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- * "Hail Province of Saskatchewan"
- * Saskatchewan Sudetendeutsche
- * Beauval: An Historic Sketch

SASKATCHEWAN HISTORY

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"HAIL PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN"

"Hail Province of Saskatchewan" is the headline *The Leader* (Regina) chose for its feature story in the September 6, 1905 edition of the newspaper. The story described the ceremonies and celebrations that marked the formal inauguration of the Province of Saskatchewan on September 4, 1905. The main ceremonies, of course, took place in Regina the interim and soon to be permanent capital of the new province. Judging from newspaper accounts there were few events in other centers of the province to mark the occasion. It seems fitting in this the 75th anniversary year to look back to see how the new province was welcomed into confederation. What follows are excerpts from *The Leader* story which we hope will recapture in some measure for our readers the way the citizens of Saskatchewan welcomed provincial status.

The Editor

THE great, the long-expected and much-prepared-for day has come and gone, and amidst much pomp and ceremonial and boundless popular enthusiasm Saskatchewan has taken her place in the confederation of Provinces that constitute the Dominion of Canada.

All day Saturday, bands of workmen, re-inforced by a small army of volunteers, were busy far into the night putting the finishing touches to the fitting preparation of Regina for the ceremony of September the fourth. Sunday dawned with the city in gala array and its hotels already thronged with those who had come to view the ceremonies. The decorations had been prepared upon the most elaborate scale, both those of a public nature and those due to private enterprise. Between Broad Street and Scarth Street on South Railway Street, four great arches had been prepared, artistically built up of golden grain, both wheat and oats, and evergreens that the generosity of the city of Prince Albert had supplied for the occasion. Starting at Broad Street and working westward, the arches bore the following inscriptions: "World's Granary," "North-West Forever," "Saskatchewan," and "God Save the King." The places of business along the route of the procession were, almost without exception, profusely and artistically decorated with flags of all sizes, bunting, heraldic and other devices. One of the most elaborately prepared buildings was the Michaelist Block, the home of the Regina Trading Co., and containing the offices of the late Territorial Government. Tiny vertical masts had been erected upon the parapet of the building, from which streamers flowed and to which festoons of tri-colored bunting were attached. The decorations of this building were not, however, confined to the exterior, an elaborate and amusing tableau having been prepared in one of the windows, showing the infant "Saskatchewan" in a baby carriage with a bottle of "Scott's Emulsion" by its side, and the portraits of the late Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Hon. F. W. G. Haultain and Walter Scott, M.P., placed around it and directions to "Watch the Baby Grow." From Broad Street to Scarth Street South Railway Street was a mass of gaily colored bunting, every building being decorated with more or less elaboration. In other parts of the city also, both in the business and residential sections, decorations had been carried out, though, while most of the humblest dwellings of the city hung out their tribute in respect for the occasion, some of the houses of people from whom a great deal might have been reasonably expected were absolutely devoid of everything in the shape of special preparations. The schools and public buildings were all gaily bedecked with flags and bunting and upon the brickwork of the High School the

words "Peace and Progress" had been inscribed. "Peace," indeed, seemed everywhere a prominent word, coupled generally with the words "progress and prosperity," seeming to indicate the direction towards which the eyes of the people of the new province were turned.

About 11:30 a.m. the special train with the 90th Regiment from Winnipeg steamed into the station amid the cheers of the big crowd waiting to receive them. With practically no delay the Regiment detrained and were marched to the camp that had been prepared for them at the Exhibition Grounds.

Church Parade

In the afternoon the Regiment attended a church parade in Victoria Park, at which it was estimated that over three thousand people were present. The service, which was conducted by the Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Church of England ministers, will long be remembered by all those who were present at it.

...
In the evening the principal streets of the city were thronged with sight-seers, viewing the decorations and illuminations. All the churches of the city were crowded to the doors and special sermons suited to the occasion were preached. In Victoria Park the Band of the 90th Regiment and the Brandon Band played sacred selections to an immense gathering.

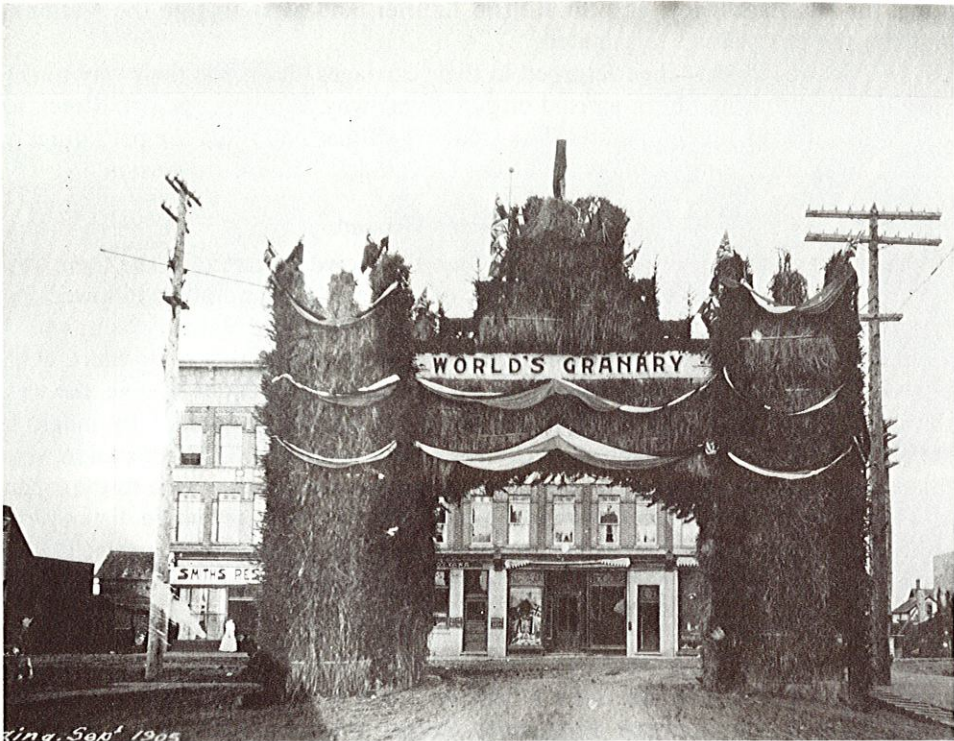
September 4th

Monday morning broke clear and fine, with a fresh breeze fluttering out the innumerable flags that flew in every direction above the city. From early dawn the special excursion trains from the north, south, east and west began to [arrive] . . . and by nine o'clock the greatest crowd ever met within Regina was thronging the sidewalks and roadways. The air was full of music, played by the various bands in different portions of the town. Among the bands present were the following: 90th Regiment, Neepawa, Brandon City Band, Wolseley Silver Band, Rosthern, Indian Industrial School, Regina Citizens' Band and Cox's Drum and Fife Band, all of which gave their services gratuitously for the occasion.

Children's Parade

At nine o'clock, in accordance with the official programme prepared for the occasion the children of the various city schools, numbering some seven or eight hundred, assembled at their appointed places, and those from the Gratton [Separate School] and High Schools joining those of the Public School, all started on their march towards Victoria Park. Walking four abreast, the girls in white and the boys with blue caps and blue sashes, each waving a Canadian flag, they presented what was without doubt the prettiest and at the same time the most imposing spectacle of the whole day. . . . After almost circling the city, the procession swept into Victoria Park, marching in admirably orderly array to the bandstand in front of which they were drawn up with almost military precision. . . .

The members of the Governor-General's party having taken up positions on the band stand the children proceeded to sing "Canada, The Land of The Maple" and "The Maple Leaf Forever," waving their hundreds of flags in the air as they sang. The effect was beautiful in the extreme and elicited the applause of those upon the stand and of the thousands of spectators massed around the children. . . . [There followed a brief speech by the Governor-General] . . . Cheers were then given for the



Decorative arch "World's Granary," Regina, September 4, 1905.

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Military Service, Victoria Park, September 3, 1905.

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King, for His Excellency, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and after singing the National Anthem the proceedings terminated.

The vice-regal party then returned to their carriages and made their way to the viewing stand that had been erected on South Railway St., facing Scarth Street, to watch the monster general parade. The great crowd that had filled the park quickly melted away, following in the wake of the Government House procession. . . .

To the Exhibition Grounds

No sooner had the procession passed than the crowds began to make their way towards the scene of the great central event of the day. Large numbers followed the vice-regal cavalcade by road, both on foot and in rigs of every description, whilst thousands took advantage of the 15 minutes service of trains run by the C.P.R. between the grounds and the city. Within an incredibly short space of time, the vast throng that had filled the streets of the city were transferred almost by magic it seemed. The great grand-stand, that had been much enlarged for the occasion, was filled to the limit of its capacity, presenting a veritable sea of faces towards the arena in which the military review was to take place, while for a considerable distance on either side immense crowds gathered to get a glimpse of the imposing spectacle. The review was watched by the Governor General's party from their carriages. . . .

Swearing in Ceremony

The ceremony of the swearing in of the Lieutenant-Governor of Saskatchewan was then proceeded with. Mr. John J. McGee, Clerk of the Privy Council, read the Minute appointing Amedee Emmanuel Forget Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, after which Lieutenant Governor Forget's commission was read the oath of office administered. As soon as the ceremony was concluded the booming of seven guns, followed by a feu de joi by the Ninetieth Regiment and this repeated three times made up royal salute. Three lusty cheers from the boys of the Ninetieth followed and were taken up by the immense crowd present.

Civic Address to Lieut-Governor

The new Lieutenant Governor was then greeted by the citizens of Regina, . . . [an] address being read by the city Clerk. . . .

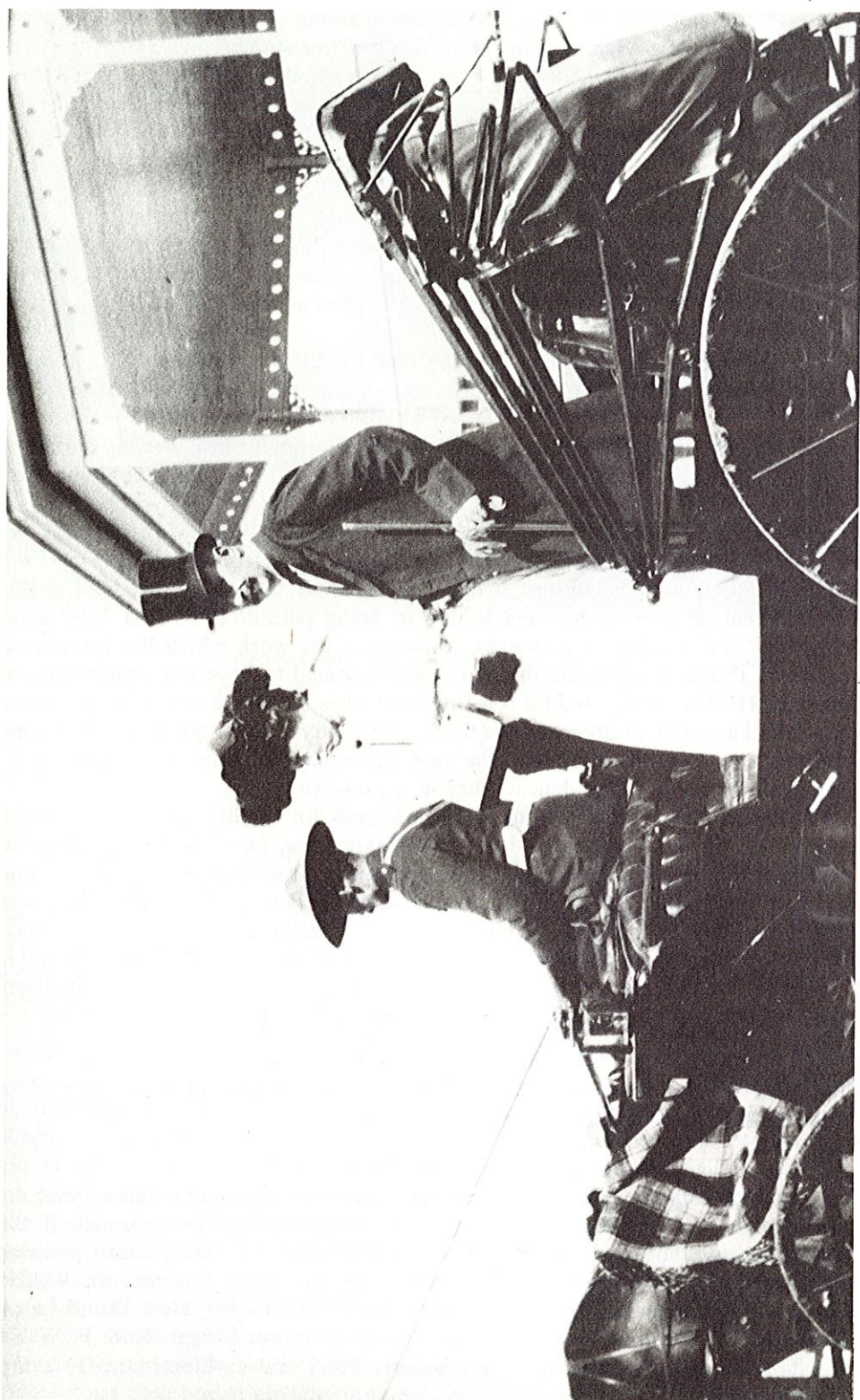
The Lieutenant-Governor's Reply

His Honor Lieutenant Governor Forget received a very warm, almost affectionate greeting as he rose to respond to the civic address. His honor spoke as follows:

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen —

I accept your address, congratulating me on my appointment as first Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan, and I thank you most sincerely, both for the feelings which prompted it as well as for the very graceful form you have given to your congratulations.

You have been kind enough to refer, in complimentary terms, to the various positions of trust and responsibilities which I held since I came to this country. While I do not believe that I quite deserve all you have said in this connection, it is certainly for me, a matter of gratification to find that my services, public and others, insignificant as they have been, have not passed unnoticed. But whether I have served my country in a manner deserving of attention or not, I am glad, to-day, to have had the good fortune of having been one of the small group of men sent to this



Earl and Lady Grey in Victoria Park, Regina, September 4, 1905.

country in the fall of 1876, charged with the mission of laying the foundation of an organized form of government for these vast Territories. The interesting function, itself, in which we are now engaged, brings me back to that early period, in recalling to my memory a small gathering at Livingstone, on Swan River, near the old Hudson's Bay Fort Pelly, on the 26th November of the year just mentioned, when it was my privilege to witness the swearing-in of my esteemed, distinguished and venerable friend, Honorable David Laird, as the first Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Territories. This pleasant recollection, rendered to me yet more agreeable by the presence here to-day of the honorable gentleman himself is not, however, I am sorry to remark, without a shade of sadness, in the thought that he and I are, I believe, the only survivors at the present imposing celebration, who participated in that historic event.

From that day to this, a pioneer in this country, I have lived as a North-Wester, with the privilege of having always been associated with the administration of the Territories and in being closely connected with the growth of the institutions around which we now live. . . . I have seen the country grow from its birth, develop during its years of infancy, progress through youth, and to-day, with you, I have the intense satisfaction to see it giving birth to two fine provinces, which will, in time, take first rank, by their importance and wealth, in that galaxy of provinces constituting the Dominion of Canada. Therefore, I, not unnaturally, feel proud to have had my name connected with this history, to have played a part, though ever so small, in this development, and to be honored to-day in being permitted, as first Lieutenant Governor of one of these provinces, to continue the work which has become so congenial to me. I appreciate the honor, and am glad to have this opportunity of thanking His Excellency, and his constitutional advisors, for conferring it upon me. I may add that, while I fully recognize the responsibility of that high office, yet I hope and trust I shall not be wanting in the necessary energy to successfully carry out its important duties, however delicate they may prove to be. . . .

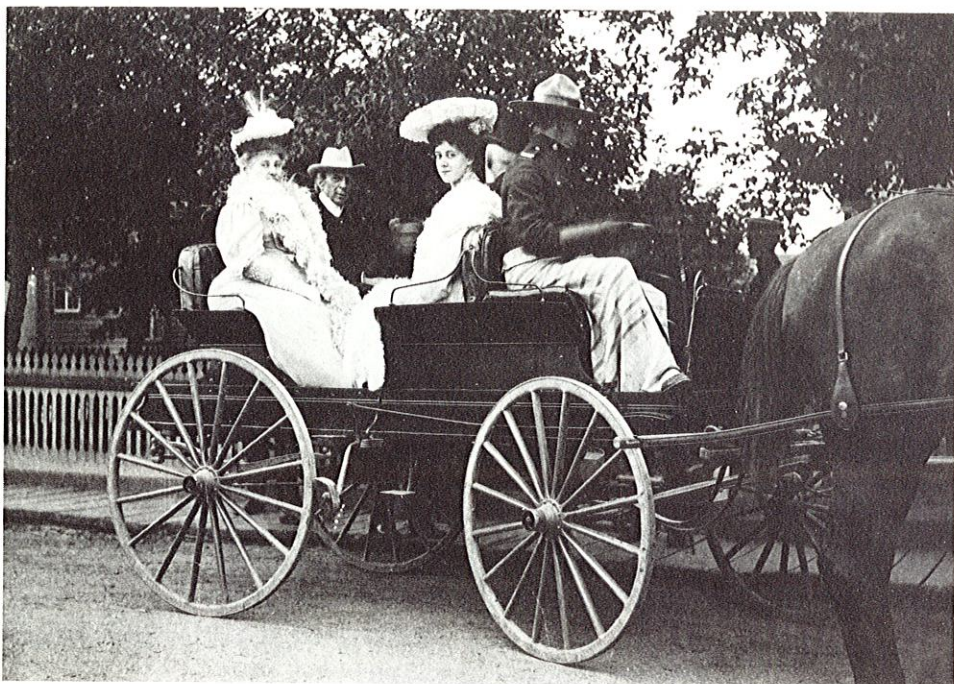
As the immense crowd began to disperse calls for "Laurier, Laurier" became imperative. Sir Wilfrid disregarded the call as long as he could but the demand becoming louder and the people refusing to leave their seats until Sir Wilfrid came forward the Premier finally did so. The roar of applause which greeted him was deafening. Sir Wilfrid said: "Fellow citizens, citizens of the Province of Saskatchewan, if we pride ourselves upon anything we citizens of a British country, it is respect for the law, and the law is that I am not to speak at this time." Loud cheers and laughter greeted the Premier's speech and the crowd dispersed.

Luncheon at Government House

At the close of the swearing-in there was a division, the ladies trooping off to Government House, where a luncheon was given. . . .

Civic Luncheon

The city's guests of the male sex wended their way to the city hall wh[ere] the official civic luncheon was served. The hall was most artistically decorated, all the windows being darkened and the electric lights turned on. Mayor Laird presided and seated at the right were His Excellency, the Governor General, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Major General Sir George French, Sir Gilbert Parker, Hon. David Laird, Chief Justice Sifton, and on his left Lieutenant-Governor Forget, Hon. F. W. G. Haultain, Hon. Wm. Paterson, Commissioner Perry and ex-Lieutenant-Governor Mackintosh. . . .



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Inauguration Ceremonies. Passengers in the carriage are l. to r. Lady Laurier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Miss Marie Mount, possibly the Hon. W. Patterson.

Sports Programme

The immense crowds that had witnessed the morning's ceremonies seemed hardly to have left the Exhibition Grounds when fresh crowds began to arrive bent upon taking in the afternoon's programme of sports and long before the hour set down for the sports to begin, the great grandstand was crowded to its utmost capacity and the rails on either side of the stand were lined with a vast concourse of expectant people. . . .

The programme was eminently suited to a country noted for its fine horsemanship and splendid horses, consisting as it did of exercises by a picked squad of sixteen of the most skilful riders of the Mounted Police under the leadership of Riding-Master Church. For close upon three-quarters of an hour, to the music of the Regina Citizens' Band, they executed the many intricacies of one of the best musical rides ever seen in the North-West, performing the various difficult evolutions with a precision and brilliancy that elicited round after round of enthusiastic applause from the spectators and deservedly won the praise of the interested occupants of the royal pavilion. Starting with comparatively simple exercises they gradually worked up to those of a more complicated character, until at the close they finished up with a series of movements that held the great crowd spellbound. As the grand finale to this ride, the riders with a sweep formed an extended semi-circle in front of the grandstand and at the word of command every horse fell to the ground while the riders stood each one at his horse's side. . . .



*Inauguration ceremonies, probably the Royal North-West Mounted Police Musical Ride,
Exhibition grounds, Regina, September 4, 1905.*

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Lacrosse Match

While one crowd was watching the sports at the Exhibition Grounds, another immense gathering filled the Railway Park Athletic Grounds to see the lacrosse match between Regina and Brandon. The Regina team was the same as recently won distinction by their tour of the West when they engaged Medicine Hat, Nelson, Lethbridge, Fernie and Cranbrook without sustaining a single defeat. The afternoon's game was marked by close and exciting play throughout and in the course of it some remarkably fine combination work was witnessed. Between two teams there seemed to be absolutely nothing to choose and the final result of 4-4 seemed to be a fitting termination to one of the finest games of lacrosse ever witnessed in the city.

Display of Fireworks

Darkness had hardly covered the city when the heavy booming of aerial artillery announced the commencement of the fireworks. For over an hour before the commencement of the pyrotechnic display people had been gathering in and around Victoria Park until at the time that the first loud detonation rang out a crowd numbering anywhere from five thousand to ten thousand people had assembled.

The artillery was followed at intervals by four fire balloons, one of which was distinguished by its exceptionally long "trailer" of over 120 feet in length, which in the course of its flight, changed colour no less than four times. After the balloons came the magical illumination of the park with prismatic lights, the effect of which was at once extremely beautiful and weird, showing in its varying hues the thousands of upturned, expectant faces. Next followed a furious fusilage of dome

rockets and display of bombshells, which in turn gave place to a diamond and box wheel. A gigantic portrait of Earl Grey was received with a ringing round of cheers from the assembled multitude, as was the motto "God Bless Our New Provinces" by which it was followed.

The next item upon the programme was perhaps one of the most effective of the whole display, consisting of the Golconda Cascades, in appearance a dazzling Niagara of silver fire. More rockets and aerial pieces was followed by the portrait of Hon. F. W. G. Haultain, who in turn gave place to the "Terrace of Fountains and Poppies." Next came rockets with floating festoons, some of which measured 130 feet in length, the flight of which through the night gave a wonderfully beautiful impression. Lastly appeared the portrait of the King, received by tumultuous cheering and saluted by a flight of electric shells of surpassing beauty. Then, all too soon for the entranced crowds, was seen the word "Good-night" and the finest display of fireworks ever seen in Western Canada came to a finish. The whole programme, which was under the personal superintendence of Mr. T. W. Hand of the Hand Fireworks Company, reflected the greatest credit upon those responsible for it, many of the principal effects having been specially prepared for the occasion and being seen for the first time in the Dominion. The fireworks over, the crowds rapidly dispersed, making their way towards the business portion of the city where the illuminations were in full progress.

Grand Illuminations

At dusk the whole of South Railway Street from Broad Street to Scarth Street, not to mention other portions of the city, became one dazzling mass of light, almost blinding in its brilliancy. . . .

The Inaugural Ball

No more fitting climax to the celebration could have been arranged for than the grand inaugural ball at the Auditorium rink in the evening. At the moment the Ball was opened by Their Excellencies the scene was brilliant and long to be remembered. The rink itself had been converted into an extremely handsome hall, a score of arc lamps and hundreds of incandescent lamps made the building bright as noon-day, while at either end electric mottos added to the brilliancy of the scene. Over the entrance burned the words "God Save the King," while at the opposite end in the supper room flashed "Confederation" in a half circle, and below it "Alberta and Saskatchewan." Hundreds of yards of bunting took away all appearance of barrenness in the huge structure, and the curved arches supporting the roof, hidden as they were by sheaves of wheat and evergreen bedecked with miniature flags, presented a most attractive appearance. . . .

The dance in progress was beautiful beyond description. The many beautiful dresses worn by the ladies, the brilliant scarlet of the R.N.W.M.P. uniforms, the sombre hue of the 90th Regiment uniform, and the dress suits of the gentlemen made a varied and ever changing picture which was enjoyed as keenly by the spectators as the dance itself was by those participating in it. . . .

The Ball came to an end shortly after two o'clock and the great celebration came to end, having been a most successful one.

SASKATCHEWAN'S SUDETENDEUTSCHE: THE ANTI-NAZI GERMANS OF ST. WALBURG

By Jonathan Wagner

ON September 30, 1938, Hitler won British and French approval for his plan of transferring the so-called Sudetenland section of Czechoslovakia to Germany.¹ The Munich Agreement, which formalized the German dictator's victory, took effect on the next day. This shockingly callous and abrupt abandonment of the Czechoslovak Republic by the western powers immediately placed anti-Nazis residing in the Sudetenland in grave danger. Many chose to flee their homeland to avoid capture by the occupying Nazi forces. In the next few months some of these "last free Germans from the heart of Europe"² made their way to Canada. Nearly half of the refugees who emigrated at that time settled in Saskatchewan.

As a group, Saskatchewan's Sudeten Germans left their homeland for basically the same reason. With the exception of the small number of Jewish members among their ranks who fled before the introduction of Nazi racial policies, most of the Sudetens emigrated because they feared the implications of their past association with the Sudeten German Social Democratic Party. For example, among Saskatchewan's Sudetens could be found contributors to the party newspapers, socialist union functionaries, Social Democratic youth group leaders, and outspoken members of the *Republikanische Wehr (R.W.)*, the Social Democratic Party's militant defense organization.³ Because they had been so actively involved in the party, the emigrants were oftentimes the most obvious socialists in their Sudetenland home-towns or local districts.

In the time just prior to Munich when the Sudeten German pro-Nazi forces stepped up their campaign of terror and intimidation, the situation of the socialist opposition worsened dramatically. The Sudeten German Social Democratic Party, the most successful of the democratic parties which had "worked for a solution of the German problem within the framework of the Czechoslovak constitution"⁴ was subjected to intense Nazi wrath — even more so than the traditional ideological opponents, the communists or the national enemies, the Czechs.⁵ The Nazis branded the social democrats traitors to the German *Volk*, "enemies of their own German flesh and blood."⁶ The more prominent social democrats quickly became "marked men."⁷ The concentration camp or the firing squad, the Nazis insisted, were the just deserts for the leaders of such an infamous movement.

Although the economic crisis plus the stepped-up pressure of the Nazis caused some membership decline, the Sudeten German Social Democratic Party apparatus and leadership remained intact throughout the pre-Munich period. Indeed as the Nazi terror increased, the party leadership steeled its resolve to resist Hitler's

supporters. If civil war resulted, they were determined to "go down fighting."⁸ Before September 1938, the party functionaries did not consider the possibility of flight seriously.⁹ Among other things, it was decided that a discussion of flight would only weaken the morale of the rank and file.¹⁰ Thus when the Sudetenland was handed over to Hitler, the Sudeten German Social Democratic leaders were totally unprepared for the consequences. In the few hours provided them to leave their homes and to move eastward into the unoccupied areas of Czechoslovakia, they managed to salvage only those belongings which they could carry with them. Munich made them not only a homeless, but also a destitute lot, resented by the Czechs amongst whom they had taken refuge as possible pretexts for further demands from Hitler.¹¹

Ironically, the solution to this untenable situation came from Great Britain. In early October 1938 a movement began among prominent private English citizens and members of the Labour Party to save the Sudeten German socialists.¹² The publicity of this crusade plus the on-going tragedy of the refugees (the Czechs had begun sending German socialists back into the Nazi-occupied Sudetenland) finally prompted the Chamberlain government to act. It was decided not only to grant temporary asylum for refugees in Great Britain but also to provide the financial means which would enable the victims of Munich to immigrate overseas. In January 1939, the British government with French assistance provided a rehabilitation loan of eight million pounds to the Czechoslovak Republic. At the same time the Czechs received an outright gift of another four million pounds. This latter sum was specifically allocated for the solution of the refugee problem through emigration.¹³

Several months before the British gift was finalized the Canadian High Commissioner in London proposed that Canada receive some of the refugees.¹⁴ In the first week of November 1938, F. C. Blair, the Director of the Immigration Branch, Department of Mines and Resources, took action on the Commissioner's proposal. He dispatched officials of the Canadian National Railway's and Canadian Pacific Railway's colonization departments to Europe to "ascertain what number of fully experienced and partly experienced farmers and gardeners were available"¹⁵ among the refugees. These officials reported back that, although some of the Sudetens had had agricultural experience, the overwhelming majority were industrial types.¹⁶ While this was transpiring, representatives of the refugees sailed to Canada, taking their case directly to Ottawa. Their delegation¹⁷ convinced the Canadian government that despite the refugees' industrial background the Sudetens "would be suitable for settlement on the land here."¹⁸ Ottawa agreed to accept 3500 refugees. The only outstanding issue remained the problem of how to finance the immigration.

After some hard reckoning, the immigration branch officials together with the representatives of the railroads, which were charged with the task of transporting and settling the Sudetens, worked out a mutually satisfactory financial arrangement. By the end of December 1938, it had been decided that the total cost of the immigration would be born by the Czechoslovak Republic utilizing those funds about to be provided by the British government. More specifically, a sum of \$1500 plus transportation costs was allotted for each family. A limited number of single men were to receive £200 or \$886. Furthermore, it was agreed that the "individual families may not claim all or any part of the \$1500. . . . The control of the money will therefore remain with the Dominion government and it is proposed to handle it

through the Comptroller of the Treasury and will be made available to the Railways on our requisition."¹⁹ Indeed, only on acceptance of this latter condition did the CPR and CNR agree to take charge of the settlement of the refugees.²⁰

The first ships carrying Sudetens to Canada left England at the beginning of April 1939. Over the next four months more than a thousand refugees in groups of ten to twenty families on seventeen different ocean liners made their way to safety in this country. The Nazis occupation of the rest of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 prevented the immigration of the additional 2500 persons that Ottawa had agreed to take. The two railroads divided the refugees nearly equally, with the CPR looking after 152 families and 37 single men and the CNR 148 families and 34 unmarried men. To make supervision more efficient and easier, the railroads chose to settle their Sudetens as close together as possible. The CPR located their charges in British Columbia's Peace River district near Tupper; the CNR established their families in and around St. Walburg.²¹

The CNR's Sudetens travelled by train to Saskatchewan in several groups spaced out over the spring and summer of 1939.²² Once the prospective settlers had been transported to St. Walburg where they were accommodated temporarily in railroad boxcars, the CNR was then faced with the two more difficult portions of its settlement task. First, the railroad authorities had to secure farms for each family and locate the families on the acquired land. Second, the CNR was entrusted with seeing that the Sudetens established themselves as farmers. The first task was by far the easier.

According to a report in the CNR's periodical, the *Canadian National Magazine*, the railroad began seriously to consider purchasing land around St. Walburg soon after the decision was made to accept Sudeten refugees: "Optioning land started quietly in the late winter, inspections were made in the spring, starting just as soon as snow was gone and most of the land required had been secured before the size of the operation caused a general rise in prices."²³ Indeed, the CNR's agents inspected over one thousand farms and eventually purchased one hundred and forty-three quarter sections and one farm of seven quarter sections. The price paid averaged \$4.34 per acre or roughly \$690.00 per farm.²⁴ The farms were scattered among three localities: the St. Walburg area itself, the Bright Sand district to the east, and the Goodsoil district north of St. Walburg.²⁵ Many of the purchases were negotiated, the *Leader Post* reported, "by A. N. Schneider, St. Walburg real estate man, who had handled CNR lands for 30 years."²⁶

The CNR obtained so many farms so cheaply because it was in a buyers' market. This situation existed basically for two reasons. First, the vast majority of the property which the CNR purchased (73%) was secured from owners who no longer resided on the land.²⁷ Most of these had abandoned their farms during the worst years of the depression and now were only too happy to unload their holdings on the CNR. Second, the railroad obtained nearly twenty farms north of St. Walburg from pro-Nazi German settlers who were permanently leaving Canada to return to Germany.²⁸ These farms the CNR purchased for prices well below that which the owners had hoped to obtain. Indeed, the railroad offered sums so low that several would-be returnees had second thoughts about selling out.²⁹

Although the CNR officials or their associates never tired of exclaiming how "wonderful" the opportunities for farming in the St. Walburg district were,³⁰ or of remarking on "the good quality of the soil on every one of those farms,"³¹ actual conditions on the land were far less promising. Actually, many of the farms bought

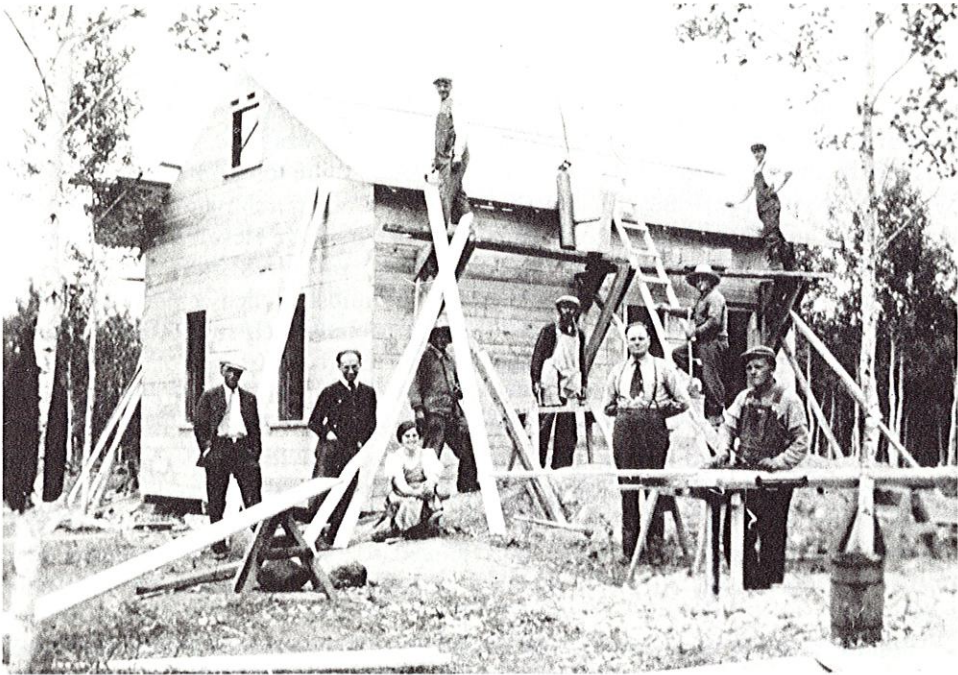
were marginal ones, being either intrinsically poor, badly developed, or undeveloped.

The most basic problem related to the uneven quality of the land. Although the farms in the north, especially around Goodsoil, had better than average soil potential, others did not. In the Bright Sand district, for example, sandy, rocky soil was nearly always present.³² (Good blueberry land, as one long-time resident of St. Walburg described it.)³³ Besides this, the farms the CNR purchased often possessed only limited amounts of cleared or broken land. In June 1941 eleven Barthel farmers complained bitterly to F. C. Blair that the CNR had placed them in the "most unfavorable conditions" by locating them in the midst of heavy bush on farms without sufficient cleared land to allow them to become "self-supporting within a reasonable time."³⁴ Moreover, they accused the railroad officials of deliberately misrepresenting in their official reports to the Immigration Branch the conditions on the farms by claiming more cleared land than existed.³⁵ Finally, there was the problem of cleared land having been cropped too often by the earlier pioneers and exhausted or having been allowed to become overrun with weeds before the Sudetens arrived. One settler reported how many of the settlers' farms resembled "flower gardens" in 1939 because "they looked so nice ... from perennial sow thistle, Canada thistle, fireweed, and the dirty grey of the shattered wild oats heads."³⁶

Besides securing farmland for the would-be settlers, the CNR had also been commissioned to use refugee settlement funds to see that each family had an adequate roof over its head, some cash, and the wherewithal to begin farming.



Seeding at Loon Lake, 1939.



House building at Bright Sand, 1939

According to the reports filed by the railroad agents, these tasks were more than adequately fulfilled. On farms which did not possess the basic farm buildings the CNR saw to it that "standard size" frame house of 18' x 20' were provided. As for household wares, the railroad reported in 1940 that it distributed "to each family 110 articles of household essentials made up of cook stove, beds, bedding, dishes, tools, etc."³⁷ Moreover, the *Canadian National Magazine* reported that the Sudetens received during the same period "308 horses, 263 cattle, 267 pigs, 2829 poultry. . . ." The CNR saw to it that "equipment such as wagons, sleighs, mowers, hay rakes, plows, drag harrows, discs, seed drills, cultivators, binders, etc. were purchased and distributed on a pool basis so that several families could share the use of this capital equipment."³⁸ Finally, during the first year, the railway provided the families with a subsistence cheque which averaged about ten dollars a month.³⁹

Like the land purchases, the provisioning was not as completely successful as the CNR maintained. Among the settlers, considerable dissatisfaction arose over both the amount and the quality of the goods provided. The eleven Barthel farmers who were dissatisfied with their farms complained just as loudly that they "were badly equipped." Specifically, they denounced the railroad for providing them with old and worn out stock and with second-hand machinery of dubious worth. For example, their letter to the Director of Immigration asserted that the "one disc, one seed drill, 1 breaking plow, and 1 binder" provided for the group "were very old and partly not fit for use."⁴⁰ A Ruthilda farmer voiced identical complaints in a confidential report to M. J. Coldwell, Member of Parliament for Rosetown-Biggar, in October 1940:

These people [the settlers at Bright Sand] received only worn out machinery. One oldtime farmer discarded his binder and bought a new one. Mr. Sinclair [A. G. Sinclair, District Superintendent for Saskatchewan of the Department of Colonization and Agriculture of the Canadian National Railway] purchased this binder but would not disclose the purchase price. He did not have it repaired and handed it over to the refugees, and expected them to use it. The original owner said the machine was useless. . . . Another refugee was provided with a team of old horses. These horses, according to other farmers, were twenty-seven and twenty-nine years old. This man asked that he be provided with a decent team. He was told he should go to Hitler. One of the horses has since died.⁴¹

The railroad's commitment did not end even after the refugees had been settled on their farms and supplied with livestock and implements. In accordance with its agreement with Ottawa, the CNR was to look after the Sudetens for the first two years to help them get started as farmers. This task, the CNR authorities continually complained, was nearly an impossible one, for the simple reason that "scarcely any of them [the refugees] had farm experience."⁴² Indeed the Immigration Branch listed sixty-six different occupations for the one hundred and eighty-six employable Sudetens in the St. Walburg group. Of the one hundred and eighty-six only sixteen were described as either farmers (fourteen) or gardeners (two). The overwhelming majority of Saskatchewan's Sudetens were artisans (electricians, locksmiths, bakers, tailors, etc.), factory workers (glass, iron, and textile workers) or other kinds of laborers such as miners, railroad men, or truck drivers.⁴³ In the Sudetenland they had been urban dwellers who had had little association with farmers and less contact with farm work.

Their inexperience showed up in a host of different ways, in their ignorance of animal husbandry, of planting and harvesting procedures, and of proper handling of farm machinery. On numerous occasions, the CNR officials described for Ottawa the "astounding" acts which characterized the Sudetens' first efforts at farming. In his mid-1940 report, A. G. Sinclair catalogued some of the settlers' blunders:

One woman was supplied with 12 hens in a crate. When called on three days later they were still in the crate. Was afraid they would get lost in the bush if turned loose in the barnyard. . . .

Settler was given a nine year old mare and gelding and advised to raise colts. Heard of stallion in vicinity, rushed over but groom told him to take the old mare home. Spoke poor English and understood nothing that the groom said except 'old'. Complained to neighbour that he had been given a mare so old that she had lost her sex appeal. . . .

Settler was told to double disc land and shown how to overlap half of previous round. Conceived the idea that it would be better to single disc twice and made the field look like a stormy sea. . . .

Binders were operated in uneven crops with the cable dragging the ground, guards scooping up clay and small stones, and reel in the lowest possible position continuously. When [shown] the correct manipulation of adjustments, the settler gave up completely stating that he would require two hands for the lines, three for the levers, one for the whip, and three heads to figure out what to do.⁴⁴

To deal with the problem of inexperience the railroad hired about a dozen supervisors. These men were usually German Canadians or German-speaking resident farmers of the areas in which the Sudetens had been settled. The supervisors were expected to travel among the various Sudeten farms instructing the newcomers in the intricacies of milking cows, feeding hogs, adjusting the gauges on seed drills, or repairing binders. For their services the supervisors received between \$45 and \$100 per month depending upon whether or not they could furnish their own means

of transportation.⁴⁵ The salaries of the supervisors, of course, were paid from the refugee fund. The reports which the CNR officials filed on the subject of the supervisors were glowing ones. The supervisors, they claimed, worked tirelessly and patiently to overcome the Sudetens' handicaps. Indeed, those farming successes which the refugees enjoyed, so it was implied or stated, could be traced to this source.⁴⁶

Once again, the situation did not exactly reflect what the CNR would have the public or the Immigration Branch believe. The matter was complicated by the fact that the CNR and A. G. Sinclair had chosen several of the province's leading pro-Nazis, namely Meinholf Doering of Loon River, Wilhelm Esch of Goodsoil, and Eckhardt Kastendieck of Paradise Hill, to supervise the Sudetens. In the spring and summer of 1939 when appointed, all three men had reputedly pro-Nazi sympathies and affiliations. For example, Eckhardt Kastendieck was *Ortsgruppe* leader of the Paradise Hill chapter of the pro-Nazi society, the *Deutscher Bund Canada*.⁴⁷ An August 1939 RCMP listing of leading pro-Nazis in Saskatchewan described Meinholf Doering as "a very important organizer and agitator of the Bund in this district [Loon River]" and Wilhelm Esch as "an important organizer and agitator of the Bund, having charge of the activities in the Goodsoil district."⁴⁸ Incidentally, A. N. Schneider, the real estate agent and long-time associate of the CNR, was *Bund* leader at St. Walburg.⁴⁹ Because of their pro-Nazi activities, the federal government interned Schneider and the other three supervisors at the outbreak of war in September 1939.

Those settlers who were charges of the above-named supervisors were very unhappy. Almost immediately they objected. The refugee leader Franz Rehwald, who himself settled at St. Walburg, noted in a letter to the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* that he had received complaints about the Nazi supervisors while still in England in the late spring of 1939. In the same letter Rehwald asserted that the day after his arrival in St. Walburg (June 24, 1939), he complained "to Mr. Sinclair about the Nazi supervisors and such complaints were repeated by most of the Sudeten settlers including myself. . . ."⁵⁰

Although Rehwald and the others tried to convince the CNR officials that "it was intolerable for refugees from areas occupied by Nazis to be under Nazi supervision here. . . .," Mr. Sinclair and the CNR turned a deaf ear. In Rehwald's words, the settlers were abruptly "informed by representatives of the CNR Colonization Department that those Nazi supervisors had their full confidence."⁵¹ The CNR's apparent support for pro-Nazis prompted the Canadian Corps Association of Saskatoon to launch its own investigation of the matter. A report of the Corps' findings, which appeared in the *Star Phoenix* in June 1940, registered dismay at the railroad's complicity. In its conclusion, the Corps' report echoed the sentiments of the settlers:

It will be remembered that the Sudetens came here as refugees and it doesn't appear to be in keeping with the spirit of the invitation which was extended to them to come here, to be under the direction, at least to some extent of Nazi sympathizers, when they had been driven out of their former homes by Nazi invasion.⁵²

For inexperienced settlers, marginal land, insufficient provisioning, and inadequate supervision could mean only trouble. During the first two years of settlement, abundant evidence exists not only of widespread difficulty in adjustment for most, but even of outright deprivation for some Sudetens. In both 1939 and 1940

the harvests were disappointingly small. Insufficient seeding in both years resulted in low yields, and dry weather in 1940 also reduced the crop.⁵³ In the fall of that year, M. J. Coldwell's Ruthilda friend visited the St. Walburg settlement and reported back his findings. The letter Coldwell received was shockingly frank.

Conditions are terrible among them [the Sudetens]; most of them have practically nothing to eat. Some have only potatoes and beets and others have not even salt. They also have very little feed for their small number of stock. . . . They are . . . in fact penniless, as some of them do not receive any support from the CNR. . . . It is too bad that you were not able to come with us and see for yourself. . . . Conditions are far worse than they were during the drought years on the prairie. In fact, it is the worst misery and poverty I have seen.⁵⁴

Reports filed six months later by Verna Brown, the school teacher at Bright Sand and secretary of the local Red Cross committee, confirm the extreme statements made by Coldwell's informant. For example, in a letter of April 3, 1941, to a Red Cross associate, Miss Brown reported that for practically all the settlers "there is a great need for help and they need it immediately." She described families being forced to live on "bread and barley coffee."⁵⁵ Several days later she filed an urgent appeal for assistance with the University of Toronto's Study Committee Concerned with Refugees. In this appeal Miss Brown detailed how to Sudeten families in her district were "very hard up, having inadequate clothing, and very little food supplies." More specifically she indicated the distressing results of a survey she conducted on twenty-six families with regard to such items as meat — "16 report having no meat; 10 having meat," flour — "18 report little or no flour; 8 report having some amount of flour," and sugar — "20 report little or no sugar; 6 have sugar." Unless help was forthcoming, she concluded, the settlers' future would be no brighter than the present, for "every family except one need[s] garden seeds. Approximately 75% of them need seed grain."⁵⁶

The Sudetens responded to these conditions in several ways. The majority tightened their belts another notch, resolved to try harder to overcome their problems, and suffered in silence. Others attempted by complaining or petitioning to get the railroad or the government to help them. Some even tried to improve their situation by forcing the railroad to grant them a voice in the control and administration of the refugee fund. Finally a number of settlers left their farms for easier work and better working conditions in other areas of the country.

As intimated above, the efforts of the settlers to make the railroad respond to their plight and to grant them additional assistance met with little success. More often than not they or their defenders were either ignored or given the run-around. Precisely this latter situation prompted a concerned Toronto doctor to complain to the Deputy Minister of Pensions and National Health in April 1941 that letters written to the CNR officials describing the appalling conditions among Sudeten children and appealing for help were "simply handed from one person to another."⁵⁷ When the officials did respond, it was not only negatively, but often with hostility.⁵⁸ The refugees who complained were labelled "mischief makers"⁵⁹ or whiners who were always "looking for sympathy."⁶⁰

The CNR officials rationalized their lack of action by arguing that the settlers needed to develop their self-reliance and independence. A letter of October 28, 1940, from J. S. McGowan, Director of the Canadian National Railways Department of Colonization and Agriculture, to F. C. Blair illustrates this attitude. "The tendency," McGowan observed,

to depend on outside support is extremely marked in this group [the Sudetens] because of their previous training and experience. . . . [Thus] so long as we maintain a man in this district most of the settlers will lightheartedly unload upon him all the problems they should set themselves to solve, and will continue to expect that we act as their fairy-godmother, supplying goods or services they should be working for or doing without. So much is this in evidence that Mr. Sinclair has recommended, and I agree, that we should close our temporary office at St. Walburg at the end of the month, and withdraw all our staff from the district at that time. This will leave the settlers entirely on their own during the winter season.⁶¹

Because the railway took this stand, spokesmen for the refugees felt obliged to make an effort to wrest exclusive control of the refugee fund from the CNR. In response to objections emanating from Canada, the leader of the Sudeten Social Democratic Party in London, Wenzel Jaksch, complained to Vincent Massey, High Commissioner for Canada, concerning the way the CNR was administering the refugee monies:

The 1500 Dollars which were reserved for each family . . . may be considered as a payment by which the Government of the United Kingdom wishes to honor the moral obligation they owed the victims of Munich. In my view it is not possible that the full and exclusive right to decide about the use of sums raised in such a way should be left to the . . . CNR.

He urged that control of the funds be organized according to "democratic principles" and that "a certain amount of influence . . . be conceded to the elected settlers' committees."⁶² In St. Walburg, Franz Rehwald tried "on a number of occasions" to secure CNR recognition of refugee rights in regard to the fund. For example, in March 1940, J. S. McGowan announced that Rehwald even went "so far as to make a statement that the single men could quite properly demand payment of the £200 quite irrespective of their settlement on the land or in some other occupation."⁶³

The officials of the CNR and the Immigration Branch were outraged by the audacity of such claims. Indeed, they considered it presumptuous that the settlers should wish to participate in the direction or administration of their settlement fund. F. C. Blair wrote off the attempts of Rehwald and the others to gain a say in how the fund was handled as due to their socialist background. In his words "it would [have been] to the advantage of the settlers and to their general welfare in this country if they [had] left their European politics in Europe along with their money and the other effects they were compelled to abandon when they came here. . . ."⁶⁴ Needless to say, the settlers' claims were rejected out of hand.⁶⁵

The final option open to disgruntled Sudetens was to leave the land. Over the first two years a number moved to cities such as Edmonton or Hamilton seeking work. Such movement, however, was strongly discouraged by the CNR and the Immigration Branch. In a letter to the Commissioner of Immigration, R. P. Devlin, who was the assistant director of the CNR's Department of Colonization and Agriculture, summed up the railway's policy:

Since we settled our German-Czech families in the St. Walburg area, we have on some occasions been requested, by a few of those families, to permit them to leave the settlement and undertake industrial work. Every such request has been discouraged and we have insisted that they remain in agricultural work in the settlement.⁶⁶

Indeed, it was greatly feared that any kind of encouragement to move even of the obvious "misfits" had to be avoided because of the ever present "danger of

unsettling some of the borderline cases, where a little increased effort on their [the settlers'] part might keep them on the land."⁶⁷

Persuasion was effectuated through economic pressure applied in several ways. To begin with, it was made perfectly clear that those who left the land would have their support from the refugee fund cut off completely.⁶⁸ Another more subtle form of pressure was to withhold the land titles from the settlers until they had become well established. Such a withholding would, it was argued, prevent the settlers from using the money obtained from the sale of their farms "to secure industrial employment."⁶⁹ In his ironic fashion, F. C. Blair rationalized this policy by claiming that:

If they [the Sudeten farms] had been paid for out of private funds I would have had no hesitancy in saying that the deeds should be delivered to the settlers, but since they were paid out of funds that were entrusted to us for their settlement on the land, I think there is some obligation resting upon us [the CNR and the Immigration Branch] to safeguard these settlers against getting rid of their land if some sudden notion takes them.⁷⁰

Less than a year later, official fears of widespread desertion by the settlers had waned and the titles of the farms were delivered to the settlers.⁷¹ Indeed, by the end of 1941 the worst of the storm had been weathered. By then, the Sudetens had developed the farming skills and knowledge which would allow them to survive on their own. In addition, the 1941 harvest was substantially better than that of either 1939 or 1940. Hence, from 1941 the condition of the refugees improved "slowly but surely."⁷² Sudeten and non-Sudeten sources agree on this.⁷³ Even the CNR accounts of the settlement's progress from this time are generally accurate. For example, in 1943 J. S. McGowan would boast that

... it is gratifying to report that this group of settlers [the Sudetens] has fitted exceptionally well into our Canadian life and in many cases remarkable progress has been made. ... Out of 148 families a total of 94 are still on their farms, while there have been 47 enlistments in the armed forces.

Many of those who joined up, he concluded, "have retained ownership of their holdings and intend to return to them when the war is over and the work terminates."⁷⁴ Many did, at least, for a while. Then gradually in the years after 1945, the number of original Sudetens was reduced by those who drifted away to other jobs in other areas of the country. Despite this, nearly half of the original settlers remained permanently on the land. They or their descendents can often still be found farming in the St. Walburg district.

Thus, in the end, the settlement at St. Walburg succeeded. The railway naturally claimed this success as due to their efforts,⁷⁵ and in at least one sense, this was true. If the CNR had not brought the Sudetens to St. Walburg and purchased the land for them, they would not have settled where they did. Nevertheless, the success of the refugees derived basically from other sources than the railway's ability to "rehabilitate" them.⁷⁶ What made the settlement viable was the intrinsic strength of the settlers. This strength overcame the marginal land, the poor implements, the language disability, the ignorance of farming, and the lack of sympathy or cooperation from the bureaucrats. The Sudetens triumphed because of their intelligence, their skill, their determination, and their ability to adjust. Saskatchewan and Canada were fortunate to have received these people.

Footnotes

- ¹Roughly speaking the Sudetenland, which Hitler coveted, constituted those portions of the "historic provinces" of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia contiguous to the Reich. Ethnically, these areas of the Czechoslovak Republic contained significant concentrations of Germans.
- ²"Von der Moldau zum Peace River," *Sudeten Freiheit* (Oslo), i July 1939.
- ³A sample reading of the obituary notices or birthday greetings in the *Sudeten-Bote*, the official publication of the Western Canadian Sudeten German Society, indicates just how active the immigrants had been in the Sudeten German socialist movement. See for example "Fritz Fechter ein Siebziger," *Sudeten-Bote [S-B]*, November-December 1977, p. 15; "Willi Schenker — 80," *S-B*, January-February, 1978, p. 26; "Wally Merz gestorben," *S-B*, March-April 1977, p. 21; "Franz Fournier ein Achtziger," *S-B*, September-October 1977, p. 23.
- ⁴Public Archives of Canada [PAC], Immigration Branch, RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 3. "Memorandum on the Problem of the Sudeten German Refugees," 9 November 1938.
- ⁵Elizabeth Wiskemann, *Czechs and Germans*. (London, 1967), p. 205.
- ⁶"Sudetendeutsche in Canada wehren sich gegen Nazi-Agenten," *Deutsche Zeitung für Canada*, 12 July 1939.
- ⁷RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 3. Telegram from High Commissioner for Canada in Great Britain to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 25 October 1938.
- ⁸*Menschen im Exil: eine Dokumentation der sudetendeutschen sozialdemokratischen Emigranten von 1938 bis 1945* (Stuttgart, 1974), p. 2.
- ⁹"Der Weg in die Fremde," *Sudeten-Jahrbuch der Seliger Gemeinde*, 1978, p. 36.
- ¹⁰*Menschen im Exil*, p. 19.
- ¹¹RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 3. Blair to Crerar, 3 December 1938.
- ¹²*Menschen im Exil*, pp. 29-36.
- ¹³See Wanka, "Der Weg in die Fremde," pp. 42-43; and RG 76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 4, Treaty Series No. 9, Agreements between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, the Government of the French Republic, and the Government of the Czechoslovak Republic regarding Financial Assistance to Czechoslovakia.
- ¹⁴RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 6. Blair memorandum.
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*
- ¹⁶RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 3. Memorandum to Crerar, 3 December 1938.
- ¹⁷RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 3. See Blair memorandum, 20 December 1938. The delegation was composed of Franz Rehwald, an editor of a trade union newspaper and secretary to Wenzel Jaksch, the leader of the Sudeten Social Democrats; Dr. Kamil Slapak, Czech Minister of Social Welfare, and Father Emanuel Reichenberger, spokesman for the Catholics among the refugees.
- ¹⁸RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 4. Memorandum to Morisset, 24 March 1939.
- ¹⁹RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 6. Blair memorandum, 8 March 1940.
- ²⁰*Ibid.*
- ²¹RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 6. German Czech Movement to Canada: Complete List of Families which sailed to Canada in the Period April-July 1939.
- ²²RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Sinclair report to Gurton, 2 July 1940.
- ²³G. H. Edwards, "Find a Haven in the West," *Canadian National Magazine* (December 1940), p. 40.
- ²⁴RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Sinclair report to Gurton, 2 July 1940.
- ²⁵RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Scobie memorandum to Blair, 26 September 1940.
- ²⁶*Leader Post* (Regina), "Exiled Czechs Carving Out New Lives among Tall Timbers, Fields of North," 2 September 1939.
- ²⁷RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Sinclair report to Gurton, 2 July 1940.
- ²⁸See the author's article, "Heim ins Reich: the Story of Loon River's Nazis," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXIX, Spring 1976, pp. 41-50.
- ²⁹*Leader Post* "Exiled Czechs Carving out New Lives," 2 September 1939.
- ³⁰RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Scobie to Blair, 26 September 1940.
- ³¹RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 8. Moffat to Hungerford, President, Canadian National Railways, 31 October 1940.
- ³²Author's interview with Erwin Kopp of Loon Lake, 31 July 1977.
- ³³Author's interview with Gabriel Rohr, 30 July 1977, in St. Walburg. See also "Sudeten Farmer: Nazi Refugee Makes a New Life for Himself and his Family in Canada's Rough Northwest," *The Standard*, 2 (Fall, 1945).
- ³⁴RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 9. Barthel farmers to F. C. Blair, 10 June 1941.
- ³⁵Compare the following figures: the CNR ascribed to the William Nimmrichter farm 38 acres under cultivation and 60 acres open; Nimmrichter himself asserted that in reality only 31 acres were cultivated and 18 open. For Franz Schuler the CNR claimed 18 acres cultivated and 10 acres cleared; Schuler insisted that only 13 were cultivated and 5 acres open. RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 9. See letter of Barthel farmers to Blair, 10 June 1941, and RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 9. Canadian National Railways, Land Settlement Reports for William Nimmrichter and Franz Schuler, 28 February 1940.
- ³⁶Joseph Elster, "More Regarding Quality of Land on which Refugees were settled," undated manuscript in author's possession. Mr. Elster is a Sudeten refugee and retired Bright Sand farmer.
- ³⁷RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Sinclair to Gurton, 2 July 1940.
- ³⁸Ken Hand, "Remember the Sudeten Czechs?" *Canadian National Magazine*, (February 1952), p. 10.
- ³⁹"Sudeten Farmer: Nazi Refugee Makes a New Life," author's interview with Joseph Elster, 29 July 1977, and with Max Kutschera, 31 July 1977. RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 10. German-Czech Settlement — St. Walburg. Financial Report, 29 January 1945.
- ⁴⁰RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 9. Barthel farmers to F. C. Blair, 10 June 1941.

- ⁴¹RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Ruthilda farmer to M. J. Coldwell, 27 October 1940. For Coldwell's response see his letter to T. A. Crerar, Minister of Mines and Resources, 31 December 1940.
- ⁴²RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Moffat to Hungerford, 31 October 1940.
- ⁴³RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 5. German-Czechs — St. Walburg Occupation List.
- ⁴⁴RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Sinclair to Gurton, 2 July 1940.
- ⁴⁵RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Gurton to Scobie, 23 September 1940.
- ⁴⁶RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pts. 7 & 8. See for example Scobie to Blair, 26 September 1940; Sinclair to Gurton, 2 July 1940; or Moffat to Hungerford, 31 October 1940.
- ⁴⁷Anschriften der Leitungen des Deutschen Bundes Kanada, November-December 1938; Bundesarchiv Koblenz, R57 (neu)/1163/3-41. For a discussion of the level of Nazi commitment and of the kinds of pro-Nazi activities which the *Bund* engaged in here, see my article "The Deutscher Bund Canada in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXXI, Spring 1978, pp. 41-50.
- ⁴⁸RG25, G-1, vol. 1964, file 855E, pt. 1. Important and Leading Functionaries of the Canadian Society for German Culture in Saskatchewan.
- ⁴⁹Anschriften der Leitungen des Deutschen Bundes Kanada, November-December 1938; Bundesarchiv Koblenz, R57(neu)/1163/3-41.
- ⁵⁰*Star Phoenix*, "Protested Vainly Against Nazis as Farm Supervisors," 29 June 1940.
- ⁵¹*Ibid.*
- ⁵²*Star Phoenix*. "Railway Official Aided Schneider, Corps Unit Hears," 20 June 1940.
- ⁵³RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Sinclair report to Gurton, 2 July 1940. Also author's interviews with Gabriel Rohr and Ernst Werner, 30 July 1977.
- ⁵⁴RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Ruthilda farmer to Coldwell, 27 October 1940.
- ⁵⁵RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Verna R. Brown to Mr. Baker, 3 April 1941. According to the article "Sudeten Farmer: Nazi Refugee Makes a New Life" (*The Standard*, Fall, 1945) this was the diet of Ernst Werner and his family.
- ⁵⁶RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. V. Brown to Mrs. Pelham Edgar, 14 April 1941.
- ⁵⁷RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Alan Brown, M.D., to R. E. Wodehouse, Deputy Minister of Pensions and National Health, 23 April 1941.
- ⁵⁸Author's interviews with Franz Rehwald (13 February 1978) and Joseph Elster (28 July 1977); RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Ruthilda farmer to Coldwell, 27 October 1940; RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Scobie to Blair, 26 September 1940. An idea of the disdain with which some of the objecting settlers were treated is conveyed in the following passage from F. C. Scobie's report to the Minister. Incidentally, Blair utilized this report to refute the contentions of Coldwell's Ruthilda farmer. According to Scobie, Wenzel Moses, a settler who had objected to the railway's handling of the settlement, was "an insignificant little Jewish character who makes up for what is lacking in his constitution with great gusto in his vocabulary and many gesticulations with his arms. His wife is a little frowsy-headed creature who looks at you with a pair of beaded eyes, and looks as though she would be ready to clutch at anything which belonged to her or to anyone else."
- ⁵⁹RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Blair to Miss Blodwen Davies, 7 February 1941.
- ⁶⁰RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. G. J. Matte to Mrs. Edgar, 29 April 1941.
- ⁶¹RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. McGowan to Blair, 28 October 1940.
- ⁶²RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Wenzel Jaksch to Vincent Massey, 6 March 1941.
- ⁶³RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. McGowan to Blair, 12 March 1940.
- ⁶⁴RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Blair to Bavin, RCMP, 5 September 1940.
- ⁶⁵RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. McGowan to Blair, 12 March 1940; and RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Ruthilda farmer to Coldwell, 27 October 1940.
- ⁶⁶RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. Devlin to A. L. Jolliffe, 6 January 1941.
- ⁶⁷RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 9. McGowan to Blair, 19 November 1941.
- ⁶⁸RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 8. McGowan to Blair, 8 February 1941; and Devlin to Blair, 21 June 1941, and Blair to Devlin, 24 June 1941. The case of Ernst Adler, a Sudeten single man, is illustrative. Leaving St. Walburg in the late fall of 1939, Adler went to Winnipeg. After seeking unsuccessfully to enlist in the army, he applied to the CNR for financial aid from the single men's fund. He was turned down on the grounds that he had forfeited any support the moment he left the farm.
- ⁶⁹RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. McGowan to Blair, 2 December 1940.
- ⁷⁰RG76, vol. 616, file 916207, pt. 7. Blair to McGowan, 24 December 1940.
- ⁷¹RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 9. Blair to McGowan, 20 October 1941.
- ⁷²RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 10. Rev. Father Hillard to CNR Colonization & Agriculture, 8 July 1943.
- ⁷³"Sudeten Farmer: Nazi Refugee Makes a New Life," *The Standard* (Fall, 1945). Also author's interviews with the following Sudetens: Joseph Elster (29 July 1977) and Ernst Werner (30 July 1977) of Bright Sand, and Max Kutschera (31 July 1977) and Rheinhold Kislung (31 July 1977) of Loon Lake.
- ⁷⁴RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 10. McGowan to Jolliffe, 15 December 1943.
- ⁷⁵Ken Hand, "Remember the Sudeten Czechs?" *Canadian National Magazine* (February 1952), pp. 10-11, 15-17.
- ⁷⁶RG76, vol. 617, file 916207, pt. 10. McGowan to Jolliffe, 15 December 1943.

BEAUVAL, SASKATCHEWAN: AN HISTORICAL SKETCH

By Paul Hurly

THE village of Beauval sits astride a sand ridge among jack pine and poplar trees overlooking the meandering Beaver River. This community's evolution from a congregating point for trappers and their families to a modern northern settlement provides a glimpse of the roles and contributions which many people have made to northern development. It also illustrates that phase in the development of Northern Saskatchewan termed "the Period of Consolidation, 1869-1945" during which government replaced the Hudson's Bay Company.¹

Beauval is located roughly 160 kilometres north of Meadow Lake on Highway 155 at latitude 55° 9' North and longitude 107° 36' West. It has a population of 556 people. Virtually ninety per cent of the community is of native ancestry.² Beauval lies within Area 3 of the Northern Administration District.

The origin of Beauval is distinct from the other communities in Area 3. For example, both Ile-à-la-Crosse and Green Lake, two settlements most often compared with Beauval, trace their inception to the beginning of the inland fur trade. The North West Company established a trading post at Ile-à-la-Crosse in 1776 and at Green Lake in 1781. Ile-à-la-Crosse was considered a permanent settlement by 1785. Green Lake dates its permanent habitation from 1793.³

Beauval, on the other hand, has quite a recent history. It would seem to have developed initially as a religious and educational center. It then developed into a stopover for freighters plying the river and the winter road, a fur buying depot, and a residential community for workers who had entered modern wage employment. Thus Beauval's beginning is inextricably linked to the Mission built by the Oblate Marie Immaculate order on the Beaver River.

The decision to construct an Indian Industrial School on the Beaver River was both rational and coincidental. In 1903 the steam boiler for the Ile-à-la-Crosse Mission saw mill expired. As a result a group of lay brothers, in either 1903 or 1904, moved to the La Plonge River to start a water-powered saw mill.

While this mill was in operation the Ile-à-la-Crosse Mission had another stroke of bad fortune. Heavy runoff during the spring of 1905 flooded the low plain on which the Mission was situated. The school building was too damaged to be used and the Grey Nuns, who had staffed the school since 1860, decided to return to France. The brothers at the mill, who had by now built a residence for themselves, began to debate the merits of relocating the school to a site near the mill. It was argued that the lumber materials for the building would be handier if the site was near the mill; high ground would avoid a reoccurrence of the past flooding problems; and the faster flowing river water was cleaner than the water of Lac Ile-à-la-Crosse.⁴

Eventually the decision was reached to relocate the school and construction of a new Industrial School Residence started in September 1905 on the east bank of the

Beaver River high above the flood plain. By the time the building was completed in October 1906 the replacement teachers provided by the Order of St. Joseph de Lyon, France had commenced instruction in the new facility. During 1908-1909 a house for the Fathers and lay brothers was completed at the Mission. In 1910 the Grey Nuns returned to teach at the Industrial School following the decision of the Sisters of St. Joseph de Lyon to return to France.⁵ From 1906-1917 the school at La Plonge was the only one serving the area until a new institution was opened in Ile-à-la-Crosse.

During this period Beauval made its inauspicious start as La Plonge village. Philip Yew and his family are generally recognized as the first to have settled on the west bank. They arrived in 1904 and 1905. Their cabin was along the Beaver River at a point below where the sewage lagoons are presently located. In 1907 several families began to arrive from the Dore Lake area and to settle at *Mesakameyak* (the men land). This fording point is about five kilometres south of Beauval. Paul Durocher and his family are acknowledged as being the first. Others such as the Kennedy and Kimbley families followed.⁶

In 1909 Francois Laliberte and his family settled in La Plonge village. He was followed by his father, Alexander, and the rest of the Laliberte family in 1910. Alexander had been living in Ile-à-la-Crosse where he worked for the Revillon Frères trading company. Alexander has been mistakenly identified as the first settler in Beauval by at least one source.⁷ By October 1910 he moved his family into a small two-story house which they had built on the site where the Beauval theatre now stands. From a small addition built onto one end of the house Alexander ran a fur buying operation for Revillon Frères until 1931.

During these early years La Plonge village was a quiet community. Several large gardens were established which the women and girls looked after. Cows provided a fresh supply of milk and the meadows on the islands in the river and along the bank were cut for winter hay. In the summer the women kept busy picking berries and preserving food for the long winter months. During the winter their spare time was devoted to making clothing, beadwork and leathercraft. Most of the men trapped and hunted for a living. Some employment was available for the men at the Indian Industrial School. The lay brothers started a large farm south of the Mission site with the aim of becoming self-sufficient in food production and local residents were hired to help clear and work the land. As well, the Mission started a freight hauling business from Big River to Ile-à-la-Crosse and also produced lumber and shingles from the mill which were sold to various communities.⁸

Once La Plonge was established the freighters using the winter road made the community a regular stop. Many of Beauval's older residents recall as children entertaining the crowds of bearded, jovial men who piloted their "swings"⁹ through the inhospitable winter weather. Alex Laliberte's shop and home became a popular hostel due largely to the cooking prowess of his daughter, Margaret.

In 1912 an electrical dynamo was installed at the Mission and a wagon trail was opened to Fort Black on the south shore of Lac Ile-à-la-Crosse. From 1910 to 1920 Ile-à-la-Cross remained the dominant commercial centre on the West side of Northern Saskatchewan but gradually commercial trade shifted from the east-west pattern to a north-south route.

In 1914 two Minnesota Germans, Joe and Frank Fiedler, arrived in La Plonge. They trapped, worked at the Mission, and settled down to marry local girls. It is felt by several Beauval residents that it is the influence of southerners such as the



Paul Hurly Collection.

Priests and Metis at Beauval, n.d.

Fiedlers that contributed to the high degree of business activity in the community. Several men were recruited from La Plonge in 1914 and 1915 to serve in France with the 233rd Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.¹⁰

In 1918 the war veterans returned to a community decimated by a flu epidemic. Though the actual fatality rate is not known many people, especially children, perished. Also in 1918 Eugene Burnouf Sr., a lay brother at the Mission, left the church to marry a local girl and thus sparked a lot of controversy. He moved about four kilometres down river to settle. On his farm he opened a store which people in La Plonge often walked to during the summer for supplies.¹¹

The name of the community was officially changed in 1919 to Beauval (beautiful valley) in order to eliminate the constant confusion between La Ronge and La Plonge.¹² One source however maintains the name Beauval was used as early as 1911. The name apparently was given to the community by the first priest who came from Beauvais, France.¹³

A telegraph office was opened at the Mission in 1922 by Frank Dupuis. A narrow winding trail largely of corduroy construction followed the line from Green Lake to Beauval. However, it was almost impossible to negotiate this trail by wagon. Later, perhaps in 1923, Dupuis moved his office and home into the village. In 1923 a tow line ferry was intalled at the bottom of what is now Peterson Street. The trail and the three bridges which led from the landing to the Mission can still be seen on the east bank. The ferry was run for nineteen years by Victor Laliberte.

Travel throughout the north was always difficult, at best. Before any roads were constructed to Beauval, canoe was the only way of travelling to places outside the village. Father Joseph Bourbonnais, who served at the Mission for more than twenty-five years, once wrote that "Beauval was then a remote place."¹⁴ His reports include the itinerary for a seven-day trip from Prince Albert to Beauval in 1925, and the observation that when "travelling on lakes, they were often wind-bound and at times [they] even had to spend one or two days on the shores of one lake or another."¹⁵

During the early years mail would come into Beauval once a month at best. Frank Fiedler brought the freight and mail from Meadow Lake during the summer by scow. Harry Roy provided a regular mail service from Green Lake every two weeks by canoe during the late 1920s until air services started in the 1930s. During the winter months sleighs remained the only way of transporting freight until the first passable all-weather roads were built. During the 1940s the winter road continued to compete with the new overland routes by replacing the horse drawn sleighs with bulldozer power. The new mode was called a "cat train."

On the evening of September 19, 1927 the school boys at the Mission had appeared restless. So the Sister-in-charge sent them to bed early. At about 10 p.m. Isadore Bouvier awoke in his home. He sat up in bed to refill and light his pipe. Suddenly his attention was drawn by a bright flickering light at the Mission residence. At Frank Fiedler's house, his wife Margaret (née Laliberte) and her sister Ernestine were up late chatting when they noticed a strange reflection in a window pane. They jumped up and looked toward the Mission. They then ran outside to tell their brother Victor and their father the horrible news. The Mission residence was on fire.¹⁶

The dry timber did not take long to ignite. Only quick work to form a bucket brigade line was able to save the Fathers and Brothers house. Though all the girls escaped harm, nineteen boys, aged seven to twelve, and Sister Lea, who looked after the boys, perished in the blaze. Father Francois Gagnon, who tried to rush in to save the boys, was overcome by smoke and had to be pulled to safety. The deceased are buried in the Mission cemetery. The supernatural plays an important role in Métis culture so it is not unexpected that numerous phenomena associated with this tragic fire have been reported by local residents and staff at the Mission.¹⁷

Work to repair the damage and to resume the education of the children started almost immediately. Most of the girls were sent home but twenty remained at the Mission. They slept in the attic of the Fathers' house while an addition was being constructed. Classes were finally resumed in November 1927 for these girls. A primary school was also started in Beauval in 1927 in Joe Fiedler's house.

In 1929 a brick moulding machine arrived from the Prince Albert Penitentiary. A great deal of employment was created for both men and women of Beauval at the Mission. Then in 1931 the Department of Indian Affairs gave approval to build a new Indian Residential School. About forty men were involved in the construction. The residence was occupied on December 31, 1931. The interior finishings were completed in 1932.¹⁸ During these years the Mission also initiated a juniorate for training Indian brothers and a postulate for training lay brothers. The seminary closed in 1934.

In 1930 Christopher Steinwandt moved to Beauval and built a large cabin on Weecheekpitapeek Lake (Stinky Lake) south-east of Beauval. This became an important stopping place for freighters using the winter road. In 1931 Revillon Frères closed their store in Ile-à-la-Crosse. The Beauval outlet which Alexander Laliberte had been running for them now became a branch of Eugene Burnouf's shop.

In 1932 the community received a small grant of a hundred dollars from the government and built a better school entirely on a self-help basis.¹⁹ Joe Fiedler's abandoned house then became a temporary post for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1933. In 1935 the Bay built a permanent frame building along with a house for the manager and a warehouse on the river bank at a point overlooking the ferry.²⁰ As a

result, the Burnouf store in Beauval managed by Alexander Laliberte went out of business. This would not be the last example of local business initiative being stifled by corporate interests.

Beauval was now considerably larger. Many men were still involved in trapping and hunting, and had also taken up commercial fishing. An increasingly large number however were trying wage employment on at least a temporary basis at the Mission or at saw mills at Dore Lake, Meadow Lake or Big River. During the Thirties several families also travelled to Meadow Lake for the first time. The railway line reached Meadow Lake in 1931 gradually turning this community into the dominant centre on the West side.

Family and community life remained much as it always had. The church played a dominant role in community affairs, going so far as to forbid dancing in public except at weddings. Marriages were still "arranged" by parents on behalf of their children. Though families did not visit too much outside their immediate kinship group summer Sunday afternoons were a time for the community to gather. The women and children would often watch the men play a game much like baseball or soccer. The soccer ball was made from a tightly wound fish net bound in a moose hide.²¹ Gradually, year by year, the families intermarried until virtually everyone was related, at least distantly, to everyone else—

The first major industry to establish in Beauval was started by Eric Erikson, a Scandinavian immigrant. He first built a saw mill on the La Plonge River. He then



Cutting fire wood at Beauval, 1925.

Paul Hurly Collection

moved it to the Beaver River in 1935. He also added a planer to the operation. He hired mostly people from Big River but one outsider who worked for him eventually did settle in Beauval. His name is Jack Riccalton, a well respected trapper. In 1946 Erikson moved his mill to Meadow Lake. Only a large barn-like warehouse remains on the shoreline to mark where his business once flourished.

Work on an improved road to Green Lake was started in 1933. Local men who worked on the project were paid "relief" money. Apart from projects like this about the only other impact the Depression made on Beauval was the large influx of southerners coming north to try their hand at trapping. Older residents recall conversations with these transient people. Their stories of mass unemployment, soup lines and poverty made little impression on Beauval residents. Life in Beauval was relatively carefree and uncomplicated. The north was still largely dependent on a subsistence economy and was thus less vulnerable to the fluctuations of the marketplace.²²

The appearance of the first truck in Beauval in 1937 marked a new era for the settlement. The Brander Brothers started regular trucking service from Meadow Lake to Ile-à-la-Crosse. The changes brought by the road were not all good, however. The overland mail service was less dependable than the air service had been. The incidence of alcohol-related problems also seemed to increase. The year 1937 was also a period of tragedy. A scarlet fever epidemic swept the community killing forty-five children. In response to the constant requests for a local church construction started in 1937 and was completed in 1938.

Ernestine Laliberte opened the first roadside cafe in Beauval in 1939 on a lot across from where the Local Community Authority office is presently located. It was constructed of vertical log poles covered with timber siding. Her brother Adolph and Ambrose Lafleur built the structure. She ran this business for several years before leasing it to another resident. Ernestine's brother Victor built a pool hall. This building still stands in Beauval today and is used as a lumber storage shed. Victor also built a workshop at the corner of Laliberte and Muskwa Streets.

In 1941 William Hugell Sandherr arrived in Beauval from Green Lake. He was a part-time trapper and businessman who soon put his considerable talents to work in the community. During a span of about fifteen years he owned and operated a small store, a cafe, a pool hall, a hotel at Lac la Plonge, a mink ranch, a berry retail business and a fish processing plant. He purchased the original shop from either a Mr. Crowhurst or Marcién Marion, and renamed it "The Family Store."²³ It was located on the east side of Ohoo Street north of the Drop-In Centre. When the price for mink pelts began to plummet he sold his many holdings and moved to Prince Albert. The exact date is not certain but his shop became a Cooperative Store in about 1957.²⁴ This store ran into management and financial difficulty and unfortunately was gutted by fire in 1965.

The Grey Nuns started teaching at the Beauval primary school in 1945. In 1947 a new school was constructed on the site of the present Valley View School. A rectory was completed in Beauval by the Oblates in 1948. Father Rivard was the first parish priest. In 1953 Father Perrault directed the construction of a community hall in Beauval. It was attached to the school house and occupied the site where the school gym now stands. The old school building was replaced in 1955 by a two-storey wooden frame school house. This structure was destroyed by fire in October 1978.²⁴

Another new resident of Beauval, John Platko, a Ukrainian from the south,



Saskatchewan Archives: Star-Phoenix Collection

Aerial view of Beauval, 1950.

opened a confectionery at the corner of Laliberte and Peterson Street in 1954. This building is now the home of Jack Riccalton.²⁵ Construction of the main highway, No. 155, from Green Lake to Ile-à-la-Crosse started in 1954 or 1955. It was completed as far as Buffalo Narrows in 1957 with an all-weather gravel surface.²⁶

The Youville Convent was built in 1955 in Beauval by the Oblate Fathers to provide a residence for the Grey Nuns teaching in the village and for girls considering joining the church.²⁷ Ernestine Laliberte returned to Beauval in 1951 following a ten-year absence. She saw a business opportunity at the fork of the new highway and the Beauval turnoff. Thus in 1956 she built the first commercial venture, a cafe-truck stop, at the junction. At some point during the fifties her brother Francois attempted to solve a problem which plagues many northern communities — the lack of banking services. He organized a credit union which failed, it seems, due to a lack of long-term deposits.²⁸

In 1962 sturdier bridges were built over the Beaver River to the Mission. The ferry service across the Beaver was terminated and the road to Lac la Plonge was upgraded.

During Beauval's growth and evolution community issues placed increasing pressure on the informal leadership structure provided by the family clans. In response to these new pressures new social structures emerged. The first and most persistent was the development of the fulltime fishermen as a leadership group. Entrance to this group depended on a man's skill and productivity. Membership in the group conferred a status on the individual.

At some point in the mid-sixties Eugene Burnouf, Jr. formed a Ratepayers' Association in Beauval. This institution did not become popular, however.²⁹ The Local Community Authority was formed in 1969. Initially it only exercised nominal power as village residents once again looked to the fishermen to provide leadership. As familiarity with the operation of the Local Community Authority increased, and as its ability to garner power and dispense favours and grants grew, it assumed a more dominant leadership role.

The last major attempt to establish an employment creation industry in Beauval was the Beauval Mutual Wood Products. This post-cutting cooperative was formed in 1973 with funding from the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. Marketing difficulties forced the closure of the operation in 1978.

In 1973 the Grey Nuns officially ended their association with the La Plonge Indian Residential School when the Indian Affairs Branch assumed total control. Also in the fall of 1973 the first public phone system was installed in the village. Despite the Mission's safe location on the high east bank of the Beaver River valley it was not totally impervious to the affects of flood. Heavy snowfall and rain led to a flooding of the Beaver River in the spring of 1974. The river ripped the main highway bridge from its foundations and carried it downstream where it knocked out the bridge linking Beauval to the Mission. Until the bridge was finally repaired in the fall of 1974 all transportation to the Mission had to cross the Beaver by barge.³⁰ While the repair work was underway a three-quarter mile bypass was constructed around Beauval to divert through-traffic.

In April 1975 the night sky was once again illuminated over Beauval by a fire. The blaze destroyed a motel and some bulk oil equipment at the forks. The proprietor of the Esso service station, Eugene Burnouf, Jr. died in the fire.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation extended its television signal to Beauval in September 1976 when a Frontier Coverage Package transmitter was installed south of the village.

Beauval in the seventies is considerably different from the original La Plonge village which started seventy-four years ago. Cree still is the most predominant language spoken in the community, though English has replaced French. The Beauval labour force, though undereducated, is becoming increasingly dependent on the modern sector. Traditional activities are now more of a hobby pursuit for most men, though snaring and hunting do provide an important supplement to the diet. The transition of Beauval illustrates an important chapter in the history of Northern Saskatchewan and its people.

Footnotes

- ¹McArthur, Douglas, *The Development of Northern Saskatchewan: Problems and Issues*, paper presented to the Saskatchewan Science Council Meeting, Uranium City, January 1978.
- ²Institute of Northern Studies, *Analyses of SHSP Master Registration File, Current on January 13, 1978*, INS, 1978; Department of Northern Saskatchewan, *Data Base of Northern Saskatchewan Community Inventory*, Vol. II, DNS, 1977.
- ³Tymchak, Michael, *Our Heritage: The People of Northern Saskatchewan*, Academic Education, DNS, 1975, p. 33; Amisk Planning Consultants, *A Socio-Economic Planning Study of Green Lake, Sask.*, Regina, 1976, p. 20.
- ⁴Bourbonnais, Fr. Joseph, *History of the Beauval Indian School*, n.d.
- ⁵Ibid.; Tymchak, op. cit., pp. 146-7.
- ⁶Interviews with Edward Kimbley, Ernestine Laliberte.
- ⁷The cover of *Natotawin*, Vol. I, Issue 17, December 1, 1976, published by the Area #3 Regional Communication Centre, Beauval.
- ⁸Bourbonnais, op. cit.; interview with Edward Kimbley.
- ⁹Nine sleighs formed a swing. Each sleigh was pulled by one team of horses, with a second team following.
- ¹⁰Interviews with Edward Kimbley, Ernestine Laliberte.
- ¹¹Ibid.
- ¹²Tymchak, op. cit., p. 146.
- ¹³Bourbonnais, op. cit.; interview with Edward Kimbley.
- ¹⁴Bourbonnais, Fr. Joseph, *Beauval was a Remote Place*, n.d.
- ¹⁵Ibid.
- ¹⁶Interviews with Edward Kimbley and Ernestine Laliberte. Tymchak, op. cit., p. 148. Errors concerning the date of the fire can be found in: Millard, R. F., "Saskatchewan District," *Moccasin Telegraph*, Hudson Bay Company, Winter 1970; Pecher, Kamil, *Lonely Voyage*, Western Producer Prairie Books, Saskatoon, 1975.
- ¹⁷Interviews with Robin Hill, Len Dupuis, Edward Kimbley and Ed Mihalicz.
- ¹⁸Bourbonnais, Fr. Joseph, *Building of the School 1927-1932*, n.d.; interviews with Edward Kimbley and Ernestine Laliberte.
- ¹⁹Anonymous, "Our Village History," *Beautiful Valley Echo*, La Plonge Indian Residential School, Vol. X, No. 4, March-June, 1955, p. 6; interviews with Edward Kimbley and Ernestine Laliberte.
- ²⁰Millard, op. cit.; interview with Edward Kimbley.
- ²¹Interviews with Edward Kimbley and Ernestine Laliberte.
- ²²Interview with Beauval resident.
- ²³Anonymous, op. cit.; interview with Ernestine Laliberte.
- ²⁴Anonymous, op. cit.; interviews with Edward Kimbley, Ernestine Laliberte and Florence Hansen.
- ²⁵Anonymous, op. cit.; interviews with Len Dupuis and Ed Mihalicz.
- ²⁶Amisk Planning Consultants, *Buffalo Narrows Planning Study*, Regina, 1978.
- ²⁷Interview with Sisters Gamache and Simard.
- ²⁸Interview with Ernestine Laliberte.
- ²⁹Interview with Ron Burnouf, Overseer.
- ³⁰Interviews with Les Hurlburt and Ed Mihalicz.

Book Reviews

SASKATCHEWAN, A PICTORIAL HISTORY. D. H. Bocking, ed. Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books and the Saskatchewan Archives Board, 1979. Pp. 209. \$29.95 hard, \$18.95 paper.

This is the first of what will eventually be a two-volume history published under the auspices of the Saskatchewan Archives Board to mark our province's 1980 Diamond Jubilee. This volume is, as its title suggests, a visual representation of the development of Saskatchewan down to 1945; a full narrative history is to appear later this year.

In the brief time that Saskatchewan has been a part of Canada, Doug Bocking notes by way of introduction, it has undergone dramatic and fundamental changes. A highly-mechanized agricultural economy has supplanted an earlier one based on the fur trade and the buffalo hunt. Cities and towns, roads and railways have appeared, and "Saskatchewan has become the home of diverse peoples, representing different racial, cultural, and religious groups." (Preface.) To illustrate these changes Bocking has relied heavily on photographs, but drawings, cartoons, posters, pamphlets and newspapers also find a place in the book. Excerpts from diaries, letters, reminiscences and other sources complement the illustrations. The result is a volume which offers some fascinating glimpses of Saskatchewan's past.

The bulk of the illustrations are drawn from the twentieth century, though the way of life of the nomadic Indian and the awkward period of adjustment which followed the disappearance of the buffalo are dealt with briefly. One of the themes treated most successfully in subsequent chapters is the emergence of Saskatchewan as the "Wheat Province." The rush of settlers, the back-breaking toil needed to transform prairie and parkland into family farms, the new machines, the ubiquitous elevator — are all depicted. Cartoons are employed with particularly good effect here, illustrating the frustration of returned soldiers unable to acquire land in 1918, and the hopes of farmers later in the decade that the Wheat Pool would deliver them from the grasp of "Speculators, Profiteers, Gamblers and Middlemen." (pp. 104, 108.) Significantly, the final illustration in the book is of a self-propelled combine, a symbol, Bocking suggests, of the profound changes which have occurred in the province since the end of the Second World War.

Saskatchewan, A Pictorial History is no less successful in portraying the increasingly cosmopolitan character of the province's population, and the reaction of groups like the Ku Klux Klan, which came into short-lived prominence during the late 1920s. It is to Bocking's credit, however, that he has attempted to strike a balance between the major events that shaped the history of Saskatchewan and the more commonplace activities which filled the lives of its residents. Some of the most compelling photographs are those which capture the people of Saskatchewan at work and at play. Examples which come readily to mind include a group of timid Indian children at the Regina Industrial School (p. 14), row upon row of solemn-eyed farmers at a Grain Growers' convention in Moose Jaw (p. 50), a Scandinavian farm wife in her kitchen (p. 57), coal miners at Estevan (p. 74), and a family picnic on the open prairie (p. 143).

There will, of course, be those who will lament the omission of a particular community, or church, or ethnic group or club. Editorial discretion may be one explanation, or the omission may reflect the bias of the photographer, or the current

state of archival holdings in the province. It would appear too that Saskatchewan photographers have never been much taken with winter; one would think from even a brief perusal of this volume that ice and snow are entirely foreign to the province. Sports, particularly amateur sports, seem also sadly neglected, though this reviewer will admit from personal experience that good photographs here are difficult to find.

These are only minor criticisms, proof that the editor of a visual history cannot please everyone. *Saskatchewan, A Pictorial History* ought to find a place on the bookshelves of all present and former residents of the province who have an interest in our history. The Saskatchewan Archives Board should be commended for undertaking such an ambitious project, and Doug Bocking for his fine editorial work.

J. W. Brennan

JOHN BRACKEN: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY. By John Kendle. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979. Pp. xiii, 318. \$17.50.

Professor Kendle has written a substantive biography that easily passes the first test of a work in Canadian politics by adding — in this case in good measure — to our knowledge of how the system works. This is no small achievement given the loss of Bracken's personal papers in the Winnipeg flood of 1950 and the paucity of material in the Bracken collection in the Provincial Archives of Manitoba — none for the first eighteen months of his premiership nor any for the last three years. The author's accomplishment is all the more impressive in light of his less than riveting subject, who once said of himself: "I have heard it rumoured too that I am not a colourful figure. That isn't just a rumour; that is the truth."

The picture that appears is of a man with modest ambition, circumspect personality and limited accomplishments; the last admittedly the product not only of his own restricted view of the proper role of government but also the result of stringent economic circumstances for a good part of his premiership. Taken together these characteristics raise some doubt as to the appropriateness of the book's sub-title, for Bracken of all Canadian politicians in this century seems to have been one of the most a-political. He was to say on more than a few occasions that he had "no sense of party politics." His work in agriculture at the provincial universities of Saskatchewan and Manitoba gave him some prominence in the decade before and after the first world war but he had taken no part in provincial politics before 1922, when he became premier of Manitoba as a result of an invitation by the victorious United Farmers of Manitoba to lead them. His entry into federal politics at the head of the re-named Progressive Conservatives was equally unpremeditated and came as a result of Tory initiatives, especially those of Arthur Meighen. To top it all, he refused to seek a seat in the House of Commons between 1943 and 1945 and led the opposition Tories from the gallery.

The author describes Bracken as a man of great reserve whose motivations were a strong sense of duty, a love of challenge and a belief in team play. These were qualities which equipped him well to succeed on the small stage of Manitoba politics. Indeed, it is clear from reading this biography that Bracken was the chief source of Manitoba's tradition of non-combative politics for most of the second quarter of this century. But in the federal arena Bracken's style spelt disaster. Good intentions were not enough to make team play work if the players had trained in

different camps and possessed different notions of what their goal should be. In particular, the Toronto squad, who loved adversarial scrimmage, would not long acknowledge the authority of a western captain who believed in co-operative strategies. The fate of George Drew (Ontario's premier after 1943) who succeeded Bracken as national leader in 1948 is instructive of the problems a semi-permanent opposition party faces. Although they had different political philosophies (Bracken was supposed to be a progressive in social matters, Drew was not), each came to federal politics with a favourable electoral record in his province which proved an unreliable guide to federal fortunes. The experience of both underlines the accuracy of the comment made years ago by Sir John Willison that "a long training in Provincial politics constitutes a positive disqualification for the Federal Parliament (*Reminiscences: political and personal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1919), 145.)

One reads this book hoping to learn why it was that a man with so few obvious qualifications for political leadership should have once held the Commonwealth record for longevity as a premier. The answer is not here, or perhaps it is, but it is what has been suspected all along — the conjunction of man and circumstance. To a large degree it is the latter — the circumstances surrounding Bracken's premiership — that become better known from the book. One of the difficulties of writing a biography of a provincial politician in most of the provinces is that so little research has been done on provincial politics and, with the exception of the work by Murray Donnelly and Tom Peterson, Manitoba is no exception. Professor Kendle has had to do much of this background work to make his subject understandable. And it is in these chapters that the book makes a major contribution.

The federal government's retention of the prairie provinces' natural resources is well known but the effect that this had on the economic and political development within the provinces has not been analyzed in most of the literature. The Bracken Government's plans to exploit hydro-electric power in Manitoba and the complicated negotiations which federal ownership of the resource presented make fascinating reading for the student of federalism. So, too, does Professor Kendle's discussion of the events leading to the transfer and their effect on the kaleidoscopic relationship of Liberals, Progressives and Conservatives in Winnipeg and in Ottawa.

Equally original is the analysis of Manitoba's participation in that great inquiry into the state of the nation — the Rowell-Sirois Commission. Much has been written about that famous Commission, especially about its recommendations and their fate, but much more attention needs to be given to the influence the Commission had, indirectly as well as directly, upon the provinces. One consideration would be its impact on the development of the social science departments in the provincial universities of the West; for it was from these nascent bodies, populated by faculty trained outside of the province (and often outside of Canada) that the provinces derived their ideas of how the federal system would work. Professor Kendle devotes a chapter to Bracken and "Manitoba's Case" and claims that Bracken emerged from this episode as a major spokesman for the West and as a committed federalist.

It was perhaps to be expected in light of his preference to absorb and accommodate opinions that he should occupy such centre ground. What is most interesting is that he failed to retain either reputation. In federal politics he was an absolute failure. Although he worked hard (as does Professor Kendle) in convincing

people of his sincerity, it was clear, says his biographer, that he was "in the wrong party." It may have been that no party would have suited him, for a party man must limit his appeal if he is to succeed. What is beyond doubt is that even Bracken's reputation as a western spokesman evaporated, once he was in federal politics, because he could not translate this claim into electoral terms.

Professor Kendle has written a good book about a western politician who tried to come to terms with the demands of Canadian federalism but who fell among Tories. As one of Bracken's Ottawa associates said: "He didn't shove very readily." The lesson Bracken learned, although he should already have known it, is that those who do not push in federal politics, get shoved.

David E. Smith

THE LETTERS OF CHARLES JOHN BRYDGES 1879-1882. By Hartwell Bowsfield, ed. Introduction by Alan Wilson. Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1977. Pp. lxxxiv, 328. Maps. Illus. Available to members of the Society.

This important book throws a great deal of light on the transformation of life on the prairies from the old, buffalo-hunting, fur-trading pattern to a settled, agricultural pattern used on buying and selling and money values.

Charles John Brydges, the second Hudson's Bay Company Land Commissioner, played a key role in the change. His correspondence is full of information about the difficulties experienced by the Honourable Company in turning itself into an up-to-date commercial concern with burgeoning "sale shops," contracts to supply government departments (chiefly the Indian Department and the North West Mounted Police), bridge construction projects, steamboat operations, and, above all, valuable real estate holdings. He was sometimes impatient with the old men and the old ways when he saw so clearly the need for a new kind of competence, sophisticated commercial and accounting skills, that would make it possible for the Company to compete effectively with new, go-ahead traders who were bringing into the country well-chosen inventories of goods that appealed to settlers, and with the I.G. Baker Company at Fort Benton, Montana, which was such a successful rival in securing government contracts.

An experienced railwayman himself, Brydges was a shrewd observer of railroad construction and operation and of the effects on land values and the progress of settlement. He noted the impact of rail and expanding steamboat services on the Saskatchewan River in putting an end to traditional freighting by trains of Red River carts. He commented on land speculation and showed a lively awareness of the interdependence of business and political concerns and the need for "tact & management" (p. 169) in dealings with the government.

In disposing of Hudson's Bay Company lands Brydges insisted on the need for accurate information for would-be buyers, sending out surveyors to make detailed reports on the character and quality of the Company's holdings. He himself made extensive tours, describing in his reports the capabilities of the country and the extent of new settlement. He stressed the advantages of the Company over rival landowners, pointing out that its land sales brought consistently higher prices than those obtained by the CPR or the government. He urged the need for the Company to develop services required by settlers, especially mills, hotels and stores.

The Introduction explores the background of Brydges' work and the nature of the difficulties with which he struggled, sketching the role of his predecessor, Donald

A. Smith (later Lord Strathcona), the first Land Commissioner, and the unfinished business that Brydges inherited from his regime. It discusses Brydges' character, policies, and achievements, not the least of these being the creation of a "new image of the Hudson's Bay Company as a citizen of the Canadian North-West" (p. lxxxiv).

Besides the significance of its contents, this book has still other claims to special attention. In two fundamental ways it marks the beginning of a new era in the publications of the Hudson's Bay Record Society. Following the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company (as Glyndwr Williams remarked in his preface to the preceding volume) across the Atlantic to Winnipeg, the Society has issued this volume in Canada under the aegis of a Canadian General Editor, and with an introduction by a Canadian scholar. Further, this is the first volume in which post-1870 records appear in print. These two new departures give this publication a special interest. They also invite comparison with the earlier publications of the Society.

There have been some changes in editorial practice. Particulars of the physical character of the documents published in the volume are missing. Were Brydges' letters written in his own hand or by a clerk? Or were they, perhaps, typewritten? A great many folios in the archival series on which this volume is based (A.12/18-21) have been left out. No explanation is given and only an occasional footnote indicates the content of a few omissions. It is easy to see why the volume begins in 1879 with Brydges' appointment as Land Commissioner, by why does it end in 1882? Is there to be another volume to cover the remaining years of his Commissionership?

There are a few rather puzzling slips, such as the identification of Pile of Bones Creek as the "present Regina, Sask." (p. 250, footnote 1 and index), instead of as Wascana Creek on which modern Regina stands. More serious is the dating of the Deed of Surrender by which the Hudson's Bay Company relinquished to the Imperial Government its Charter rights. The Deed is reproduced in Appendix A as Schedule C of the Order in Council admitting Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory into the Dominion of Canada. The only date given is June 23, 1870, the date of the Order in Council. The Introduction states: "By early 1870, however, with prospects of a return to stability [after the Riel rising], the Company concluded with the British government a 'Deed of Surrender'" (pp. xiii-xiv and xxiii). In fact, the Governor of the Company signed the Deed on November 19, 1869, in the expectation that Canada would take over Rupert's Land on December 1, 1869. (See E. E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870*, Vol. II, p. 912).

Such discrepancies notwithstanding, this volume is a notable addition to the Society's publications. It is likely to attract a wider range of readers even than its precursors. It is a happy augury for the future; clearly there is a wealth of material in the records of 1870 to 1900 for many useful volumes, as well, it is to be hoped, as some further volumes based on still unpublished pre-1870 records.

Irene M. Spry

EACH FOR ALL: A HISTORY OF THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN ENGLISH CANADA, 1900-1945. By Ian MacPherson. Toronto: Macmillan, 1979. Pp. 258. \$9.95.

Ian MacPherson, an Associate Professor of History at the University of Victoria, has written an outline of the co-operative movement in English-speaking Canada

from the turn of the century to the end of World War II. He has chosen 1900 and 1945 as his time limits because it was during this period that the movement established itself on firm, lasting foundations.

Three themes appear in this work. First is the conflict between producer and consumer co-operatives, the former wanting higher prices for producers, the latter lower prices for consumers. MacPherson's second theme is the co-operative movement as a means of protest by the hinterlands against the economic control of central Canada. This dissatisfaction with their economic status contributed to the strength of the co-operative movement in Canada's traditional hinterlands, the Maritimes and the prairie West. Co-operation offered Maritimers and Westerners the opportunity to run their own businesses and thus, to some extent, their economic lives. MacPherson's third theme is the conflict between local and centralized control within the co-op movement. Local control contributed to the proliferation of co-operatives, as members were eager to direct their own affairs, but for co-ops to survive centralized control was necessary, to offer financial and managerial advice and to enable local co-ops to compete with privately-owned chain stores. Centralized control took the direction of affairs away from local operations and led to the loss of active member participation at the local level.

These three themes are difficult to follow in MacPherson's book. He has chosen a chronological rather than a thematic approach. He examines the co-operative movement in the four regions of English-speaking Canada — the Maritimes, Ontario, the prairies, and British Columbia — in five and ten-year periods. Detail is plentiful but there is little development of the themes common to the movement. At times one wonders if co-operators in the regions shared anything. They did but MacPherson does not emphasize the similarities.

He prefers to present a detailed narrative since he is attempting to introduce the subject, to reveal some of the people, organizations, and developments in the co-op movement. This he does. The reader meets the tireless secretary of the Co-operative Union of Canada, George Keen and becomes acquainted with various co-ops, such as the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and the Wheat Pools. He sees certain developments take place, such as the growth of credit unions in Western Canada during the Depression to fill the vacuum created by the withdrawal of traditional credit institutions. These credit unions were very successful and their strength supported the entire co-op movement.

The strength of MacPherson's book is the introduction of these people, organizations, and developments. MacPherson indicates that more study is needed on these subjects and he suggests the areas that need work. His footnotes and bibliography show what sources are available for further research. Despite a confusing organization this work provokes thought and discussion on the co-operative movement in Canada.

Warren Clubb

WHEAT AND WOMAN. By Georgina Binnie-Clark with introduction by Susan Jackel. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, No. 30 Social History Series, 1979. Illus. First published 1914. \$7.50 paper, \$20.00 cloth.

The main purpose of the University of Toronto Press "Social History Series" is to provide the reading public with ready access to books and materials that have a special bearing upon the social history of Canada. To date thirty volumes have been re-issued in this series: among others these include Nellie McClung's *In Times Like These*, J. S. Woodsworth's *Strangers Within Our Gates*, Salem Bland's *The New Christianity* and Catherine Cleverdon's *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada*. The most recent book to appear is Georgina Binnie-Clark's *Wheat and Woman*. Given the mandate of the "Social History Series" what are the justifications for selecting this book? Depending upon the interest of the particular reader, many reasons exist for the editors' choice.

For those interested in the travel literature of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries *Wheat and Woman* illustrates a distinctive style that is both easy to read and informative. As Susan Jackel, in her excellent introductory essay, points out, Georgina Binnie-Clark was an English gentlewoman turned author who, by the time it came to write her book, faced a reading public in Great Britain that had become jaded to the strict, unimaginative format of the travel literature genre. To counter this phenomenon Binnie-Clark adopted the devices of dialogue, plot, dramatic incident and characterization that is more commonly associated with fictional writing. Unfortunately for Binnie-Clark, however, her experiment in style coincided with the start of World War One and few readers bothered to read travel literature while their country was in the throes of the Great War.

Aside from the stylistic features of *Wheat and Woman* the reader interested in the status of women in prairie frontier society will find this volume an interesting account of one woman's attempt to establish herself as a farmer in the Qu'Appelle district of Saskatchewan. It is this aspect of the book which provides one of the two historically significant focal points of the volume. Not only does the reader learn of the attitudes of men towards women farmers but also of the disabilities that prospective women farmers faced in establishing themselves.

Indeed, the reader is treated to vivid, albeit bitter, accounts of the secondary status that women were expected to adhere to by their male counterparts. Binnie-Clark's brother, who spent one summer helping on her farm and who thoughtlessly created extra work for Binnie-Clark by not cleaning up after himself, caused her to muse:

Always at the back of my mind had been the belief that they [men] had a genuine title to the splendid term which has come to be a byword, "lord of creation." To make life possible one drank at the fountain of the thought of men, not women; but through the shoulder to shoulder rub of everyday working-life in Canada it grew clear that although more giants had issued from the male division, within the crowd men have hoisted their pretension to superior power not on the rock of superior work, but on the sands of superior wages—the misappropriation and unfair division of money. (p. 164)

It is clear from this statement that Georgina Binnie-Clark's attitudes about the expected roles of men and women underwent a significant transformation during her lifetime. The "shoulder-to-shoulder rub of everyday working-life in Canada" acted as a catalyst in this process with her views changing from a passive acceptance

of the "natural" order of things, where men dominated women, to a militant rejection of this order. No doubt this change in attitude was furthered by the economic disabilities that she, as a woman, faced in setting up her farm. Unlike her male neighbours, Binnie-Clark was not eligible to apply for a homestead grant. Instead, she was forced to purchase her land. This in itself placed her under the shadow of exceptional financial burden that in the early years of her farming career created untold difficulties and retarded the development of her land. Capital that men would have been able to apply to breaking new land or purchasing machinery had to be used by Binnie-Clark to purchase land. She complained justifiably that:

... even allowing that a woman farmer is at a slight disadvantage in working out a farm proposition, she has the killing weight of extra payment thrust on her at the very outset. She may be the best farmer in Canada, she may buy land, work it, take prizes in seed and stock but she is denied the right to claim from the Government the hundred and sixty acres of land held out as a bait to every man. (p. 300.)

Unquestionably the insights that *Wheat and Woman* provides about the status of women in the prairie farm society at the turn of the century more than warrant the re-publication of this volume. But another feature of the book supplants this aspect in the significance that it has for the understanding of the settlement era in Saskatchewan's history. This element is, of course, the vast amount of information that Binnie-Clark includes about the development of her farm. Her comments about the purpose of summerfallowing, for example, indicate that the concept of fallowing land for moisture preservation may not have been as wide spread in 1914, when the book was written, as has been assumed by some agricultural historians. (pp. 26-27.) Since it is generally agreed that this particular cultivation innovation was a key factor in the successful settlement of the dry belt region of the prairies a thorough examination of the process of diffusion of this technique, and others, might aid us in a better understanding of the agricultural settlement era.

Along similar lines, Binnie-Clark recommended the adoption of mixed farming (pp. 214 and 265) and her comments seem to reflect a general acceptance of this practise. John Herd Thompson, in his study *The Harvests of War*, has suggested that this system of agriculture was well established just prior to World War One and that the pattern became disrupted by the wheat mining practises of the war years. Binnie-Clark's observations seem to lend support to at least the first part of Thompson's argument.

Indeed, for the reader generally interested in the history of Saskatchewan, *Wheat and Woman* represents a timely addition to a growing literature about that province. It is particularly valuable for the information it provides about the status of women and about the history of farming. Hopefully the re-issue of this book will help stimulate a greater interest in the history of rural Saskatchewan, in particular, and rural Western Canada, in general. *Wheat and Woman* raises many issues that require thorough examination in order that a full understanding of the activities and thoughts of the majority of Western Canadians during the settlement era, the rural people, can be developed. Prairie historians have trod the streets of the cities long enough, it is time for at least some of them to plough new fields and walk the backroads of the country.

Rudy G. Marchildon

Notes and Correspondence

Subscription Rates — *Saskatchewan History*

Effective with Volume XXXIV No. 1 (1981) the subscription rate for *Saskatchewan History* becomes \$2.00 a copy or \$6.00 for a yearly subscription of three issues. The price increase has been forced by increased costs of production and distribution.

Exploring Local History in Saskatchewan

In cooperation with the Saskatchewan Archives Board, the Department of Continuing Education and the Department of Culture and Youth, the Saskatchewan 1980 Diamond Jubilee Corporation has published a booklet entitled *Exploring Local History in Saskatchewan*. The booklet is based on lecture notes prepared for a series of workshops held at various points throughout the province through the community college system to assist groups preparing a local history. This booklet is intended to be a basic guide to those beginning the exploration of local history. Copies of the booklet are available to local history groups at no charge. If your group is interested in securing a copy please write to the Saskatchewan Archives Board, University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan, S4S 0A2.

Local Archives and History Conference

In November 1979 the Saskatchewan Archives Board sponsored a local history and archives conference in recognition of International Archives week. Papers given by Dr. N. Ward, Dr. J. H. Archer, I. E. Wilson and Mildred Rose at the conference have now been published. A limited number of copies of the publication called *The Proceedings of the Local Archives and History Conference* are available without charge. Anyone interested in securing a copy should write to Saskatchewan Archives Board, University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan, S4S 0A2.

Myth that La Corne Grew Wheat

In comment on the two articles dealing with the question of whether or not wheat was first grown near the later site of the Hudson Bay Company's Fort-à-la-Corne (Volume XXXIII No. 1) Dr. Lorne C. Paul formerly editor of *Saskatchewan Farm Science* writes:

"I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. C. Stuart Houston and K. Rasmussen on their articles regarding grain production at Fort a la Corne, which appeared in the Winter 1980 edition of *Saskatchewan History*.

It would seem that I was the one who opened the can of worms when what appeared to be reliable information was included in the February 1965 issue of *Saskatchewan Farm Science*, when I was editor of this publication.

If the 1965 statement was responsible for the intensive studies of Houston and Rasmussen and the laying to final rest of the myth that grain was grown at La Corne in 1754, it has brought forth valuable information without which the myth might still be flourishing."

Portrait J. F. Macleod

The portrait identified as of J. G. Macleod published in *Saskatchewan History* Volume XXXIII No. 1 page 15 appears to be a portrait of Lord Lorne. We are grateful to Mr. George Howard of Mississauga, Ontario for drawing this error to our attention.

Regional History Award

The Regional History Committee of the Canadian Historical Association wishes to announce that it is soliciting nominations for its 'Certificate of Merit' Awards. These annual awards are given for meritorious publications, or for exceptional contributions by individuals or organizations to regional history. The awards will be announced at the CHA Annual Meeting in Halifax in June 1981. Please send your nominations before 1st December 1980 to the prairie representative on the committee at the following address: Professor Gerald Friesen, Department of History, St. Paul's College, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

CONTRIBUTORS

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September 4,
1905

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University of Saskatchewan,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
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