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Press and Party in Saskatchewan, 1914-1929

by J. W. Brennan

A SIGNIFICANT feature of twentieth century newspaper development in Canada has been the trend towards centralization and consolidation which has resulted in the appearance of more and more one-newspaper cities and the control of papers in several communities by press chains.¹ In Saskatchewan, as in other provinces, these developments threatened the traditional partnership of press and party. Most newspapers at the turn of the century, if not owned or controlled outright by politicians or political parties, were in the hands of publishers and editors who took their politics seriously, and zealously supported the Liberals or Conservatives. The Regina *Leader*, one of the first newspapers to appear in the North-West Territories, and one of the few to survive to the present day, was typical of such "party organs". N. F. Davin had established the Regina *Leader* to further the interests of the Conservative party in that part of the North-West Territories, and, as long as he remained in control, the paper's editorial and news columns extolled the virtues of Sir John A. Macdonald's administration.² After the paper was sold to Walter Scott it became an equally vigorous champion of the Liberal party.³

The pressure of competition and increased costs of publication tended to force the weaker newspapers from the field or into the arms of their rivals. As loyal newspapers disappeared, and as the remaining dailies came to be controlled by a single group allied with the dominant Liberals, the opposition parties in the province, the Conservatives and Progressives, found themselves without any means of regularly presenting their point of view to the public. The lengths to which both parties, and especially the Conservatives, were prepared to go to overcome this handicap, are an indication of the importance which politicians attached to sympathetic newspaper support. The disappearance of a competitive party press, and the attempts made to revive it, merit consideration as an important chapter in the history of Saskatchewan politics and journalism.

Until the outbreak of the First World War both major parties were fairly evenly matched in terms of newspaper support. Liberal and Conservative newspapers existed side by side in all of the major centres and in many of the smaller communities as well. In Regina, for instance, a Liberal paper, the *Journal*, was established shortly before the 1887 federal election to compete with the Conservative *Leader*.⁴ In 1890 J. K. McInnis purchased the *Journal* and changed its name to the Regina *Standard*.⁵ The Regina *West* appeared in 1899 as successor to the *Leader* as the local Conservative paper.⁶ The *West* ceased publication in 1910, and another Conservative paper, the *Daily Province*, was established to replace it. By this time Regina had two morning and two evening newspapers; the *Morning Leader* and the *Daily Province*, and the *Evening Leader* and the *Standard*, respectively. In 1913 McInnis sold his newspaper to the Saskatchewan Publishing Company, owners of the *Daily Province*, who changed the name of the evening newspaper to the *Evening Province and Standard*.⁷

Walter Scott purchased the bankrupt Moose Jaw *Times* in 1894 and made it a profitable business venture⁸ and a voice for Liberalism in that city. The Conservative Moose Jaw *News* appeared in 1906.⁹ In Saskatoon, the *Phenix*, established in

1902 to "boost" that growing community, was purchased in 1905 by a company controlled by Dr. J. H. C. Willoughby. When he failed to get the nomination as Provincial Rights candidate in Saskatchewan's first provincial election, he sold the paper to J. A. Aikin, who altered the paper's name to *Phoenix* and its politics to Liberal. A new Conservative paper, the *Capital*, appeared in 1906.¹⁰ Similar newspaper competition existed in other Saskatchewan communities before 1914.¹¹

In their attempts to secure and maintain sympathetic press support the Liberals had one important advantage over their rivals: control of government printing patronage. The chief beneficiary was the Regina *Leader*, whose large government printing contracts aroused the jealousy not only of Conservative newspapers, but of other Liberal papers, such as the Saskatoon *Phoenix*, as well.¹² The support of local newspapers throughout the province could be assured by the judicious distribution of advertisements of tenders for public works projects, liquor licence applications, and court and legal notices. Such advertising might be worth \$100.00 to \$300.00 per year.¹³ Local editors jealously guarded their privileged position, and were quick to protest if a rival newspaper received favorable treatment, particularly if that rival supported the Conservative party.¹⁴ Even for occasional printing work, party affiliation was the most important criterion in the awarding of contracts.¹⁵ Federal patronage, especially that of the Department of the Interior, was more extensive than anything Regina could offer,¹⁶ and from 1896 to 1911 this too was distributed by the Liberals. After 1911, of course, the Conservatives controlled the federal patronage, but the complaint by the editor of the Moose Jaw *News* suggests that Conservative newspapers in Saskatchewan were not favored with a great deal of government work.¹⁷

The first newspaper chains, in which one man or a group of men controlled papers in several communities, began to appear in Saskatchewan during this period. For a number of years Walter Scott owned both the Moose Jaw *Times* and the Regina *Leader*, before selling the latter in 1906.¹⁸ The first extensive chain was created by W. F. Herman. Wilberforce Herman had gone as a young man from his native Nova Scotia to Boston where he learned the printing trade. Later he came west in search of business opportunities.¹⁹ Herman acquired the Prince Albert *Herald* in 1911, converted it from a weekly to a daily, and then resold the paper to its former owners in 1912. In that same year he purchased the plant of the Saskatoon *Capital*, which he renamed the *Daily Star*. The Regina *Evening Province*, renamed the *Daily Post*, was added to Herman's newspaper holdings in 1916.²⁰ For a time the *Daily Post* continued to support the Conservatives as its predecessor had done. Then on March 17, 1917 the newspaper declared its political independence.²¹

In the absence of any personal papers, or records of editorial agreements which may have been made at the time, the reasons for Herman's sudden desertion of the Conservative party must remain a matter for speculation. The terms of the agreement of sale of the *Evening Province* to Herman might have included a stipulation that the new owner continue to support the Conservative party for a given period of time, thus preventing a change of editorial policy until March 1917. This would not have been an unusual arrangement, for in purchasing the Regina *Leader* from N. F. Davin in 1895 Walter Scott had agreed to such a condition.²² On the other hand, Herman might simply have realized that the unpopularity of the wartime federal Conservative administration would hamper the financial success of

his new venture, and he chose to follow a more independent course for commercial reasons.²³ Whatever the explanation, the defection of the Conservative newspapers in Regina and Saskatoon was a serious blow to the party's fortunes in Saskatchewan.²⁴ On the eve of the 1917 provincial election the two papers carried editorials calling for the re-election of the Liberal government of Premier W. M. Martin.²⁵

W. F. Herman expanded his newspaper "empire" beyond the boundaries of Saskatchewan with the purchase of the Windsor *Record* in 1918. He changed the name of the newspaper to the *Border Cities Star* and began a profitable business venture in that Ontario city.²⁶

A similar process of consolidation was taking place among Liberal newspapers during the First World War. The Saskatoon *Phoenix* was in serious financial difficulty, and in 1918 an agreement was reached whereby the paper was taken over by the owners of the Leader Publishing Company in Regina.²⁷ By the end of the war, then, the editorial policies of the Regina *Leader* and Saskatoon *Phoenix*, and of the Saskatoon *Daily Star* and Regina *Daily Post*, were directed by two groups, the owners of the Leader Publishing Company, and W. F. Herman, respectively.

The most significant political development on the prairies in the postwar period was of course the appearance of the Progressive party, a movement of agrarian protest bent on replacing the existing provincial and federal governments with administrations more receptive to the demands of the western wheat farmers. In Saskatchewan the Progressives found an unexpected ally in the person of W. F. Herman. His Regina *Daily Post* and Saskatoon *Daily Star*, the latter boasting the largest circulation of any daily newspaper in the province for a number of years,²⁸ provided the new party with extensive news coverage and sympathetic editorial support unmatched even by the *Grain Growers' Guide*, the official organ of the organized farmers. The Herman newspapers were considered almost official party journals by Progressive leaders and many of the rank and file,²⁹ and Herman himself attained such influence within the party that certain Progressives sought his blessing for a Liberal-Progressive coalition in 1922.³⁰

The Liberals regarded the Herman press as their most persistent critics,³¹ and newspapers which supported the government at Regina, and especially the *Leader* and the Saskatoon *Phoenix*, were quick to reply in kind. The years 1919-1923 witnessed a spirited editorial battle between the two opposing newspaper groups in Saskatchewan.

Beneath the sound and fury, however, negotiations were taking place which would lead to a further consolidation of newspaper ownership. In 1920 the two groups made an arrangement whereby Herman agreed to publish the Saskatoon *Phoenix* and the Leader Publishing Company the Regina *Daily Post*, but the editorial control of the respective newspapers remained unchanged.³² By 1922 George M. Bell and the owners of the Leader Publishing Company were attempting to purchase the Herman newspapers outright, and were seeking financial assistance from wealthy eastern Liberals.³³ It is not clear whether the desired assistance was secured from that quarter, but, nevertheless, a deal was concluded. On February 1, 1923 ownership of the Saskatoon newspapers passed from W. F. Herman to George M. Bell and his associates.³⁴ The four daily newspapers in Saskatoon and Regina were now controlled by the same shareholders, and the days

of competition and editorial warfare between newspapers in the two cities came to an end. The editorial policies of the *Daily Star* and the *Daily Post* did not immediately change, but within a few months it was apparent that the two papers had become Liberal in outlook.³⁵

The prospect of monopoly control of Saskatchewan's daily newspapers was of such concern to the members of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association (S.G.G.A.) that the annual convention instructed the executive to consider the feasibility of establishing an official S.G.G.A. paper.³⁶ The executive entered into an agreement with Harris Turner and A. P. Waldron, who had been associated in the production of *Turner's Weekly*,³⁷ to publish a weekly newspaper, the *Progressive*, in the interests of the S.G.G.A. The policy of the paper was to be controlled by the association, through an editorial board, and net profits were to be divided equally between the S.G.G.A and Turner's Weekly Limited. The agreement would not come into effect until the farmers' association had obtained as working capital 5000 fully paid subscriptions.³⁸

The first issue of the *Progressive* appeared on August 27, 1923, although only 500 subscriptions had been secured by that date.³⁹ The need for haste was explained in another farm journal:

In face of the attitude of the daily press of the province towards the contract wheat pool in particular, and the association in general, it was felt to be necessary that this publication should be placed in the hands of the public at the earliest possible date, so that the interests of the farmers may receive that sympathetic treatment which is so necessary, particularly at the present crisis in the marketing of the dominant crop of the province.⁴⁰

In the summer of 1923 prairie farmers began a campaign to organize a voluntary pool to handle western grain. Aaron Sapiro, the famous cooperative organizer from the United States who had set up produce pools in the Middle West and California, was brought to western Canada by the combined efforts of the various farm organizations and undertook a speaking tour to convince farmers of the advantages of a cooperative wheat handling agency. He fired the imagination of thousands of farmers, and in Saskatchewan the pool organizers set about the task of signing up 50 per cent of the acreage in the province to the five year contracts.⁴¹ The four dailies in the *Leader* group, although not originally opposed to the idea of a wheat pool, did oppose the scheme of five year contracts. These newspapers were also exceptionally critical of Aaron Sapiro.⁴²

The *Progressive* was from the outset an ardent champion of the pool idea and a vigorous critic of the "Concentrated Press" as the *Leader* group of newspapers came to be called. The first issues of the *Progressive* were to be ". . . emergency issues, published largely for the purpose of giving the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool as much support as can be rendered."⁴³ Its editorials stressed the danger involved in allowing a virtual press monopoly to exist in Saskatchewan.⁴⁴

In response no doubt to these attacks, a series of articles entitled "The Inside History of Some Saskatchewan Newspapers" appeared in the Regina and Saskatoon dailies in the fall of 1923. The articles, written by Burford Hooke, managing editor of the *Leader* Publishing Company, claimed that the various newspaper amalgamations in the two largest cities were the result of economic necessity. Of the six daily newspapers published in Regina and Saskatoon in 1914, only one, W.

F. Herman's *Daily Star*, was showing a profit. The Regina *Province* and *Evening Province and Standard*, and the Saskatoon *Phoenix*, were nearly bankrupt. Herman purchased the Regina paper for a nominal sum, installed new equipment and improved the paper in a variety of ways, but still it lost money. Meanwhile the owners of the Leader Publishing Company lost \$130,000 in two years trying to operate the *Phoenix* in Saskatoon. The agreement of 1920, whatever its drawbacks, had through a more efficient use of the newspaper plants prevented Regina and Saskatoon from becoming "one-newspaper cities."⁴⁵

When it became known that Herman's Saskatchewan newspaper holdings were for sale, the board of directors of the Leader Publishing Company decided to act to keep the papers in the hands of Saskatchewan men, and to effect further economies in production costs.⁴⁶ Because Saskatchewan newspaper publishers faced some of the highest production costs in Canada,⁴⁷ only in this way could first class newspapers continue to be published in small cities such as Regina and Saskatoon.⁴⁸

The articles implied that there was a concerted and unjustifiable campaign being waged to create antagonism towards the recent newspaper consolidation. This campaign, and the attempts by the S.G.G.A. to establish an official newspaper, were partisan in motivation. "What the central executive of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association want is not a newspaper but an old fashioned political 'organ' ".⁴⁹ The rivalry between the *Progressive* and the *Leader* group of newspapers was to be as bitter as any in the history of Saskatchewan journalism.

The *Progressive* did not let up in its campaign against the "Concentrated Press," whose persistent and unwarranted opposition it declared to be the greatest menace to the formation of a wheat pool. The pool organizers were warned not to underestimate the power of the *Leader* newspapers with their large daily circulation. The *Progressive* promised to give precedence to the pool campaign over all other matters in its columns, and to do all it could to put the pool's case before the farmers of the west.⁵⁰

The pool organization failed to sign 50 per cent of the crop acreage in Saskatchewan to pool contracts in time to handle the 1923 crop, and the work was carried over to the following year. By June 1924 the objective was achieved and in July the Saskatchewan Cooperative Wheat Producers Limited commenced operations.⁵¹ The propaganda work of the *Progressive* accounted in no small measure for the success of the pool campaign, and its popularity among the farmers was evidenced by the fact that, within a year, paid-up circulation increased from 500 to 9000.⁵²

The *Progressive* devoted much of its attention to the wheat pool campaign during this first year, but it did not neglect political matters either. The paper became a strong critic of the two traditional parties and tended, in spite of its declarations of political independence, to favor the Progressives. This support came at a critical time for the farmers' political movement in the province. By 1923 the Saskatoon and Regina newspapers were solidly opposed to the new party, and the assistance promised by the S.G.G.A. had proved to be inadequate. Six provincial by-elections had taken place since the S.G.G.A. authorized provincial political action by its locals in February 1922. In all but one, the government candidate had been returned without any opposition. Even the one contested seat, Happyland, resulted in a Liberal victory.⁵³ The active participation of members of the provincial

government in a federal by-election campaign in Moose Jaw contradicted earlier pledges which implied that the provincial Liberals would not directly oppose the Progressives in federal contests. In retaliation, a Saskatchewan Provincial Progressive Association (S.P.P.A.) was formed to contest a provincial by-election which was to held in Milestone in October 1923.⁵⁴ Significantly, one of the leaders of this new group and their chief speaker during the Milestone campaign was Harris Turner, editor of the *Progressive*.⁵⁵

Although unsuccessful in their first contest,⁵⁶ the provincial Progressives moved to extend their organization over the whole province in preparation for the next general election. No official support could be expected from the S.G.G.A., for at its 1924 convention the Association decided to leave politics altogether. The resolution which had authorized provincial political action in 1922 was rescinded, and a second resolution declaring support for the S.P.P.A. was tabled.⁵⁷ The new party held a provincial convention in Saskatoon and drafted an official platform. The convention was presided over by Harris Turner, who had recently been elected House leader of the opposition group in the Legislature.⁵⁸ The involvement of the editor of the *Progressive* to such a degree must have heartened the delegates, for it seemed to assure the unqualified support of that newspaper at the next election. If such was their expectation, it was soon dashed.

Less than a month after the Saskatoon convention it was announced that the *Progressive* would henceforth be known as the *Western Producer*. Two reasons were given in explanation of the change. Some officials of the S.G.G.A. were concerned that the former title of the paper gave the impression that the Association was rigidly bound to one or both of the political organizations bearing the name Progressive. Moreover, the directors of the Wheat Pool and the publishers of the paper believed that the retention of such a politically suggestive name would hamper Pool publicity work.⁵⁹ A third reason might also be suggested. In June 1924 the *Progressive* began to carry a weekly page of news from the other farmers' organization in Saskatchewan, the Farmers' Union of Canada.⁶⁰ Whether any influence was brought to bear on the publishers from this source is not known, but the decision to change the name of the paper would certainly have pleased the Farmers' Union, an organization which disavowed all political activity and stressed economic reform.⁶¹

The decision of the editorial board must have come as a bitter blow to the hopes of the provincial Progressives. They constituted the main opposition to the Liberal government in the provincial election of 1925, yet they were given no significant press support during the campaign. The *Leader* group of newspapers called for the re-election of the government, the *Grain Growers' Guide* ignored the campaign altogether, and the *Western Producer* remained essentially neutral.⁶²

While the *Western Producer* continued to take an active editorial interest in politics in subsequent years, it remained true to its first interest, the promotion of the Wheat Pool. Pool news and items of general interest to western farmers, rather than political questions, dominated its pages. In this the paper reflected, consciously or otherwise, a shift in the focus of attention of the western farm organizations away from direct political action and back to measures of economic self-help, such as the wheat pools. There is nothing to suggest that the change in the content of the paper did not meet with the approval of its readers, for the circulation of the

Western Producer continued to increase, reaching 12,000 in 1924 and 21,000 in 1926. By this latter date the *Western Producer* was as influential a paper among Saskatchewan farmers as the older *Grain Growers' Guide*.⁶³

The prospect of a Liberal newspaper monopoly in Saskatchewan was no more appealing to the Conservatives than it had been to the Progressives. For Conservatives, though, the absence of assured newspaper support was only one of the many difficulties the party faced in the postwar period. There was a new leader, Donald Maclean, a Saskatoon lawyer, but the party was handicapped by the unpopularity of the wartime Union government among prairie farmers, and by internal feuding.⁶⁴ The last Conservative daily newspaper in the province, the *Moose Jaw News*, ceased publication in 1920.⁶⁵ Then on the eve of the 1921 provincial election Maclean submitted his resignation as leader. No successor was named, and the party decided to concentrate on those ridings where some chance of success existed.⁶⁶ Only four candidates were nominated, and the chief opposition to the Liberal government was provided by a group of Independents.⁶⁷

The Conservatives fared little better in the federal election held later in the same year. A full slate of candidates was nominated in Saskatchewan, but all were defeated, including the four sitting Unionist Conservative M.P.'s. The Progressives virtually swept the province taking fifteen of the sixteen seats.⁶⁸ The future of Saskatchewan Conservatism seemed far from encouraging.⁶⁹ Party organization work was neglected,⁷⁰ and for two years no attempt was made to fill the vacancy caused by Maclean's resignation as provincial leader.

It was the federal Conservatives who took the initiative to put the party in a stronger position in Saskatchewan.⁷¹ At two conventions in December 1923 and March 1924 steps were taken to re-establish a party organization throughout the province, draft a platform and select a new leader, Dr. J. T. M. Anderson.⁷²

The party and its new leader would need to overcome two serious problems, Saskatchewan Conservatives believed, if any permanent success were to be achieved. The more immediate concern was a lack of money, without which large scale organization work could not be undertaken.⁷³ To complement this work, a newspaper or newspapers would be required to present the Conservative point of view to the voters. "So far as receiving any news or editorial opinions at all favorable to the Conservative party is concerned," one Conservative lamented, "the 800,000 people in Saskatchewan might as well be in Central Africa."⁷⁴ It was almost impossible even to get a fair report of their meetings in the predominantly Liberal press.⁷⁵ Between 1923 and 1928 Conservatives in Saskatchewan and Ottawa sought to remedy this problem, but without much success.

Saskatchewan Conservatives were unanimous in their opinion that the financing of a new daily newspaper, involving perhaps \$250,000, was beyond the means of any local men.⁷⁶ Instead they attempted to establish or purchase a weekly newspaper or secure the editorial control of one or more of the existing dailies. Several weekly newspaper schemes were considered by the party hierarchy,⁷⁷ but only one came close to realization.

Walter McInnis, owner of a Regina printing firm, was willing to provide his plant and \$20,000 for a weekly paper in Regina if additional financial assistance could be secured from eastern sources. Local Conservatives were enthusiastic about the proposition. McInnis' sound business reputation promised financial

success, and from a political point of view "The Weekly gives us a medium of Propaganda, does not interfere with a daily if we ever get one and meantime we have something whereas now we must sit and take all the abuse the Bell Crowd [i.e. the *Leader* group of newspapers] can give us."⁷⁸ Arthur Meighen, the federal leader, was interested too, and negotiations appeared to be proceeding favorably⁷⁹ until McInnis learned that the Conservatives were also negotiating with the "Bell Crowd" for control of the editorial columns of the Regina *Daily Post* and Saskatoon *Phoenix*.

It was George Bell himself who approached the Conservatives with this proposal shortly after the purchase of the Herman newspapers was completed.⁸⁰ Meighen's initial response, and that of the local Conservatives, was one of opposition to a scheme which, they felt, would not be in the best interests of the party.⁸¹ Nevertheless Meighen did enter into negotiations with Bell.⁸² The prospect of re-establishing a Conservative voice in the two largest cities in Saskatchewan was too attractive to be dismissed out of hand, even if it meant doing business with a Liberal. Such at least was the opinion of the eastern Conservatives who would be expected to assist in the financing of any newspaper venture in the province.⁸³

When McInnis learned of the Bell scheme he immediately withdrew his own proposal.⁸⁴ The discussions with Bell continued for another year and a half,⁸⁵ but in the end, apparently, no agreement could be reached.

The Conservatives enjoyed more success in the political arena. By 1925 J.T.M. Anderson and his colleagues could claim to have re-established the party as a significant force in the province.⁸⁶ The Liberals did not take the threat of a reorganized and revitalized Conservative party lightly. Looking ahead to the next provincial election Premier Dunning feared the Conservatives might "absorb a certain number of the saner and more level-headed farmers and endanger his chances in three cornered contests."⁸⁷ Three Conservative candidates were elected in the 1925 general election, despite a lack of money and "a couple of good newspapers to carry the message through the province."⁸⁸

The absence of dependable newspaper support was still a great handicap, in the opinion of most Conservatives. J. T. M. Anderson's pleas for assistance became almost desperate in tone: "We must have a paper! Surely some of your Eastern monied men can do something. We'll never get anywhere until we get one."⁸⁹ With the decision of the Moose Jaw *Times* to discontinue its regular column "The Conservative View Point" in December 1925 Saskatchewan's Conservative press was reduced to a single weekly, published at Melfort.⁹⁰

Ottawa Conservatives were sympathetic to the plight of their Saskatchewan brethren, but hoped to see more local initiative taken in the financing of a party paper.⁹¹ A group of Moose Jaw men did come forward with a proposal to establish the *Saskatchewan Daily Mail*, a morning paper, which would be published in that city and circulated in Regina, Saskatoon and a large area surrounding these three centres as well.⁹² The local people were convinced of the paper's chances of success, provided sufficient funds could be raised in Saskatchewan and elsewhere.⁹³ Eastern financial support did not materialize, and local jealousies and a lack of enthusiasm hampered the sale of shares within the province.⁹⁴ As a consequence, the *Saskatchewan Daily Mail* did not publish a single issue.

In 1927, Saskatchewan Conservatives embarked on yet another abortive

newspaper scheme, this time involving the purchase of the two Saskatoon papers.⁹⁵ As the negotiations proceeded rumors began to circulate that other groups were also interested in the papers. It was alleged that the Sifton family and the Southam chain were anxious to acquire some or all of the daily newspapers in Regina and Saskatoon.⁹⁶ The rumor became fact when it was announced on March 24, 1928 that the four dailies in the two cities had been sold to the Sifton family.⁹⁷

It would appear that the Conservatives were already considering other proposals by this time.⁹⁸ These involved Charles E. Campbell, a Vancouver businessman and newspaper proprietor.⁹⁹ Campbell had owned the Vancouver *World* (1921-1924) and the Vancouver *Star* (1924) before purchasing the Edmonton *Bulletin* in 1925 and the Calgary *Albertan* in 1927.¹⁰⁰ He entered the field of Saskatchewan journalism in 1928, incorporating two newspaper companies, the Regina Daily Star Company and the Saskatoon Free Press Company.¹⁰¹ Most Saskatchewan Conservatives were at first unaware that their hour of deliverance was at hand.¹⁰² With money provided by R. B. Bennett, the Conservatives' millionaire national leader, Charles Campbell was about to end the Liberal daily newspaper monopoly which had existed in the province since 1923.

Little is known of the negotiations which took place between Bennett and Campbell, or of the terms of their agreement. It is clear that Bennett was expected to put up most of the money, as much as \$150,000, for which he would receive bonds and preferred and common shares of the Regina Daily Star Limited to the amount of \$240,000. At a mutually satisfactory time the Saskatoon paper would be published under similar terms. It was anticipated that initial expenses for the Regina paper would amount to \$199,000, including an operating loss of \$90,000 during the first two years.¹⁰³ Bennett was apparently favorable to this proposal,¹⁰⁴ and after further discussions with Campbell an agreement was concluded.¹⁰⁵ By early June 1928 Campbell was in Regina making preparations for the publication of the new paper.¹⁰⁶ A building and equipment were purchased and staff hired, and on July 16, 1928 the Regina *Daily Star*, "Saskatchewan's Independent Newspaper," first rolled off the presses on Rose Street.¹⁰⁷

Local Conservatives were impressed both with the newspaper plant and with the *Daily Star* itself.¹⁰⁸ Indeed one wrote to Bennett that the paper was "... meeting with greater success than we had ever dared hope for."¹⁰⁹ The successful launching of the Regina newspaper prompted some, including Campbell himself, to suggest that the Saskatoon *Free Press* be started at once.¹¹⁰ Caution appears to have prevailed, at least in the mind of R. B. Bennett, the man who was expected again to provide the necessary financing.¹¹¹ For whatever reasons, the Saskatoon *Free Press* never appeared. The task of presenting the Conservative point of view to the citizens of Saskatchewan was to rest with the Regina *Daily Star* alone.

The day to day operation of the new Regina paper demonstrated to Campbell and his Conservative associates that to start a paper was one thing, to keep it going quite another. Circulation grew steadily, reaching 17,000 after three months of publication,¹¹² but the securing of advertising, and particularly national advertising, proved to be a slow business. Advertising managers were traditionally wary of any new paper as a publicity medium until it had been published for a full year. It was discovered, moreover, that the Sifton newspapers were using their influence in the

east to prevent their Conservative rival from securing advertising contracts.¹¹³ An appeal was sent to a number of prominent federal Conservatives, urging them to help the *Daily Star* in this matter,¹¹⁴ but the revenue derived from national advertising showed no immediate increase.¹¹⁵

The Regina *Daily Star* also proved to be a more costly newspaper to operate than had been anticipated. R. B. Bennett had arranged a line of credit for the paper at a local bank, but the initial amount of \$25,000 was soon exhausted and further sums had to be provided.¹¹⁶ Expenses were rigorously cut and the paper finally showed an operating profit in the spring of 1929.¹¹⁷ More losses followed, more money was advanced by Bennett, and by November 1929 the paper again showed an operating profit.¹¹⁸

Whatever the shortcomings of the Regina *Daily Star* from a business point of view, its political value could not be denied. Conservatives were convinced that their near defeat of the Liberal member in a crucial provincial by-election in Arm River was due in no small degree to the news column publicity and editorial support provided by the *Daily Star*.¹¹⁹ The appearance of the paper gave a tremendous boost to party morale throughout the province, and Conservatives approached the 1929 general election confident of success.¹²⁰ The emotional campaign waged by the Conservatives, with its emphasis on alleged sectarian influence in the public schools, the dangers of unrestricted immigration and the corruption of the Liberal "machine" was faithfully reported to readers of the *Daily Star*.¹²¹ In order to increase the paper's circulation during the campaign, "extras" were sent out to the various candidates, more than 2000 to Saskatoon alone.¹²² When Premier J. G. Gardiner and his Liberal government were defeated on June 6, 1929, more than one jubilant Conservative was willing to give the Regina *Daily Star* much of the credit.¹²³

In retrospect it can be seen that the war and postwar years were a period of transition for Saskatchewan's party press. By 1923 daily newspaper competition virtually ceased to exist. There were nine dailies in Saskatchewan in 1913 but only six in 1923, and four of these were owned by one company. The reasons were largely economic, for newspaper publishing was an expensive business and only the strongest papers survived. Such developments were not unique to Saskatchewan, of course. Canada as a whole does not even now boast as many dailies as it did in 1913.¹²⁴ But the decline of newspaper competition occurred in Saskatchewan at a relatively early date, and threatened to deprive the Conservatives and Progressives of sympathetic press support at a time when the newspaper was still the single most influential form of mass persuasion available to a political party. A measure of competition was restored by the end of the decade, with the appearance of the *Western Producer* and the Regina *Daily Star*. Even this was short-lived, for the latter ceased publication in 1940.¹²⁵

The history of Saskatchewan journalism in the 1920's provides one of the earliest illustrations of what has since become an all too common phenomenon in Canada: the appearance of more and more one-newspaper cities, and the control of newspapers in several communities by press chains.

Footnotes

- ¹ W. H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1967), pp. 73-82.
- ² C. B. Koester, "Nicholas Flood Davin: A Biography." (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Alberta, 1971), pp. 113-115, 125, 160-161, 343-344.
- ³ D. H. Bocking, "Premier Walter Scott: His Early Career," *Saskatchewan History*, XIII, 3 (Autumn, 1960), pp. 96-97.
- ⁴ E. G. Drake, "Pioneer Journalism in Saskatchewan, 1878-1887. Part I: The Founding of the Territorial Press," *Saskatchewan History*, V, 1 (Winter, 1952), p. 25.
- ⁵ C. MacDonald (comp.), *Historical Directory of Saskatchewan Newspapers, 1878-1950* (Saskatoon: Office of the Saskatchewan Archives, 1951), pp. 80, 85.
- ⁶ Koester, *op. cit.*, p. 344.
- ⁷ MacDonald, *op. cit.*, pp. 82, 85-86; W. A. Craick, *A History of Canadian Journalism* (Toronto: The Ontario Publishing Company, 1959), II, pp. 274, 276.
- ⁸ Bocking, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
- ⁹ MacDonald, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
- ¹⁰ E. G. Drake, "The Territorial Press in the Region of Present-day Saskatchewan, 1878-1905." (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1951), p. 128; J. H. Archer, "The History of Saskatoon to 1914." (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1948), p. 100.
- ¹¹ Among the communities served by more than one newspaper during this period were Estevan, Indian Head, Kindersley, Melfort, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Weyburn and Yorkton.
- ¹² Archives of Saskatchewan (AS), *Calder Papers*, J. A. Aikin to J. A. Calder, March 10, 1910.
- ¹³ AS, *Scott Papers*, W. Scott to T. Sanderson, November 2, 1907, p. 50301.
- ¹⁴ AS, *Turgeon Papers*, General Files, T. Robertson to W. F. A. Turgeon, November 13, 1912; D. Lawrence to W. F. A. Turgeon, June 15, 1913.
- ¹⁵ Thus, for example, only Liberal newspapers were considered by the government when awarding contracts for the printing of the voters' lists in 1908. When it was discovered that one of the papers so favored had been sold to a Conservative syndicate, the work was given to another paper. (AS, *Scott Papers*, W. Scott to E. Williamson, September 1, 1908, p. 37052; H. C. Pierce to W. Scott, October 5, 1908, p. 37132; private secretary to H. C. Pierce, October 14, 1908, p. 37133.)
- ¹⁶ AS, *Scott Papers*, W. Scott to T. Sanderson, November 2, 1907, p. 50301.
- ¹⁷ Public Archives of Canada (PAC), *Willison Papers*, W. G. Cates to J. S. Willison, March 29, 1915, pp. 5098-5099.
- ¹⁸ MacDonald, *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 81.
- ¹⁹ C. Bruce, *News and the Southams* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1968), p. 221.
- ²⁰ Craick, *op. cit.*, pp. 275, 278.
- ²¹ L. A. Brown, "Progressivism and the Press in Saskatchewan, 1916-1926." (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1966), p. 21.
- ²² Bocking, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
- ²³ L. A. Brown suggests, on the basis of an interview with A. P. Waldron, a Saskatoon newspaperman and personal acquaintance of W. F. Herman, that "commercial reasons figured largely in the editorial policy changes". (Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 22.)
- ²⁴ PAC, *Willison Papers*, W. G. Cates to J. S. Willison, April 2, 1917, p. 5103.
- ²⁵ See, for instance, *Daily Post*, June 16, 1917.
- ²⁶ Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 221; Craick, *op. cit.*, p. 279.
- ²⁷ AS, *Martin Papers*, W. M. Martin to J. H. Ross, February 28, 1918, pp. 35051-35052; Craick, *op. cit.*, p. 280.
- ²⁸ According to the newspaper and magazine directory of the *Canadian Almanac* the circulation of the *Daily Star* exceeded that of its closest competitor, the *Leader*, in the period 1919-1921 by a significant margin. (A. W. Thomas, ed., *The Canadian Almanac and Miscellaneous Directory*, 1919-1921.)
- ²⁹ Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-157.
- ³⁰ PAC, *King Papers*, J. F. Johnston to W. L. M. King, July 22, 1922, pp. 63641-63643; W. L. M. King to J. F. Johnston, July 27, 1922, pp. 63644-64645; Queen's University Archives (QUA), *Crerar Papers*, J. F. Johnston to T. A. Crerar, July 28, 1922.
- ³¹ AS, *Dunning Papers*, C. A. Dunning to J. M. McKay, April 12, 1922, p. 35596.
- ³² Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 3; Craick, *op. cit.*, p. 280. This arrangement was to have remained in effect for a period of ten years. (*Morning Leader*, September 26, 1923.)
- ³³ PAC, *King Papers*, A. Haydon to W. L. M. King, February 25, 1922, pp. 63118, 63120; G. M. Bell to A. Haydon, March 17, 1922, pp. 59485-59486; A. Haydon to W. L. M. King, March 27, 1922, p. 63127. The other owners of the Leader Publishing Company mentioned in this correspondence were Burford Hooke, Hugo Meilicke, S. L. Ross and J. H. Mitchell.
- ³⁴ Craick, *op. cit.*, p. 282. By 1923 the major shareholders in the Leader Publishing Company were the Meilicke family of Saskatoon (34 per cent); G. M. Bell, Regina (26 per cent); S. L. Ross, Regina (19 per cent); and B. Hooke, Regina (19 per cent). These figures are taken from the *Morning Leader*, September 22, 1923. Shortly after he sold his Saskatchewan newspapers W. F. Herman purchased the *Hamilton Herald*. (Craick, *op. cit.*, p. 283; Bruce, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-226.)

- ³⁵ Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 175, 183.
- ³⁶ *Grain Growers' Guide*, February 7, 1923.
- ³⁷ This independent journal first appeared in 1918 but lasted only a few years. (W. K. Rolph, "Turner's Weekly: An Episode in Prairie Journalism," *Saskatchewan History*, IV, 3 [Autumn, 1951], pp. 81-92.)
- ³⁸ *Grain Growers' Guide*, June 6, 1923; August 1, 1923.
- ³⁹ *Progressive*, August 28, 1924.
- ⁴⁰ *Grain Growers' Guide*, August 29, 1923.
- ⁴¹ H. S. Patton, *Grain Growers' Cooperation in Western Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), pp. 210-216.
- ⁴² S. W. Yates, *The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool: Its Origin, Organization and Progress, 1924-1935* (Saskatoon: United Farmers of Canada, n.d.), pp. 61, 82, 88-100.
- ⁴³ *Progressive*, August 27, 1923.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, August 27, 1923; September 5, 1923.
- ⁴⁵ *Morning Leader*, September 26, 1923.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, September 29, 1923; October 6, 1923.
- ⁴⁷ Newsprint costs and telegraph tolls were cited as two examples. (*Ibid.*, October 6, 1923.)
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, According to the 1921 census, the population of Regina was 34,432; of Saskatoon, 25,739. (Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *The Canada Year Book, 1922-1923*, p. 108.)
- ⁴⁹ *Morning Leader*, October 3, 1923.
- ⁵⁰ *Progressive*, February 21, 1924.
- ⁵¹ Patton, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-217, 219-221.
- ⁵² *Progressive*, August 28, 1924. The paper was sent to all Wheat Pool contract holders as part of the initial subscription drive. (Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 185.)
- ⁵³ *Saskatchewan Executive and Legislative Directory, 1905-1970* (hereafter cited as *Legislative Directory*). Regina: Saskatchewan Archives Board, 1971, pp. 46, 106.
- ⁵⁴ These developments are discussed in greater detail in J. W. Brennan, "C. A. Dunning and the Challenge of the Progressives: 1922-1925," *Saskatchewan History*, XXII, 1 (Winter, 1969), pp. 2-6.
- ⁵⁵ *Morning Leader*, October 13, 1923; *Progressive*, October 18, 1923.
- ⁵⁶ *Legislative Directory*, p. 119.
- ⁵⁷ *Grain Growers' Guide*, January 30, 1924.
- ⁵⁸ *The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs (C.A.R.)*, 1924-1925, p. 409.
- ⁵⁹ *Progressive*, September 11, 1924.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, June 19, 1924.
- ⁶¹ D. S. Spafford, "The Origin of the Farmers' Union of Canada," *Saskatchewan History*, XVIII, 3 (Autumn, 1965), pp. 89-94.
- ⁶² Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 200-201.
- ⁶³ *Western Producer*, December 31, 1924; QUA, *Crerar Papers*, memorandum "Weekly or Semi-Monthly," January 4, 1926. The *Western Producer* could not, however, match the circulation of the *Grain Growers' Guide*, which in 1926 totalled 73,000, and 40,000 in Saskatchewan alone. (*Ibid.*) It was the competition of new farm newspapers, such as the *U.F.A.* in Alberta and the *Western Producer* in Saskatchewan which prompted the publishers of the *Grain Growers' Guide* to change the paper from a weekly to a semi-monthly in 1926. (*Ibid.*)
- ⁶⁴ PAC, *Meighen Papers*, T. H. Hart to A. Meighen, December 9, 1921, pp. 13459-13460.
- ⁶⁵ Craick, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
- ⁶⁶ *C.A.R.*, 1921, p. 809.
- ⁶⁷ *Legislative Directory*, pp. 91-158.
- ⁶⁸ *Directory of Members of Parliament and Federal Elections for the North-West Territories and Saskatchewan, 1887-1966* (Regina: Saskatchewan Archives Board, 1967), pp. 28-53.
- ⁶⁹ PAC, *Meighen Papers*, D. J. Wylie to A. Meighen, February 15, 1922, p. 37481.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, E. T. Myers to A. Meighen, February 17, 1922, p. 37490.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, A. Meighen to E. T. Myers, November 5, 1923, pp. 76884-76885. Meighen wrote to a number of prominent Saskatchewan Conservatives at this time, explaining what needed to be done to revive the party in Canada's third largest province.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, W. D. Dunlop to A. Meighen, March 5, 1924, p. 77024; W. D. Dunlop to A. Meighen, March 27, 1924, p. 77044; *C.A.R.*, 1923, p. 717.
- ⁷³ PAC, *Meighen Papers*, J. T. M. Anderson to A. Meighen, April 28, 1924, p. 77052; J. T. M. Anderson to A. Meighen, October 3, 1924, pp. 77079-77080; J. T. M. Anderson to A. Meighen, December 26, 1924, p. 77114.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, C. B. Keenleyside to M. A. MacPherson, August 23, 1924, p. 68944.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to A. Meighen, October 3, 1924, p. 77079.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, R. E. Turnbull to S. F. Tolmie, August 24, 1923, pp. 68900-68904; C. B. Keenleyside to M. A. MacPherson, August 23, 1924, p. 68944.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, A. J. Gibson to A. Meighen, July 24, 1923, pp. 68892-68894; W. D. Dunlop to H. E. Munroe, December 24, 1923, pp. 75057-75058; A. J. Wickens to A. Meighen, January 28, 1925, pp. 68961-68963.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, M. A. MacPherson to A. Meighen, December 29, 1923, pp. 68914-68915; M. A. MacPherson to A. Meighen, June 16, 1924, p. 68923.
- ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, A. Meighen to M. A. MacPherson, January 4, 1924, pp. 68916-68917; M. A. MacPherson to A. Meighen, June 16, 1924, p. 68925.

- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, E. B. Jonah to A. Meighen, February 12, 1923, pp. 68886-68888.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, A. Meighen to E. B. Jonah, March 13, 1924, pp. 68889-68890; M. A. MacPherson to A. Meighen, July 19, 1924, p. 68933; J. F. Bryant to A. Meighen, July 25, 1924, pp. 68939-68940.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, A. Meighen to M. A. MacPherson, June 19, 1924, p. 68927.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, A. Meighen to J. F. Bryant, July 29, 1924, pp. 68937-68938.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, W. McInnis to A. Meighen, July 14, 1924, p. 68930.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, A. Meighen to M. A. MacPherson, August 31, 1925, p. 68978; M. A. MacPherson to A. Meighen, September 4, 1925, p. 41191; A. Meighen to G. Bell, February 11, 1926, p. 69006.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to A. Meighen, April 26, 1925, pp. 77182-77184.
- ⁸⁷ PAC, *Dafoe Papers*, C. Sifton to J. W. Dafoe, January 28, 1925.
- ⁸⁸ *Legislative Directory*, pp. 47-48; PAC, *Meighen Papers*, W. W. Davidson to A. Meighen, June 9, 1925, pp. 77414-77415.
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to A. Meighen, March 31, 1926, p. 33372.
- ⁹⁰ *Moose Jaw Evening Times*, December 19, 1925; PAC, *Meighen Papers*, A. J. Wickens to R. Rogers, n.d., p. 68988. "The Conservative View Point" began to appear after the old *Conservative News* was absorbed by the *Evening Times* in 1920, and was written by the last editor of the *News*, Frank Wright. (*Ibid.*) Conservatives were convinced that the column had been stopped because of its attacks on the activities of the provincial Liberal "machine." (*Ibid.*, F. Wright to A. Meighen, December 19, 1925, pp. 68981-68983.)
- ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, A. Meighen to F. Wright, December 24, 1925, pp. 68984-68985.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*, A. J. Wickens to R. Rogers, n.d., pp. 68988-68995.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*, A. J. Wickens to A. Meighen, December 29, 1925, pp. 68986-68987.
- ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, A. Meighen to W. R. Reilly, April 16, 1926, pp. 69025-69026; J. T. M. Anderson to A. Meighen, April 10, 1926, p. 33376.
- ⁹⁵ University of New Brunswick Library (UNB), *Bennett Papers*, R. M. Buchanan to R. B. Bennett, January 26, 1928, pp. 44082-44083.
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, J. F. Bryant to R. B. Bennett, January 20, 1928, p. 44078; PAC, *Cameron Papers*, T. A. Crerar to A. K. Cameron, February 8, 1928. One widely circulated rumor involved a joint ownership of the four papers with two run as Liberal papers and two as Conservative. (UNB, *Bennett Papers*, F. Somerville to R. B. Bennett, January 12, 1928, p. 44071; J. J. Leddy to R. B. Bennett, January 16, 1928, pp. 44079-44080.)
- ⁹⁷ Craick, *op. cit.*, p. 286.
- ⁹⁸ UNB, *Bennett Papers*, R. B. Bennett to R. M. Buchanan, February 21, 1928, p. 44088.
- ⁹⁹ C. G. D. Roberts and A. L. Tunnell (ed.), *The Canadian Who's Who, II, 1936-1937*, pp. 164-165.
- ¹⁰⁰ Craick, *op. cit.*, pp. 281, 283-285. Campbell owned the *Albertan* only briefly, before selling it to G. M. Bell.
- ¹⁰¹ *The Saskatchewan Gazette*, XXIV, 15, April 14, 1928, p. 10; UNB, *Bennett Papers*, M. A. MacPherson to R. B. Bennett, April 7, 1928, p. 25000.
- ¹⁰² At least one Regina Conservative was convinced that the new papers would be Liberal organs. (*Ibid.*, J. F. Bryant to R. B. Bennett, May 26, 1928, p. 44114.) The fact that Campbell had been a prominent figure in British Columbia Liberal circles (Roberts and Tunnell, *loc. cit.*) may have contributed to this mistaken impression.
- ¹⁰³ UNB, *Bennett Papers*, memorandum by C. E. Campbell, n.d., pp. 44109-44110.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, R. B. Bennett to C. Campbell, May 21, 1928, p. 44111.
- ¹⁰⁵ R. B. Bennett's shares in the Regina Daily Star Company were held in trust by P. H. Gordon, a Regina lawyer, and F. Somerville, a Regina Businessman. (*Ibid.*, Declaration of Trust, April 10, 1929, p. 44193.) Bennett also loaned the sum of \$50,000 to Campbell to begin operations. (*Ibid.*, R. B. Bennett to P. H. Gordon, October 2, 1928), p. 44142.
- ¹⁰⁶ QUA, *Dunning Papers*, G. M. Bell to C. A. Dunning, June 9, 1928; UNB, *Bennett Papers*, C. E. Campbell to R. B. Bennett, June 12, 1928, pp. 44119-44120.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, C. E. Campbell to T. H. Blacklock, June 20, 1928, p. 44124; F. Somerville to R. B. Bennett, August 2, 1928, pp. 44125-44126; Craick, *op. cit.*, p. 286.
- ¹⁰⁸ UNB, *Bennett Papers*, C. E. Campbell to R. B. Bennett, August 28, 1928, pp. 44130-44131.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, A. B. Gillis to R. B. Bennett, August 31, 1928, p. 44133.
- ¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, F. Somerville to R. B. Bennett, August 2, 1928, pp. 44126-44127; C. E. Campbell to R. B. Bennett, September 6, 1928, pp. 44137-44138.
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, R. B. Bennett to A. B. Gillis, September 11, 1928, p. 44140.
- ¹¹² *Ibid.*, R. B. Bennett to H. H. Stevens, December 4, 1928, p. 44147.
- ¹¹³ *Ibid.*, P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, December 21, 1928, pp. 44152-44153.
- ¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, R. B. Bennett to H. H. Stevens, December 4, 1928, p. 44147; R. B. Bennett to G. Stirling, December 4, 1928, p. 44148.
- ¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, April 11, 1929, p. 44174; P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, June 21, 1929, p. 44200.
- ¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, January 10, 1929, pp. 44155-44157; S. G. Dobson to R. B. Bennett, February 19, 1929, p. 44168.
- ¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, C. E. Campbell to P. H. Gordon, n.d., p. 44172; P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, April 20, 1929, p. 44176.
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, May 17, 1929, p. 44179; F. Somerville, P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, May 21, 1929, pp. 44190-44191; F. Somerville, P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, September 16, 1929, p. 44220. The capitalization of the Regina Daily Star Company was increased and Bennett

took an additional \$50,000 in bonds (*Ibid.*, R. B. Bennett to P. H. Gordon, July 10, 1929, p. 44205; R. B. Bennett to P. H. Gordon, October 7, 1929, p. 44222), thereby increasing the face value of his investment in the Regina paper to more than \$340,000. (*Ibid.*, Declaration of Trust, October 15, 1929, p. 44226.)

The largest operating profit recorded by the paper was \$2,588.46, for the month of May 1929. At no time between August 1928 and January 1930 was the profit in operating account sufficient to meet the monthly charge for preliminary and promotional expenses, and in each instance a net loss was recorded. By January 1930 these losses amounted to more than \$146,000. (*Ibid.*, financial statements and auditor's reports for the months ending August 31, 1928 through January 31, 1930, pp. 381126-381206.)

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, R. B. Bennett to G. Stirling, December 4, 1928, p. 44148.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to R. B. Bennett, February 9, 1929, p. 25183; P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, May 3, 1929, p. 44178.

¹²¹ Indeed, some Roman Catholic Conservatives believed that the paper was going to extremes in its reporting of the party's campaign. (*Ibid.*, A. G. MacKinnon to R. B. Bennett, May 27, 1929, pp. 25290-25291.)

¹²² *Ibid.*, F. Somerville, P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, May 21, 1929, p. 44191.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, P. H. Gordon to R. B. Bennett, June 21, 1929, p. 44200.

¹²⁴ Kesterton, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

¹²⁵ Craick, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-292.

Regina to Prince Albert by Train in 1890

We reached Regina, but made no stay there this time, going on a 250 miles journey by train to Prince Albert, arriving there on Sunday morning after a somewhat uninteresting travel through a flat prairie country of poor quality and lacking wood and water, but it is said to be better than it looks. A fire was burning for many miles as we passed on over the prairie, the railway track, stations, and the few houses to be seen being protected from the fire by what are called fireguards. This is about six or eight furrows ploughed along each side of the rail and around the houses, which prevents the fire crossing. The effect of the fire gives a very desolate, bleak, barren appearance to the country. At the various stations very large heaps of buffalo bones, collected off the prairie by Indians, and sent, I am told, to England, are to be seen, and the Indians themselves, with horses and quaint shaped carts, camping very like the old English gipsy a short distance away on the rising ground. A few herds of cattle, flocks of wild geese, ducks, an occasional wolf or fox, startled by our train (the second only, I believe, that has passed up this newly-laid line), completed the picture. Prince Albert contains about 900 inhabitants, and is very pleasantly situated on the river Saskatchewan, the surrounding scenery being very beautiful, and there are some good houses on the high ground, with the police barracks and nunnery on the hilltop.

The North-West Rebellion and Its Effects on Settlers and Settlement in the Canadian West

by *André N. Lalonde*

SEVERAL exhaustive historical studies of Louis Riel and the North-West Rebellion have been published.¹ The racial, religious, and political animosity engendered by the Rebellion and by the subsequent trial of Riel have been analyzed thoroughly in a volume written by R. E. Lamb, entitled *Thunder in the North*.² However, little or nothing has been written concerning the effects of the North-West Rebellion on settlers and settlement in the Canadian West.

While it is true that few civilians lost their lives and the great majority of settlers residing in the Canadian West suffered little tangible distress, numerous colonists experienced uncertainty, fear and anxiety during the height of the Rebellion. Simultaneously, a substantial number of settlers obtained vital funds for the sustenance of their languishing agricultural operations by selling and transporting supplies for Canadian troops. The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway as a result of the Rebellion also benefited all western settlers who, during earlier years, had suffered from isolation. Nevertheless, false rumors emanating from the Canadian prairies and sensational headlines adorning eastern Canadian and European newspapers disheartened prospective immigrants, brought settlement to a virtual halt, and dealt a damaging blow to John A. Macdonald's vision of a densely populated Canadian West.

The North-West Rebellion erupted at the end of March, 1885 when a group of Métis led by Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont clashed with Major Crozier and the North-West Mounted Police at Duck Lake. The Macdonald Government reacted swiftly and with determination; the Honourable A. P. Caron, Minister of the Militia and Defense, dispatched 4,605 militiamen to assist 500 North-West Mounted Police in crushing the Métis before the various western Indian tribes elected to join forces with Riel.³ On May 12, 1885, General Middleton, commander of the militia, routed the Métis at Batoche and on May 15, Riel surrendered. The uprising was crushed within two months.

During these two months of violence, approximately twenty-two civilians were killed. On March 26, nine Prince Albert Volunteers lost their lives during the clash at Duck Lake between the Métis and the North-West Mounted Police under the command of Superintendent Crozier.⁴ When news of the defeat of the Police at Duck Lake reached the Eagle Hills reserve, the Stonies rebelled and assassinated James Payne, their Farm Instructor, and Bernard Fremont, a rancher residing in the vicinity of the reserve, before proceeding to Battleford to join forces with Poundmaker.⁵ During the ensuing siege at Battleford, Frank A. Smart, a member of the Battleford Volunteers, "met so lamentable a death at the hand of the treacherous Indian" while on patrol.⁶ In early April, members of Chief Big Bear's tribe, smeared with war paint, walked into the small hamlet of Frog Lake where they killed the Indian Agent, Thomas Trueman Quinn; the Farm Instructor, John Dolaney; two priests, Father Fafard and Father Marchand; John C. Gowanlock, a

miller; George Dill, a storekeeper; John Williscraft, Charles Gouin, and William C. Gilchrist, employees of Gowanlock.⁷

News of Gabriel Dumont's victory at Duck Lake, the Indian uprising at Battleford, and the massacre at Frog Lake caused anxiety and fear among the settlers residing in the vicinity of Indian reserves. Everyone feared that some dire calamity would befall them. On April 9, *The Winnipeg Daily Times* published an article stating that tribes of Indians were crossing the Montana border to join the rebellion of the Métis and Indians against the white settlers. Fearing a raid by the Cree Indians, the residents of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead colony at Red Deer abandoned their farms and sought refuge in Calgary.⁸ Several homesteaders located on the Edmonton and Saskatchewan Land Company's tract at Clover Bar deserted their homes and sought safety for themselves and their stock in Fort Edmonton when rumors circulated that Indians from the surrounding area were converging on their isolated town.⁹ The residents of the Montreal and Western Land Company's colony at Kinbrae panicked when a handful of half-breeds entered the hamlet overnight and stole horses belonging to the company and the local postmaster. This event seemed to substantiate rumors that the half-breeds would raid Kinbrae within a fortnight and prompted the settlers to dispatch a wire to General Middleton: "Settlers in dread, having no protection. Colony raided by half-breeds, four horses stolen and other injuries threatened. Please send assistance at once."¹⁰

Some settlers appealed directly to Ottawa for help. The panic-stricken residents of Yorkton sent James Armstrong, the managing director of the York Farmers' Colonization Company, to the nation's capital to request protection against the Indians of the neighbouring reserves who were in a defiant mood. He was referred to A. P. Caron, Minister of the Militia and Defense, who commanded Major W. T. Watson to proceed to Yorkton at once. The latter, accompanied by Sergeant-Major G. Gardiner, left Ottawa on April 3 and reached Yorkton nine days later. Watson promptly organized a military brigade of sixty-three men, issued twenty rounds of ammunition and a rifle to each volunteer, and, with the assistance of these settlers, erected an eight foot stockade 150 feet square. As a further means of security, a ditch four feet deep and six feet wide was dug around the stockade. The Yorkton citizens' fears of an all-out offensive by the Indians of the neighbouring reserves never materialized; but the Indians, particularly those of Chief Little Bone's band, plundered settlers' homes, stole horses, slaughtered cattle, and held nightly pow-wows on the shores of Lake Yorkton.¹¹

The residents of Saskatoon experienced several anxious moments. Bordered on the south by Whitecap's Sioux tribe, on the West, although at a much greater distance, by Chief Big Bear's tribe, and threatened with extinction by the leader of the insurrectionists, Louis Riel,¹² the settlers of Saskatoon feared a union between Whitecap, Big Bear, and the Métis with themselves located in the centre of warlike activities. Their dread of the scalping knife reached its peak when sentries spotted the Sioux, feared for the warlike reputation they had acquired in the United States, advancing toward the settlement. After brief discussions with leaders of the small community, Chief Whitecap, who still commanded sufficient respect to prevent his warriors from attacking the hamlet, led his followers around the town and continued north to Batoche. Not a single settler was molested, although *The Winnipeg*

Daily Times carried an erroneous story that the settlement had been raided by the rebels who had stripped the colony of all its provisions.¹³ Saskatoon, however, was still threatened by the Métis, and the settlers were greatly relieved when General Middleton reached Clark's Crossing on April 20.¹⁴

In actuality, few people suffered bodily injuries or material losses through Indian pillaging or raids, but the circulation of wild and frightening rumors, heightened by vivid imaginations, caused considerable distress among a great number of settlers in the North-West Territories. Even after Riel's surrender, the settlers feared further trouble. In Yorkton, the colonists were angered when Major Watson disbanded his brigade of volunteers and collected, prior to his departure, all the arms and ammunition he had distributed during the height of the Rebellion. Everywhere the situation was the same. Volunteers refused to surrender their arms in order to be prepared for any eventuality. Rumors kept their fears very much alive throughout the summer and fall of 1885. The rumors were so prevalent during the summer that the Territorial Government passed an ordinance "forbidding arms and ammunition to all in the territory without a permit issued by the Lieutenant Governor".¹⁵ The purpose of the Bill was to disarm the Indians and rebels and guarantee arms to loyal men. One half-breed was reported as saying in the fall of 1885: "Last spring there was a rebellion but there would be a war."¹⁶ It was reported that several Indians and half-breeds were leaving their homes and going south to Montana to join Gabriel Dumont and Michael Dumas who would return to clear the white men out of the country.¹⁷

Rumors of Indian unrest continued to circulate throughout the winter and the summer of 1886. The Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Territories, Edgar Dewdney, suggested to John A. Macdonald on January 26, 1886, that "a flying column of military men [be] sent through the territory to calm the fever of unease".¹⁸ Even in 1887, Dewdney stated in his annual report as Commissioner of Indian Affairs that there were still murmurs of unrest and that he expected such rumors to continue for years to come.¹⁹

The circulation of wild rumors was not limited to the Canadian West. Headlines in eastern Canadian, American, and European newspapers such as "Many Blazing Homesteads", "Indians Scalping Settlers" magnified the gravity of the situation in the mind of the readers and prospective settlers. For example, some Toronto newspapers carried thrilling accounts of an engagement between the 90th Battalion of Winnipeg and the File Hill Indians in which a number of volunteers were reportedly killed. Needless to say, this engagement never took place.²⁰ Even the *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, the *Saskatchewan Herald*, and the *Regina Leader* were guilty of sensational journalism. On March 27, the *Saskatchewan Herald* published a rumor that the Sioux had attacked and taken Saskatoon. On April 16, the *Regina Leader* published a report from Medicine Hat that Indians had looted Saskatoon. On April 21, the *Manitoba Daily Free Press* carried the same story under the headline "The Saskatoon Settlement Plundered". According to this newspaper, a band of twelve Sioux Indians from Whitecap's reserve had raided Copeland's store at Saskatoon and had threatened to kill the owner. This erroneous story, which was first printed in the *Saskatchewan Herald*, and reprinted in the *Regina Leader* and the *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, appeared in practically every eastern Canadian daily newspaper.

The printing of exaggerated accounts became so prevalent that several soldiers were angered by the appearance in newspapers of erroneous lists of individuals who had died on the field of battle. They complained bitterly that their families suffered sufficient tribulations without being tried in this manner.²¹

The Liberal party's attempts to capitalize on the Rebellion by censuring Macdonald's Conservative Government for its failure to respond to the Métis' grievances kept the issue of the uprising very much alive. The trial of Louis Riel and the ensuing political agitation gave eastern Canadian and European prospective settlers the impression that the North-West Territories remained a troubled area long after the termination of the actual Rebellion.

Several residents of the Canadian West and individuals endeavouring to foster immigration to the prairies recognized at a very early date that the publication of erroneous rumors and exaggerated accounts on the Rebellion would discourage immigration. On March 25, 1885, the editor of the *Manitoba Daily Free Press* lamented:

So little is actually known of this country by the outside world that even there the best of intentions with regard to the publication of intelligence regarding the uprising, very erroneous impressions would almost necessarily be found.

Immigrants cannot be expected to come to a country which they will be taught to believe is in the throes of a rebellion backed by the tomahawk and the scalping knife of the Indian. The American and British newspapers are filled with exaggerated accounts of the Rebellion . . .

It is not hard to imagine the effect of the colored reports now circulating will have on immigration not only during the present year but until the memory of them has died out.

To counteract the sensationalism of Canadian and foreign journalists, on April 13, 1885, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba adopted a resolution, copies of which were dispatched to every post office in Canada and to the Canadian High Commissioner in England for publication in the British and European newspapers. The resolution read:

Resolved that whereas it is believed that the present troubles in the Northwest are affecting immigration to Manitoba. This House desires to place on record the fact: that there is not the slightest disturbance in any part of Manitoba and as the existing trouble is confined to the districts of Alberta and Saskatchewan, some hundreds of miles northwest of the settled portion of Manitoba; therefore, all who contemplate coming to Manitoba this Spring can do so in the most perfect safety.²²

Several settlers, who had occupied land in the summer of 1884 and gone east in the fall to prepare their family for the long trek to the Canadian West the following spring, postponed indefinitely the reoccupation of the homesteads out of fear for themselves and members of their family after reading the exaggerated accounts of the Rebellion in newspapers. In other instances, settlers who had migrated to the Canadian West in early March, 1885, and started burning the underbrush to prepare their land for plowing, returned to eastern Canada when widespread rumors of impending holocausts became too alarming. Several prospective settlers who had intended to migrate to the North-West Territories in the spring of 1885 also postponed their plans indefinitely. Of the effect of the Rebellion on prospective

settlers, S. J. Brine, agent of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company, wrote:

I regret the events of the past year which opened with the promising movement of intending settlers to Crescent Lake. The intending settlers came from Manitoba, Ontario, England, and Scotland . . .

I left Toronto on March 24, 1885 with my son, Mister Farvin and Mister Tracey in order to prepare the camp for the regular movement of settlers with their families . . .

On my return to Toronto, instead of having a large party to return west, only two were willing to go. I myself decided to move to Detroit instead of the North-West Territories and to wait for the outcome of the Rebellion.²³

The North-West Rebellion and the ensuing publicity of this event deterred immigration to the Canadian West during the entire summer of 1885. A combination of factors such as the drawing-power of the American West, world economic conditions, crop failures in the Territories, and the derogatory publicity printed on the fertility of the soil in the Canadian Prairies kept immigration at a minimum from 1881 to 1896, but the smallest number of immigrants to venture West during these fifteen years was recorded in 1885 owing to the publicity surrounding the North-West Rebellion. According to the Minister of Agriculture, John Henry Pope:

the breaking out of disturbances in the North-West, of which the most exaggerated and sensational reports were published, both in the United Kingdom and on the Continent, had a very serious effect in hindering the immigration movement. And this was particularly the case as these disturbances took place just at the time the booking season for immigrants was about to begin, and lasted during the whole of the active or spring season.²⁴

The number of immigrants who migrated to Canada and stated their intention to settle here declined to 79,160 in 1885 from a high of 133,624 in 1883 and 103,824 in 1884.²⁵

Immigration to Canada suffered as a result of the derogatory publicity surrounding the North-West Rebellion, but immigration to the Canadian prairies suffered even more. Only 21,946 individuals migrated to Manitoba and the North-West Territories in 1885—3,831 from Europe, 8,660 from the United States, and 9,455 from eastern Canada. Of that total, 14,706 were reported to have left the Canadian prairies via Emerson and Gretna, making a total increase of only 7,240 immigrants in 1885.²⁶ The immigration agent at Brandon, Thomas Bennett, lamented:

The number of immigrants arriving at this agency were [sic] less than in former years, caused, no doubt, by the reports of the Indian and half-breed uprising in the North-West.

The opinion which evidently prevailed amongst strangers, and those not acquainted with the geography of this country, was that trouble extended over the entire North-West as well as the Province of Manitoba, which might, and no doubt did, to a certain extent, cause them to change their minds in favour of another country, where their scalps would be allowed to remain undisturbed.²⁷

A. J. Baker, the government immigration agent of Qu'Appelle, echoed those sentiments:

From correspondence with delegates from Britain and other foreign countries through the year 1884, and other information received, I expected a large immigration to this district during the year 1885 — which I was led to believe would have taken place was it not that unfortunately for us, and for the immigrants as well as the country at large, the rebellion in this territory, having

broken out at the time, when many were on their way to this place, did, in consequence of such, change their destination, whilst others remained away for a time.²⁸

The Minister of the Interior, Thomas White, the managers of the various colonization companies endeavouring to promote settlement,²⁹ and several homesteaders insisted that the Rebellion was the primary cause of the decline in immigration.³⁰

The number of homestead entries declined by more than one-half in 1885 — 533,280 acres in 1884 to 249,552 acres in 1885. In addition, numerous old entries were cancelled throughout Manitoba and the North-West Territories in 1885 as illustrated by the following chart:

Agency	Homestead Entries	Cancellations
Battleford	—	—
Birtle	75	105
Calgary	137	—
Coteau	21	46
Dufferin	96	57
Edmonton	42	—
Little Saskatchewan	6	121
Prince Albert	24	3
Qu'Appelle	140	294
Souris	35	175
Swift Current	41	—
Touchwood	2	—
Turtle Mountain	122	248
Winnipeg	8	247 ³¹

The nefarious impact of the Rebellion on immigration and the distress experienced by numerous residents of the Canadian prairies were offset, to some extent, by the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the accidental discovery of summerfallowing, and the outlay of substantial sums of money by the Canadian militia throughout the Territories during the Rebellion.

Several settlers found profitable employment as guides, teamsters, linemen, and messengers during the Rebellion. Many of them suffered successive crop failures as a result of droughts and early frosts. Employment permitted them to obtain sufficient funds to continue their farming operations. Others secured a lucrative market for their surplus agricultural products. As Gerald Willoughby, a pioneer from Saskatoon wrote in his memoirs, "The Riel Rebellion proved to be a bonanza to many a settler hereabout".³² Borrowing from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, the editor of the *Qu'Appelle Vidette*, expressed similar sentiments in a poem entitled, *A Nor'-Wester's Oration on Louis Riel*.

Friends! Fellow-countrymen! Lend me your ears;
 I come to speak of Riel — not to praise him.
 The evil that he did, ye all remember;
 The good to the Northwest ye have forgot.
 Now, listen well to me. The noble Dewdney
 Hath told you that Louis is a rebel;
 If it is so, it is a serious fault.
 And if it is proved, Riel should swing.
 Here, under leave of Dewdney and the rest
 Come I to speak on Louis Riel's behalf.

He was your friend, he brought you cash.
Through him many teams were hired
The cash from which your pockets filled with bills.
When that the farmer cried, "I am undone,
My wheat is frozen", then Riel rebelled,
And saved you all. Was this not opportune?³³

Further offsetting the losses and distress experienced by the western settlers during the Rebellion, the Federal Government passed an Order in Council instituting a commission to review and, whenever deemed advisable, award monetary compensation to applicants who had suffered property losses during the Rebellion. Prior to June 30, 1886, the commission agreed to pay \$131,797.35 to claimants — \$102,791.35 to residents of Battleford, \$20,011 to residents of Duck Lake and Carlton, \$5,720 to settlers at Fort Pitt and Frog Lake, and \$3,275 to settlers at Prince Albert.³⁴

The outbreak of the North-West Rebellion proved to be a godsend for the Canadian Pacific Railway which had been wallowing in dire financial straits since the fall of 1883. In 1884, the Macdonald Government advanced \$7.5 million to the railway syndicate, but again in the spring of 1885, the railway company was drastically short of funds. "While everything hung fire, the Second Riel Rebellion broke out".³⁵ The transportation of militia units on the C.P.R. from the east to Winnipeg (except for gaps totalling a hundred miles in the road along Lake Superior where the men travelled in sleighs between rail sections) within a week gave Macdonald sufficient arguments to justify before the House of Commons the advancement of additional financial assistance to the Canadian Pacific Railway syndicate. As W. C. Van Horne, who occupied in succession the position of General Manager, Vice-President and President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, exclaimed in later years: "The company ought to erect a monument to Riel as its greatest benefactor."³⁶

The completion of the railway on November 7, 1885 removed the feeling of isolation which had been prevalent in the minds of settlers.³⁷ Eastern manufactured goods became more easily available and western farmers now had the means to have their agricultural products transported to market.

The North-West Rebellion also led accidentally to the discovery of summerfallowing. Several settlers, particularly in the Qu'Appelle Valley, left their land fallow during the summer of 1885 to take advantage of the lucrative salaries paid to teamsters during the Rebellion. During the drought which plagued the south-central portion of the prairies during the summer of 1886, several individuals realized that the fallow land yielded a better crop than neighbouring fields. This information was relayed to Angus Mackay who was appointed Superintendent of the new Dominion Experimental Farm in 1887, and by the early 1890's summerfallowing became almost universal on the plains of western Canada.³⁸

The North-West Rebellion, then, had both beneficial and detrimental effects on settlers in the Canadian West. As for settlement, which was already experiencing difficulty owing to three successive crop failures, it suffered a crippling blow which even the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway failed to remedy in the near future. Thus the North-West Rebellion, along with the depression, poor farming techniques, and the drawing-power of the United States precluded the rapid development of the Canadian West during the 1880's.

Footnotes

- ¹ G. F. G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada, a History of the Riel Rebellions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969); G. F. G. Stanley, *Louis Riel* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1963); J. K. Howard, *The Strange Empire of Louis Riel* (Toronto: Swan Publishing Company Limited, 1970); E. B. Osler, *The Man Who Had To Hang, Louis Riel* (Toronto: Longmans Green, 1961); H. Bowsfield, *Louis Riel: The Rebel and the Hero* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1971).
- ² R. E. Lamb, *Thunder in the North* (New York: Pageant Press Inc., 1957).
- ³ *Sessional Papers of Canada*, 1886, Vol. 6a (Report upon the Suppression of the Rebellion in the North-West Territories), p. 1.
- ⁴ *Sessional Papers of Canada*, 1886, Vol. 8a (Annual Report of the Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police Force), p. 97 — List of Prince Albert Volunteers killed at Duck Lake: — Capt. John Morton, Corp. William Napier, Constables Jos. Anderson, James Bakie, S. C. Elliott, Alex Fisher, Robert Middleton, Daniel A. McKenzie, Dan McPhail.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- ⁷ *Saskatchewan Herald* (Battleford), April 23, 1885.
- ⁸ *The Globe* (Toronto), April 15, 1885.
- ⁹ *Edmonton Bulletin*, April 18, 1885.
- ¹⁰ *Regina Leader*, June 16, 1885; J. C. Richards, secretary of the settlers' assembly to the editor.
- ¹¹ *Yorkton Enterprise*, July 8, 1943.
- ¹² *Sessional Papers of Canada*, 1886, Vol. 43C (Testimony of Dr. Willoughby at the trial of Louis Riel), p. 56.
- ¹³ *The Winnipeg Daily Times*, April 10, 1885.
- ¹⁴ G. Willoughby, *Retracing the Old Trail* (Saskatoon: n.p. 1928), p. 31 ff.
- ¹⁵ J. B. D. Larmour, "Edgar Dewdney, Commissioner of Indian Affairs and Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Territories, 1879-1885" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus, 1969), p. 202.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 218, as quoted from the Dewdney Papers, Vol. VI, H. Langevin to Dewdney, October 20, 1885, pp. 1421.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 218.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 221.
- ¹⁹ *Sessional Papers of Canada*, 1888, Vol. 13 (Report of the Department of Indian Affairs), p. 188.
- ²⁰ *Manitoba Daily Free Press* (Winnipeg), April 9, 1885.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, April 8, 1885.
- ²² *Journal of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba*, April 13, 1885, p. 43.
- ²³ *Department of the Interior, Dominion Lands Branch*, File No. 43012, Vol. 3, S. J. Brine, agent for the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company, to John T. Moore, manager of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company, January 4, 1886.
- ²⁴ *Sessional Papers of Canada*, 1886, Vol. 10 (Report of the Minister of Agriculture), p. xxvii.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xxiv.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 83.
- ²⁹ For further information on Colonization Companies, refer to the following article: André Lalonde, "Colonization Companies in the 1880's", *Saskatchewan History* (Autumn 1971), Vol. XXIV, No. 3, p. 101-114.
- ³⁰ *Sessional Papers of Canada*, 1886, Vol. 8 (Department of the Interior Annual Report), p. xi; *Regina Leader*, June 16, 1885, Letter to the editor from J. C. Richards, a settler from Kinbrae; *Department of the Interior, Dominion Lands Branch*, File No. 42767, Vol. I, Memorandum from the Edmonton and Saskatchewan Land Company to the Minister of the Interior; File No. 41201, A. T. Drummond, manager of the Montreal and Western Land Company to the Minister of the Interior, April 15, 1885. P.A.C.
- ³¹ *Sessional Papers of Canada*, 1886, Vol. 8, Part I (Annual Report of the Minister of the Interior), p. 6. Disillusionment with the results obtained in farming probably played some role in the number of cancellations of homesteads in 1885 as stated by A. S. Morton, *History of Prairie Settlement* (Toronto: Macmillan Co., 1938), p. 84.
- ³² Willoughby, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- ³³ *Qu'Appelle Vidette* (Indian Head), July 30, 1885.
- ³⁴ Arlean MacPherson, *The Battlefords, a History* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1967), p. 105.
- ³⁵ J. Lorne McDougall, *Canadian Pacific, A Brief History* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1968), p. 61.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 61.
- ³⁷ *Sessional Papers of Canada*, 1886, Vol. 8, Part I (Annual Report of the Minister of the Interior), p. 15; 1886, Vol. 10 (Annual Report of the Minister of Agriculture), p. xxvii.
- ³⁸ A. R. Turner, "W. R. Motherwell: The Emergence of a Farm Leader" *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XI, No. 3, 1958, pp. 94-103.

Recollections and Reminiscences

An English School Marm in Saskatchewan

by *Theresa Goodwin*

In the year 1912, Theresa Goodwin left England to teach in Saskatchewan. She found the train journey unpleasant and arrived with some relief at her initial destination, the city of Regina. In her letters home she described Regina as a "nice little place", but found the destruction caused by the cyclone earlier in the year appalling. Eventually with the assistance of an agency, Miss Goodwin secured a teaching position at Chaplin at a salary of \$750.00 a year. The following reminiscences describes some of her experiences as a teacher at Chaplin and Duval.

The Editor

AS THE train neared Chaplin, the prairie seemed to stretch on and on forever, treeless, desolate and uninhabited. The rich black earth became clouded with a white deposit. Later I discovered there were a few shacks, but they were built of timber or old railway ties and unpainted, so they blended into the landscape and were invisible from the train.

A short distance away on the left was a long, dull grey, dead, looking lake. "If I were you," a friendly fellow passenger said, "I'd forget to get out." It certainly was an uninviting place. I got out and stood. A few men in dirty overalls were propping up the wall of the depot. After a while, a middle-aged man lounged towards me. "You the new School Marm?" he asked. "Yes", I said. "I'm the school secretary," he informed me. I discovered later, he was also the school treasurer. He disappeared over the prairie with the school funds. "We're glad you're from the old country. I'm a Scot. See this stone? It's a moonstone — brings luck," he continued, pointing to a white stone attached to his stetson. "There ain't anywhere fer you ter board but the section house. You won't like it but no one else will have yer." He led me to a clean looking house near the depot. A woman, whom I knew later as Mrs. Blanchard, stood in the doorway. I was a prim English school teacher with a strict sex-segregated schooling, young, straight from home and with well defined rules of social behavior. She studied me, then said. "You'd better come in but yer won't like it." "Frances", she shouted to a freckled-faced girl about six years old, "take the School Marm to her room." There was a bed with a bright coloured patchwork coverlet, a chair, a tin basin on an iron stand and that was all, except for a large stove pipe which linked the floor to the ceiling. "The bed'll hold yer," said Frances. "Big Bill laid on it." She disappeared. All was very clean. I looked out of the window. Beyond the depot the prairie stretched unbroken to the far horizon. I could see the great curve of the earth. I became homesick — really and truly homesick. Presently there was a bang on the pipe. Mrs. Blanchard shouted up, "If yer don't come down yer won't get nothen." I went down. The Section gang were seated at a long table, at the head of which sat a very big man. I guessed he was the "Big Bill" who had tested my bed. He smiled at me kindly. "Sit there," he said. Mrs. Blanchard came in with a huge dish of chunks of beef. She followed with a mountainous dish of potatoes. A dish of bread followed. There was butter on the

table and a pot of toothpicks which all used after meals. Each man plunged his fork in each dish until his plate was full, and then set to work. I gazed. Big Bill smiled, "If yer don't help yerself yer won't get nothen." I plunged my fork in a dish and all was well. I was learning. The following is an extract from a letter I wrote at that time:

The meals are very odd. There is no serving. One just helps oneself. They eat bread and butter with everything even to roast beef hot. They drink with every meal — green stuff which I do not like, but my landlady makes me English black tea. We have no tea as a meal but meat supper at six. The meat is cut off in chunks and is nearly always tough. My landlady makes the most delicious bread, and queer, but nice cakes too. They eat stewed sliced apples or peaches at nearly every meal, and cake with them! They also eat fried potatoes at every meal, so all meals seem alike. I am paying 5 dollars per week for board and lodging, washing extra, which is not dear considering the price of food.

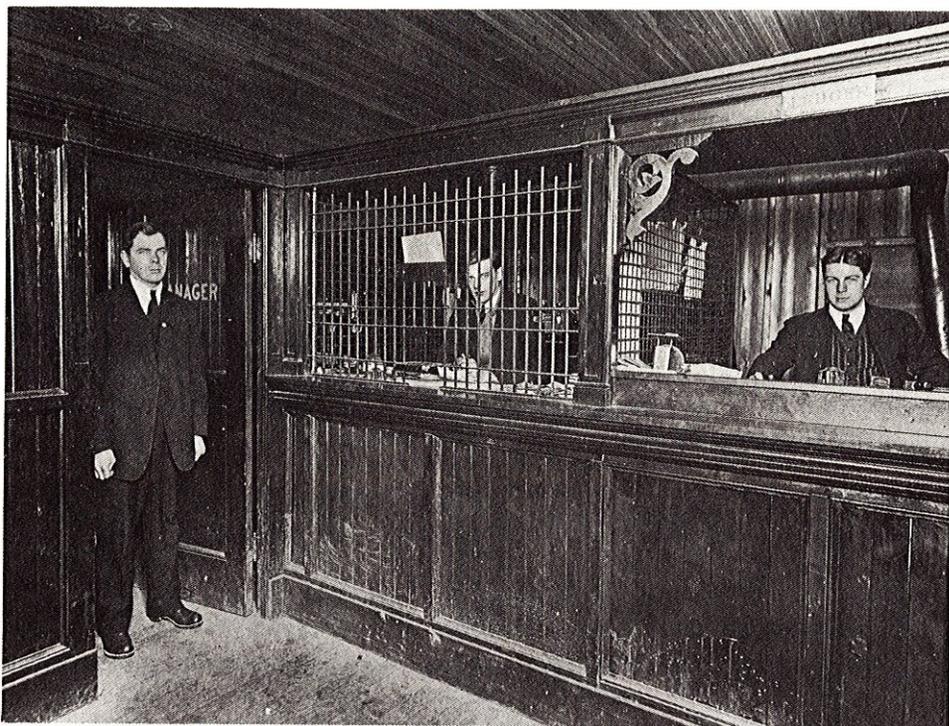
Mrs. B. also made delicious corn bread, doughnuts, raisin pies, pumpkin pies and cracker pies, I was certainly very fortunate to board at the Section House.

The school building was a delight and so were the children. There was no trouble with discipline. The teacher was responsible for the behavior of the children in school, of course, but also on their way to and from school, which I thought unfair. The duties of the children stated in the Department's regulations were:

to attend regularly and punctually and in case of absence or tardiness, to give the teacher a reasonable excuse; to be provided with authorized textbooks and other school requisites; to be clean and tidy in person and clothes; to be diligent in studies, kind and courteous to classmates and obedient to the teacher; to conform to the rules of the school and to submit to such discipline as would be exercised by a kind, firm and judicious parent.

They did keep all the rules except the first. I tried, I really did try, to reach the high standard laid down, hopefully, for the teacher. The children did not attend regularly or send excuses. If they were wanted on the farm, they stayed away. According to my letters I had twenty-five children on the books, but never more than fourteen at school and usually only nine when I arrived which was the first week in September, but after the harvest I had thirty-five and all attending.

The metric system was taught in schools. I realized what a lot of time was spent in English schools teaching complicated arithmetic based on our systems of measurements. Needlework was not taught, yet all the women seemed to be clever needlewomen. They made their own clothes and their girls', and always looked smart. The girls all wore big bows of brightly coloured ribbon on the end of their plaits or on top, if the plaits were bound round their heads. It was a very attractive fashion. Their plaits were bound on top at a very early age making them look older than English children. A study of a book of ethics took the place of the English Bible. The curriculum was set by the Department in Regina. As a teacher in a strange land I found this a great help. One day the Inspector called. I had been given warning because he had spent the night in Chaplin. I was nervous. "There is no need to be frightened," said Mrs. Blanchard. "There is a man teacher at Smithfield. He picked up the Inspector and threw him out." I had no need to have been nervous. He was most kind and helpful. There was a reading course for teachers which was excellent. Three books were prescribed every year. They were expected to read at least two, and send an essay on them to the Education Department. I



Bank at Duval, 1913.

found the books very stimulating and certainly kept a rural teacher informed about new ideas in education. There was also an annual conference in Regina, but I did not find that helpful. We were entertained by a choir of children, but the singing sounded harsh and nasal. Marie Lloyd's sister sang Music Hall songs to us. A Canadian teacher who was with me thought it was an insult. The lectures did not seem as stimulating as the prescribed books. However, it was an enjoyable outing with tea at the Eutopia restaurant and a theatre visit though not at the expense of the Department!

Christmas approached. My salary was in arrears. Neil, the secretary treasurer had "gone over the prairie" with the school funds. I discovered the expression, "gone over the prairie" corresponded to the English Cockney "ees 'opt it". I heard it a number of times during my travels. I was paid by the Board of Trustees for Chaplin. The Department for Education for Saskatchewan contributed 85 cents for each day the school was opened, and a number of residents were liable to be assessed for school purposes, but I do not know details. The system gave the parents an intimate interest in the school, but the teacher's salary was paid erratically. In England my salary was paid on the first of the month without fail and I balanced my budget accordingly, but not so here. I was often left high and dry, but I think many people were too, in those days. The children never went for holidays; no child had seen the sea. The only stretch of water they had seen was that forbidding Lake Chaplin. No child had seen a tree taller than a few feet. I asked

them once, in a geography lesson, how high they thought a really tall tree would be. They looked vacant, then one bright boy said, "As tall as you, Miss." One family did go to Moose Jaw for one day. They brought me back a beaded cushion of Indian work.

I applied for the school at Chaplin because it was near a Depot on the C.P.R.; I applied for the school at Duval because of its name — "Duval in the Last Mountain Valley". It had a poetic lilt: Claud Duval — a highwayman-adventure: "The Last Mountain Valley" — mysterious, inviting. I spent six very happy months there.

When I arrived, I did not see an expanse of unbroken prairie, but fairly flat land broken here and there by clumps of small trees, a few ponds with clear water and a rise called "The Mountain". It was a very small mountain. An old man told me that before the railway was built the place was a marsh. I thought perhaps some of the ponds were formed through drainage. Now there were many homesteads, some with two or three sections and all looking prosperous. One man farmed a thousand acres for a syndicate. The majority of the people were of British ancestry. There were also two German families and nearby a community from Prince Edward Island. I was often taken for short rides in a buggy. Once we passed a pond where beavers were at work and once I saw a large animal moving through some trees and was told it was a timber wolf. I visited and was warmly welcomed, at many farms.

I boarded at the hotel, a timber building three storeys high with the bar and kitchen on the ground floor, the parlour and several small bedrooms on the second floor, and more above. It was very well managed by the proprietress, Mrs. Robinson. Mrs. Robinson was a good looking woman, always well dressed. She tailored her suits herself.

Mrs. Robinson loved a social life and would arrange outings for her permanent guests. During the winter we went occasionally to dances at Govan. Some of the dancers wore conventional evening dress. No one chewed gum. It was the ride home I loved and remember vividly — the sleigh speeding smoothly over the snow, the fire flies dancing, the sleigh bells ringing and overhead those brilliantly, beautiful stars. It was not always perfect. The horses would sometimes miss the trail and down into the snow would go a horse and a runner. I do not remember the sleigh overturning but it was often at a precarious angle. On one occasion, both horses stepped up to their neck in snow, but there happened to be four hefty outdoor type of men on the sleigh and all was soon put right. Several times I went to Strasburg by sleigh to see curling or hockey on ice or a show. Once we were warned by weather-wise folk that a blizzard was imminent, but we took no notice. The temperature was 16° below zero, but I had been loaned a cooncoat, and my companion wore a sheepskin, so snug in rugs, we had a good ride there, but when we left, snow was falling and it was much colder. The snow thickened until we were completely blinded. It reminded me of walking through a London peasoup fog, it tasted cleaner though. Twice the horses left the trail. There were not four hefty men in the sleigh this time, but a young teller at the Duval bank and myself. The snow was not yet very deep. I dragged the horses onto the trail and kept them moving which was essential for their circulation at that temperature, while my companion with difficulty righted the heavy sleigh. We arrived back eventually.

In the summer we went for picnics to a lake a few miles away. We travelled by a car which Mrs. Robinson hired from the livery barn. It was the only car in Duval.

There had been none in Chaplin. The water in the lake was deep enough for swimming and it was equipped with a diving board.

I have a vivid memory of the spring thaw. It was sudden and quick. One day all was as usual: the next morning every man was shovelling the rapidly melting snow into every dip and hollow. By evening the Hotel looked moated. Some dips became long-lasting valuable ponds. The next day the men were working on that rich damp soil.

In letters home I wrote:

We are having lovely weather. The prairie is covered with crocuses as thickly as our fields are with buttercups and daisies. They seem to spring up in one night. The men are seeding here now. You would not believe they could get the earth ready in so short a time. They keep the children away an awful lot to help. I think it is a shame. I have not been paid for the last month which I also think is a shame. The weather is glorious now.

'Buggys' they are the traps, carriages or whatever you like to call them are all out now and no more sleighs. It is so warm, one can wear the thinnest of summerwear and yet there is a lot of snow still lying around. The animals are all waking. There are hundreds of little gophers and everyone is out shooting them. The wild ducks and geese are back. The badgers are up and the rabbits are changing colour, for they are white in winter and brown in summer. We had a terrible wind storm which smashed one of the hotel windows and a door, but it dried up the water and the country is grand.

In August I was recalled to England owing to a family tragedy. During that year in Saskatchewan, I learnt to love the prairie for its wide open spaces gave a wonderful sense of freedom and its dry air left every movement light and quick, untrammelled by the weight of cloud I had been used to in England, and like a sailor on the sea my eyesight became sharpened by the distances, and my back straightened. But above all, I took home with me a memory of the courage of the lonely women, who battled against incredible hardships and disasters such as fire, plagues of grasshoppers, drought and so on and kept on battling, confident of the future. But the future brought the depression! Courage needed again and confidence.

Cumberland House Two Hundred Years of History

by Mary Helen Richards

THE OLDEST continuously occupied settlement west of Ontario is Cumberland house, a small community in the Saskatchewan river delta. It was founded by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1774 as its first inland post.

The fort was built on the north-east shore of Cumberland Island, a flat stretch of marsh and rocky soil isolated by two channels that connect Cumberland Lake with the Saskatchewan River. With water routes extending from this point north to the Churchill and the Athabasca, west to the buffalo plains and the mountains, and east toward both Hudson Bay and Montreal, the fort was well placed to meet the competition of the fur traders from Quebec.

After considering the reports of some forty-four expeditions inland¹ and the recommendations of Andrew Graham, in charge at York Fort, the London Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company chose the approximate site. Samuel Hearne, back from his explorations of the Coppermine River, was appointed to lead a party inland and establish a house "at or near Basquiau"² (The Pas).

Handicapped by insufficient canoes to carry the twelve men and their supplies, the group was dispersed among six parties of Indians who were returning to the interior, these departing from York Fort on different days and by separate routes. Hearne's section left on the 23rd of June, in canoes so deeply laden that "56 lb. of shott and ball and 2 Pecks of Oatmeal" were sent back to the fort.³

Arriving on the Saskatchewan in August, Hearne spent four weeks while waiting for his men, in examining possible sites. On Saturday, September 3rd, he selected an area on the south shore of Pine Island (Cumberland) Lake that he believed to be "more comodious for Drawing the Indians to Trade as well as for Provisions than Basquiau, it laying in the Middle between three Tribes".⁴

The men worked twelve hours a day throughout the winter, despite short rations, to build a combination lodging and storehouse. The effort was more difficult because of the absence of the three more experienced servants, Matthew Cocking, Isaac Batt and Charles Isham, who had been taken by their Indian guides to Good Spirit Lake, 160 miles to the south. With them were all the medicines and the pitsaw.⁵

The shortage of food and supplies, of experienced men and their tools, and of Company boats and crew could have sabotaged the founding of this first island post. It did survive but remained nameless for its first year. The Company referred to it as "Basquea", and Hearne used "Pine Island Lake" until after his return from York Fort in August, 1775, when he named the post "Cumberland House".⁶ No reason for the choice was given; it probably was named with the same casualness as were later forts in the western interior.

No Indians lived on the island before the post was built. Bands of Swampy Cree were on the Sturgeon River, and in The Pas and Moose Lake region; Saulteaux dwelt to the south, near the Pasquia Hills. But once the post was established it became a gathering place for families from their wintering grounds, and a place to wait for the canoes to return from the bay. The Swampy Cree has long

been associated with the Company, living at the bay as Home Indians, trading there or being supplied by Indian middlemen with guns, ammunition and traps. The Company for many years were dependent on the Indians for food and fur, and for labourers and canoemen. In turn, the natives came to look on the fort "as a refuge in days of stress, and a place of shelter in sickness and old age."⁷

Such a refuge was Cumberland House when, in 1782, smallpox infected most of the Indians in the region. The factor, William Tomison, made the fort into a hospital, bringing in the sick, and assigning the healthy to cut wood, catch fish and bury the dead. The survivors, many of them women and children unable to fend for themselves, were given rations.

It was a disaster for the fur trade. "My Debtors are all Dead," reported Tomison, and he sent his men to the Indian tents to collect the beaver robes.⁸

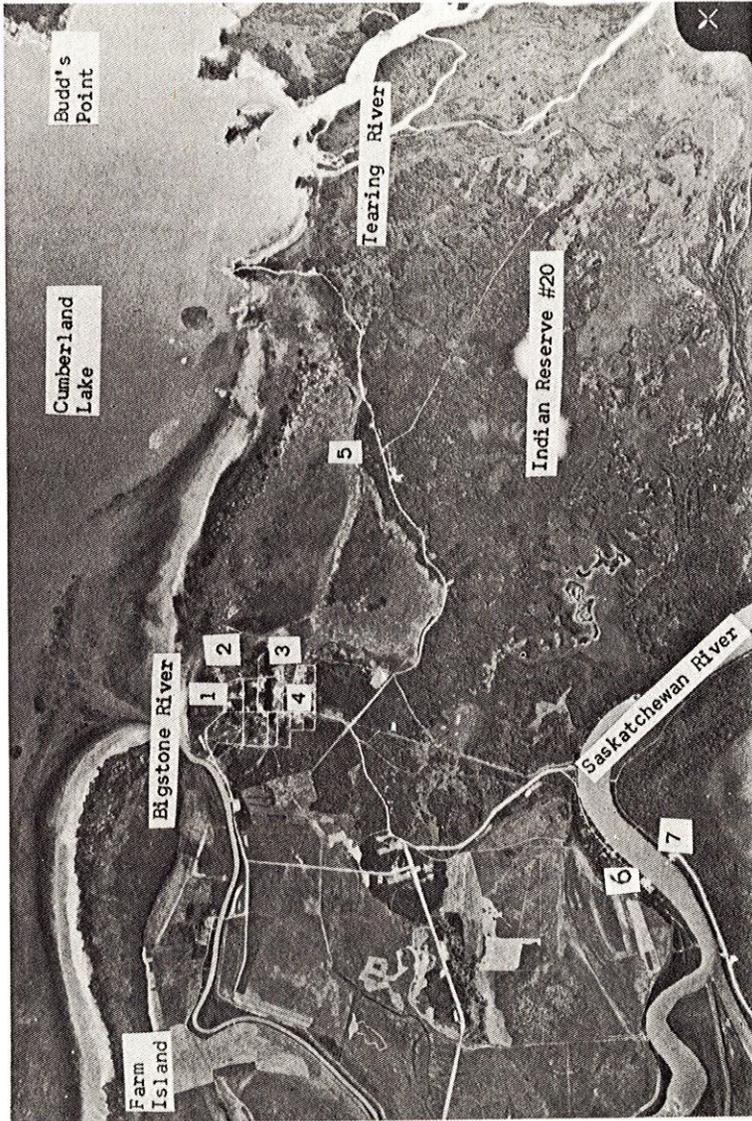
But the post continued in operation, growing into a vital storage and transshipment base. During its first twenty years, the site became bare of firewood, and periodically was subjected to flooding. At a more desirable location on high ground across the little bay, a fort was built of squared logs covered with boards. By May of 1794, the palisades were in place, the flagstaff set up, and the men moved onto the site where the Company buildings are today.⁹

A few yards to the west were the fort and garden of the rival North West Company, constructed about the same time, and also called Fort Cumberland, or The Depot. Used more for storage of goods than as a trading centre, there was little rivalry between the two houses until the period of open warfare in 1820. Captain John Franklin and his Arctic exploring party were careful to maintain a tactful neutrality while they enjoyed the hospitality of both forts during the winter of 1819-1820.¹⁰

After the union of the two factions in 1821, the Company post settled into its role as an administration and storage centre. As a part of the Saskatchewan District, it was expected to build boats, and procure snowshoes, portage straps, and pemmican for the passing brigades.¹¹ The boatbuilders lived with their families on the Saskatchewan River.¹² Here was the point at which bags of dried meat and pemmican from Fort Carlton and Edmonton were off-loaded and carried along a trail winding between the marshes to the warehouse at the fort. Fleming, in August of 1858, arriving there after having pushed his birchbark canoe over the wetlands beside the portage, described this warehouse as a very large edifice, containing extensive machinery for pressing and packing furs, and for making pemmican. The post's importance as a way station was pointed up by Fleming's observation of the arrival and departure of three brigades of boats within two days.¹³

The Church of England missions on the Saskatchewan provided other nuclei of settlement. Financed in part by the legacy of James Leith, in charge at Cumberland from 1822 to 1829, a chapel was built at The Pas in 1840, and later at the site of Hearne's post near the Indian camping grounds. In 1862, the Reverend Thomas Cook ministered to the twenty families of Christian Indians on the island, as well as to the Company servants and their dependents. Of the eighty-one persons living at the fort, twenty-three were of school age and studied in a house provided by the Company. A school was also taught by the missionary for the Indian children and their mothers, all learning the Cree Syllabics.¹⁴

After the Red River uprising of 1869, some of the Métis who moved west



1. Site of North West Company fort
2. Hudson's Bay Company buildings
3. Roman Catholic Church
4. Site of Revillon Freres

Note that embayment marked by sites 2 and 3 on the west, and site 5 on the east has been filled in with alluvium; indeed, the whole lake is shallowing. Thus Hearne's little bay is now a willow flat. Map adapted from an air photo of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. Scale approximately 1 inch = 4500 feet.

Cumberland Island

5. Possible site of Hearne's post, former site of Anglican mission
6. Pemmanic Portage
7. Ferry to Highway No. 123

settled at Cumberland House.¹⁵ For those who were Roman Catholic, a mission was established in 1877 by Father M. Paquette, O.M.I. on a parcel of land at the south-east corner of Company property. After Father Ovide Charlebois (later the first Bishop of Keewatin) succeeded Father Paquette, he built a small log school and a large church in 1892; these are standing today. However, there were too few students to fill both mission schools and so the one public school was taught by both Protestant and Catholic missionaries and, later, by religious and lay teachers, a practice that has been continued.¹⁶

With the adherence of the Cumberland band to Treaty Number Five in 1876, most of the island area, with the exception of Company land, became part of the reserve. Included were the grounds of the Métis houses around the Catholic mission. A petition, submitted to the government by Father Charlebois and the settlers¹⁷ resulted in 640 acres adjacent to the church being withdrawn from the reserve, the Indians eventually being granted equivalent land at Budd's Point and Pine Bluff.

Inherent in the terms of the treaty was the turning away from hunting and trapping to a settled life as farmers; yet the low, wet acres on Cumberland Island were unsuitable for other than garden patches. Because there was a growing scarcity of fur and game animals, the Indians did make some attempt at farming but the crops were flooded out. They then petitioned for better agricultural land near Fort a la Corne:

If their request is not granted, they say the government must supply them with food, as long as the sun courses around the world, for they cannot endure to listen to their children crying with hunger.¹⁸

Land was subsequently allocated to the Cumberland band and the families wishing to farm moved to the new reserve.

The remaining Indians chose to live "almost entirely by means of the net, the trap and the gun",¹⁹ a precarious existence for as Factor Macfarlane reported in 1891, the collection of "country provisions" was the smallest on record. Because of low water, the muskrats were dispersed among the reeds and grasses, beyond reach of canoe and gun. The scarcities were accompanied by much sickness and death.²⁰

The coming of the steamboats on the Saskatchewan in 1875 provided an alternative to the hunting economy, undoubtedly a factor in stemming further Indian and Métis emigration. Men worked as porters and crew in the summer, and in winter cut the thousands of cords of wood needed to fire the boilers. The arrival of the railway at Prince Albert, and the shallowing of the steamboat channels west of Cumberland Lake, put an end to the carrying of supplies by the larger vessels, from Lake Winnipeg up-river to Carlton and Edmonton. River boats were operated as far north as Sturgeon Landing and west to Prince Albert until 1925.²¹ As well, a large quantity of freight for Pelican Narrows, Stanley, and Lac du Brochet was carried by canoe and York boat via the Sturgeon Weir route.²² Barges loaded with copper ore were floated down from Sturgeon Landing to the railhead at The Pas from 1917 to 1925. Thus, all through these years, there was work on boats for some Cumberland men.

The stability of the Cumberland population was maintained by a number of families who had resided there since the 1860's and before. The departure of those Métis and Indians who had taken money scrip and moved up-river was offset by an

influx of Métis from St. Laurent, Manitoba, who came in the early 1900's to work for the Armstrong-Gimli Fisheries.²³ After the end of the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly in 1869, independent traders also settled at Cumberland House; Shannon and Company of Winnipeg were in business there by 1886, and Revillon Freres of Paris maintained a store and warehouse south of the Catholic mission from 1906²⁴ to around 1923.

Revillon hired as clerk H. S. M. Kemp who later described the settlement as it was in 1912:²⁵

... the forest of slender spruce trees sheltering the native houses; the Company's post in the traditional open square; the low-growing juniper bushes; the soft grey of the caribou moss.

Luta Munday, the wife of the North West Mounted Police constable at Cumberland in 1907, also wrote about the fort with its old stockade still enclosing the grounds, the six o'clock bell signalling the shutting of the gates, and the two cannon beside the flagstaff that were fired, with some degree of caution, on state occasions.²⁶

It was Mrs. Munday and her friend Ruth Gray who returned to Cumberland during the winter of 1918-1919 to volunteer their services during the influenza epidemic. They worked in twelve-hour shifts, nursing the sick who were huddled, for warmth, two or three families to a house. Few escaped the illness and many died. Boards were torn from porches to make coffins which had to be stored in a warehouse for lack of grave-diggers.²⁷

Nor did Cumberland escape the effects of the Depression years and the drought. As river levels fell, the marshes dried up, destroying the muskrats' habitat. Other fur-bearing animals were wiped out by the invasion of White trappers from the drought-stricken prairies.²⁸ To restore the fur potential, the federal Department of Mines and Resources in 1939 began a conservation program in the 160,000 acre delta region, building canals, dams and dykes to regulate the water flow to the rat marshes. Waterfowl and beaver, as well as muskrat, showed a marked increase.²⁹

Trapping, however, declined steadily as a means of livelihood after World War II. J. E. M. Kew, in his report on Cumberland House in 1960, noted that the settlement realized only twenty-two per cent of its income from trapping and fishing, while forty-six per cent came from casual labour or self-employment, and the remainder from sources such as family allowances and social assistance. It was apparent that the population, as well as its needs, had outstripped the resource capacity of the region.³⁰

There had been a rapid increase in the birthrate matched by a declining infant and maternal mortality due to better health care. A public health nurse had been assigned to the community since 1929 and an outpost hospital, built with the assistance of the residents, was in operation in 1940. An intensified program of preventive medicine, including inoculations, resulted in the settlement at last being free of the periodic epidemics that had decimated the population.³¹

Migration of families into Cumberland House contributed to the growth as satellite settlements were being abandoned. Out of ten encampments and settlements occupied thirty years ago, including Pine Bluff, Budd's Point, Birch River,

the Barrier, and the reserve itself, only Pemmican Portage was still occupied in 1970.

A better school was one reason for consolidation of settlement. In 1944, the provincial government at last assumed full responsibility for the operation of Charlebois School. Until then it had been a problem of small government grants, reluctant local taxpayers, and inadequate facilities, along with teachers' complaints of unpaid salaries and poor attendance.³² Absenteeism dropped with the paying of family allowances which was conditional on school attendance, and with women and children remaining at home while the men visited traplines during the winter. The assigning of Treaty children to provincial schools in 1952³³ necessitated building a larger school, with classrooms added in later years to accommodate kindergarten to grade nine. The opening of an all-weather road to the west in 1966 allowed for busing the senior students to secondary schools in Nipawin and Prince Albert.

Better schools and a road were only part of the provincial government's belated contributions to Cumberland House. Immediately after World War II, a four-point program was proposed for the settlement: better educational facilities; a sawmill to produce lumber for houses; muskrat development; and the establishment of an agricultural economy.

The farm project began with the purchase of land across the Bigstone River together with a herd of beef and dairy cattle and ended when a major flood inundated Farm Island in 1948. The completion of the Squaw Rapids dam in 1963 has helped control the flooding and since then a large beef herd enterprise has employed up to thirty residents and trained several men who then have started their own livestock farms.³⁴ The marshes, however, were left for muskrat, game birds and moose, an attraction for hunters who in turn provide work for local outfitters and guides.

No program thus far has made the 1,000 residents self-sufficient and recently there has been an out-migration to better job opportunities.³⁵ Families, however, often return during the holidays to visit relatives, thus repeating the tradition of the summer encampments.

One uninterrupted enterprise has been the Hudson's Bay Company, in operation ever since Hearne pitched his tent beside the lake. Governor George Simpson accurately predicted its long life when, in 1828, he said it would continue despite low fur yields because of the "economical footing on which its business is conducted."³⁶ Sentiment was never a factor in its long association with the delta. This was evident in 1966 when it locked up the little white store near the seventy year old powder house, and moved into a new retail establishment called The Bay and situated on the main street across from the Canadian Legion and north of the Co-op store. Its business is assured as long as the residents remain.

As for the people of Cumberland House, they share with the rest of Northern Saskatchewan in the uncertain future of communities in transition. Meanwhile they can be justly proud of an unique and colorful history.

Footnotes

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- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 113.
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- ⁶ Tyrrell, *op. cit.*, p. 175.
- ⁷ Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 824.
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BOOK REVIEWS

CANADA 1896-1921: A NATION TRANSFORMED, (The Canadian Centenary Series). By Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974. 412 + xiv pp. Illus. \$12.50.

When Gerald Craig's *Upper Canada: the Formative Years* inaugurated The Canadian Centenary Series eleven years ago, students of Canadian history were excited by the high quality of Craig's work. Unfortunately, the next volume in the Series, Oleson's *Early Voyages and Northern Approaches*, disappointed most readers. And many of the volumes published since 1963 have been mediocre, or, at least, less than was expected of their distinguished authors. Happily, as the first decade of the Series' existence drew to a close, the appearance of Zaslow's *The Opening of the Canadian North* and Trudel's *The Beginnings of New France* gave cause for renewed hope among despairing collectors and readers of the Centenary Series. The latest volume, Craig Brown's and Ramsay Cook's *Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed*, brings the assurance that the high level Trudel and Zaslow reached has been maintained, and that a synthesis as thorough and convincing as was the study by Craig eleven years ago has been achieved.

Brown's and Cook's success is not attributable to any inherent simplicity in their task; they had to survey a complicated era for which secondary studies are only beginning to appear. During the Laurier-Borden years the Canadian nation was transformed through a two-fold process of maturation; extensive development in the West, and intensive social and economic reorganization in the old provinces. Both these complicated stories the authors recount with great skill, in spare, lucid prose sparkling with gems of ironical humour. The development of the West is clearly outlined, with particularly good explanations of the Doukhobors (63-5) and the Ukrainians (65-76); and the political problems arising from the opening of the West — nativism, French-Canadian opposition, and western regionalism — are skilfully handled. At the same time, the authors described and analyse the more complicated process of industrialization and urbanization in the central provinces in admirable fashion. They not only explain what happened with great clarity, but they also relate the process of growth and complexity to the intellectual criticism, labour organization, and moral reform movements of the new Canada. Throughout the study Professors Brown and Cook combine their own extensive research in the primary sources with the fruits of unpublished research of the past two decades to produce a treatise at once scholarly and thorough.

Inevitably, some criticisms have to be made. The section on the Autonomy Bills controversy (75-9) smudges the question of Laurier's motives in framing the educational provisions. Had the authors made use of Evelyn Eager's analysis of the incident, they might have given a clearer answer to the question of whether this episode showed Sir Wilfrid to be a knave or a fool. The failure to treat the Klondike rush (indeed, the omission of both "Klondike" and "Yukon" from the Index), save in its relation to the Alaska Boundary question leaves a gap. While there are relatively few observable typographical errors, the Index is seriously deficient. One wonders why "prostitution" has an entry, but "Presbyterian" (or "Methodist", or "Roman Catholic", for that matter) do not. Sir William, not

Cawthra Mulock was Postmaster General (407). Why, in spite of the excellent section on the origins of the Ontario School controversy (235-6), is "Regulation 17" not in the Index? And surely the editors could have seen to it that Sir Wilfrid Laurier's name was spelled correctly in the Index (406).

These minor criticisms aside, this is an excellent book. The preface describes the study as "an attempt at synthesis", and as "a progress report on Canadian Scholarship, our own and that of others". *A Nation Transformed* is what its authors describe, and far more: it is an outstanding piece of historical scholarship and a boon to students of the Laurier-Borden era. Buy it; you'll like it.

J. R. Miller.

VOICES OF THE PLAINS CREE. By Edward Ahenakew. Edited by Ruth M. Buck. Toronto, McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1973. 204 pp. illus. \$7.95.

My own recollections of Canon Ahenakew are that of a kindly old gentleman, soft spoken with a slight Cree accent, and with wisdom gained through years of work with his people. Living in a neat log cabin on the shores of Sandy Lake, he seemed in many ways like a man who was born too soon; his knowledge, his attitudes, and his education set him apart as a unique person among the Crees.

Voices of the Plains Cree reinforces this feeling. Canon Ahenakew, who wrote this manuscript in 1923, did so at a time when many of his people were illiterate and many more had only a smattering of English. Yet, not only did he understand the need to preserve oral history, but he foresaw the role that the Indians would need to play if they were to become masters of their own house. Many predictions made by the Canon are only just now coming true.

This book, written while Canon Ahenakew was convalescing from a serious illness, is actually two books in one. The first part consists of a series of adventure and cultural stories, mostly told to him by Thunderchild, a leading chief. The second part is a semi-fictional account based upon the experiences of Old Keyam, a man of great wisdom who, from this reviewer's viewpoint, appears to be the author himself.

The Thunderchild stories are excellent. They tell of battles with the Blackfoot, of buffalo hunts, and of religious events. Many deal with the chief's own youthful experiences while others provide some of the best accounts of Plains Cree life that one can find anywhere. They are told with simplicity and clarity, in a style which easily draws the reader into the past. Thunderchild must have been a good storyteller and there is no doubt that Canon Ahenakew was an able writer.

The story of Old Keyam, on the other hand, provides a fascinating picture of Cree life and values in the 1920's. Delving into the past, then moving quickly into the present (1923), Old Keyam stands between two worlds. He has obviously taken the best of both, so that his lectures on old time morality and law stand side by side with discourses on the need for the Crees to organize and to take the future into their own hands. Like Canon Ahenakew, Old Keyam was interested in political action as a means of gaining Indian rights, so his views on the League of Indians are actually the Canon's own opinions. The League was one of the first such action groups in Canada, so these views are important in understanding how the long fight

for independence began. Not until twenty years later did such Indian organizations gain any attention or make any progress, either with the Indian Department or with the Canadian public.

This book, which was ably edited by Ruth M. Buck, is worth reading, not just because Canon Ahenakew was a fine person. Rather, it is one of the best works in print on early Cree life. It is also one of the few books written about prairie Indians in the Twentieth Century. On both counts, it stands as one of the best books that this reviewer has seen in a long time.

It is just too bad that the Canon never lived to see it in print. He died in 1961. A scholar, school teacher and missionary, he must have led a lonely life. Who else among his people had the same kind of education? Who else had, at so early a date, foreseen so clearly the future role of his people? And who else among the Indians of the 1920's could have written a manuscript of such quality?

He was an amazing man, and this book is a fitting tribute to his work.

Hugh A. Dempsey.

ACROSS THE MEDICINE LINE. By C. Frank Turner. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973. pp. 269, illust., \$8.95. SITTING BULL, THE YEARS IN CANADA. By Grant MacEwan. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1973. pp. 221, illust., \$8.95.

Sitting Bull won the battle of the Little Big Horn but lost the war. It was obvious to him that the United States would not allow Custer's defeat to go unavenged, nor would they reverse their Indian policy. Consequently, in the year following Sitting Bull's victory, he was forced to seek refuge in Canada. These two books are concerned with the years which Sitting Bull and his followers spent in Canada.

In 1877, the Sioux settled in the Wood Mountain area near the international boundary presenting the Dominion Government with an unwelcome responsibility. Canada felt it was in her best interests to see Sitting Bull return to the United States. The Canadian authorities feared that Sitting Bull would use his sanctuary in Canada as a base from which to raid settlements south of the border. This would certainly have provoked a strong reaction in the United States and created tensions between the two countries. It was also feared that Sitting Bull's presence would antagonize Western Canadian Indians who were caught in a hopeless struggle for food; a struggle which the Sioux only made more intense. In Ottawa, the prospect of Canadian assistance to American Indians resident in Canada was an unwelcome one.

The responsibility for persuading Sitting Bull to return to the United States was handed over to the North West Mounted Police, in particular Major Walsh, the Superintendent at Wood Mountain post. Sitting Bull's return to the United States in 1881 was however, effected more by the fact that the Sioux were starving than through the force of Canadian arguments.

This reviewer found little that could be recommended in either of these books about Sitting Bull. MacEwan's narrative is marred by a persistent emphasis on events which had little connection with the question of Sitting Bull. For example, the first portion of the book is more concerned with the origin of the North West

Mounted Police and with their trek West than with Sitting Bull. A further example of this is the unnecessary length of the descriptions of American Indian policy. MacEwan's work also abounds in historical "ifs" which serve little purpose in the narrative.

Turner's book can be faulted mainly by his neglect to provide footnotes. Since the book is mainly written in dialogue form, footnotes are essential in verifying the contents. Further, the book does not possess an index. These two factors make this work of almost negligible value to any serious student of Western Canadian history.

One area which could have been explored at greater length in both books is the diplomatic manoeuvring which occurred between the United States, Great Britain and Canada. This would have provided an insight into Canadian thinking vis à vis the United States, Indians and Western Canada. Neither author is particularly analytical about the events narrated in his book. Both books include an interesting series of photographs of the principal people involved in the event.

D. Wetherall.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES TO 1953, 2nd edition. By B. Peel, University of Toronto Press, 1973. Pp. 780. \$45.00.

In 1956 when the first edition of the Bibliography was published it was recognized as an important contribution to the field of bibliography and immediately became an indispensable reference work for the prairie provinces. There were 2769 entries in the first edition and it was followed in 1963 by a supplement that added 475 entries. This new edition brings the total number of entries up to over 4500. The entries are arranged in chronological order and there are subject and author indexes which add greatly to the value of the work. There is nothing that compares to this bibliography and there is no question but that the new edition will be welcomed by everyone working in this specialized area.

The *Bibliography* is of necessity selective in many respects. The author has made this fact clear and indicated the selections that he has had to make. The first one is that the work is restricted, with a few exceptions, to publications that appeared in print prior to 1953. The reader will not find in this volume a listing of all government publications from or about the prairie provinces although this important source of research is not entirely ignored. It has been impossible to include all serial publications or publications of political parties and other organizations that are available in this bibliography. In fact, not all authors writing about the prairie provinces are cited. In most cases the author indicates where a copy of the publication listed can be found but this should not be taken to mean that it cannot also be found in other libraries or archives. It also appears from the published list of libraries, collections and other sources cited that Peel has been unable to examine all possible repositories including some in the prairie provinces. It is obvious that anyone using this bibliography or indeed any other similar work should be aware of the selections the author has had to make in compiling his entries. Peel's *Bibliography* is not, nor is it intended to be, a complete and definitive listing of everything published on the prairie provinces. It is nevertheless, a valuable con-

tribution to prairie studies and perhaps it is not too early to express the hope that the work will be continued and that there will be further editions of this important reference work.

D. H. Bocking.

Notes on Books Received

BUFFALO HORN VALLEY. By Myrtle G. Moorhouse. Regina: Banting Publishers, 1973. Pp. 45. Illus. \$3.00.

The author came west with her parents who settled south of Ponteix in 1910. These reminiscences describe her recollections of pioneer experiences as a girl growing up on her parents' farm. She also tells of her later experiences of farming during the depression years. In many of its aspects the story is a familiar one but as with all pioneer experiences, these are unique experiences and new insights which add to our understanding of life on the prairies.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE DIOCESE OF SASKATCHEWAN OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA. By W. F. Payton. Prince Albert: Diocese of Saskatchewan. 175 pp. Map and Illus.

This brief history of the Diocese of Saskatchewan was written for the 100th anniversary of the diocese. Actually, the decision to create the Diocese of Saskatchewan was taken at a meeting of the synod of the Diocese of Rupert's Land in January, 1873 but it was not until May, 1974 that McLean was consecrated as the first bishop. Over the past hundred years many changes have taken place and these are described in this history. Attention is also given to the many dedicated clergy and lay people who have served the diocese during this period. This is not a definitive analytical history of the Anglican church in Western Canada. It is as its author intended it to be — a popular history chronicling the important events in the life of the diocese over the past one hundred years. Archdeacon Payton's book is a well written and interesting account of an important period in the history of the church.

ORAL HISTORY: BASIC TECHNIQUES. Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature. \$1.00.

Oral history, as a new and ever-expanding field of historical research, has fast become "in vogue". However, many people are unacquainted with the techniques necessary to produce a good taped interview. Therefore, a how-to-do-it booklet, *Oral History: Basic Techniques* has been published recently as a guide for those interested. The research behind the oral history program, the pre-interview session, the actual taped interview, the outlining, storage and utilization of the tapes are all explained in this small twenty-paged publication. There is also a note on different types of equipment that can be used.

For anyone interested in *Oral History: Basic Techniques* copies are available from Heritage Inventory, Manitoba Museum of Man & Nature, 190 Rupert Ave., Winnipeg, Man. Canada. R3B 0N2.

Notes and Comments

We regret to have to report that Mr. Allan R. Turner, Provincial Archivist since 1962 has left Saskatchewan to accept a similar appointment in British Columbia. A well known and respected authority on the history of Saskatchewan Mr. Turner's contributions will be missed in historical circles in this province but we wish him well in his new appointment.

The Honorable Ed. Tchorzewski has been appointed a member of the Saskatchewan Archives Board replacing the Honorable Elwood Cowley.

Mr. D. H. Bocking has been named Acting Provincial Archivist replacing Mr. A. R. Turner.

Mr. D'Arcy Hande has joined the staff of the Saskatchewan Archives Board as an Archivist in the Saskatoon Office.

Contributors

J. W. Brennan has been engaged in graduate studies at the University of Alberta and is now lecturing in history at the University of Regina.

André N. Lalonde is an Associate Professor of History, University of Regina.

Theresa Goodwin (Mrs. T. Bibbings) returned to England in 1913 and lives there now.

Mary Helen Richards is a Saskatoon resident who has done a great deal of research on the history of Cumberland House.

J. R. Miller is an Assistant Professor of History, University of Saskatchewan.

Hugh A. Dempsey of the Glenbow Alberta Institute, Calgary, is editor of the *Alberta Historical Review*.

D. Wetherall is a graduate student at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

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