furs from the Indians, while Smith retorted: "You appear to take things very hienously [sic] when the game goes against you; you have sanctioned and supported your men in acts of violence and aggression."¹⁶

What then of the possibility that young Robert McVicar did fight a duel at Ile-à-la-Crosse with McNeil or with some other Nor'wester? In 1815-1816, the year preceding the incident at Fort Chipewyan, McVicar was stationed at Ile-à-la-Crosse, but, for a number of reasons, it seems impossible that he could have fought McNeil and improbable that he was involved in any duel there. In the first place, the coincidence of two McVicar-McNeil duels within less than a year of each other at two different posts in the same area, involving two Hudson's Bay Company men of the same surname (and perhaps two Nor'westers of the same surname) could hardly have passed without comment in the various accounts of what happened at Fort Chipewyan. Secondly, those same accounts do make the point repeatedly that McNeil was a stranger to all the Hudson's Bay Company men at Chipewyan, and Robert McVicar was at the fort when the newcomer appeared. Had a duel taken place earlier, it seems reasonable to assume that the dangerous newcomer would be identified at once. Thirdly, there is the negative evidence of the Ile-à-la-Crosse journals during the year that McVicar spent there.¹⁷ The entries of the conscientious clerk, Robert Logan, began on September 13, 1815, and continued until the following June. They make no reference to any duel, but do give in great detail items of local news that heightened tension. Logan found time and space to recount the fulminations of representatives of the two rival companies, threats, charges and counter-charges. Whenever Hudson's Bay men were absent from the fort in small groups, trying to intercept the Indians before the furs went to the rival company, or sometimes to take back prisoners captured by Nor'westers in an earlier foray, Logan's concern leaps from every entry in his journal.

The character of the Ile-à-la-Crosse journal of 1815-1816 and of the man who kept it must stand as important evidence in any investigation into Robert McVicar's activities during that year. On one occasion, McVicar was despatched to Paint River "to get our men from the N. W. Co. either by fair means or foul ones."¹⁸ He set off the very day after rejoicing and dancing were heard from the North West Company fort as the men there celebrated news of fresh victories in the Athabaska country. Shortly after his departure came the disquieting news that Samuel Black had also left for Paint River. Black was the man the Hudson's Bay Company employees most hated and feared; he was consistently described as an outlaw and a felon, "callous to every honorable and manly feeling."¹⁹ There was no doubt in the minds of the Hudson's Bay Company men at Ile-à-la-Crosse that, given the mood of triumph among Nor'westers at the

time, Black would impose no restraints upon his own conduct or that of his men. Black re-appeared at Ile-à-la-Crosse on April 3, but McVicar did not return to report on the failure of his mission until May 3.²⁰ During this month, concern for McVicar's safety was mentioned repeatedly, and it seems incredible that any specific cause the North West Company might have had for desiring vengeance upon him would have been omitted.

But certain circumstances in the history of the Ile-à-la-Crosse post made it such a reasonable locale for violence that the more a historian knew about the post, the more disposed he might be to accept rather uncritically the likelihood of McVicar's being embroiled in a duel there. The traders from Montreal had been established there for more than a generation. It was to Ile-à-la-Crosse that the young William McGillivray was sent when he first arrived from Scotland in the 1780's; it was at Ile-à-la-Crosse that he married, *au façon du nord*, the Indian girl called Susan; it was at Ile-à-la-Crosse that their children, including the belligerent Simon, was born.²¹ As a wintering partner in the early 1790's, William McGillivray had coordinated the food and transport services for the entire English River District at Ile-à-la-Crosse. To the natural advantages of the place — the abundance of fish, the presence of an Indian settlement, the closeness of the beaver country, the water route to Athabaska²² — were now added the organized links with Green Lake and the Saskatchewan River area, as well as the concentration of pemmican supplies brought from the forts on the upper Saskatchewan by dog-sled each winter.²³ By the time McGillivray left for wider areas of management in 1793, he was already noting that the wood supply around the fort was depleted because of the long occupancy by the Montreal traders.²⁴ Perhaps for that reason, the North West Company built a new post at Ile-à-la-Crosse in the late 1790's.²⁵ There seems little doubt that they had selected the most effective location for a post, and the Hudson's Bay Company, which built its first post on the lake in 1799, was not usually in a position to offer very effective opposition. After 1821, it was not surprising that it should have been the former North West Company post that continued to be used, while the rival Fort Superior was abandoned.²⁶

In the two decades preceding the amalgamation of 1821, Ile-à-la-Crosse acquired a reputation for violence, but the nature of that violence needs to be examined rather carefully. The continuous presence and strenuous activities of Samuel Black and, after 1811, Peter Skene Ogden, contributed greatly to the reputation of the place. Both became chief villains in the eyes of the Hudson's Bay Company men, so much so that they were denied positions under the Deed Poll of 1821. Only later did their undoubted talents secure them important positions with the "new" Hudson's Bay Company.²⁷ Black was frequently referred to as a gadfly in Ile-à-la-Crosse incidents; Ogden had all the self-assurance of a very young man whose family was accustomed to deference. Both undoubtedly broke the law as repeatedly as and often more successfully than their opponents. In many of the incidents in which they were involved, the numerical superiority of the North West Company at Ile-à-la-Crosse made possible a kind of harassment which the Hudson's Bay men resented and denounced repeatedly. When Robert Sutherland was forced to abandon the post by what he called insolent "marauding"

by the Nor'westers, a very clear picture of the rivalry of 1811 appears. "Marauding" is defined by Professor Rich as "a series of injuries, outrages, and premeditated insults in which he was prevented from access to Indians, his fishing nets were cut to pieces, his stockades were hacked down and his goods taken and carried away."²⁸ Up until 1815, the preponderance of power was so greatly in favour of the Nor-westers that incidents were legion. The number of the incidents and the frequent appearances of Black and later Ogden in the midst of them, creates a peril for the historian. It creates a disposition to believe any account of violence alleged to have taken place at Ile-à-la-Crosse.

The overriding question, with which historians like Professor Rich are necessarily concerned, is that of the Hudson's Bay Company priorities in the west. As early as 1802, William Auld, in command at Churchill, was urging a full-scale challenge to the North West Company in Athabaska.²⁹ If his arguments were accepted, Ile-à-la-Crosse would assume an important role in the operations of both fur companies and real violence was likely to erupt there, although not necessarily every season or involving every employee. It was not until 1814, however, about the time that Auld left Churchill, that the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company had at last resolved upon a more aggressive policy in Athabaska, and harassment of the weak by the strong was likely to give place to combat between more equal forces.

It was Colin Robertson, the former Nor'wester then working for the Hudson's Bay Company, who sought to carry into effect the plan that both he and Auld had been advocating for some years. In 1814, he first undertook to recruit Canadian workmen in Montreal. In the the same year, Joseph Howse and a group of Hudson's Bay Company employees, many of them Irish with some experience at Red River, were sent to Ile-à-la-Crosse to win the support of the Chipewyan Indians by a show of strength there.³⁰ The results were predictable. In February, 1815, James Johnston, who served as accountant for Howse, went in search of a steel trap which he suspected had been stolen by Nor'westers; he was shot by a métis, brother-in-law to Samuel Black, and, in the answering fire, a Canadian labourer in the employ of the North West Company was also killed.³¹ The nature of violence at Ile-à-la-Crosse had sharply altered, and a legendary quality came to surround the incident which had claimed two lives. Although it seems clear that Samuel Black had tried to prevent violence on this occasion, his very presence on the scene, his relationship to the man who killed Johnston, and his reputation for provoking confrontations, all made it easy to conclude that he was an accessory both before and after the fact.³²

An interesting sidelight upon the Johnston death, the creation of myth around it, and the actual routine of life at Ile-à-la-Crosse in the succeeding years is provided by the reminiscences of Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, one of the men recruited by Colin Robertson for Hudson's Bay Company service. Charbonneau signed on for three years' service in the Athabaska country, left Lachine in May, 1815, and reached Ile-à-la-Crosse in the late summer.³³ As soon as he arrived, the story of Johnston's death during the previous winter was impressed upon him.³⁴ He was caught up in the excitement of an armed camp, in which

“les simples serviteurs embrassaient la cause de la compagnie à laquelle ils appartenaient avec autant d’ardeur que les chefs eux-mêmes.”³⁵ He noted that the North West Company already had a number of “athlètes” in residence; to counter these, the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1815 engaged some equally tall and robust “montagnards écossais”.³⁶ Among these might be classified Robert McVicar. Two significant aspects of the history of Ile-à-la-Crosse emerge from Charbonneau’s account — his own unwillingness to become involved in the brawling if he could avoid it, and the subjects of most of the quarrels: traps, stolen fish (during the winter months), and the location of gardens in the spring. Small and wiry, and practically indestructible provided he stayed clear of the strong-armed warriors, Charbonneau acted as a courier and exulted in being away from post so much. He was absent at Green Lake when the Hudson’s Bay men briefly dropped their guard and were captured by their rivals in March 1817.³⁷ When he returned, he also became a prisoner of Samuel Black, and, with fourteen others was taken to Lac la Ronge, eventually freed there, sent to Fort Dauphin, and then back to Ile-à-la-Crosse. His headquarters remained there for another decade, and his continuous experience enabled him to observe, from a very limited and local point of view, the drama of fur trade rivalries in one particular post, and some isolated incidents striking enough to warrant the attention of later historians. That Charbonneau mentions no duels proves nothing. But one point that his narrative does make clear, which historians have consistently noted without realizing fully its significance with respect to the history of duels, is that the year 1815-1816 at Ile-à-la-Crosse was a comparatively peaceful one.

Between the bloodshed of 1815 and the capture of the fort in 1817 lay an interlude of tension. At first, two virtually equal forces were confronting each other, with the possibility always present that superiority in numbers, perhaps in one of the outposts linked to Ile-à-la-Crosse, might precipitate an incident and full-scale war ensue. At Green Lake, in March, 1816, for example, the ubiquitous Samuel Black took a number of Hudson’s Bay Company men prisoner.³⁸ Any misjudgement of the degree of force at one’s command might well lead to bloodshed on such occasions. The tension at Ile-à-la-Crosse heightened as news of Hudson’s Bay Company disasters in the Athabaska reached jubilant Nor’westers, and during 1817 and 1818, a comparative calm arose from the dominance of one company throughout the whole area, with Ile-à-la-Crosse on the periphery of excitement. It is ironic that one of the printed contemporary accounts that support this view was preserved more to perpetuate legend than to expose it. The Abbé Dugas, who collected and published the reminiscences of Charbonneau many years after the events, was primarily interested in the French Canadian presence in the west, and more particularly, the Riel family. It was at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1815 that the North West Company servant, Jean Baptiste Riel, married the Franco-Chipewyan métisse, Marguerite Boucher; it was at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1817 that their son Louis was born. The family left the area in 1822 and, in September of that year, young Louis was baptized at Berthier, Lower Canada, but as an adult he was to journey west again, briefly as a Hudson’s Bay Company employee at Rainy River, then, permanently as a resident of

Red River where his more famous son was born in 1844.³⁹ Whatever aspect of western history catches the attention of the historian, it seems that the name of Ile-à-la-Crosse leaps from the page; the threads of which legends are woven lie there constantly ready for the loom.

As the years of rivalry between the fur trading companies drew to a close, Ile-à-la-Crosse again became a centre of potential violence, because the revived Hudson's Bay presence in the whole Athabaska region and the reestablishment of posts formerly lost to the rival company recreated the situation of 1814-1815. The man sent to command the Ile-à-la-Crosse post in 1819 was the John Clarke who was already noted for his rash behaviour in several ill-fated Athabaska campaigns, and it appears that he surrounded himself with an able and truculent staff.⁴⁰ New clashes were to be expected under his energetic leadership. Clarke challenged his opposite number, Angus Bethune, to meet him "as a gentleman", threatening at the same time to give that Nor'wester a public horsewhipping, but Bethune refused to answer the challenge.⁴¹ Clarke's journal has several references to potentially dangerous incidents. Paul Fraser, a North West Company employee, on one occasion threatened to fight and was told that only blackguards fought with their fists,⁴² and

that if he had any inclination to show his bravery he [McLeod of the Hudson's Bay Company] was ready at a call and would walk forward before him into the bushes for that purpose, Mr. McMurray [of the North West Company] in the interval going for a brace of pistols. The North West gentlemen requested me (particularly Mr. McMurray who said: "Beware of bloodshed") to arrest such proceedings. From Fraser's manoeuvres, who was going crying and weeping through the camp, and seeing Messrs. McMurray and Bethune detaining him from following our gentleman, I knew there would be nothing serious which induced me to allow Mr. McLeod to persist. After waiting on the ground for about twenty minutes, Mr. McKenzie, who was Mr. McLeod's second, came to the camp and told Fraser, "We are waiting for you some time back," and returned immediately to Mr. McLeod, and after waiting fifteen minutes more and finding Fraser did not go, they both came back through the North West camp.

A later journal entry reported further activity by the same Paul Fraser, when he and Angus Bethune arrived at a place where several Hudson's Bay Company men were working.⁴³

Fraser laid hold of Proux from behind and Bethune immediately came to his assistance and both of them were dragging Proux along, when they were perceived by Patrick Cunningham, who ran to Proux's assistance and took him from Bethune and Fraser. Proux finding support wished to fight with the North West gentry, but Cunningham prevented him.

This incident, minor in itself although representative of those that enlivened the fur trade at Ile-à-la-Crosse over a number of years, is interesting in that it involved Patrick Cunningham, an Irishman who had been an associate of Howse and Johnston in 1814, and had survived all the intervening events. He had one later claim to fame. Early in 1821 three duels were reported in the northwest within the period of a month — "one at Ile-à-la-Crosse between young Douglas and Pat Cunningham (no blood)".⁴⁴ A far more arresting figure in Canadian history than Robert McVicar thus steps on the stage in an actual duel at Ile-à-la-Crosse,

for Cunningham's antagonist was the James Douglas⁴⁵ who was to create legends of his own west of the Rockies. If historians or writers of fiction had chosen to supplement scanty journal entries and deliberately selected one incident to illustrate the tensions at Ile-à-la-Crosse, surely the Douglas-Cunningham encounter would have recommended itself for consideration. The McVicar myth has grown by accident, not design.

It is all too easy to ascribe blame for the creation of such myths. Interpretive historians of the west, like A. S. Morton and E. E. Rich, have contributed to the growth of the myth, not out of any desire for dramatic effect, but out of minor errors in detail made possible, to a great extent, by their knowledge of the large picture into which the details fit so neatly and so deceptively. The local historian may discover the errors, but, in his triumph at confounding the experts, he may fail to scan the broad picture, and lack the perspective that made the error possible. Uncovering as much of the story of the McVicar-McNeil duel as it is now possible to piece together, fascinating as the exercise may be, reveals little of the grand drama of the confrontation of fur trading companies in the west. In his desire to focus on individual locations and personalities, the local historian can often be misled, and it is significant that it was a local historian of northwestern Ontario who provided the complete and unequivocal statement of a McVicar duel at Ile-à-la-Crosse. Fort William and Ile-à-la-Crosse were part of a whole, and knowledge of one of the parts can be most deceptive. The references to Selkirk's capture of Fort William as justification for retaliation in Athabaska,⁴⁶ for example, or the transfer of personnel from one area to another — Robert McVicar, Angus Bethune and Thomas McMurray were all involved in the later history of the Lake Superior district. But these are the kind of details, fortuitous but arresting, from which the local historian may erect a precarious structure, relying for his information not upon the original records but upon the useful appendices that the interpretive historian often provides. It is precisely in these appendices that mistakes will be most frequent, for the necessity of creating a generalization and a theory makes almost inevitable some errors in detail. The historian of the west, as a whole, caught up in the study of the grand design, is quick to recognize such errors as trivial; the local historian may well ask when an error ceases to be trivial.

The creation of myth, insofar as it is accomplished by individual writers at all, may be credited to those seeking to magnify the importance of a local person or event. But, in a very real sense, the myth cannot be created. It takes hold of the minds of people, historians or not, as the essential rightness of a story, the essential drama of a situation forces itself upon the mind. "Myth already reveals the striving and the power, not simply to glide along in the stream of feeling and affective agitation, but to fetter this movement and bring it into a kind of spiritual focus, into the unity of an 'image'".⁴⁷ It was this imaginative leap that caused Morton to see chivalry in a petty and even ludicrous quarrel. Such a leap is never far away from the student of old records who cries to himself: "Let these dry bones articulate."

Footnotes

- ¹ A. S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, (London, 1939), p. 608.
- ² E. E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870*, (London, 1959), II, pp. 341-2.
- ³ George Simpson, *Journal of Occurrences in Athabaska Department, 1820 and 1821, and Report*, edited by E. E. Rich, (London, 1938), Appendix B, p. 457.
- ⁴ J. P. Bertrand, *Highway of Destiny*, (New York, 1959), p. 179.
- ⁵ Rich, II, p. 345. In this reference, Robert McKenzie is stated as the writer of the journal, but an apparent error is corrected in Simpson, Appendix B, p. 454, where Rich gives a biographical account of Roderick McKenzie (Junior).
- ⁶ Public Archives of Canada (P.A.C.), Microfilm of Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) records, B-39-a, Fort Chipewyan Post Journals, 1816-17, Entry of October 5, 1816. Reference to this and other material in the HBC records is made with the kind permission of the Company.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, B-39-z, Miscellaneous Papers, Fort Chipewyan, Deposition of John McVicar, sworn before James Bird at Cumberland House, December 11, 1817.
- ⁸ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers, Colonies*, (reprinted Shannon, 1971), V, p. 239, Deposition of Hector McNeil.
- ⁹ P.A.C., HBC records, B-30-a, Fort Chipewyan Post Journals, 1816-17.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, B-39-z, Miscellaneous Papers, Fort Chipewyan, Deposition of John McVicar.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, B-89-a, Ile-à-la-Crosse Post Journals, Feb. 1, 1816.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, B-39-a, Fort Chipewyan Post Journals, April 15, 1817.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, B-39-z, Miscellaneous Papers, Fort Chipewyan, Deposition of Robert McVicar, Fort Wedderburn, August 28, 1818.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, B-181-a, Fort Resolution Post Journals, 1819-20, Letter of McVicar to William Williams, Dec. 1, 1819.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Entry of Oct. 17, 1819.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, includes exchange of notes between Smith and McVicar, Apr. 15, 1820.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, B-89-a, Ile-à-la-Crosse Journals, 1815-16.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Entry of March 11, 1816.
- ¹⁹ Simpson, *Journal of Occurrences*, p. 102.
- ²⁰ P.A.C., HBC records, B-89-a, Ile-à-la-Crosse Journals, April-May, 1816.
- ²¹ Marjorie Wilkins Campbell, *McGillivray, Lord of the Northwest*, (Toronto, 1962), p. 58.
- ²² Donald Gunn, *A History of Manitoba from the Earliest Times*, (Winnipeg, 1880), p. 125; Abbé Dugas, *Un Voyageur des Pays D'en Haut*, (Montreal, 1924), p. 85.
- ²³ Campbell, pp. 60-1. ²⁴ Morton, p. 450. ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 452. ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 630.
- ²⁷ Simpson, *Journal of Occurrences*, Appendix B, pp. 429-30; Colin Robertson, *Colin Robertson's Correspondence Book, September 1817 to September 1822*, ed. by E. E. Rich, (London, 1939), Appendix A, p. 238.
- ²⁸ Rich, II, p. 304. ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 278.
- ³⁰ *Robertson's Letters*, pp. 31-2, Robertson to Irving, December, 1817; Appendix A, pp. 221-3.
- ³¹ Gunn, pp. 122-4.
- ³² Simpson, *Journal of Occurrences*, p. 222, quotes report that the murder of Johnston was planned by Durocher and Black; *Robertson's Letters*, 68n, reference to J. B. Durocher as the confessed killer of Johnston who was then protected by Black.
- ³³ Dugas, p. 29; p. 84. ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 89. ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86. ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 89. ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-7.
- ³⁸ Simpson, *Journal of Occurrences*, Appendix B, p. 430.
- ³⁹ G. F. G. Stanley, *Louis Riel*, (Toronto, 1963), pp. 3n; 375.
- ⁴⁰ Simpson, *Journal of Occurrences*, pp. 7; 324; 344.
- ⁴¹ J. J. Hargrave, *Red River*, (Montreal, 1871), Appendix B, Journal kept by Clarke at Ile-à-la-Crosse, 1819-20, p. 495, May 20, 1820.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 491, Oct. 6, 1819.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 492, Oct. 17, 1819.
- ⁴⁴ Gordon G. Davidson, *The North West Company*, (New York, 1918), Appendix O, p. 302, J. G. McTavish to the Wintering Partners, Fort William, April 22, 1821.
- ⁴⁵ Margaret Ormsby, "James Douglas" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, (Toronto, 1972), IX, p. 239.
- ⁴⁶ Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers, Colonies*, V, p. 236; Deposition of Hector McNeil.
- ⁴⁷ Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Form*, (New Haven and London, 1957), III, p. 108.

The "Magic City on the Banks of the Saskatchewan": The Saskatoon Real Estate Boom 1910-1913

by R. REES

ONE of the least attractive features of the European settlement of Western Canada was the speculation in land which attended the settlement. Although the speculation was as regrettable as any other expression of greed it would be naive, in view of the rapidity and mass nature of the settlement, to have expected more restrained behaviour. The speculation affected both urban and rural land but was heaviest in the growing towns and cities where land was scarce. In all cases it was based upon expectations of growth. During the first decade of the century boom conditions prevailed throughout the prairies. The success of the settlement plan had occasioned a huge influx of population—Saskatchewan recording a fivefold increase between 1901 and 1911—which coincided with the expansion of the wheat economy. After the middle of the 1890's wheat prices had moved sharply upward, transportation charges declined and farm productivity increased rapidly.¹ By 1910 it was evident that the prairies were destined to become one of the great wheat exporting regions of the world and Westerners were understandably optimistic about the future. As service and distributing centres the towns were expected to share in the general prosperity.

In general the highest optimism was reserved for those towns which were situated at the junction of railway lines, it being an article of faith in the early West that intersecting lines guaranteed a community's growth. An interesting case in point was the experience of the small town of Warman, situated fourteen miles north of Saskatoon. In 1906 it found itself at the junction of the Canadian Northern and Prince Albert lines. The latter was then operated by the Canadian Pacific Railway which paid no attention to the Canadian Northern's schedule, thus enforcing long delays at Warman. To accommodate the passengers three large hotels were built, and in anticipation of future growth lots were surveyed up to a mile from the town centre, some of them selling at high prices. For promotional purposes a map was prepared showing Warman as a great centre with Saskatoon as an insignificant settlement fourteen miles to the South. Two years later the Canadian Northern bought the Prince Albert line and ran the trains to suit the schedule of its main line. Passenger delays were eliminated and Warman remained a small town.²

The local events leading to the Saskatoon boom were also connected with the railways. By 1908 the city could boast the services of all three transcontinental railway companies — the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk — and commercial interests began using the slogan 'Hub City', the first of a series of unfortunate destiny labels. A year later the city succeeded in its bid for the University of Saskatchewan so that by 1909 it had acquired those functions which were to form the basis for its subsequent economic growth

as a distribution and marketing centre for central Saskatchewan and an educational and institutional centre for the whole province.

Given these circumstances, there were ample grounds for confidence in the city's future, but business interests and city 'boosters' foresaw only unlimited growth and prosperity. In doing so they were responding to the excessive optimism which seems to have characterised not just Western Canada but the whole of the Western world before the outbreak of the first World War. The brashness of the period and the general belief in wealth and material progress as an unequivocal good were described by George Orwell in *Such, Such were the Joys*:

There never was, I suppose, in the history of the world a time when the sheer vulgar fatness of wealth, without any kind of aristocratic elegance to redeem it, was so obtrusive as in the years before 1914. It was an age when crazy millionaires in curly top hats and lavender waistcoats gave champagne parties in rococo houseboats . . . the age of *The Merry Widow*, Saki's novels, *Peter Pan* and *Where the Rainbow Ends* . . . The goodness of money was as unmistakable as the goodness of health or beauty, and a glittering car, a title or hordes of servants was mixed up in peoples minds with the idea of actual moral virtue.³

Although, in Western Canada, the manifestations were somewhat different from those in England the ethos in both places was virtually the same. The West's particular contribution to the vulgarity of the period was the boastful, extravagant statement. *The Saturday Press*, for example, in its Building and Development supplement, November 1912, described Saskatoon's growth between 1904 and 1912 as "the greatest example of town and city building in the world's history", and an advertisement placed in an Eastern newspaper claimed that the city was "the eight year old wonder of the British Empire".⁴ Unfortunately, the hyperbole was not confined to Saskatoon. Civic boasts reverberated throughout the province. The following appeared in a full page advertisement in a Regina newspaper in 1912: "The Eyes Of The World Are Upon Regina The Capital And Wonder City Of This Mighty Province Whose Growth Can No More Be Stemmed Than The Waters Of The Sea".⁵ Prince Albert, which seemed to be as certain of its destiny, was to become a northern metropolis. Hydro electric power generated by the placid North Saskatchewan, would make it "The White Coal City", and a railway to Hudson Bay "The gateway to Europe". A publication, sponsored by the board of trade in 1910, predicted the usual roseate future, to be enjoyed by a population of half a million, and ended with this remarkable panegyric:

Hear ye the roar of enginery and motor, the buzz of wheel, the hum of pulleys, the symphony as sung by power applied to drill and saw and hammer. Note ye the flow of material into the city and the stream of finished product that leaves by train going to build the homes of the sturdy men who are tilling the prairie.⁶

The combination of high emotion, created by these gospels of growth, and belief in the unlimited potential of the West, was an ideal matrix for the growth of speculative fever. To trigger the growth only an inflow of capital was needed. This final prerequisite was provided through the initiative of the boards of trade and the real estate companies. Financial houses and the general public both at

home and abroad were alerted, by a flood of promotional literature, to the golden opportunities awaiting the investor in the Western cities. At the time there were large supplies of mobile capital in Britain seeking profitable ventures overseas and the Canadian prairies were regarded as a favourable area for investment.

In some of the promotional literature extraordinary claims were made. A group of Saskatoon real estate promoters predicted a population for the city of 400-600,000 by 1940 and even the mayor, in 1910, foresaw a population of 100,000 "in a few years".⁷ In 1912 a full page newspaper advertisement underlining the city's attractiveness as a location for industry predicted that "Winnipeg will be a Chicago and Saskatoon will be a Minneapolis and St. Paul with a million people"⁸. Prospective industrialists were promised cheap sources of power in the form of natural gas — vast bodies of which were "known to exist" within the vicinity — and hydro-electricity, which was to be generated by harnessing the South Saskatchewan River. To advertise the agricultural potential of the province and allay fears about the reported limitations of the prairie climate, the president of the board of trade grew sub-tropical plants outside his office. With similar intent photographs were taken of bumper crops of onions, potatoes and cabbages and distributed widely. Fortunately, the zeal was leavened by a little gentle caricature: postcards using trick photography to show giant cabbages and enormous wheat stalks ridiculed the excessive claims of the prairie boosters.

However, gentle caricature was no match for the zeitgeist. When reality itself is inflated the caricaturist is disarmed. Capital flowed into the West — "a continuous tide of British gold",⁹ according to Elbert Hubbard the famous inspirational essayist who visited Saskatoon in 1912 — and the cities boomed. Saskatoon's boom began in the fall of 1910 and ended in the summer of 1913. Since its general history is fairly well documented¹⁰ only its salient features need be mentioned here. Like all speculative booms it was characterised by inflated land prices and totally unrealistic subdivision. The surrounding prairie was used as a seedbed for real estate fantasies. Land — some of it still not built upon — was subdivided into lots in a radius extending six miles from the city centre, with the mayor recommending that the radius be lengthened to ten miles. In all, about fifteen thousand acres outside the city limits were surveyed into town lots, most of them selling at prices above their present value. By 1913, even allowing for an expansion of the city's boundaries in 1911, it has been estimated¹¹ that there was enough subdivided land outside the city limits — approximately 60 quarter sections — to accommodate a population of half a million in detached houses.

To administer to the speculative fever the number of real estate firms in the city mushroomed from eight in 1908 to two hundred and fifty-seven at the height of the boom in 1912. Today there are fifty-eight. According to Elbert Hubbard many of the real estate boomers were Americans, some of them, presumably, being professional town promoters who had participated in the booms of the American West and Mid-West. Although cash did exchange hands most of the transactions were in 'futures', the buyer making a small down payment, holding the remaining debt in the form of a mortgage. Lots exchanged hands frequently

— on occasion several times during a week — making large profits for both local and foreign investors.

Inflationary pressures, however, were not confined to real estate. In 1911 the board of trade had advertised the city's population as 17,000 whereas the Dominion Census in October of that year found it to be only 12,000 and as if to add insult to injury gave out a figure of 30,000 for Regina. The inevitable reaction, in view of the wound to an abnormally sensitive civic pride and the danger of a loss of credibility in the financial houses, was an outburst of righteous indignation. "It" [the census finding] expostulated the mayor, "is absolutely unreasonable, unbelievable and absurd".¹² Shortly afterward the board of trade organized a retaliatory citizens' recount which restored the figure to a respectable 18,000.

The essence of the boom was the hallucinatory real estate promotion. One of the more interesting of these concerned the building of the industrial 'city' of Factoria. The scheme was conceived by a Chicago syndicate which bought a 470 acre development site about two miles north of the city boundary. Manufacturing was to be based primarily on the natural resources of the site: a spring of water, "the purest in Canada", limestone, clay and sand. "It's the natural resources that make Factoria a reality — the water — the clay — the sand",¹³ intoned the head of the syndicate who proposed to utilize them in a brewery, a lime kiln, a brick and tile factory and a glass and bottle works. The development was also to include a flour mill, a farm implement factory, and a sixty-six room hotel. A few of the plants and a tar paper hotel were actually built but the project, which called for a million dollars worth of industries and a population of two thousand within a year, collapsed with the end of the boom.

Another well-known industrial promotion of the period was the formation of the 'Industrial League' which, in spite of the rhetoric and swollen expectations attending its inception, sounded a more realistic note. The promoters of the League recognized that the limits to Saskatoon's service and distributive function would be set by the population of its hinterland. By 1910 free homesteads were already scarce and the rural areas were filling up with settlers. With the completion of settlement, argued the promoters, future growth would depend on industrial development. To bring this about they proposed to create a rotating fund — started by citizens' contributions — which would be used to help industries to locate in the city. Once in production shares were to be sold and the money invested in new plants. The scheme was greeted enthusiastically and within a few days a million dollars had been pledged to the League. After a few months the *Saturday Press* offered this encomium: "Today, after a test of a few months . . . it would appear that the Industrial League had sounded the chanticleer call that signalled the dawn of the sun of industry upon the prairie west, and particularly upon Saskatoon."¹⁴ Further allurements to prospective industrialists were the offer of free sites in 'Cordage Park' and the provision of cheap Slav labour to be brought into the country by an incorporated company with the Dickensian title of 'Toil Corporation Limited'. Fortunately, perhaps, the League also died with the boom.

As if intent on providing another intoxicant for an already overstimulated populace, city council adopted during the boom years, a novel and, in the judgement of orthodox economists, a naive system of taxation: Henry George's 'single tax'. In its pure form the 'single tax' is a system of taxation by which a community raises the whole of its revenue through a tax on land alone, exempting improvements. The justification for the scheme is that the value of land is created by the community which should, therefore, receive the benefits. Through placing a heavy tax on land Henry George hoped to nullify the advantages of ownership, his ultimate objective being the effective elimination of private property in land. It is ironic, therefore, that the scheme should have been adopted at a time when fortunes were being made from land sales. However, it was precisely to prevent speculation that the 'single tax' had been adopted since, as George and his supporters argued,¹⁵ the heavy tax on land would force its owners to put it to use. Among the benefits expected to accrue from the scheme were that commerce and industry, unburdened by taxation, would flourish; that land prices would be kept down and that scattered developments, seeking cheaper sites in outlying areas, would be prevented. The latter was a particular problem on the spacious prairies. In arguing for the centralizing influence of the 'single tax' upon the location of buildings the Winnipeg commissioner noted that "throughout the prairie country there appears to be a great tendency to build in scattered disconnected sections away from the heart of the city thus greatly adding to the expense of constructing and maintaining local improvements."¹⁶

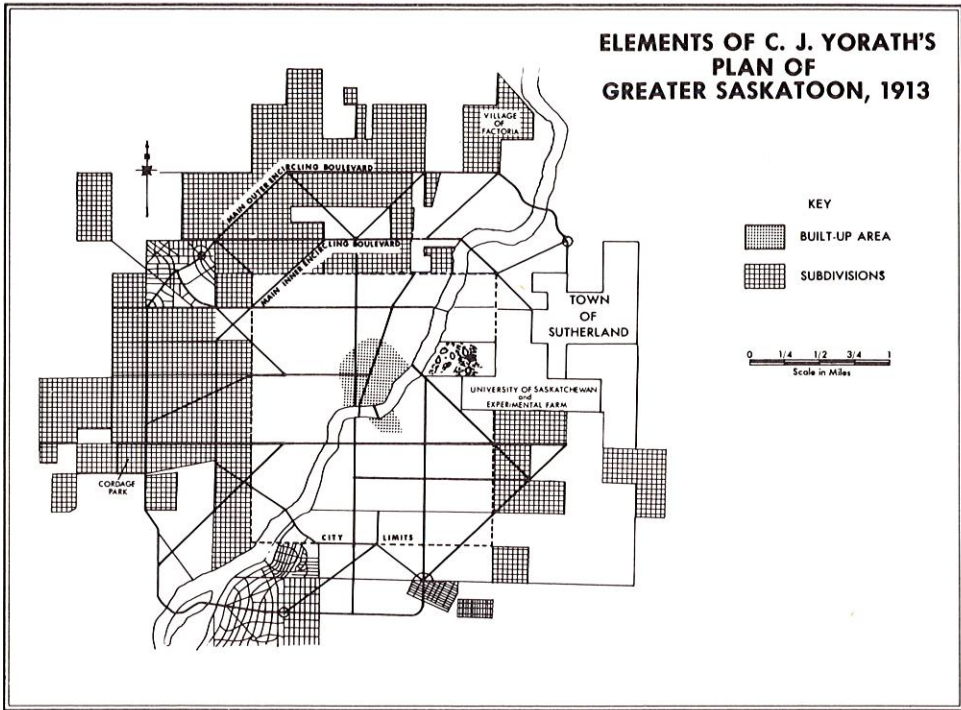
In Western Canada the history of the adoption of the 'single tax' — or, more precisely, a modified version of it since it was never adopted in its pure form — began in British Columbia in the 1890's and from there the practice spread to Alberta and Saskatchewan. In Saskatoon concessions to improvements were first made in 1911, the assessment being reduced from 60% to 50% of their fair actual value. Further reductions to 35% and 25% were made in 1912 and 1913. Land, on the other hand, was assessed at its full value.¹⁷

The effects of the 'Single tax' system on the development of Saskatoon were assessed by the city commissioner in a special report in 1917.¹⁸ He found that few of the expected benefits actually accrued. The system not only failed to prevent speculation but, in the commissioner's opinion, actually encouraged it by adding to the general excitement through offering potential developers the prospect of an almost tax-free future. In addition, it proved to be a difficult tax to collect and, in part, accounted for the enormous arrears of taxes in 1917. The commissioner could also have added that it failed to prevent scattered developments. On the positive side it did encourage owners to develop their property but to such an extent that the supply of buildings exceeded the normal demand. In 1917 Saskatoon, like many other Western cities, was embarrassed by an over-supply of buildings. The commissioner concluded his report with an appeal to council to spread the burden of taxation by reducing the assessment of land values by 25% and by increasing the assessed value of improvements from 25% to 40% of their fair actual value. These changes, he offered, would both broaden the tax base and spread the burden of taxation according to the recognized principles of ability to pay and benefits received.

Although in essence the boom was a chimera sustained by rhetoric and financial promises it was not without substance. Profits made from real estate speculation were invested in downtown buildings such as hotels and office blocks, some of the latter, which were expected to be part of a crowded development, having windows on only one or two sides. In addition hundreds of houses and large numbers of churches, schools and other public buildings were built to accommodate and serve the growing population, which doubled, approximately, during the boom years. Between 1909 and 1912 the annual value of building permits increased from \$1 million to \$7 million.¹⁹ Money borrowed by the city on the strength of its dangerously inflated²⁰ — owing to the extensive subdivision and high land values — revenues was used to build roads, sidewalks, street lighting, water mains and sewers. In his budget statement of 1921²¹ the city commissioner estimated that these improvements could have served a population twice the current (1921) size of the city.

Judged solely by quantitative standards Saskatoon could justifiably claim to be a 'wonder city'. But in the qualitative sense the case was otherwise. Considered generally, the architecture was dull and undistinguished and the general lay-out — standard grid iron or checker-board — unimaginative. In his study of architecture in Canada, Alan Gowans²² points out that the Western cities had the misfortune to be built during the least attractive period of Canadian architecture: the Late Victorian, which persisted here until the 1920's. By the beginning of the century Victorian design had lost its earlier inventiveness with the result that the centres of the Western cities were dominated by uninteresting, basically utilitarian buildings. But in Western Canada in 1913 it was quantity rather than quality that impressed. One overwrought citizen, who was as overwhelmed by the sight of his city as the ancient Sumerians were with theirs, muses, as they did, upon the possibility of supernatural origins: "And when you look up and see the stately residences and massive public buildings lining its banks you wonder if you are in a dream city or can this really be the little village of yesterday. Saskatoon has risen like a magic city on the banks of the Saskatchewan."²³

The 'magic city', nevertheless, had a physical reality, and to control its development, council, in 1913, appointed a city commissioner, having adopted a commission form of government in 1911. Given the prevailing mood it wasn't a responsibility that could have been entrusted to an ordinary man. The commissioner, Mr. C. J. Yorath, who arrived in May 1913 with an A.M.I.C.E. and ten years of planning experience in England, had "the makings of what Mr. Elbert Hubbard would call a hundred point man" and combined "the cultured accent of the English cosmopolite" with "the broad forehead and deep eyes that go with intellectuality and the suave manner that goes with culture."²⁴ Although, to judge from his reports, Mr. Yorath was an intelligent and a sensible man, he was, inescapably, a victim of context. His public statements reflect the general optimism which, although it had subsided by the summer of 1913, still maintained its public front. In an address to the real estate board in June 1913 Mr. Yorath could still say: "I believe the high optimism of Saskatoon is justified. We are on but the threshold of our greatness. In the centre of the



greatest wheat growing province of the dominion . . . we are very favourably situated.”²⁵ In his remarks alluding to the future planning of the city the models he used were Washington and Paris.

Although he was to condemn the irresponsible subdivision and the rash spending of council during the boom years Mr. Yorath, ironically, is remembered for a map which now serves as a memorial to the boom since it mirrors the spirit of the period and shows much of the subdivided land outside the city limits. The map was produced in 1913 at the request of council who wanted guidelines laid down for the city’s future development. In spite of the restrictions imposed upon it by previous subdivision, the map is an interesting document since it is a melange of then current planning theory and practice. Mr. Yorath’s taste, as revealed by the plan itself, by his favourable references to Washington and Paris and by an example of a city plan used as an illustration in his annual report for 1917, was for planning in the grand manner. The ideal city was to be laid on a foundation of broad tree-lined avenues, spacious public parks and monumental buildings occupying vantage points on elevated ground or at the heads of avenues. The principles of baroque planning had been revived at the end of the 19th century by the planners of the influential Chicago World’s Fair in 1893.

Owing to the pre-existing subdivision Mr. Yorath could only superimpose baroque features upon the grid iron network. His additions included broad avenues and boulevards, and, where space was available, parks. The avenues and boulevards, in addition to improving the appearance of the city, were designed

to serve practical needs: the diagonal avenues were meant to provide easy access between the centre and the periphery, and the encircling boulevards, the main inner one corresponding fairly closely to today's Circle Drive, to connect peripheral points. Mr. Yorath was a severe critic of the grid iron lay-out which he condemned on the grounds of its wastefulness and its impracticality. It is wasteful in the sense that the streets, being nearly all of the same width, were costly to maintain and impractical in that it did not channel traffic. In a grid system any street can be a through street. In his 1917 report Mr. Yorath demonstrated the advantages of a curvilinear street pattern woven into self-contained residential neighbourhoods providing recreational, shopping and educational facilities for the local community. His models were the neighbourhoods in the newly built English garden city of Letchworth.

Commissioner Yorath's ideas, however, were never implemented. Instead of directing the future growth of Saskatoon, he was, on the contrary, to spend much of the term of his appointment, from 1913 to 1921, restoring the city's financial base. Political instability in Europe, together with doubts raised about the financial viability of the Western Canadian municipalities, stemmed the flow of money in the spring of 1913. Denied sustenance, and exposed to sober appraisal, the boom quickly subsided. In the fall of 1913 Henry Howard of the *Investor's Guardian* in London issued this warning:

I think that Saskatoon, under its present conditions, will have quite reached the limit of the credit to which it is entitled, even if it has not already exceeded it. It seems to me that a debenture debt approaching the sum of \$8 million is a serious matter for a young community whose assessment value was only \$40 million in 1912. The progress made by Saskatoon during its life of ten years is remarkable but it must be remembered that it takes a reasonable time to develop a city and that a forcing process is always an expensive matter . . . There is a fine framework of a city in Saskatoon but, like that of a slender stripling, it wants filling up. If, of the very large number of vacant lots which obtruded themselves upon my notice in the majority of streets in Saskatoon, a fair proportion are built on and occupied in the next few years, then Saskatoon might have a reasonable expectation that its future calls on the market would receive respectful attention.²⁶

The next few years, however, saw little building. In 1914 the value of building permits amounted to only half a million dollars, compared to seven million in 1912, and in 1915 reached the all time low of twenty thousand dollars.²⁷ With the collapse of the boom the reckoning was severe. Several years later the commissioner was to describe the financial condition of Saskatoon in 1913 as "the most deplorable of any city in the West".²⁸ Yet surprisingly, and perhaps undeservedly, the city in the long run was to benefit from the boom. The owners of surveyed prairie lots, who were either unable or unwilling to pay the taxes, forfeited them through default. As a result, by the time of the second World War, Saskatoon found itself in the fortunate position of owning most of the unimproved land within the city limits. Anticipating the rapid post-war expansion and anxious to avoid the historic pattern of speculation, spiralling land values and disorderly development, council established a Real Estate Committee to dispose of the land. The Committee decided to sell the land on a lease-option agreement which

stipulated that the purchaser build on the land within one year of the purchase date. Title to the land was not transferred until the contract obligation had been fulfilled, thus eliminating the possibility of a quick re-sale. To encourage large scale, co-ordinated development, contractors were offered land for one-half of the assessed value on condition that at least ten houses be built. Industrial property sales were conducted in the same manner.²⁹

Since 1957, the Real Estate Committee, in collaboration with the Planning Department, has pursued a policy of continuous land acquisition using the revenues from its land sales. In doing so it has been able to maintain a reserve of land sufficient to meet its development needs for fifteen to twenty years ahead. As a result Saskatoon has been able to achieve the most orderly physical expansion of any city in Canada and, through its domination of the land market, has been able to stabilize land prices. Today Saskatoon, which sixty years ago was described as a "speculative boomer's paradise",³⁰ is one of the few cities in North America where land speculation is no longer a major problem.

Footnotes

- ¹ W. T. Easterbrook and H. G. J. Aitken, *Canadian Economic History*, Toronto, 1961, p. 477.
- ² J. Clinksill, "Reminiscences of a Pioneer in Saskatchewan", unpublished manuscript, Saskatoon, 1936, p. 27.
- ³ George Orwell, *Such, Such Were the Joys*, New York, 1953, p. 47.
- ⁴ Reported in the *Saskatoon Phoenix*, April 26th, 1913.
- ⁵ Quoted in E. G. Drake, *Regina The Queen City*, Toronto, 1955, p. 149.
- ⁶ Quoted in V. A. M. Kemp, *The Scarlet and Stetson: the Royal North West Mounted Police on the Prairies*, Toronto, 1964, p. 198.
- ⁷ B. Peel and E. Knowles, *The Saskatoon Story*, Saskatoon, 1952, p. 70.
- ⁸ *Saskatoon Daily Star*, May 28th, 1912.
- ⁹ Elbert Hubbard, *A Little Journey to Saskatoon*, East Aurora, New York, 1913, p. 12.
- ¹⁰ See Peel and Knowles, *op. cit.*
- ¹¹ City of Saskatoon, "Saskatoon Housing Report", 1961, p. 4.
- ¹² Peel and Knowles, *op. cit.*, p. 73. ¹³ *Ibid*, p. 77.
- ¹⁴ *Saturday Press*, Building and Development Supplement, November 16, 1912, p. 11.
- ¹⁵ A member of the Henry George Lecture Association visited Saskatoon in April, 1913, *Saskatoon Phoenix*, April 17th, 1913.
- ¹⁶ Quoted in Wm. Pearce, *The Absurdity and Injustice of the Single Tax, as carried out in the Western Provinces of Canada*, Calgary, 1915, p. 1.
- ¹⁷ City of Saskatoon, "Special Report upon Assessment and Taxation", 1917, p. 9. ¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 4.
- ¹⁹ H. McI. Weir, City of Saskatoon Engineering Department, "Historical Treatise." Unpublished Manuscript, Saskatoon, 1963, pp. 18 and 30.
- ²⁰ Henry Howard of the *Investors Guardian*, London, found that only 6% of the increase (from \$40 to \$60 million) in the net assessment valuation which occurred between 1912 and 1913 could be attributed to new building. The remainder of the advance was due to increased site values. Henry Howard, Canada, *The Western Cities: their Borrowings and their Assets*, *Investor's Guardian*, London, 1914, p. 80.
- ²¹ City of Saskatoon, Annual Budget, 1921, p. 5.
- ²² Alan Gowans, *Looking at Architecture in Canada*, Toronto, 1958, p. 167.
- ²³ *Saturday Press*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
- ²⁴ *Saskatoon Daily Star*, May 16th, 1913. ²⁵ *Saskatoon Phoenix*, June 20th, 1913.
- ²⁶ Henry Howard, *op. cit.*, p. 85. ²⁷ H. McI. Weir, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
- ²⁸ City of Saskatoon, Annual Budget, 1920, p. 4.
- ²⁹ S. L. Buckwold, "Land Policy in Saskatoon", *Habitat*, Jan.-Feb., 1962, pp. 2-5.
- ³⁰ Elbert Hubbard, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

Gardiner and Estevan, 1929-34

by *Norman Ward*

THE Saskatchewan general election of June 6, 1929, gave the Liberal party under James G. Gardiner the largest number of both votes and seats, but the latter numbered only twenty-eight against a combined opposition of thirty-five. Gardiner (over his opponents' protests) stayed in office until the legislature met, as he had the constitutional right to do, and then forced the opposition groups to unite to defeat him on the floor of the assembly, which they obligingly did on September 6.¹ The new premier, J. T. M. Anderson, the leader of twenty-four Conservatives in the house, took office on September 9 as head of a Cooperative Government supported by the Progressives and the MLAs who called themselves Independent.

As Leader of the Opposition (a post he always said he enjoyed) Gardiner had almost immediately to consider whether the Liberals should contest the by-elections made necessary by the law, obsolete since 1936, which vacated the seats of newly appointed ministers and required them to be confirmed by their constituencies. In the event no ministerial by-elections were disputed, the Liberals giving a higher priority to a general reorganization of the party than to a series of contests they could hardly expect to win anyway.

Shortly thereafter more by-elections loomed as petitions under the Controverted Elections Act — evidence for which was then commonly collected by the political parties against each other as a form of insurance for their own seats — began to come in; sometimes, indeed, the evidence was deliberately planted, the parties inducing unqualified electors to vote while providing observant witnesses of the dastardly deeds in the polling stations. The common solution, when each major party had good cases against the other, was to negotiate saw-offs which cancelled out the petitions, and this was done in 1929. "There is a feeling here," Gardiner wrote to one of his chief negotiators, J. W. Estey, on October 28, 1929, "that unless all of the petitions are going to be dropped, none should be dropped."²

No seats were vacated by the courts, the saw-offs presumably all having been successfully arranged. They had one interesting by-product not strictly relevant to this paper: the federal Liberals, with the national election of 1930 in mind and, with that, possible pre-election deals with Progressives about not opposing each other in several western seats, on November 25 offered Gardiner five hundred dollars if he would go away and spend it on a holiday. Gardiner, whose loyalty to the Liberal party never wavered, and who as a provincial leader regarded Progressives uncompromisingly as his enemies, replied at length, arguing in part that if the purpose was to keep him from meeting some "so-called Liberals and quite a number of self-seeking Progressives," the money could be "better used to assist some real Liberal back to office."³

He took the same spirit into the first real contest between his forces and

the Anderson government, the by-election held in Estevan on December 23, 1930. With one break in 1925, Estevan had returned Liberal members since the seat was created before the election of 1908, and another, E. W. Garner, won the seat in 1929. In a few months he resigned, the public being told that it was for "business reasons"; Gardiner later charged that the government had "prepared the ground" and "forced Garner out through his company and then called the election."⁴ If that was true, he also had two plausible explanations of why a vacancy had been created: the government, full of confidence after fifteen months of what it considered successful administration, wanted a triumphant public confirmation of its virtues; and it also wanted to lessen its reliance on "the influence of the Farmer members in the house."⁵

Certainly the premier's address to the electors of Estevan in 1930 bore out the first of Gardiner's explanations. "No Government at any time or any place," Dr. Anderson told the populace, "ever carried out more faithfully or more conscientiously at its first session the promises made to the people who placed it in office." He recited its achievements, not forgetting to remind the voters that seventeen government buildings had been converted to burn Estevan's principal product, lignite coal.⁶ Anderson placed his Minister of Highways, A. C. Stewart (a man particularly disliked and distrusted by Gardiner) in charge of the campaign. Stewart, Gardiner later argued,

had men there from all over the province and from U.S. Every member of the government was down there taking part in the campaign. Most of them remained throughout election day . . . They even held a conference in Regina with the Hon. H. H. Stevens in an endeavour to use Federal purchases of products as an inducement.⁷

Since Stewart was Minister of Highways, it was natural that the government's campaign should stress road-building in Estevan, and Gardiner was gratified to find the strategy failing. "We had expected to be able to make votes against them on their road policy back from the Main Highway," he told Mary Sutherland, the party's organizer for women and one of his ablest correspondents, "but were surprised to find that votes were more easily made by opposing the program right were (sic) most of the expenditure had been made."⁸ But the Liberal campaign also had its problems:

The Executive Committee and I as Leader of the Party, have been a little discouraged in the past five months by the difficulty which we have had in having our people realize that there is a change in the position of the Party. While in power it was very easy for us to show activity. We were about the province continuously and could make our politics fit in with business at little cost to anyone. As a result most of the arrangements for activities started from Regina. Some took exception to this. We are now forced into the opposite position where the very lack of funds to move our people around makes it necessary that any activity must start with the local people.⁹

Funds also required the Liberals to economize in Estevan. "The only reason we did not have you and a number of others," Gardiner told one willing worker, "was that we had no money with which to move men around and I know times are hard with everyone this year. We relied upon those who had passes as much as possible thinking that snow would in all probability prevent us travelling

by car long before the fight was over."¹⁰ Money was also the reason given to Mary Sutherland for not using her in the campaign, and there was a second:

In addition to that we had to be very careful at the first not to offend the local people who rather resented outside interference. That wore off as the campaign advanced but . . . I could not get a decision from the local board of strategy until it was too late.

Next time, he concluded darkly, "there will be no local board of strategy on that point".¹¹

Both campaigns culminated in a radio debate before a large audience on the evening of December 20, 1930, with A. C. Stewart speaking for the government, and Gardiner for the Liberals. Gardiner and his supporters felt sure that they had won the debate, and polling day confirmed that they had also won the by-election. The actual candidates, David McKnight, Conservative, and Norman McLeod, Liberal, were so overshadowed by their own leaders and their campaigns that they appeared almost as the players of bit parts, but they received all the votes on December 23: McLeod, 2702; McKnight, 2697. The Progressives were conspicuously absent from the fray throughout, although they had contested the seat in 1929; but the fact that the government's campaign was handled by A. C. Stewart, the lone former Progressive in Anderson's predominantly Conservative cabinet (he ran as an Independent in 1929), suggests that the absence of a Progressive candidate was by arrangement.



J. G. Gardiner in 1926.

Gardiner received dozens of congratulatory communications, including one from his revered national leader: "There is usually some by-election which more than anything else spells the ultimate doom of an Administration," King wrote on January 29, 1931, "and I believe such will prove to be the case with the seat you have just won."¹² But officially, at that point, the Government, not the Opposition, had won the by-election, for a recount before a judge had made McKnight the winner by fourteen. On the other hand, between polling day and the recount there was evidence of such flagrant tampering with the ballots in four boxes that the government itself ordered an investigation, and on January

20, 1931, H. E. Sampson, K.C., presented an exhaustive report to Hon. M. A. MacPherson, the Attorney General, in which he concluded that ballots had been tampered with by a person or persons unknown.¹³

There followed a strange sequence of events. According to Gardiner's own notes, Dr. Anderson called on him even before Sampson's report was made and suggested that the simplest method of avoiding yet another by-election in Estevan was for the Conservatives to withdraw their motion for the recount, the Liberals to withdraw their appeal against it, while everybody reverted to acceptance of the returning officer's original declaration of McLeod's election. Gardiner thought this device was legally unworkable, and reminded Anderson that the legislature could call McLeod before the Bar, and, since the legislature was the unquestioned judge of its own members, seat him simply by erasing McKnight's name on the roll of members and inserting McLeod's.¹⁴ If both sides of the house agreed, there would be no problem. That note is unfortunately undated, and there is another undated note which offers a supplementary explanation: "The agreement was the Attorney General's agreement. There was no negotiation."¹⁵ The point was important because, odd though the proposal sounded, there was a clear Saskatchewan precedent for it, but the 1931 case differed from the precedent in one notable particular; Gardiner's second note above in effect blamed the Attorney General for that particular, and thus by inference for all that followed.

In the province's first general election, 1905, one Peter D. Tyerman was returned as the winner in Prince Albert over Samuel J. Donaldson. It was subsequently established that one hundred and fifty-one votes were counted by Tyerman in three remote polling divisions where in fact no poll had been held at all. Since Donaldson's majority over Tyerman was otherwise fifty-eight, he petitioned the legislature to seat him in place of Tyerman (who resigned the seat on January 22, 1906) and it did so on April 2, 1907. The relevant motion, passed in conjunction with a detailed recital of the facts (as well as of related parliamentary history back in 1770) read as follows:

That the Clerk of the Executive Council be summoned by Mr. Speaker to attend the Bar of the House and amend his certificate relating to the return of the member elected to represent the Electoral Division of Prince Albert at the election held on the 13th December, 1905, by inserting the name of Samuel James Donaldson in lieu of the name of Peter David Tyerman.¹⁶

The motion to seat Mr. McLeod in 1931 (seconded, like the motion of 1907, by the Leader of the Opposition) included the wording of 1907 with names changed, but added "without prejudice to the rights of any person with respect to the said election under The Controverted Elections Act of the said Province".¹⁷ (No controverted election proceeding, it should be noted could have been used to seat Donaldson or McLeod; such proceedings could only unseat.)

Gardiner's memorandum claiming that the agreement over the seating of McLeod "was the Attorney General's agreement" also argued that the reference to the Controverted Elections Act was to have a limited application.

We accepted their proposition it being understood that only for infractions of the law on the part of the candidate or his agent would action be taken to override the decision of the house. This has been thrown aside, either for political reasons or to prevent full discussion in the house.¹⁸

His last sentence referred to a series of court cases, all entitled *Lamb v. McLeod*, through which McLeod, on petition of a private citizen, was finally unseated late in 1932 because unqualified persons had voted in the election.¹⁹ There is no doubt that unqualified persons did vote, and none either that at least some of them did so with the connivance of McLeod's opponents; but despite frequent urgings from the Liberals, no one was ever prosecuted. When the legislative session of 1933 began, Estevan was again vacant.

The last formal act of the play occurred on February 24, 1933, when T. C. Davis, whose portfolios in Gardiner's cabinet before the election of 1929 had included that of Attorney General, moved a bill that would have re-seated McLeod. M. A. MacPherson, Anderson's Attorney General, pointed out that the legislature was being asked to set aside a judgment of the province's highest court, but promised that Estevan would have a member by the next session. The premier moved the six-months' hoist and it passed, opposed only by the Liberals and one lone Conservative. This effectively killed Davis' proposal.²⁰

Estevan remained unrepresented until the general election of 1934, when the same area, considerably altered by a redistribution in 1932, again went Liberal. The government's reluctance to open up the seat is understandable, for as the drought and depression deepened the Conservative governments at both Ottawa and Regina were increasingly — if unfairly — being held responsible for both, its chances of carrying a by-election in any marginal area inevitably declined. Estevan, moreover, was not merely marginal politically; it was in the heart of the stricken agricultural area and, as one of the few industrial areas in the province, also had labour-management difficulties. What was equally important was that the Liberals, having failed to re-seat McLeod, themselves became increasingly less interested in pressing for another by-election. Their hopeful economizing in the first had been followed by four court cases and Gardiner told one of his regular correspondents late in 1933 that "the central office has been at unlimited expense already in connection with the Estevan seat;" the correspondent, J. P. Tripp, who won a seat himself in 1934, had written to Gardiner to urge him not to bring down on the party's head the blame for forcing the province into the expenses of another by-election, when "the money could be better used for relief."²¹

Besides, by 1933 the vacancy at Estevan had become a handy political instrument. Any re-seating of McLeod could only have been for the old seat of Estevan, which was to disappear when the writs for the next general election were issued. The area was going into two new seats, Bromhead and Souris-Estevan, and McLeod had his eye on securing a nomination for one of them. Gardiner, on the other hand, with the party's provincial interests as a whole in mind, was not anxious to have McLeod get an early nomination in either new seat, since that could be interpreted as a concession of his claim to the old one. The local

party associations in the area, moreover, were naturally anxious to organize the new seats, and the central office, including Gardiner, not only had no real control over them, but did not claim to: the party was a strong believer in local autonomy. "The Government," Gardiner told Tripp in the exchange cited above,

now have placed themselves in a position where they either have to hand us that seat without an election or create a first class political issue by refusing to open it at all. I do not care which they do but I do not want the fellows down there to take any action which will rob us of both the seat and the issue.

Gardiner was ready (in the same letter) to agree that if the 1934 session was called without a by-election in Estevan nominations in the two new seats could go ahead at once, and Anderson's Cooperative Government lived up to its name. Estevan was not opened up, McLeod won the nomination in Bromhead and Tripp in Souris-Estevan; both won in 1934, and the Estevan area was once again represented in the legislature. The unreliability of its electors in 1929 and 1930, quite apart from the legal and political manoeuvres over the by-election of 1930, was undoubtedly one reason why, in 1934, they found themselves in two seats instead of one.

Footnotes

- ¹ See Gordon Unger, "James G. Gardiner and the Constitutional Crisis of 1929", in this journal, Vol. XXIII, Number 2, Spring 1970, pp. 41-9.
- ² *Gardiner Papers*, Saskatchewan Archives, 14330.
- ³ *Ibid.*, Andrew Haydon to Gardiner, November 25, 1929; Gardiner to Haydon December 1, 1929; 17566-7. Gardiner added that if the idea was to show some appreciation for his services, and at the same time put him in the most "reasonable state of mind to confront either Tories whom I admire, or fair weather Grits whom I tolerate, or Progressives whose real desires have already been demonstrated," he might go.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, Gardiner to H. R. Schaller, January 3, 1931, 18132.
- ⁵ Undated manuscript in *ibid.*, 18167.
- ⁶ A copy of Dr. Anderson's manifesto is in *ibid.*, 19855 (undated).
- ⁷ Undated speeches in *ibid.*, 17947 and 19462.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, Gardiner to Mary Sutherland, January 3, 1931, 18110. Mrs. Sutherland was the wife of a former Speaker of the Legislature, Dr. W. C. Sutherland.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, Gardiner to Mrs. L. M. Norman, January 5, 1931, 17990.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Gardiner to J. A. Watson, December 30, 1930, 18075.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, Gardiner to Mary Sutherland, January 3, 1931, 18110.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, W. L. M. King to Gardiner, January 29, 1931, 17624.
- ¹³ Saskatchewan Sessional Paper No. 26, 1931 (not printed).
- ¹⁴ Undated memorandum, *Gardiner Papers*, 18165.
- ¹⁵ Undated, unnumbered, memorandum in *ibid.*, file V, 17, (C).
- ¹⁶ *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan*, April 2, 1907, pp. 82-86. The official printed version of the Journals for that day is marred by an omitted line, but its intent is clear.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, February 9, 1931, pp. 62-4.
- ¹⁸ Undated, unnumbered memorandum in *Gardiner Papers*, file V, 17, (C).
- ¹⁹ The cases are reported in *Western Weekly Law Reports*, 1931, pp. 445-8; 1932, pp. 206-9, 412-3 and 686-7.
- ²⁰ *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan*, February 24, 1933, pp. 49-50. A full account of the Liberals' view of the debate is in *Saskatchewan Liberal*, March 2, 1933. The division marked the defection from the Liberals of Charles McIntosh, who joined Anderson's cabinet on April 29, 1933, and was defeated in the usual ministerial by-election on May 22, 1933.
- ²¹ *Gardiner Papers*, J. P. Tripp to Gardiner, November 7, 1933; Gardiner to Tripp, November 11, 1933, 16846-7.

David J. Goggin, Prototype Pedagogue

by *John W. Chalmers*

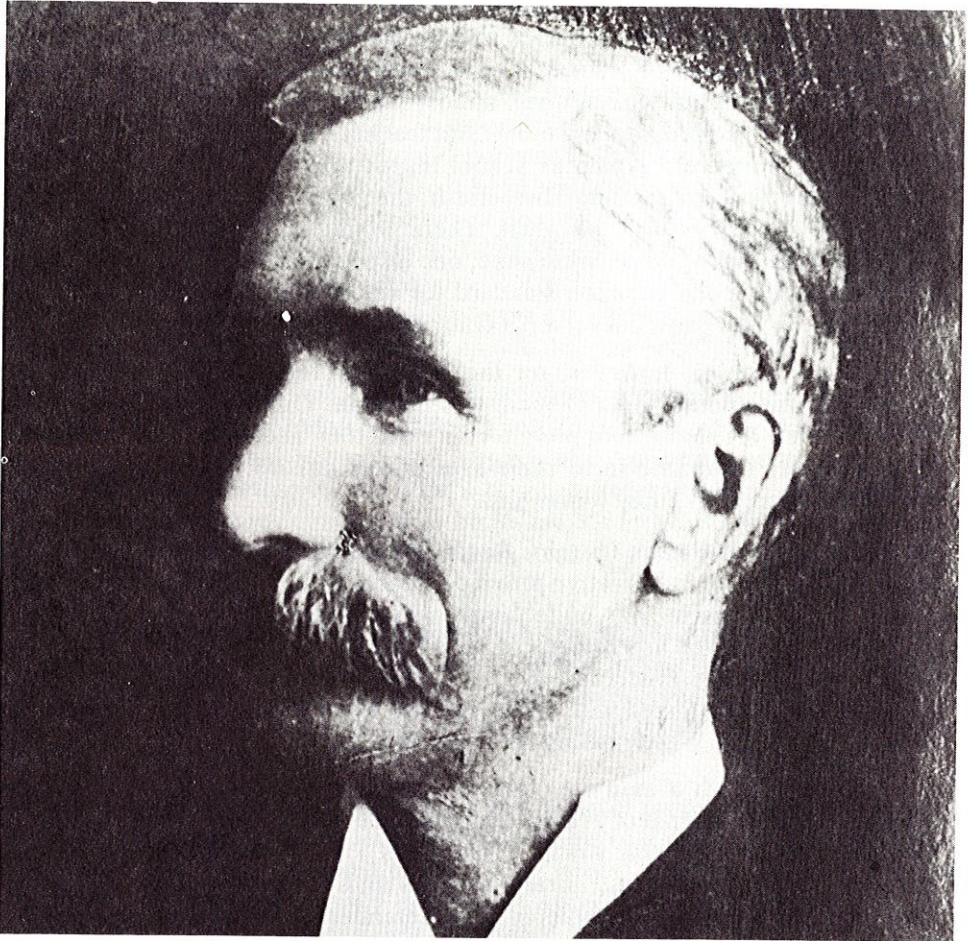
PROBABLY to the typical Western Canadian, or at least the one born and raised in a prairie province, nothing appears more normal, more inevitable than the school system to which he was subjected for ten or a dozen years. He sees nothing remarkable in the fact that education is tax-supported, compulsory and therefore free, that boys and girls attend the same institutions, that somewhere along the line they have to write provincial examinations, that a locally-elected board controls the school, or that a provincially-appointed officer inspects it. That all children (except Indians) attend the same school regardless of their socio-economic status he mistakenly considers as part of our British heritage. That public schools should be secular he regards as divinely ordained — unless he happens to be a Roman Catholic.

Each separate feature of our school system can be found elsewhere in the world, but the total pattern is as Canadian as pemmican or the maple leaf. Ask not who is a Canadian; he it is who unthinkingly accepts — even as he criticizes — the Canadian educational system.

All of its characteristics have come about for particular reasons: the forces of environmental circumstances, or the actions — and the compromises — of politicians, or the work and commitment of a handful of professional educators.

The blueprint for anglophone Canadian education was drafted about the middle of the last century by that remarkable Methodist preacher, editor, and educational administrator Egerton Ryerson. For over thirty years, from 1844 to 1876, he laboured in Canada West, later Ontario, to convert a conglomeration of wildly dissimilar, often shoddy schools unworthy of the name into a respectable and respected pedagogical system. Educational standards particularly engrossed him, and these he achieved by attacking ignorance on four fronts. He developed a provincial program of studies and imposed it on all tax-supported schools. He trained the personnel to teach it, and sent his inspectors out to see that indeed it was taught. Then he set examinations for the young scholars to see that it was learned.

These, then, were some of the characteristics of an educational model readily available to Manitoba and the North-West Territories in 1870, when they entered Canada. And yet they rejected it and chose instead one very similar to that of Quebec, then and now, a dual system of confessional schools, dual (or multiple) also in the languages of instruction. That they should have done so is not surprising, for in 1870, between the Great Lakes and the Rockies there were more Roman Catholics than Protestants, more who spoke French as a mother tongue than boasted of English. The French-speaking Roman Catholics could not expect more than had been conceded to their confrères in “la belle province”; the Protestant anglophones would not accept less than what was enjoyed by their co-religionists in Quebec.



David James Goggin.

However, in the next twenty years the population "mix" changed. The settlers who came to this last best West were predominantly Protestant and English-speaking. By 1890 these Orange-hearted anglophones outnumbered the Roman Catholic French speakers. The time had come to homogenize the Prairie Provinces in language and schooling, if not, unfortunately, in religion.

If history can be considered as having a height-of-land, that of Western Canadian education is surely the period 1890 to 1892. During this biennium Manitoba and the North-West Territories rejected the Quebec model and opted for a basically secular educational system with a tightly limited input of religious instruction. At the same time, the use of French or any other language except English as the medium of instruction in tax-supported schools was abolished, with minor exceptions, principally in the primary grades.

Manitoba went all the way in its secularization of public education. But the Territorial Assembly, after prolonged controversy, adopted a compromise

which allowed Roman Catholic or Protestant minorities (no others!) to establish separate schools. However, religious affiliation stopped at the district level. The church-oriented Board of Education was swept away, and with it the Roman Catholic and Protestant committees, almost wholly independent of each other, which had approved program of studies and teachers' qualifications, set examinations and appointed clergymen as school inspectors. In its place appeared the political Council of Instruction. Henceforth, the organization of education above the local level was unitary, not dual. There would be one program of studies for all schools, public and separate alike, one inspectional staff, one set of provincial examinations, one common standard for teacher certification at each level. The Territories had chosen Ryerson's Ontario pattern for its system of education.

It was one thing, however, for the Territorial legislators to approve such a design; it was another to implement this decision. Untrained in pedagogy and busy with their legislative and private concerns, they needed a dedicated school administrator, sympathetic to their aspirations but no patronage-seeker or sycophant. Incredibly, they found him.

He was David James Goggin. Born (1849) and educated in Canada West, he had taught school in his native province, reaching the exalted rank of principal at Port Hope. Thus he was quite familiar with Ryerson's educational system. But he had also served as Principal of the Manitoba Normal School in Winnipeg, and so was no effete Easterner. He understood the problems and ambitions of the West and sympathized with them. He had even obtained both his B.A. and M.A. at Manitoba, Western Canada's only university.

Of course, such a man was terrifically expensive. At \$3,000 per year his salary exceeded even that of Premier Haultain, a fact which disturbed government critics no end. But he was worth it. On April 1, 1893, he became Director of Teachers' Institutions (i.e., normal schools and teachers' institutes), and on December 1 he was also appointed Superintendent of Education. Before long he was also in effect if not in name Director of Curricula, Supervisor of Examinations, Chief Inspector of Schools, and School Grants Officer. He would have been cheap at twice the price! Of course, acceptance of such responsibility and efficient discharge thereof could be expected of a man, the ink hardly dry on his sheepskins who had been a member of the Councils of St. John's College and the University of Manitoba, an examiner of the latter institution and of the Department of Education, president of the Manitoba Teachers' Association, and member of the province's Advisory Board of Education.

Throughout Western Canada during most of the nineteenth century, professional preparation for teaching was virtually unknown. Teachers were usually Roman Catholic or Protestant clergymen, or young men on the way to becoming such. Or at least they were persons with good education and some religious commitment, as they had to be to work for their almost nominal stipends. Female teachers were similar in their outlook and motivation. If Roman Catholic, they were usually nuns. If not, they were not uncommonly daughters or future brides of clergymen. In either case, an adequate general education and good moral

character were considered satisfactory qualifications. Professional preparation was regarded almost as irrelevant — but not by David Goggin.

Before Goggin's arrival in Regina, there was indeed some professional preparation for teachers — of a sort. It was offered by "union schools", i.e., high schools with attached normal school departments. In all the years before Goggin came to Regina, only 55 students had been trained in such institutions. In the ten years after his arrival, the number of normal school graduates reached 808, of whom 155 received First Class and 429 Second Class Certificates from the Regina Normal School. The remaining 224 achieved Third Class standing at union schools. Their programs usually were on a temporary and *ad hoc* basis, offered where, when, and if sufficient candidates presented themselves.

Second and First Class Certificate programs required achievement at the Standard VII and VIII (today's Grade XI and XII) levels respectively for admission to Regina Normal School. In Goggin's era, the professional preparation took about four months; by the 1920's this had generally been increased to a year. These certificates continued to be issued up to World War II, and there are still many active pedagogues in prairie, parkland and foothills schools who carry these credentials.

The Third Class Certificate was issued to candidates who had only Standard VI general education or who were unsuccessful in meeting the requirements for a higher credential. Unlike the others, it could not become a permanent teaching licence; if it were not up-graded to a First or Second Class Certificate, it simply lapsed.

Goggin was a passionate believer in the value of professional education for teachers. "In teaching, as in every other calling, the best results are accomplished by trained rather than untrained persons", he wrote. "The genius may succeed without training, but the supply of these is exceedingly limited, and even the genius may profit by the experience of others".¹

But training in the art, science, or craft of pedagogy was not enough in itself. His teachers were to have a broad general scholarship, and in the narrow temporal confines of the normal school program he strove to meet any deficiencies in that direction. His young men and women also had to have actual classroom experience in teaching; theory by itself was not enough. And they were expected to be gentlemen and ladies.

A pleasant evening was once spent by a group of male students serenading some receptive young women. Unfortunately such boisterous behaviour was frowned upon in 1898 and the choristers were jailed. The somewhat abashed group were lectured by Dr. Goggin on conduct befitting "moulders of youth."²

(Actually, Goggin did not receive his honorary D.C.L. from Trinity University until 1900.)

In 1893, Goggin was not only Director of Teachers' Institutions, he was almost the whole staff of the Territories' sole regular normal school, assisted only occasionally by a part-time kindergarten teacher. Otherwise he handled all

the professional and academic subjects such as English and history, taught model lessons to children borrowed from Regina schools, and supervised practice teaching. As time went on, however, he recruited part and full-time assistants, drawn from the ranks of classroom teachers and school inspectors. Such help he needed, for he had other responsibilities.

Among them were those *ad hoc* normal schools in places like Edmonton, which Goggin visited from time to time, giving lectures to the students to supplement those of the school inspectors and local experts in music, drawing, manual training, etc. In addition, this peripatetic pedagogue was on hand for many teachers' institutes, precursors of today's regional teachers' conventions. He also visited the four school inspectors, whom he regarded as his eyes and ears. These men he expected to work as hard as he did himself. They tried to visit every teacher at least once a year, conferred with school trustees, and assisted them in establishing the multiplying school districts. (During the Goggin regime, the number of operating schools increased from 249 to 640.) The inspectors also taught normal school classes and played a major role in teachers' institutes. Goggin did more to job-orient these functionaries than give them a pat on the shoulder and a copy of the *School Ordinance*. In reports of the Council of Public Instruction he provided them with quite explicit directions on how to perform their duties. In general, he defined their role as "observation and examination, with a view of determining how far the school meets the needs of the pupils and the requirements of the State".³ He then went on to detail the points which the inspector should note; these ranged from cleanliness of the classroom and suitability of the class schedule to examination of the children in the several subjects and inspection of the attendance register. "Schools are good as their inspection is intelligent and thorough", he wrote, "and poor as that inspection is aimless and accidental".⁴

Indeed, no aspect of the educational system escaped his careful attention. The aims of education, he felt, were twofold: to prepare the student to live worthily, and to earn a respectable living. The content of the curriculum should be that "which is helpful in the transaction of business, the duties of citizenship, the care of the body, and the formation of moral character".⁵ From here he went on to the specific aims of each individual subject in the program of studies, and even the details of how to achieve them, e.g., how to teach a poem, as he taught "Idylls of the King" to normal school students. No narrow specialist, he dealt with subject after subject in the same way: spelling, reading, composition, history, geography, nature study, agriculture, mathematics, manual training. So well did he build the structure of the curriculum that it stood virtually unchanged for a decade after he left the Territories, and most of his ideas seem as sound to practising teachers today as they did at the beginning of the century.

Goggin was astute enough to realize that, while a program of studies may outline a curriculum, examinations usually determine what is actually taught, especially when they are imposed by an external authority and are fairly predictable. From 1892, such examinations were required from Standard III (about Grade VI) upwards. Goggin recognized the merits of such devices, which helped

schools "by raising the standards of scholarship", — Ryerson's justification for introducing them into Ontario — "directing the teaching into sounder lines, causing the essentials of subjects to be learned more thoroughly, and spurring the indolent and indifferent to more vigorous and systematic effort".⁶ On the other hand, "teachers were overly concerned with preparing students for examinations . . . The prolonged nervous strain . . . was having an unhealthy effect . . . wrong ideals were being set up, increased attention was given to products rather than processes, and memorizing of unorganized knowledge was increasing".⁷ On his advice, therefore, in 1893 all examinations except in Standards III and IV were abolished, and in 1896 in all standards up to V.

But if examinations were not to be the criteria for promotions, what were? Not only scholarship but physical health, mental vigour, and application, as documented by monthly records on each pupil's achievement and character development. These records were to be the basis of teacher-principal discussions at promotion time — which could be whenever the individual pupil's progress so merited — and of semi-annual review by the school inspector. Apparently that worthy gentleman was expected to visit the school twice a year, not just once. Goggin would have every aspect of school operation documented; not just pupil achievement and school attendance. He also advised a daily record of homework assigned, so that pupils would not be overloaded. He was unenthusiastic about homework anyway, and regarded it as too often an infringement on time which should be spent on rest, recreation, and learning home duties.

Indeed, Goggin never took his eyes off the pupil. Control, he believed, should be gentle, humane, sensible. For instance, the tardy child should not be sent home for a written excuse; such action would only result in his missing still more school time. Detention should not occur at noon and result in the child missing his dinner — in those days the evening meal was called supper — not after school if it interfered with family arrangements or music lessons. Apparently only the morning and afternoon "recess" periods were still available for incarceration purposes.

It was also the pupil and not the taxpayer of whom Goggin was thinking when in 1900 he advocated the centralization of school districts, with conveyance of the children to the school. That the consolidation movement did not gather strength on the prairies until ten or fifteen years later did not invalidate the soundness of his views.

For reasons which still remain obscure, Goggin left the Territories not quite ten years after he arrived. It has been suggested that the controversy over his high salary was the cause of his resignation, but that dispute occurred at the beginning and not the end of his tenure. Possibly it was the fact that when the Department of Education was established in 1901, the first Deputy-Commissioner (i.e., Deputy-Minister) was not Goggin but J. A. Calder. In retrospect, this appears to have been a political appointment, for Calder soon resigned to win a seat in the Assembly and succeed F. W. G. Haultain as Commissioner of Education.

More likely, as Goggin himself indicated when he resigned in October, 1902, it was "for family and financial reasons"⁸ His bride of just three years — he did not marry Frances M. Sweetland, of Port Hope, until he was nearly fifty — had died the previous September. Thus no doubt Regina lost much of its appeal for him. In any event, he apparently left the West without bitterness, for he returned several times to address teachers' gatherings. Nor did he forsake education. Until 1907 he was literary manager of the Canadian Publishing Company in Toronto, and in 1909 he became managing editor for the new Ontario textbooks. Somewhere along the line he even wrote one himself, his *Public School Grammar*.

David Goggin was by no means an educational innovator or original theorist; he was a perfectly predictable product of Ryerson's system, and one of whom that old Wesleyan might well have been proud. He was admired by former students and colleagues alike, as is indicated by his election in 1901 as fifth president, and first west of Toronto, of the Dominion Educational (now Canadian Education) Association. Nor were his interests and influence narrowly limited. In Regina he served as president of the Victoria Hospital board. He became vice-president of the University of Toronto Alumni Association, his credentials apparently deriving from his *ad eundem* M.A. from Toronto-affiliated Victoria University. He was also chosen as a president of the Toronto Empire Club, a High Chief Ranger of the Foresters and Grand Master of the Masonic Lodges.

Goggin was an indefatigable worker with the transcendent capacity for taking trouble which Carlyle ascribes to genius. Certainly he built a school system so well that in Alberta and Saskatchewan it was to survive almost unchanged for half a century. In these provinces to this day education is still public, compulsory, free, graded, basically secular (certainly above the local level), highly centralized, egalitarian, with English as the normal language of instruction. If the Normal Schools have gone the way of the buffalo, teachers are still prepared in provincial, non-sectarian institutions. External examinations have not wholly disappeared. Education is still largely instrumental, a means to a good life rather than an end in itself.

Truly on the prairies the heritage of David Goggin, prototype pedagogue, still flourishes.

Footnotes

¹ N.W.T., *Report of the Council of Public Instruction*, 1896, p. 17.

² A. D. Selinger, "The Contributions of D. J. Goggin to the Development of Education in the North-West Territories, 1893-1902", unpublished M. Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, 1960, p. 29.

³ N.W.T., *Report of the Council of Public Instruction*, 1898, p. 16.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1896, p. 19.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶ Selinger, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ N.W.T., *Report of the Department of Education*, 1902, p. 27.

Book Reviews

A HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN WEST TO 1870-71, by Arthur S. Morton, second edition, edited by Lewis G. Thomas, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973, pp. 1039, \$25.00.

It has become custom among scholars of Western Canadian history to refer to A. S. Morton's *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71* as a monumental study. There can be little doubt that this reputation is well deserved, for the book is the most comprehensive study of the Canadian fur trade ever undertaken by a professional historian and, although written more than a generation ago, remains a standard work in the field.

The utility of Morton's *History*, however, has long been handicapped by its availability. Published in a limited edition in 1939, it has since become a collector's item and increasingly inaccessible to students of the pre-1870 period of Western Canadian history. It would appear, moreover, that interest in this period is more widespread today than at any time in the past. In terms of both approach and numbers, recent history theses would indicate that the fur trade, far from being exhausted by historians, is experiencing something of a renaissance. This revival in history has been paralleled, if not exceeded, by kindred and newly discovered interests in a number of related disciplines, and especially in ethnohistory, archaeology, economic history and historical geography. Morton's *History* is thus of wide contemporary value and, despite the divergent methods and objectives implicit in current research, remains an authoritative reference for a variety of students of both the period and the region. Thus, the recent appearance of this second edition of Morton's *History* is a most welcome and fundamental addition to the growing list of reprints concerned with the fur trade Canadian West.

This facsimile publication of Morton's *History* has been rendered all the more valuable by virtue of the contributions of the editor, Dr. L. G. Thomas of the University of Alberta. An authority on the history of the early Canadian West, Professor Thomas has written both a preface and an introduction to the second edition. The introduction reflects the editor's longstanding interest in the historiography of the period and affords a fresh and careful measure of Morton the historian. The preface explains the system of documentation employed in the second edition. The latter comprises an appendix of notes which affords bibliographical information that is far more comprehensive and detailed than that contained in the first edition and constitutes the most valuable contribution by the editor to the second edition.

It was Morton's wish that the first edition be published without footnotes, and that information on sources be relegated to an appendix entitled "Brief Bibliographical Notes". Organized by chapter, the bibliographical appendix of the first edition consists of a select series of notes intended, as Morton put it, "to suggest to the reader the source from which the information is drawn — this without plaguing him with bibliographical footnotes." Although useful, the appendix falls far short of affording the reader a comprehensive guide to the sources, and especially to the massive archives of the Hudson's Bay Company which were so

salient in Morton's research. This deficiency in the first edition is superbly remedied by the editor's appendix in the second.

In part, the appendix in the second edition is intended to supplement that of the first. This is accomplished by appending references to relevant articles and books in the field published since the first edition appeared in 1939. The main purpose, however, is to provide systematic and detailed notes on the sources which Morton employed in producing *History*. That this was possible is owing, on the one hand, to the footnotes which Morton inscribed in a proof copy of the book and, on the other hand, to the prodigious efforts and scholarship of the editor.

The numbers of notes vary from chapter to chapter for, as the editor points out, Morton did not regard his annotations in the proof copy as complete. However, over eleven hundred references have been recovered by the editor and, for most chapters, they provide a more than ample guide to the specific sources which Morton employed. Almost all of these references have been verified by the editor and, where necessary, amendments and additions have been included. The additions are largely those that pertain to direct quotations in the text and to sources published since 1939. A glance through the notes also reveals a miscellany of highly informed editorial comments designed to further assist the reader with the sources. These range from comments as to the authenticity of certain documents used by Morton to recommended readings and the availability of specific manuscripts. The editor has also taken pains to convert manuscript references to current systems of classification.

The notes in the editor's appendix are organized by chapter but do not refer to numbers in the text as is normal practice in footnoting. Rather than attempt to insert reference numbers into the facsimile pages of the text, and thereby alter their appearance, the editor has elected to link Morton's notes to the text by referring in the appendix to the page and line numbers, as well as the last words in the sentences, to which the notes apply. The result is a cumbersome system of annotation that does not readily permit the reader to work from text to sources. This, however, is merely a matter of inconvenience in an otherwise flawless and handsome edition.

Just as the appendix affords a detailed guide to the sources employed in *History*, so the introduction provides an incisive view of its author. In the first part of the introduction, Professor Thomas reviews the author's career and publications. It is in terms of his *History*, however, that Morton's stature and inclinations as a historian are most fully assessed.

Morton emerges from the introduction as a giant among Western Canadian historians, but not as one who is easily classified or pigeon-holed in the mainstreams of Canadian historiography. As the editor points out, he espoused no theories of history. He did not recognize the "great man" view of history, nor did he attribute events to inexorable forces of environment. Morton accorded scrupulous attention to the geography of the West, but he was not an environmentalist as were many of his generation, including the historians of the Continental and

Laurentian schools. Similarly, he took cognizance of metropolitan forces, and especially those emanating from London, but to interpret this as metropolitanism would be misleading in the extreme. If Morton is to be associated with any school of Canadian history, it might be said that his sentiments were most akin to those of the Britannic School, or to the "Blood is Thicker than Water" school identified by Professor Careless. Although this analogy can be taken too far, and is only implicit in the introduction, it does point to the major leanings in the book.

As the editor points out, Morton's opinions of the French, the Indians and the Americans were rigid and illiberal. These views, moreover, were not inconsistent with his unflagging admiration for the Hudson's Bay Company and for the imperial interests which the Company served. Professor Thomas writes that, "Though he could scold David Thompson for what he saw as his share in the loss of the Oregon country to the British Crown, he did not necessarily exult when British Columbia entered the Canadian federation." Thus, in contrast to his contemporaries, Morton made little effort to interpret the Canadian West in terms of an emerging, independent Canada. Nor was he a regionalist, as the title of the book may suggest. Rather, his sympathies lay with the Empire, and the Canadian West, scarcely a region in *History*, expands and contracts as the struggle for empire unfolds. The geographical locus of the study is thus a fluid one. It is also a vast one, which transcends any notion of a Western Canadian region to embrace, not only Rupert's Lands, but most of the northwest quadrant of the continent.

The scope of *History* is at once its strength and a source of weaknesses. It is a massive work that manifests an impressive command of sources and is thus indispensable as a reference. The scale of the work, however, has also taken its toll. It is not without errors in fact, nor is it free of problems in organization. It is also tedious in some of its detail. Thus, as is clearly and judiciously pointed out in the introduction, the book has its faults, as well as prejudices to which few would subscribe today. These assessments are not intended to degrade the worth of the book or the stature of its author. Like the annotations of the second edition, they provide the reader a most valuable insight into this truly monumental study.

D. W. Moodie.

BEYOND FOUR WALLS: The Origins and Development of Canadian Museums. Archie F. Key. McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto, 1973. Pp. 384, \$12.50.

This book is based on a three year survey of Canadian museums' resources, to which some observations on European and American museums have been added. Originally the survey was to have been published as an official report of the Canadian Museums Association. However, a temporary cutback of funds caused cancellation of the project and the author presumably carried the manuscript to publication on his own. *Beyond Four Walls* is a collection of information about various museums at various times and places. The collection is divided

into four parts preceded by a two page introduction and followed by a five page conclusion and a thirty-four page list of Canadian museums and related institutions.

The first part deals mainly with European museums prior to approximately 1900 A.D. but is not entirely restricted to this topic. Near the beginning the author quotes "the twentieth century definition of what constitutes a museum", namely "all collections, open to the public, of artistic, technical, scientific, historical or archaeological material, including zoos, botanical gardens, but excluding libraries except insofar as they maintain permanent exhibition rooms." (p. 14). This definition, the author points out, does not confine a museum within four walls and could include such outdoor collections as the cave paintings at Lascaux or Altamira, the restored neolithic village of Catal-Huyuk in Turkey, the Tom Thomson shack in Kleinburg, Ontario, the Musée de l'Artiste in Chicoutimi, Quebec, or Barkerville in British Columbia. These observations lead to the premise that "objects removed from their environment lose much of their significance" (p. 16), the reconstruction of London Bridge in Arizona being an example. The importance of interpretation is emphasized and the recent development of techniques for simulation of the total environment such as the diorama display is noted.

The second part is more or less aptly entitled "The American Scene, The Learned Societies, The James Smithson Legacy and a Covey of Robber Barons." The importance of wealthy benefactors and of dedicated individuals is apparent. At the same time philosophical quotations and comments on them by the author are of considerable interest. For example in the first paragraph of the introduction to the book, Key asserts that in the past the major role of the larger museums was scholarly research and that sometimes this was to the detriment of the public. In Part II we get some idea of what the author may mean by this when he comments:

An unfortunate result of the new [1800s] emphasis on research and the development of new scientific disciplines within the museum was a tendency on the part of the new breed of curator scientists to perpetuate the ivory tower philosophy of the university campus to the detriment of the lay visitor. This was the era of static displays and restricted visiting hours. The display technician and public relations officer had still to be invented. (p. 87).

Key's is a collector's viewpoint. It implies that research stands in the way of display, public relations and public enjoyment. One might assume that a good museum is comprised of a collection, a good display man, and a good P.R. man. On the other hand, the scientists viewpoint implies that even when beautifully displayed random collections are meaningless. From this one might assume that display and public relations are only part of a good museum and that they come toward the end of a logical sequence of activities beginning with purpose, collection of related sets of objects, study, publications, display and so on. Collectors and scientists have fundamentally different views on the purpose of collecting and the value of objects. The difference is not identified by Key, but the conflict it produces is threaded through the book. Accordingly, the development of museums becomes a sequence of powerplays with collectors and researchers alternately in control.

Part III, entitled "Colonialism in Canada — A One-Way Street: Mechanic's Institutes, The Jesuits, and Early Canadian Learned Societies", documents 150 years of frustrations, poverty, and government apathy while dedicated individuals and idealistic societies sought to serve as guardians of Canada's heritage (p.198) beginning with the Laval University's geology and mineralogy collection in the 1790s. Important historical events and museum beginnings are briefly described province by province from east to west. The section pertaining to Saskatchewan refers to a provincial institution formed one year after the province entered Confederation and occupying 6000 sq. ft. with a staff of three by 1932, but no name is given. This must be the Provincial Museum. Elsewhere Key writes: "The North-West Mounted Police force was established in 1893 made up of a five hundred man unit, many of whom were British expatriates, for policing the North-West Territories and with headquarters in Regina." (p.155) According to R.C.M.P. official reports the force was established in 1873 initially with 150 men to which another 125 to 150 were added before the march west in 1874. Moreover, Regina was only one of seven headquarters the R.C.M.P. has had and the 2nd last at that. In chronological order the headquarters were Fort Gary, Dufferin, Swan River, Fort MacLeod, Fort Walsh, Regina and Ottawa. Several other errors are evident in the Saskatchewan section, for example, Regina was named provincial capital in 1905 not 1907, and Batoche was the focal point of the struggle of the Metis under Louis Riel, not Prince Albert. The important facts that are meant to characterize Saskatchewan are almost all erroneous.

Part IV, entitled "Canadian Renaissance And The New Look: A National Consciousness, Cultural Maturity, Centennial Celebrations, and the Centennial Aftermath", describes the museums in each province from east to west from approximately 1940 to the present. This part is written badly jumping from one topic to another often within a single sentence, and again the chapter on Saskatchewan is littered with obvious errors. The Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History in Regina was officially opened in its present building in 1955, not 1950. On the same page the Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery is opened on the Regina Campus in two different years 1955 and 1951. The Hewlett House (misspelled Hewett) in south eastern Saskatchewan is mentioned in the same sentence as the restoration of J. G. Diefenbaker's boyhood home in Wascana Park (misspelled Wascona) Regina, while the restoration of Cannington Manor Provincial Historic Park only one and a half miles from the Hewlett House is never mentioned. The paragraph on Duck Lake also contains errors. For example, the film set which comprises the site was sold to the Province for \$75,000, not \$500,000, and Donald Sutherland starred as Dan Candy, a mountie, not as Almighty Voice, the escaped Indian.

The Conclusion to the book is not a summary but simply addenda concerning Canadian museums that must have come to the author's attention after the main text was completed. The list of Canadian museums and related institutions at the end of the book is incomplete, erroneous and contains misspellings.

With the present explosive growth in Canadian museums the time is ripe for a historical review, assessment and up-to-date inventory. Older museums trying

to struggle out of a day to day existence and new museums attempting to operate as efficiently and yet as effectively as possible could benefit from a clear, broad perspective. Unfortunately, *Beyond Four Walls* displays a weak structure, an undisciplined analysis and, in places, a complete disregard for the accuracy of historical facts.

Ian Dyck.

SKY PAINTER: THE STORY OF ROBERT NEWTON HURLEY. By Jean Swanson, Saskatoon: Western Producer Book Service. 1973. 137 pp. plus B/W and Colour Illus. and Index. \$12.95.

"Jean Swanson is the best, most understanding reporter I have ever come up against." Lawren Harris made this statement in 1944. Mainly through Jean Swanson's interest in art, the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*, for which she worked, became signal in Canada from the mid-forties till the mid-fifties for its coverage of art news. On the third page, she regularly presented numerous, large reproductions of pictures from local and travelling exhibitions and knowledgeable write-ups on the state of art in Saskatchewan and Canada. The secret of her competent coverage was her immersion in the local art community. Outside of her reportage, she worked for the newly founded art centre and counted all the major painters in the city amongst her friends. Now, thirty years later, Jean Swanson has evinced her continuing interest and involvement in local art by her recent biography of Saskatoon's unique prairie painter, Robert Hurley.

Her book, *Sky Painter*, is basically a eulogy of this prolific painter who painstakingly learned his craft from library books and made his first paints from the juices of vegetables and berries. Hurley, who came to Canada from England in 1923, found time heavy on his hands as he sat out the relief years in north Saskatoon and turned to sketching and painting the things he found in his house, garden and along the riverbanks of the Saskatchewan. The diversion grew into a hobby, the hobby into a lifetime passion. His "sky paintings", with their low horizon lines and expanse of multicoloured skies, were the first, authentic, visual interpretations of the classic, prairie emblems of grain elevator, horizon and sky. That he drew with a ruler, that he turned them out at the astounding number of five or more a week for thirty years (most of this time while he was working a full-time shift at the university greenhouses), that he himself referred to them as "potboilers" or "quickies" does not lessen the impact of his success in reducing a landscape to one powerful, simplified statement. Swanson rightly comments of his influence: "For many, the Prairies began to look like a Hurley landscape".

It would be easy to criticize Swanson's book. The style is uneven, varying from the simplistic to the turgid, spawning strange metaphors and deadening clichés. She glosses over, as best she can, the obviously unprepossessing character traits of her subject — his bigotry, his narrow tastes, his self satisfaction — and she does not say more than is necessary about his corny poetry and silly musical inventions. She leaves out the nasty politicking which accompanied the founding of the Saskatchewan Arts Board and the hassling over cultural programmes in the Adult Education branch of the new C.C.F. government. She

keeps a steady, cheery pace and emphasizes the positive things about the man and the times.

But what she does say about Hurley is worth saying: He was a good painter. His colours are bold and well-handled. His composition is strong and, within the small format of his pictures, he handles the two-dimensional problems of space and planes with an impressive deftness. I would agree with Jean Swanson: "To describe his art as 'modest' is to define its style, not its quality, for in some of his paintings he came as close to perfection in achieving what he was attempting as is given to any artist". He did what the Eaton's European originals, the tiresome Oregon Trail and Last Round-up Pictures from the United States and the velvet paintings from Mexico do not do. He gave to our society, in its isolation and ignorance of art, quality work at ridiculously low prices.

T. G. Heath.

THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE: A CENTURY OF HISTORY. By Nora and William Kelly, Edmonton: Hurtig. 1973. 318 Pp. Illus. \$10.00.

During 1973 the Royal Canadian Mounted Police celebrated their Centennial year, and to coincide with this notable achievement, *The Royal Canadian Mounted Police: A Century of History*, co-authored by Nora Kelly and William Kelly, a former deputy commissioner of the R.C.M.P., has been published. In this book, one hundred years of the Force's history has been recounted in an effort "to help Canadians to become better acquainted with our national police force" (p. 11). Twenty-five years earlier, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police marked their seventy-fifth anniversary, and in recognition of that event, Nora Kelly compiled a general history of the Force entitled, *The Men of the Mounted* (see *Saskatchewan History*, III, No. 3, Autumn 1950, p. 115). That particular book traced the development of the Mounted Police from a para-military force patrolling the North-West Territories to a highly sophisticated federal police organization by the late forties.

If one compares the earlier work with *Royal Canadian Mounted Police: A Century of History*, one discovers that, with minor exceptions, the account of the Force's history between the years 1873-1948 is almost identical. In Part I, "North-West Mounted Police, 1873-1904", the authors provide a lengthy narrative of the work undertaken by the Mounted Police, initially in the North-West Territories and later in the Yukon and Arctic regions of Canada. An account of the Great March West in 1874; encounters with whisky traders and Indians; service in the North-West Rebellion of 1885; policing the Yukon Gold Rush, and patrolling the Western Arctic regions are included in the first section. The second part, "Royal North-West Mounted Police, 1904-1920" deals for the most part with the work of the Force in the northern regions of Canada, and to a lesser extent, with operations in the Prairie Provinces. In the chapters about the Arctic, dangerous patrols undertaken by courageous men such as Caulkin, Fitzgerald and French are recounted. A small chapter is devoted to the activities of the Police on the Prairies, including a brief resumé of the Force's role in

the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919. The last part of the book, "The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 1920-1973" describes how the Force was re-organized, expanded and equipped to meet the needs of a more complex Canadian society. Modernization of the Force, World War Two operations, espionage and the recent FLQ crisis receive most attention. In particular, this reviewer found Chapters 19 and 26 about post-war espionage most interesting as they undoubtedly reflect Mr. Kelly's experiences as director of Security and Intelligence.

In attempting to cover one hundred years of Police history, the Kellys limited themselves to outlining the facts of each investigation and event in which the Force was engaged. The North-West Rebellion of 1885 is covered in nine pages, and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 in four pages. However, this approach does not account for the omission of the Estevan-Bienfait mining dispute and the Regina Riot from the text. At times the authors leave themselves open to misinterpretation by not presenting a complete picture. For example, the North-West Mounted Police were organized, not only to repress the illicit liquor trade, to bring law and order to the inhabitants, and to prepare for anticipated settlement and railroad construction, but also to secure the North-West from American encroachment. The Kellys also leave the reader with the impression that Sir John A. Macdonald had originally conceived the idea of a constabulary force for policing the Territories. While the Prime Minister did bring about the formation of the Mounted Police in 1873, the idea of such a force had been formulated earlier by Lieutenant Blakiston of the Palliser Expedition. Discrepancies such as these, while not serious, do give the reader the wrong impression.

From the beginning, however, the reader is cautioned by the authors in the preface that "... the book contains less criticism than history records" (p. 10). Given this admission, anyone interested in acquiring a general knowledge of the Force's history over the past one hundred years, will find this book with its numerous photographs and maps, capable of fulfilling that requirement.

T. J. D. Powell.

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