ERRATUM

Pages 348 and 349 are missing due to a typing error.
Even these little things are affected by revolutions of state and the change of manners, as the storm which wrecks an armada turns the village weathercock.

Robert Southey, Letter from England XXIV.
 APPROVAL

Name: Bruce E. Batchelor
Degree: Doctor of Philosophy
Title of Thesis: The Agrarian Frontier Near Red Deer and Lacombe, Alberta, 1882-1914
Examin ing Committee:
Chairperson: Mary L. Barker

__________________________
P aul M. Koroscil
Senior Supervisor

__________________________
Guy Steed, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, University of Ottawa

__________________________
David H. Breen, Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of British Columbia

__________________________
L.J. Evenden

__________________________
Carl J. Tracie
External Examiner
Associate Professor, Department of Geography, University of Saskatchewan

Date Approved: April 5, 1978
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Author: __________________________________________
(signature)

________________________________________
Bruce E. Batchelor
(name)

________________________________________
April 24, 1978
(date)
THE AGRARIAN FRONTIER NEAR RED DEER
AND LACOMBE, ALBERTA,
1882-1914

Volume One
ABSTRACT

This historical geographic study enquires into the social and economic processes of the agrarian frontier around the Alberta parkland communities of Red Deer and Lacombe during three decades after 1882. Three hypotheses focus the study: 1) the evolution of a regional cultural identity was fostered by selective historical processes in immigration and in land policy; 2) land use intensified over time and the increase in the regional agricultural product arose at least as much from intra-farm intensification as from the augmentation of the number of farming units; and 3) when the failure of the rural economy to deliver the level of farm income expected by rural residents was finally acknowledged, rural producers shifted the role of the individual in social and economic thought. This shift was accomplished, however, without endangering liberal notions of the autonomy of the individual in the marketplace, and although the change was more particularly associated with the reform movement of the years after the war, this study is concerned with its economic basis. The first hypothesis concerns the immigration period from 1882 to the end of the land rush at the turn of the century, the second the intercensal period of 1901-11, and the third the period of wild speculation, economic depression and
and war at the end of the study period.

The methods are not unusual in historical geography. Chronological treatment is applied to statistical and documentary sources concerning immigration and a number of selected sectors in the rural economy. The time span of the study is divided into three for editorial convenience and analytical clarity. Maps from little-used Dominion statistics are presented to show change in the rural economy over the decade 1901-11 in such sectors as hog raising, horse rearing, cattle production, arable farming and dairy production. The concept of economic man is used to appraise producer decisions. Some alternatives which hold appeal in retrospect were rendered out of reach to parkland farmers by limitations in the liberal social and economic creed of the time. The study uses a broad range of documentary, statistical, cartographic, secondary and oral sources, and concludes with a short descriptive model of land use in the region over the three decades under study.

The general findings of the study, taking the hypotheses in order, are as follows. Immigration selectivity was enforced in the Red Deer region in the 1880's by a combination of poor economic conditions, the effects of the Rebellion of 1885, the emigration of many potential immigrants from eastern Canada to the United States, and the influence of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company. This company, part of the corporate colonization scheme of 1881-85, exerted a profound and lingering regional effect on land prices and on the spatial
focus of colonization in the Red Deer-Lacombe corridor. Some properties were listed in its name as late as 1918. Most early immigrants were Canadian or British; many of those arriving in the nineties were American. Among the Americans were many who fared poorly because of the slow state of the economy and the meagreness of their original capitalization. A colony of Jews at Pine Lake failed utterly from destitution.

With the land rush of 1900-03 the nationalistic dream of the earlier arrivals on the frontier for an Anglo-Saxon countryside was met in part, but the American identity of much of the immigrant wave was resented by some who felt that the purity of Loyalist ideals and the closeness of the Imperial tie were compromised. Full settlement of the countryside was expected to lead to rural prosperity, but while some leading farmers forged ahead economically most families were confined to low and irregular receipts and by 1911 there were few districts more than 50% settled. Rural protestors typically blamed the low rate of occupancy on outside speculators in land, but the feature seems in fact to have been caused by a dynamic regional balance in land prices. Part of the effect of this process was to deflect potential settlers with small initial capitalization to newer frontier zones outside the study area, the matter of future land purchases for farm expansion apparently being of some importance.

The reliance of rural protestors on the handy stereotype of class economic conflict—the speculator versus the
small farmer--demonstrated an intellectual deficiency of the reform movement. Farm protest in the Red Deer region was led by men of education, business ability, social status and financial achievement, and complaints were most vociferous in periods of combined low markets and sagging real estate values. This pattern is reviewed by a detailed documentation of cyclical trend in the pork and arable cropping sectors. Economic cooperation was forestalled by protective traditional liberal attitudes to individual rights in marketing decisions, and by the common habit of taking short-term profits in place of guarantees to cooperative marketing agencies.

The economic rewards of the frontier were dismal for most farm families, the typical increase in personal worth over the decade 1901-11 being about $1500 separate from land value. It is argued, in support of a long tradition in western Canadian scholarship on this matter, that farm land values came to be seen effectively as wages for the years spent in developing frontier farms. Despite the nostalgic images of frontier farm life, rural transiency and actual depopulation in some townships even before the Great War were indicative of the beginnings of later difficulties in the rural social milieu.
"...there was some people had just a little better idea of making money, and there was some people done some awful foolish things and you couldn't know quite why they did it; others went ahead and after awhile those that didn't get very far wanted to go to the coast. The ones who made money could live, and they could progress as inventions come they could afford better implements. And it wasn't always on the best land that the most progressive people lived, but they may have bought out better farms as time went on; but a person had to do with what he had and there were those who failed on the better land. The better ones seemed always to be able to get their money out, and there were always persons coming in with money, even as there are today."

from JLB; Morningside, 1975.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No work of this sort could be accomplished without substantial assistance. Thanks go to Dr Paul Koroscil, Senior Supervisor, for sustaining an unusually free and creative working relationship, and to the other members of the Department of Geography, Simon Fraser University, for fostering the sort of environment in which research achievement can be laced with curiosity and speculation. Profound thanks go to Mary Batchelor for toiling through the typing of a massive manuscript, and to all the other members of the family who have cherished this work almost as if it were their own. Without the tireless insistence of my sister Sheila the recovery of data from the obscure *Historical Tabulations* of Statistics Canada would not have been possible. Very special thanks must be given to Ron and Nena Whistance-Smith of Edmonton who graciously provided not just a room but an actual home during the exhausting weeks of documentary research. The author is indebted to Simon Fraser University for support through an Open Graduate Scholarship and to the Canada Council for a Doctoral Fellowship. Some of the more exceptionable statements in the work have been moderated through the indulgence of a patient examining committee; any faults which remain are thoroughly my own.
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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACR Alberta Central Railway
ADA Alberta Department of Agriculture, Annual Reports
CASGA Central Alberta Stock Growers’ Association
C&E Calgary and Edmonton Railway
DANWT Department of Agriculture, North-West Territories, Annual Reports
DP Delburne Progress
GTP Grand Trunk Pacific Railway
HTCS Census of Canada, Historical Tabulations of the Census of Agriculture (1901 and 1911)
LG Lacombe [Western] Globe
RDAA Red Deer Alberta Advocate
RDCS Red Deer Centennial Series (biographies of settlers)
RDN Red Deer News
SLHC Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company
STA Standard Township Area (An area of 23000 acres of agriculturally exploitable land; see Appendix I.)
PREFACE

The opening of the Canadian west to Anglo-American colonization was part of the 'march of civilization' for which the nineteenth century was remarkable. In the course of a few decades of what Henry George called the 'wonderful century' colonizers of western European cultural background appropriated large portions of the world for the production of staple commodities and attempted to exercise their own traditions in environments and among cultures in which they were, to varying extents, misfits. At the beginning of the century it was generally supposed that mechanization would relieve common people from the burden of toil. The growing importance of the machine was thought to be

"... elevating society from its very foundations, lifting the very poorest above the possibility of want, exempting the very lowest from anxiety for the material needs of life ... these slaves of the lamp of knowledge taking on themselves the traditional curse, these muscles of iron and sinews of steel making the poorest laborer's life a holiday, in which every high quality and noble impulse could have scope to grow."  (1)

1 Henry George, Progress and Poverty (New York, 1891), p 4, commenting on the manner in which the dream went wrong.
That this vision was not borne out is common knowledge; urban blight, wage slavery, the exercise of privilege, class and status, and the falterings of imperfectly managed and little-understood industrial economies were responsible, among other things, for the dimming of the general optimism which marked the early Victorian period. By the last quarter of the century it became apparent that piecemeal attempts to right the course of events were useless and that only a concerted shift in social philosophy touching the core of liberal beliefs -- the idea of social progress and the role of the individual in economic advancement -- would be adequate to effect change. This change was simultaneously radical and conservative, radical in the sense that unusual methods were employed and sensational threats made to accomplish grandly conceived ends, but conservative in the sense that the end desired was, by implication, a return to conditions of individual worth and economic leverage associated with the halcyon days of individual entrepreneurship of mid-century. Scholars have been able to make their choice among the trends in this movement according to their persuasion -- socialist, Marxist, liberal progressive, or conservative -- and there have been times at which the debate has descended to the frivolity sometimes seen in textual criticism unrelated to the 'real world'.

This work considers the landscape and the lives of frontier men and women in a part of central Alberta during a
crucial period in the development of the Canadian west, a period which involved not only the settlement of the land but also the shift from the classic liberalism of the small independent producer to the progressive or reform liberalism of the period after the Great War. In Alberta the reform wave was an attempt to discover political mechanisms and economic guarantees which would ensure in effect a return to the idyll of independence in which the grandfathers of frontier settlers were believed to have lived. A veneer of millenialism and radical rhetoric concealed the conservative core of the movement. But the development of reform policies involved nevertheless a synthesis of elements which were both indigenously Canadian and borrowed from the stock of tradition imported by immigrants. The synthesis reached back into the tradition of protest on the Upper Canadian frontier, the liberal protests of Ontario in the seventies, the cooperative philosophies of both urban workers and rural folk, Loyalist hagiography, obscure but powerful ideas on the historicity of the frontier as the vehicle of white Protestant civilization, diverse components from the vast stock of midwestern United States' protest movements, and mechanistic ideas of class harmony imported by English conservatives.

Classic liberalism underwent a metamorphosis into reform liberalism according to the definitions we devise in this work by the shifting of the focus on individual action in the historical process. Progressivism, we maintain, was marked by assumption of responsibility by individuals for
changes in the welfare of all men—something which was of concern only to those who could afford to be philanthropists under the tenets of classic liberalism. The synthesis was not complete until after the Great War, and any study of economy, land and society on the western frontier is directed perforce to a discussion of the components, both Canadian and imported, which made up the movement and the manner in which they became accommodated on the frontier. In the Red Deer region this accommodation was fostered, we argue, by selectivity in immigration such that a population which was already agreed on the importance of individual economic progress was already part of the way toward a logical solution to the inconsistencies between the old liberal notions and the needs of the twentieth century.

Few arrivals on the frontier could have known whether they were to be among the success or the failures. There was much scope for the exercise of will, forbearance and physical strength, and the major sensation of the frontier must have been one of excitement. That this excitement was fanned by the hope for a rise in property values is now regarded as one of the crucial weaknesses in western development, but at the time it was a perfectly natural expectation within the liberal commercial spirit of the age. Individual and social progress were linked in an ethos which saw easy economic conditions leading automatically to the improvement of all men, and the frontier where there was cheap land for those without existing advantage was a natural home for the creed.
This study looks into the interplay among ideas, the land, historical developments and the actions of both the leaders and the common folk on a small part of the frontier of the western farmer and small rancher. In the space of the three decades of the frontier the producers of the parklands moved, as did most of the rural people of the continent, from a position of moral superiority and relative economic certainty to a position of bewilderment, anger and economic imprisonment. The story is both monumental and tragic, and it is impossible to tell without tacit resort to the devices of regenerative tragedy beloved by Victorian novelists and by later chroniclers of the western frontier such as Robert Stead and Frederick Grove. In this tradition the protagonist at some point attains a degree of spiritual peace in having had a glimpse of the hand of a Greater Power in the working of things. As some of the old-timers of the frontier sit in their well-earned retirement it can be felt that individually such realization has occurred. "You see, our fathers expected too much of the land", some of them have said.

Dissertations are properly didactic only by implication; an implication of the research in these pages might be that the realization of the broken promise of the land has not become general. The limits we have reached in an old political union based on the conveniences of a century ago are a challenge which might be met by measures more appropriate than the loose axioms which brought the west into the twentieth century.
CHAPTER I

OBJECTIVES;

LITERATURE SURVEY; CRITERIA FOR THE STUDY AREA;

SOURCES OF DATA; METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS.
OBJECTIVES AND STUDY AREA

The objective of this study is the portrayal of the people and the changing economic landscape of a part of the central Alberta frontier of 1882 to 1914. This will be done with reference to the national and regional economic cycles, to the regulations of the Dominion bureaucracy in matters of immigration and agricultural policy, to changing farm and stock technology and to the rural social milieu. The device of change over time is used to gauge the fortunes of agricultural producers and of their region. Economic behavior in the liberal commercial tradition is important to the analysis of the data, and the coherence of the region in the manner of a culture area is thought to have sprung partly from an umbrella of beliefs originating in common liberal elements in the background of the Anglo-Saxon settlers.

There appear to be few detailed studies on the parkland belt of western Canada at the time of agrarian settlement. The study area lies between Calgary and Edmonton and consists of some thirty townships mostly to the east of the rail line between the two towns of Red Deer and Lacombe. The area was chosen for combined considerations of adequate primary data, the survival of some oral tradition, substantial local interest and publication in local history, a lack of previous scholarship,
and a conviction both on the part of the researcher and many of the inhabitants of the region that the colonization process which had occurred there contained a good story. The study area is shown on Map I along with information on the geological heritage of the region. The fractional townships at the periphery of the map represent the real limits of the study, which limits arise from the coincidence of boundaries in newspaper service areas on the frontier, the configuration of Census sub-districts and especially the manner in which colonization spread on the land rush frontier at the turn of the century. The study area is in fact the portion of the countryside which was populated to some density by approximately 1903. The district names used in the study are those of the frontier school districts; these are available from Map VII.
The settlement of the Canadian west has been described as "...an experiment in marginal agriculture in which the costs, both material and human were high, and the process of successful adaptation slow." ¹ Little has been written concerning cultural and economic influences on the agricultural practices of the Canadian west ² and much of that concerns the dry prairies and the problems encountered during the social and environmental distress of the Great Depression period. There have been numerous studies of 'ethnic' groups on the prairies, but few, if any, systematic studies of the frontier ³ of the Anglo-Saxon farmer, shopkeeper, stock dealer and speculator. A small number of intensive studies in


2. The founding work in this field is R.W. Murchie's Agricultural Progress on the Prairie Frontier (Toronto, 1936.) Various monographic studies have peripherally concerned the evolution of prairie cultivation practices, but it is interesting that a recent publication shows that there is still enormous room for groundbreaking research; see John H. Thompson, "Permanently Wasteful but Immediately Profitable: Prairie Agriculture and the Great War", Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers, 1976, pp 193-206.

3. The word 'frontier' is used in this study in the broad sense of the undeveloped edge of a more differentiated cont'd...
historical geography complement established writings in economic history, and in particular illuminate the workings of the Dominion Lands Branch of the Department of the Interior; but Canadian settlement patterns at the local scale have received little attention and few works demonstrate sensitivity to the subtleties of change over time in settlement morphology. With the exception of Fitzgerald's massive and elegant Pioneer Settlement in Northern Saskatchewan and some works on the Peace River country there seems to have been no

3 cont'd and 'civilized' society. Under this definition the frontier period could have, and did, last for several decades; for a discussion of the various meanings that the word has had over the years see Fulmer Mood, "Notes on the History of the Word Frontier", Agricultural History 22:2 (1948), pp 78-83. Mood points out that the word did not attain the above meaning in a major dictionary until the end of the nineteenth century, although there is ample evidence that the popular usage included some similar meaning for some time before that.

4 For a comprehensive bibliography of the writings in Canadian economic history impinging upon agriculture up to the Second World War see V.C. Fowke, "An Introduction to Canadian Agricultural History", Agricultural History 16:2 (1942), pp 79-90. The works in historical geography are indexed in R.C. Harris, "Historical Geography in Canada", Canadian Geographer XI (1967), pp 235-250; the important works are cited in note 12, infra.

5 R.C. Harris, "Historical Geography in Canada", op. cit., p 235.

6 Ibid, p 236.

7 D.P. Fitzgerald, Pioneer Settlement in Northern Saskatchewan, unpublished dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1966. The period and the environmental geography of the Fitzgerald study differ so markedly from this study that there are few parallels except in the focus of the research methodology.
major attempt in the west to discover the relationships at the local scale among features of agrarian colonization and demography, material culture, agricultural technique, soils and other characteristics of the physical environment, the historical timing of settlement, the cultural identity of the population and important political events and extra-regional economic trends. 8

There is no need for renewed critical comment on the Turner thesis, which somehow survives in a non-Kuhnian fashion as a backdrop to much of the thought on frontier society in North America. It can be accepted without much dispute that the idea of the frontier, like the concept of empire which coloured the life of the country in its own way, was a telling influence on several generations of Canadians—on what they chose to do for a living, on their material expectations, on the kind of organizations they fostered, on the sort of world they thought they were leaving to their children and on a number of smaller issues such as the expectations one would have had from a bond of friendship. Because the influence of the frontier was pervasive over long periods, and diverse, it cannot be considered to have been a simple phenomenon. The ideas

8 For the linkage of the cultural landscape to economic change at the larger regional scale see Karl Lenz, Die Prärie-provinzen Kanadas: der Wandel der Kulturlandschaft von der Kolonisation bis zur Gegenwart unter dem Einfluss der Industrie (Marburg, 1955).
of simple determinism of environment and culture have been modified in scholarship over the last few decades and it is no longer thought that the frontier offers the researcher a simplified environment similar to that among primitive groups which was once thought by some to give a peek into the human past. It must be stated with some precision what we expect a frontier to have been and the sorts of analytical methods adaptable to it.

Frontiers are unique combinations of place, culture and the moment of history involved, and they require analytical historical and spatial methods which do not pre-judge the 'simplicity' of culture and economy. Comparative studies of frontiers may reveal similarities, but important discoveries are not inevitable and may result from unnoticed influences from some common source in the heritage of the colonizing populations. At any rate, lack of systematic scholarship has so far precluded comparisons, and few frontier studies have even taken account of pre-existing economic and environmental conditions.

Researchers into the customs and settlements of frontier populations sometimes present findings with


no reference as to the characteristics of populations, the
identity of leaders, and the context of events. 11

Few studies in the geography of the Canadian Plains 12
investigate intra-regional cultural unity. 13

11 idem; and for similar points of view see John Hudson, "Two Dakota Homestead Frontiers", Annals of the Association of American Geographers 63:4 (1973), p 442; and P.J. Perry, "Agricultural History: a Geographer's Critique", Agricultural History 46:2 (1972), p 261. Hudson feels that the commonly used perception and adaptation themes, despite their success at defining 'in situ' relationships are "...inadequate when interpreting the larger context of events that guided and restrained internal development [in frontier regions]". The von Nardroff 'safety valve' interpretation was criticised by Henry M. Littlefield for the reason among others, that "...America is not one graph on a chart, it is many graphs on many charts." See p 49 of "Has the Safety Valve Come Back to Life?", Agricultural History 38:1 (1964).

12 A survey of the Canadian literature in geography and other fields straddling the material of this study reveals that there are few works nearly comparable in method, and none which are concerned with the relationship between colonization and agriculture in the so-called 'fertile belt'; the most apposite studies are: John W. Bennett and Seena B. Kohl, "Characterological, Strategic and Institutional Interpretations of Prairie Settlement, in: Anthony W. Raspovich, ed., Western Canada: Past and Present (Calgary, 1975), pp 14-27; Eckart Ehlers, Das Nördliche Peace River Country, Alberta, Kanada: Genese und Struktur eines Pionierraumes im Borealen Waldland Nordamerikas (Tubingen, 1965); D.P. Fitzgerald, Pioneer Settlement in Northern Saskatchewan, op. cit.; Barry Kaye, Some Aspects of the Historical Geography of the Red River Settlement from 1812-1870, unpublished thesis, University of Manitoba, 1967; Donald C. McGowan, Grassland Settlers: The Swift Current Region During the Era of the Ranching Frontier (Regina, 1975); Chester F. Prevey, The Development of the Dairy Industry in Alberta, unpublished thesis, University of Toronto, 1950; John Proskie, Financial Progress of Settlers with

13 See next page
studies with a regional setting have been performed in the field of historical geography, but as far as can be ascertained, the number of theses at the master's and doctoral

12 cont'd

It would be frivolous to attempt a comprehensive résumé of allied American research given the wealth of regional, state and county histories and geographies compiled over a period of decades; two studies which are very close to the intent of this one are: William Grover Robbins, The Far Western Frontier: Economic Opportunity and Social Democracy in Early Roseberg, Oregon, unpublished dissertation, University of Oregon, 1969; (for a summary of the research contained in Robbin's dissertation see "Social and Economic Change in Roseberg, Oregon, 1850-1885; a Quantitative View", Pacific Northwest Quarterly 64:2 [1973], pp 80-87); and James T. Lemon, The Best Poor Man's Country, A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania (New York, 1976).

As a general rule we omit references to the ranching frontier of the short grass plains on the assumption that the environmental issues and the human cultural habits differed greatly from those on the agrarian frontier of the more humid zone.


levels dealing with any aspect of interaction among rural land use, demography and culture, and landscape and settlement morphology in any part of the Canadian plains is about a dozen. In historical research there is an equally small number of works dealing with the correlative field of historical agricultural economics, and there is a mere handful concerned with the improvement of animal stock. In some fields the research was first carried out at foreign universities, and in most cases these lines of enquiry have never been tested by indigenous scholars.

This lack of attention is not difficult to explain. Canadian historical research has not maintained a tradition of researching the life of the ordinary man and scholarship on popular movements has tended to focus on leaders and issues rather than on the constituencies concerned. Until recently the frontier has not seemed far enough in the past to have been treated historically, and the direction of the nation politically and economically has distinctively coloured scholarship. The reliance of the country on a restricted range of staple commodities has focussed attention on these products and upon the channels of trade they have followed. Where important social movements have affected these channels, such as in protest in the grain trade, scholarship has been adequate, and the research into the economic history of the staples themselves is renowned. But little attention has been paid in the west at the minor regional scale to the places and to the people
which produced agricultural goods. Some agricultural sectors, such as cattle and hog production, have received very little attention.
STUDY AREA AND SOURCE MATERIALS

The small region chosen for the study exhibited some degree of internal coherence in culture and economy while at the same time demonstrating some intra-regional variety in land use at the district level. An important consideration in the choice of the region was the size and diversity of the corpus of primary material on early society and economy. While gaps in the evidence for short terms of a year or two would make the construction of a detailed study difficult for any one community in the region, the sources available for the region as a whole blend together effectively over time and space. The overall adequacy of the materials does not mean that they are, however, virtually inexhaustible. In fact, it was possible for almost all important materials to be covered in a universal sample by the researcher. This was thought to have been an important consideration in the choice of the region and of methodology.

The parkland belt lies between the short grass plains of the Canada-United States border region and the boreal forest across the north of the prairie provinces. The attractiveness of the area to settlers, many of whom had felt the effects of drought and economic uncertainty on American frontiers of the eighties and nineties, rested upon the ready availability of good soil, clear water, ample wood for fuel and building, and large tracts of wild hay. In the parklands the success of the

15 The physical geography and ecology of the region are described in detail in the next chapter.
farmer came more from business acumen than from the brute perseverence and good fortune in grain prices which were the hallmarks of homesteaders on the monocultural grain frontier. For rather elementary geographic reasons it was clear that the central Alberta frontier would be among the last of North American pioneer regions, and in the early years of white colonization around Red Deer and Lacombe there was general agreement among the populace that the tide of settlement implied the final vanquishing of the realm of the savage and the substitution of civilization in the form of homes, villages, schools and churches. The motivating beliefs behind the commercial spirit in the tide of colonization were liberal, but they came from such a variety of sources that it is possible now only to allude to the main characteristics of the social ethic of the time. The dominant component of the tradition was the desirability of individual economic progress.

More is said in later pages on the influence of liberal notions on the social and commercial life of the study area, but a short definition of the form of liberalism most affecting the region should be offered here. In the study the drift from classic liberalism to reform or progressive liberalism is noted.

16 The concept of the frontier as a continental phenomenon is repeated in Walter Sage, "Aspects of the Frontier in Canadian History", Canadian Historical Association Annual Report, 1928, pp 62-72; the theme is resurrected by Paul F. Sharp, "The American Farmer and the 'Last Best West'", Agricultural History 21:1 (1947), pp 65-75.

17 While this study defines the liberal notions exercised in the region under consideration, it naturally does not extend to a genetic review of the whole topic. A recent work accomplishing this is David Marcell, Progress and Pragmatism: James, Dewey, Beard, and the American Idea of Progress (Westport, 1974)."
Classic liberalism involved the assumption that human progress was linked to the linear motion of history. In this tradition there was a restricted role for the exercise of leadership and initiative, and in fact there was even a tendency to think that leadership in matters of human welfare was not essential. The moral state of men and the welfare of the deserving poor and of the handicapped were advanced as by-products of the combined success of the multitude of entrepreneurs rightfully exercising capital. Reform liberalism represented the decay of this tradition in response to overwhelming evidence that the social benefits of capital simply did not occur; this shift was important in the rural milieu but it was not initiated among farming producers until most of them agreed that farm receipts and land values had declined permanently. Subsequently reform liberalism forced the individual to the forefront of the political process as a complainant against the financial and political institutions which were thought to have been holding back financial progress.

Some period of economic malaise was responsible for initiating this process. In Alberta the first stages were evident with the emergence of protest groups after the turn of the century, but the timidity of the United Farmers over direct political action meant that the embryo of the reform movement performed only a sniping function until after the Great War. This study is concerned with the economic basis of the malaise as it was experienced in a small region on the Alberta frontier. The economic issues in Red Deer and Lacombe were probably little different from those in other Alberta communities with similar
economic bases, but the wits of Alberta protestors as a group were sharpened by the heavy contributions the region made to the executives of the UFA and of various breed organizations. Red Deer contributed two Presidents to the UFA and Lacombe and district was notable for contributions to cattle organizations.

Our description of the major trends in social philosophy over several decades should not be taken to imply that the changes were accomplished with ease. The cultural roots of parkland immigrants were diverse, and part of the richness of the frontier story in the central Alberta parklands, as elsewhere in the west, was the flamboyance with which the interests of conflicting groups were thrust into the public view. Within the broad umbrella of liberal ideas there was a plethora of individualistic variations and no lack of factional dispute, acrimony, prejudice, pointless rivalry; punctilious bickering and selective patronage.

Source Materials

The source materials are varied in origin and generally complementary over time, from topic to topic, and over space. Consequently the documentary base of the study is as seamless as might be reasonably expected. Before 1904 the reports of

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19 See the Bibliographic Notes for more detailed comments on the sources, and for a listing of the sources which might have been of use but which were not consulted.
the Department of the Interior, Department of Public Works, and the Territorial Department of Agriculture, and other material of an archival nature are virtually all that survive as a written record. The Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture of the North-West Territories, and later of the Province of Alberta, are informative sources for the economic and technical conditions surrounding agriculture. Some material originating with local historical societies is useful for the early years and an important and voluminous file in the Public Archives gives an intimate view of the workings of what was perhaps the longest-lived of the colonization companies which sprang up under the provisions of December 1881. Some previously unused Census material which provides detailed data down to the level of the sub-district on the average, a parcel the size of three to five townships was discovered in Ottawa and covers the important agricultural schedules for 1901 and 1911. A number of newspapers, not all contemporaneous and balanced more to the end of the period, were read virtually in their entirety and material on cultural

20 The various homestead files of the Dominion Lands Branch, Department of the Interior, were not used in this study. This was an early decision based on the limited information available from the sorts of files located in the Public Archives of Canada and in the Alberta Provincial Archives. Had the author been aware of the Township General Registers some effort would have been put toward obtaining at least a sample from them. The correspondence files formerly attached to each application for inspection for patent were seen not long ago by an official of the Public Archives in a basement in Edmonton; they are practically not accessible for research.
habits, economic and technological trends, political matters influencing agriculture and land tenure, and other important matters was taken out. Auction notices provided information on the material progress of settlers, and land advertisements, recorded in virtually a universal sample, contribute to the model of frontier land values presented in Chapter V. The notes and the maps of surveyors provide material on landscape description for the early period, and a number of interviews with veterans of the frontier contribute information on the later period. Some tax rolls are available for the pre-war period and show the percentage of non-resident land owners and the size and location of owned parcels. A small number of diaries are available to document the course of daily life on the farm and the material fortunes of some farm families and bachelor ranchers. The modern soil maps and their derivatives, and a work on the surficial geology may be used along with several works on the ecology of the parklands to build a well-rounded appreciation of the physical environment.

Finally, and as important as any other source, was the field examination of the area carried out on several trips between 1973 and 1976. Most of the roads in the area were covered by car, numerous photographs were taken and several old farmsteads were documented.
METHOD AND DEFINITIONS

Introduction

The interpretation of land use on the parkland frontier around Red Deer and Lacombe requires data of economic and cultural origin. Economic data on stock rearing and sales, on arable cropping practices and on land prices will provide some estimate on the fortunes of the inhabitants and on the trend of the regional product. Cultural data will help to explain attitudes to land exploitation and to the social aspects of the frontier. The time span of the study is divided into three segments represented by respective chapters and the methodology is not thought to be unconventional. The documentation of change over time provides a device which we believe is sympathetically linked to the operation of concept of progress as it was seen by the people of the time. The concept of the culture area is invoked to assert regional uniformity in some important matters of culture related to the making of a living. Such uniformity is assumed to have risen from a communality in the background of settlers. Paternalistic ideas of the importance of church and community, both for their conventional influence on society and as bastions against the 'savagery' equally of the wilderness and of the native peoples, were further reinforcements of the culture area. Economic decisions are assessed on the criterion of economic man, while the definition of culture devised for the study
relied heavily upon the traditional aspects of group experience.

The frontier is considered to have lasted until the Great War. Until then much of the land surface was lightly colonized and very extensively used, and the economic progress of farm folk away from what they thought were rough frontier conditions was not marked until the arrival of the purchasing power put into their hands by the large crops and halcyon markets of the war years.

**Method**

The encompassing general hypotheses of this study are that:

1) The confluence of historical timing and selective processes in immigration led to the creation of a regional cultural identity, which may be called a culture area, in the central Alberta parklands. The distinguishing features of this culture area were the English language cultural tradition, general belief in the progressive liberal model of society and especially in the importance of individual economic advancement, the isolated family farm, and the emergence of neighbourhood, village and town centres of parochial, social and commercial importance. Cultural differences over space, some of which were not at all subtle, nevertheless were differences in emphasis among the components of a liberal tradition, and might
be traceable to a nodal effect resulting from the micro-regional immigration history of the various districts concerned in the study;

2) the changes in regional and intra-farm land use over the three decades 1884-1914 represent a shift from extensive to intensive in the relative sense, but the lack of capital, the restraints imposed by the technology of horse farming, large amounts of unoccupied land which tended to decrease farm values, uncertain trends in the economy and unimaginative farm credit practices led to a substantial degree of underutilization, and to the corollary retardation of regional economic advance and the stultification of the dreams of many farm families;

and 3) the shift of the parklands population politically over the three decades of the frontier from the ideals of petty capitalist liberalism to principles more characteristic of the reform liberal wave which reached fruition after the war was of geographic consequence in the alteration of attitudes to land speculation, taxation, economic development, the role of government in the economy and the position of the individual in the economic system.

A number of subsidiary hypotheses might be devised to accompany these major ones, such as, for instance, that the spatial integrity of the culture area was eroded over time by the intrusion of commercial and cultural linkages from the cities of Edmonton and Calgary. Such in fact was the case as, for example, the dairy industries of these centres vied for the
cream supply of the local creameries, and as such services as
highly specialized medical care became focussed on the cities.
But there would be no end to sub-hypotheses in a detailed study,
and to avoid the tedium of building up an unnecessary hierarchy
questions arising from the main hypotheses are treated impli-
citely. At any rate "...hypothoses cannot be more than the be-
ginning of inquiry", and an over-zealous dedication to investi-
gation by hypothesis alone might lead to a 'new fossilization'
of scholarship.21 In dealing with the past it is not always
possible to say that one's hypothesis has been proven or dis-
proven. Cultural materials are diverse and it could never be
claimed in a study such as this that the materials were created
for or tailored to the exact requirements of the researcher.
It is the intention of the study not merely to prove a number
of points which have been so simplified that they can be
answered by 'yes' or 'no', but to illuminate the workings of
economy and society on a part of the western Canadian frontier.
Hypotheses can help however to retain the focus of the study
through source materials which are sometimes contradictory and
nearly overwhelming in quantity, and quite importantly serve as

notice to the reader on the approach to be taken.

Instead of claiming that the study is worthy on the basis of methodological advance, it will be maintained that it represents an advance in the understanding of frontier processes in the Canadian west by

1) focussing on a confined area

and 2) bringing to bear on this area a diversity of sources which explain the spatial patterns of colonization and land use from complementary directions including the bureaucratic, the political, the technological, the environmental, the cultural, and the economic.

As pointed out in the survey of literature, this avenue has not often been used in the western Canadian milieu.

The intensive study of small areas from a number of directions should lead to 'superior explanatory hypotheses' because the local area represents a 'fine grain of sampling'.

Approaches to rural morphology which merely are pattern-oriented or single-factor explanations tend to provide an illusory basis for generalization either because of an excessively simplified research design or because complex ideas and cultur-

al phenomena come to be represented by things. Things are not a valid basis for generalization; only ideas and systems can fulfill this role, and the operation of these is best seen in the locale in which they interact.

Large physical areas can be covered by approaches which override the complexity of rural life. The intensive study of smaller areas, on the other hand, requires

1) an appreciation of the functioning of the culture of the area as a whole

2) a control of the various types of contemporary evidence which may be diverse in nature, and

3) an intimate familiarity with the terrain occupied by the group under discussion.

This study attempts to follow these precepts.

Methodology: The Role of Chance

If it can be accepted that historical geography is genetic by nature, then it must link events and landscape features logically and search for the probable origins of the landscape components in the cultural characteristics of the

23 P.J. Perry, "Agricultural History: a Geographer's Critique", op. cit., p 262, and passim for the remainder of this paragraph.


25 All geography may be genetic in nature. See Richard Hartshorne's paper "Time and Genesis in Geography", in: Perspectives on the Nature of Geography, Association of American Geographers Monograph Series #1 (Chicago, 1959), pp 81-107; and see Carl Sauer's "Forward to His- cont'd...
resident population.

The period of the study was one of the family mixed farm, individual capitalism, and of emphasis on the value of the individual; it may be that the mystical power of some of these matters was of more importance than their alleged real existence, but it still seems logical to follow the fortunes of the individual farm family on the frontier when this is possible. Information should be assembled to assess the material and other ambitions of the immigrant, and these ambitions should be compared with the status of the farmer after several years on the frontier. In the liberal petty capitalist tradition the upward trend of the farmer's fortunes would have added up in terms of increased property values, larger holdings, increased status in the community, a larger cash income on a regular basis, 'showy' possessions, improved credit availability, and a feeling of security. At the regional level these processes would have worked toward an increasing and possibly diversifying regional product, a diversity of urban services, stability in the credit resources of local government units, increasing intensity of intra-regional and intra-farm land use, and population adjustments that, either increasing or decreasing, bespoke an optimising trend in land

25 cont'd

torical Geography", op. cit., p 352 in which he criticises an earlier position of Hartschorne's; and at p 360: "... the subject [of culture] is of necessity concerned with sequences in time."
use. It is conceivable, but not inevitable, that there would have existed a mood of experimentation in governmental forms and modes of taxation.\(^{26}\) The size and the complexity, if not the number, of service centres should have increased, and the number of merchants should have risen for a time; conceivably under conditions of competition the number of merchants might later decrease but expansion should have continued in dollars of sales.

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26 For a discussion of the role of change in economic and social history see Andrew Clark, "Suggestions for the Geographical Study of Agricultural Change...", op. cit.; and by the same author, "Geographical Change: a Theme for Economic History", op. cit. S.D. Clark invites all social scientists not to regard change over time as the domain of the historian alone, a matter which numbers of them have taken up in the last decade. ("Sociology, History, and the Problem of Social Change", op. cit.) In his analysis of the origins of the English working class E.P. Thompson eschews structural methods entirely and moves to a position that only change over time—the union of seemingly disconnected events originating in both human experience and consciousness—is adequate to explain the historical phenomenon of class. See the Preface to The Making of The English Working Class (Harmondsworth, and Markham, Ontario, 1968.) Change may be better explained by idealistic methods than by the imposed rigidities of positivistic ones according to G.R. Lowther, "Idealist History and Historical Geography", Canadian Geographer 14:3 (1959), p 32.

Because our work revolves heavily around liberal ideas of progress and social organization, some comment should perhaps be made concerning the 'Butterfield dilemma'—the possibility that the connections that the historian finds through events that he believes to be logically associated have been forged by the false assumption that there are enemies and friends to progress. See Herbert Butterfield, The Whig Interpretation of History (first published 1931; Penguin edition 1973.) In latter years social researchers have not been loathe to turn to the use of materials and interpretations which attempt to render knowable the psychological state of the actors of cont'd...
The years covered by the study are divided into three chapters terminating respectively in 1897, 1906 and 1914. The final chapter is concerned with an overall view of the study and with some theoretical considerations. The choice of time periods is necessarily somewhat arbitrary and there is not always a neat coincidence of developments in the various sectors under review with the chapter divisions. The chosen periods are editorially convenient, being of approximately the same length, but there are real historical reasons for the choice. Chapter II concerns a period of economic slack marked by the very slow rates of colonization up to 1898, and Chapter III is concerned with the enormous influx of settlers at the turn of the century which caused a permanent shift in the human geography of the parklands. The fourth Chapter concerns the period of Autonomy, the diminution of the wave of immigration, the consolidation of the farm and regional economy, and some comments on the conditions unleashed by the war. Chapter IV is composed more from the newspaper record than Chapter III.

cont'd

history, a possibility which Butterfield perceived, but which he regarded with scepticism. Consequently, the possibility that the interpretation of history be warped by the researcher is reduced to a question of whether his inaptitude and insensitivity are so great as to make nonsense of the objective components of the materials. Improvement in the discipline occurs by the process of finding explanations and connections that better approximate larger and larger slices of time and historical materials.

and contains detailed commentary on land use and on the economic recessions which were one of the important agents in the dimming of the progressive dream.

**Methodology: Culture Area**

The culture area is the geographic expression of the culture of the group in its effort to create a home.\(^{28}\) The concept of culture area relies heavily on the dynamic cultural components of that phenomenon which has recently become known in the common parlance as the 'sense of place'.

Some groups, such as the well known Hutterites, take steps to standardize elements of the landscape they create. Their landscape is admittedly distinctive; the landscape of other groups is equally distinctive once the cultural linkages between the use of the land and the group ethic is known. Landscapes such as those of the parkland frontier are more the product of the apparently unfocussed daily acts of a large number of constitutionally separate but culturally similar beings. A knowledge of the functioning of a culture can come only from historical reconstruction\(^{29}\) of an area over which there has been a functionally coherent way of life.\(^{30}\)

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\(^{29}\) *Idem*

\(^{30}\) *Ibid*, p 364; and see the comments of Perry, "Agricultural History...", *op. cit.*: "The ideal basis for agricultural history is surely the place or the region, the locale of the integration of the interacting systems." (p 261)
first stage of research after selection of the study area should be discovery of the details of this way of life, especially of the manner in which a living is won from the land. 31

Culture area concepts have been used in various ways. An early approach involved explaining the diffusion of folk artifacts through class characteristics, 32 and some researchers assumed that a uniformity of the culture as a whole was implied over the area. 33 Other studies which used a small number of apparently characteristic traits for defining the whole culture were also not thought to be successful. 34 No such application of the culture area concept is intended in this study. Rather, emphasis is placed on coherence over space in the manner in which the population makes a living and in the level of agreement which exists on matters of social philosophy affecting the making of a living. Both these categories are affected by the traditions which people bring to a frontier and the kinds of shared experiences they undergo once they are working and living on the land. The search for a core of traits in culture and technology does not reduce the study to the fatuousness of single factor taxonomic approaches if the core of the society is unassailably established as a functioning reality and if

31 Carl Sauer, "Foreword to Historical Geography", op. cit., p 364.
33 Idem
34 Ibid, pp 40-41.
the documentation comes, as it does in this research, from a spectrum of sources broad enough to point light into most of the corners which could reasonably be expected to be of importance in the working of the culture.

The cultivation of what Clark calls 'regional character' was encouraged, we claim, by the spatial distribution of colonization away from the rail centre nodes in central Alberta. In this sense the evolution of the culture area was spatially 'organic', and if a case can be made for the relative uniformity of important cultural characteristics among the immigrant population there should be sufficient grounds to assume that the region was a culture area. An implication of this approach is that the boundaries of the study area are essentially those of the land rush frontier of 1903 by which date the homestead frontier had reached the vicinity of Buffalo Lake.

The spatial effect of the group ethic, and the feature which makes the use of the culture area apt for this study, was the parochialism of the vision that the early pioneers held of human society. At the same time that the spread of white society was proceeding spatially it was supposed that the moral and social needs of the population would be catered to by tightly knit nodal centres spaced not far apart. Each centre was expected to possess rudimentary economic services and church facilities. This puritanical model was pessimistic of human nature and was based upon the economy and the population densi-

ties common in places such as Ontario, Ohio and New York at mid-century. 36

The methodology outlined here should allow the isolation of a group in space and the identification of the important cultural components of the group. The methodology was chosen partly because it seemed to play the least havoc with the values of the period under study and with the natural spatial progressions which were thought to have occurred in the region. The divination of such sensations from the data need not involve conceit:

"Such a fixing of society in its boundaries and in time, at the point of departure and at the terminal point of the analysis of social change, is not so arbitrary as at first glance it might appear. If we are engaged in the examination of a society undergoing change, it requires no great knowledge of it to discern the approximate point at which the change becomes pronounced and the approximate point at which it pretty well ceased." 37

Research into culture areas does not seem to have occupied a large part of geographic literature, but the idea of the culture area is so close to the regional concept itself that the lack of numerous entries in bibliographies need not be taken as condemnation. 38 Recent scholarship may be represented

36 The role of puritan ideas in the settlement history of North America is touched upon in Daniel Elazar, "Land, Space and Civil Society in America", op. cit.


38 Few works were found under the title of culture area during bibliographic searching. The concept is obviously used in one or another of its manifestations in numerous works which do not afford attribution.
by one work at the large regional scale which determines the outer limits of the Pacific Northwest as a cultural phenomenon and by a contrasting work more on the scale and in the tradition of this study which looks at the folk materials of a portion of the Ozark highlands. 39

Methodology: the Links among Economy, Culture and Landscape

The well known concept of economic man is used as a reference in the discussion of economic behaviour; an attempt is made to steer clear of the stereotypes of rugged isolationism and subsistence which have marked much of the popular, and some scholarly, writing on frontiers. 40 The fur trader, the cow


40 The necessity of accommodating the facts of frontier life to sacred stereotypes has been more than some historians and geographers could effectively handle. For a particularly critical case of facts being forced to match theory see the often-praised The Making of an American Community: a Case Study of Democracy in a Frontier Community (Stanford, 1959) by Merle Curti. Much good evidence is thrown away on such puerile exercises as the announcement that Fourth of July picnics must have been of democratic influence because a lot of people went to them (p 125). The subsistence stereotype has been attacked by Andrew Clark, who speculated that settlers were in fact highly cont'd...
hand and the hardy pioneer were either themselves petty capitalists or were employed in a system of commerce which was linked to overseas fur markets, to packing plants or to the breakfast food factory as the case may have been. The decisions of farmers are assessed as much as possible in the light of information that reasonably could be expected to have been in existence at the time.

Culture is considered in this study to have been strongly linked to group tradition. Consequently we give culture a broad role and definition: a system of beliefs and attitudes, communal agreements, perceptions, indigenous customs and social philosophy which reinforce group allegiance, make members of the group recognizable to each other and to outsiders, enforce group standards and preserve the communal memory.

commercial people, even if they did not come into contact with the channels of trade for some time after entering homesteads. It was nevertheless their intention to do so at some time, and the most telling proof against the nostalgic image of the frontier as the home of stalwart independent men was the alacrity with which settlers avoided "...settling down to a bucolic, highly subsistent way of life." ("Suggestions for the Geographical Study of Agricultural Change...", op. cit., p 170.) Clark was concerned with an earlier period than this study, but there is little reason to believe that much changed over the ensuing century. Samuel Strickland's Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West demonstrates page by page that climbing out of isolation and enforced subsistence was the objective of every pioneer community.
The study of the culture of the frontier is interesting because it concerns the meeting of strangers and the ways in which they prolong or resolve difficulties. Perhaps more interesting is the fact that the immigrants to the central Alberta frontier shared a number of important cultural characteristics without ever having met—characteristics which came from the broad liberal and commercial tradition of the western English-speaking world. Over time groups develop a sense of tradition reinforced by codes and rituals of behaviour, and by the accumulating experience of having lived together in a place. To some extent this settling in process was foreshortened in the parkland frontier because the historical timing of settlement brought together people who were already subscribers to a comprehensive code involving language, politics, social behaviour and religion. Parkland society was to some extent prefabricated in Nebraska, Suffolk, Ontario, Cape Breton, and Minnesota.

Traditions imply a sense of the past and much of the group identity may thread through this colloquial meaning of the term, but we do not imply that their operation is solely in that direction. Some traditional components provide a code of living for today and a vision of tomorrow. Codes undergo historical change. It is not intended to become very techni-

41 Probably the daily tasks concerned with staying alive alter first, the more abstract issues securing law, government and religion being more persistent. For comments on Canadian society in this respect see George F. Stanley, "Western Canada and the Frontier Thesis", op. cit., p 107.
cal over this; rather it is argued that the concept of tradition provides an historical scope to the operation of culture just as the concept of the culture area provides a spatial. 42

Traditions exist in spatial and topical hierarchy, from the family level to that of the group and the state. An individual may subscribe voluntarily to a number of traditions and for the purposes of the historian be a member of some to which he does not acknowledge or recognize adherence. 43 Allegiances are reinforced by daily activities, by economic behaviour, and by a myriad of minor decisions as well as by more important decisions such as the choice of career, marriage partner, places of residence, political adherence, and so on. What is passed to the next generation is an important element in the survival of traditions. 44 Some traditions such as that

42 In "Space, Time, Culture and the New Frontier", Berkhofer counterposes the 'modern' idea of culture as a normative system against the 'older' idea of a total social heritage. (Op. cit., p 24.) The approach in this work tends on these criteria to the older version, but with the proviso that the tradition or traditions of a group may, and perhaps inevitably do, include normative components.

43 It is even possible that the individual is not cognizant of the directions of his allegiances: "Every day we awake to participate in what is in effect a different society." S.D. Clark, "Sociology, History, and the Problem of Social Change", op. cit., p 395.

44 Traditions do not always exhibit internal coherence or consistency. Some components become fixed while others may continue to change in response to historical demands. For an example of a 'fundamental contradiction in culture' in which a group which prized individuality and independence looked with anger and jealousy on the achievements of a group with autocratic tendencies, see Horace Miner, Culture and Agriculture, an Anthropological Study of a Corn Belt County (Ann Arbor, 1949), p 57. Berkhofer feels cont'd...
which proclaims the right to bear arms eagerly accept new members, while some of a racial or religious nature are closed or accessible only with sacrifice and difficulty. Because the potential members for any voluntary tradition are essentially infinite in number, the study of change in history (or as in this case, cultural and economic geography) becomes an exercise in the manner in which memberships have been claimed or allocated, and in which the threads of the ideas that have held the traditions together have worked through time, both as the tools of the members and also as limits to that which it was possible to accomplish. Specifically, in historical geographic research, the concept of tradition as outlined here may be used as the basis for an informal taxonomy of the economic and behavioural characteristics which are of importance to geographers in the analysis of group activities in space and in the search for the probable geographic origins of the ideas and methods used by the population being studied. Without a search for the origins of the methods of farming folk the documentation of farm technology, land use patterns, the holding of land for speculation and other matters of land value, and such

44 cont'd that the creation of a complex commercial society on what were supposed to be the simple social lines of an earlier period in American history was "...true paradox...of Jacksonianism." "Space, Time, Culture and the New Frontier", op. cit., p 28.

45 And for some comments on a parallel theory of class which attempts similarly to avoid a rigid structuralism see S.D. Clark, "Sociology, History, and the Problem of Social Change", op. cit., p 395.
cultural patterns as the social round of the rural neighbour-
hood becomes an inventory of merely trivial and antiquarian
interest. 46

Patterns of residence and the plan of the farmstead are
two features which have been much influenced by tradition,47
but the variety which has been evident for centuries in rural
landscapes over the world 48 is decreasing yearly as rural de-
population and the invasion of outside technology and tradi-

46 For an example of a presentation which suffers this fate
see Allan R. Turner, "Pioneer Farming Experiences",
Saskatchewan History 8:1 (1955), pp 41-55. The farming
practices of the respondents to a questionnaire are
listed out of the context of the locality and the time of
the practice. Not only should the time and the locality
be offered, but the biography of the individual should be
incorporated whenever this is possible. (M. Mikesell,
"Comparative Studies in Frontier History", op. cit., p 74.)

47 Presumably an 'ancestral form' lies behind the morphology
of farmsteads, but the particulars are altered by the
material available on the frontier, and by other matters
such as level of farm income. See Carl Sauer, "Historical
Geography of the Western Frontier", op. cit., p 52. The
ancestral forms are easier to detect in an area with a
simple colonization history, and the lack of complexity
in material culture which makes this possible may have
contributed to the assumption, sometimes unwritten, that
the society of frontiers is similarly less complex and
the components more visible than those of the 'older' cul-
tures from which they came.

48 For a discussion of the manner in which the tradition of
the group achieves a geographic expression see Philip L.
Wagner, The Human Use of the Earth (Toronto, 1960), pp 47-
50.
tions diminish the coherence of small regional cultures.

It has been common in frontier studies to refer to the existence of a 'mother culture' which provided a stock of people to populate the land; according to the Turner thesis the frontier-bound migrant carried ideas of democracy which came into flower in the free environment of the fringe of civilization. But beyond these urgings which Turner considered American in nature it does not seem to have occurred to him that frontiers were selectively peopled. Another theory of change in frontier or immigrant populations involves the congelation of traditions in a migrant group at the time of departure from the homeland. But theories which presume a single national origin or national tradition of frontier groups should not be used for areas which are colonized by a diverse population, as in fact were the southern parklands of Alberta. It is not necessary to discard the concept of prior tradition, but the student should be aware that some complications may be encountered. If the colonizing group differs not only in geographic origin but also varies internally in cultural heritage the study of the frontier becomes one of looking for the modes of compromise or conflict resolution.


50 It could only be with difficulty, or with some risk, that one could specify what constituted 'the Canadian tradition' in, say, 1880. Mikesell considers that the study of national character in its relation to frontiers involves the researcher in a 'maze'. (M. Mikesell, "Com- cont'd...
Another possibility, which we maintain was the case in the Red Deer area, is that the heritage of the settling group is not fragmented but may be generally unified despite the different geographic sources of the people. The general agreement occurred not on grounds of 'national identity' but on a wider basis, the sources of which can be obtained from looking at local pronouncements on social philosophy and at the evidence of human activity. This is not to say that settlers did not feel they were influenced by matters of a national sort, or that they held the country in low esteem. Quite the contrary was true in these matters. But establishing a national identity and forcing settlers into it, especially if they are diverse

50 cont'd...

parative Studies in Frontier History", op. cit., p 73.) In their efforts to throw off the Turnerian tradition and the larger matter of an American interpretation of Canadian history both Sage and Stanley became lost in the use of semantics which derive from the Turner school itself or from the earlier tradition of using organic evolutionary metaphors for the linear development of Canadian society. In both cases the result was entrapment. (Walter N. Sage, "Aspects of the Frontier in Canadian History", op. cit.; George F. Stanley, "Western Canada and the Frontier Thesis", Canadian Historical Association Annual Report, 1940, pp 105-114.) However, Carl Berger has made an instructive essay at the core of Canadian identity in the late nineteenth century, and finds that it was most coloured by a fabrication which he calls the 'loyalist hagiography'. See The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914 (Toronto, 1970), especially the chapters on 'The Loyalist Tradition', (p 78 ff,) and 'The Canadian Character', (p 128 ff.)
in origin, is faulty procedure. Western democracies of the nineteenth century were amalgamations of group interests and regional lobbies and the writing of economic and cultural geography consequently requires research into the nature and mechanics of group and regional identities.51

51 For an introductory chapter on the methodology of writing social and economic history from the 'bottom up' see William Grover Robbin's The Far Western Frontier..., op. cit. Robbin's findings on a frontier town in Oregon are paralleled by the results presented later in this study; most notably communities were 'crystallized' by the influence of early monied arrivals and the identity of the community persisted almost as a spectre over a constantly mobile lower class.
DEFINITIONS
Liberalism and Progress

Liberalism

It was postulated earlier in this chapter that some important components of cultural heritage were shared by a crucial majority of the immigrants to the parklands. The tradition to which they were adherents, whether acknowledged by them or not, was liberalism. To them history was linear and was moved by individual action. Social and economic change, which were usually seen to be progress, were by-products of the historical process. The individual participated in a market economy by taking his chances with other entrepreneurs and if many men profited simultaneously there resulted general prosperity. The surplus of expended wealth was expected to generate and advance for all.  

The progress of the society as a whole was the sum of the progress of the individuals; the modern


53 Among some thinking people this view may have been in retreat by the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Freedom showed little tendency to broaden down from precedent to precedent as the theory implied, and the manager/worker pyramid of industrial capitalism affected more...
idea that society forms the individual would have been regarded with puzzlement or amusement by the average rural or small town resident of the turn-of-the-century west.

This collection of beliefs, like most popular movements, and notwithstanding the enormous amount of scholarly effort expended by liberal intellectuals, was mostly unwritten, diverse in origin, internally incoherent and at times self-defeating. Because it claimed to interpret the place of man in the world, to offer him a code of conduct, explain historical change and to show the way to human advancement and even to perfection from generation to generation it could be called a tradition under the definition we have devised above. The geographic influences of the tradition were numerous; the most important was the rationale offered for expansionist economic practices and social mobility. Land was the lever which the frontier offered for the economic and social advancement of the farm family, as it was for the professional speculator.

There have been times in Canadian history when the terms 'liberal' and 'conservative' did not represent the cleavages that latterly have been the case. The 'liberal democrat' versus the 'Tory boss' stereotype would have been inaccurate, for instance, for the parties on some of the issues of the election of 1911, the one that is normally remembered

53 cont'd
to have been fought over Reciprocity. Edward Michener, the noted Red Deer conservative, said about that time that the differences of the parties were concealed and that for convenience any party in power should simply be called the 'Autocratic Party' and the opposition take the label 'People's Party'. The reform elements in the Conservative platform of 1911 were much-needed purgatives to an increasingly corrupt political life, and the fact that few of them were implemented was a poor recommendation of a party and not of the ideas themselves.

It was an age of liberalism; what conservatism the frontier Tories retained was not allowed to stiffen the essential liberality of the economic mores they held if they were merchants or farmers. Frontier elections as a result were reduced to slanging matches proclaiming feuds of family heritage, or devolved to issues on which real differences could be discovered such as the natural resources question, morality, political organization and reform, bureaucratic reform, Imperial loyalty, and the issues of popery and the immigration of impure races.\footnote{54}{Perhaps Canadian political parties and their for observations on the closeness of the Canadian socialist and conservative, and on the phenomenon of the red Tory see G. Horowitz, "Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism in Canada: an Interpretation", \textit{op. cit.} We cannot agree with what seems to be Horowitz' contention that political action is motivated mainly by abstractions. The issues of life were near the bone for the western farmer, and his political action, for all that it at times seemed to embody myth and fantasy, was supremely pragmatic.}
aiherents were incapable of fighting on the basis of ideas in the first place. 55

There was an inconsistency involved in using theory which had been devised to capture political freedom to explain economic change and progress. The danger was serious enough when applied to industrial expansion, but when liberal theory was used as a rationale for expansion in an agricultural economy populated by a large number of small producers the inconsistency assumed much more serious proportions. 56 This was because farms and industries are essentially different as producers; industrial 'progress' moved by means of increasing output and sales, imposition of monopoly, technological innovation, sound and consistent financial management, and competition on price. Only the last of these was generally available to the farmer, assuming that financial management in industry includes the suppression of wage demands. Tech-

55 According to Underhill, Canada had less than its fair share of 'prophets and philosophers' in the emerging liberal democratic tradition. ("Reflections on the Liberal Tradition in Canada", op. cit., p 7.) Underhill reviews the criticism of a number of foreign observers who seemed to agree that ideas were not necessary for the formation of parties in Canada. (Ibid, pp 10-11.)

56 Blazar feels that the conflict between the Jeffersonian rural ideal and Jacksonian political ethics was the root of the internal incoherence in the farm protest movement; the major source of the difficulty was in basing a model of economic and social progress on a prototype which was more suited to political reform. (Land, Space and Civil Society ..., op. cit., p 278.) The Red Deer News of March 13, 1906 put its finger on the problem in commenting on the efforts of the Society of Equity to maintain a wheat blockade in the United States: "...the farmers have not a close enough bond of union in this wide world with its great productive areas and easy means of transportation..."
nological change could provide some leverage, but under uncertain conditions of climate and markets there were few farmers willing to compete on this basis only; technological change over the whole realm of producers provides no differential advantage to any individual. Some of the richer farmers could run their farms like businesses and it is interesting that some of the better farms of the parklands were built up by men who obtained a substantial part of their income from sales to other, and poorer, farmers. These advanced farmers were in the forefront of the protest movement.57

It is possible that the character of frontier agricultural production was so intrinsically different from production in industry that it requires analysis from different precepts. Small scale commodity production by independent operators, usually family units, remained distinctive in Alberta farming for decades after the close of the frontier despite the sizeable expansion of the capital requirements of farming. 58 While the concept of independent commodity production raises important questions as to the manner in which farmers might differ in commercial ethos from merchants and industrialists, the

57 This finding is not at odds with Anne Mayhew's postulation that much farm protest at the end of the nineteenth century arose not on the abstract grounds of the preservation of the agrarian myth but because the farmer was economically and intellectually ill-equipped to deal with the increasing commercialization of agriculture. See "A Reappraisal of the Causes of Farm Protest in the United States, 1870-1900", Journal of Economic History 32:2 (1972), pp 464-475. A nearly similar point of view is taken by Gilbert Fite in an eloquent but apparently little cited review of the same matter in Chapter I of George Peek and the Fight for Farm Parity (Norman [Oklahoma], 1954).

58 This issue is important to the argument of C.B. Macpherson...
types of data and their precision for the frontier period do not allow the imposition of such fine distinctions. Subsistence farming and production by the use of much hired labour do not fall under the category of independent commodity production. There is a dearth of documentary material on the hiring of labour on the central Alberta frontier, but that available from the Census for 1911 shows enormous spatial variations from sub-district to sub-district and a generally low utilization of hired labour in weeks of employment in 1910. Hired help was considered desirable but not essential by the elderly informants to this study and one supposes that there was an element of status as well as of convenience in keeping hired men the year through. Mixed farming was designed to maximize the efforts of a few people, usually family members, and this variety of farming was typical to the parklands. The hiring of permanent help was no doubt undertaken by most ordinary farmers, if at all, after some time on the frontier while fortunes were being built up, but there must have been times of adversity for many farmers when the economy of releasing the hired man was irresistible. In consequence the farm operation slid over time from category to category.

In view of the slimness of the data on the matter of hired labour and the objections we have raised to applying the concept with excessive assiduity there seems little utili-
ty in pursuing the matter further except to mention an irony. The tradition of farm protest in Alberta which led to the victory of the United Farmers in 1921 was fanned in large measure by prosperous men who are well known to have been farming or dairying through wage labour. Such men had high status in their neighbourhoods and usually were of influence in political as well as farming circles. In addition the common ambition of the period seems to have been to advance progressively by property accumulation and the sale of farm products to a higher status. Some attention must be directed to explaining the process by which common farmers gave up dreams of advancement and settled upon the sort of protest and social mechanics which Macpherson considers typical of the independent producer or to explaining how Alberta farmers could have been two things at the same time. This study takes on the former task by the accomplishment of which the later developments in the realm of small producers should be rendered quite logical.

**Progress**

The creed of progress was one of the banners of the liberal insurgence in the nineteenth century, but the idea that change in human affairs amounted to improvement was
not invented by liberals. The origin of the idea may remain shrouded in uncertainty because any source in the philosophy of history which can be shown to have advanced the idea that things change and increase human welfare is as likely a foundation as any other such source. On balance it seems that there existed, precisely enough for our purposes, a mutually reinforcing linkage in the Christian tradition between a voluntarism which encouraged optimism and individual effort and a view that the world was created by God to be used by man. This co-existence was missing from the Eastern Church.

The most quoted work on the issue is John Bagnall Bury, The Idea of Progress: an Inquiry into its Origin and Growth (New York, 1955; first published in 1932); Laurence S. Fallis has covered several aspects of mid-century Canadian life, including farming, in The Idea of Progress in the Province of Canada, unpublished dissertation, University of Michigan, 1973; an excellent introductory essay is available in David W. Marcell, Progress and Pragmatism: James, Dewey, Beard, and the American Idea of Progress (Westport, Connecticut, 1974). Henry George's Progress and Poverty (1880, and in various editions thereafter) was an instrumental work in provoking thought on the relationship between land and welfare. In a rambling and pretentious work Leslie Sklair manages to come up with the important observation that progress and change are not innovative in all societies, and that some very inventive societies avoid innovation: see The Sociology of Progress (London, 1970), p 120 ff. This idea does not possess novelty, however, as Horace Miner's excellent monograph on Hardin County demonstrates: Miner observes that there is the possibility of, and even the demand for, change and 'progress' in the life of the individual without accompanying social innovation. See Culture and Agriculture..., op. cit. For the link between Christian voluntarism and the beginnings of industrial invention in the early Middle Ages see Lynn White Jr., "The Study of Medieval Technology, 1924-1974: Personal Reflections", Technology and Culture 16:4 (1975), pp 519-530.
and it was not held with equal certitude by western churches, but there were some which carried it to a fever pitch. Among these were the Methodists who added to the exploitation of the earth the exaltation of missionary heroism in the face of savagery and isolation. The first white settlement on the Red Deer River was made by Methodists from Ontario and the Maritimes who were very much in this tradition, while at the same time on the lookout for a good investment opportunity. The Church of England adherents who came to the Red Deer frontier were often less commercially-minded than the Methodists, but on the other hand numbers of them were imbued with the image of the wilderness as a sort of monastery.

Land and progress were linked on the frontier, and the attitudes to land in various periods of frontier history varied with the type of Christianity in vogue. The southern states may have lacked a Biblical interpretation of the frontier process, but there was a strong tradition in Puritan groups to use land, in concert with religious persuasion, to


61 Daniel J. Elazar, "Land, Space and Civil Society...", *op. cit.*, p 262.
create the conditions of proximity and neighbourhood which in that tradition were thought essential for the preservation of the moral being.\textsuperscript{62} But by the middle of the nineteenth century this idealism had probably been in the main eroded and there was a trend to "...an agricultural society whose real attachment was not to the land but to land values."\textsuperscript{63} The rhetoric of moral and educational progress was preserved in literary clubs and chapters of the Epworth League, but the real drawing force of the frontier was the economic prospect of getting rich on undervalued land and rising thereby in social status.

As a corollary to the comments made in the previous section of the inapplicability of liberal economic theory to the small farmer, it can be pointed out that the creed of progress was also in default of reality. Theory dictated that the linear direction of history was amenable to being moulded by will and knowledge. This provision was an important key, along with the gentlemanly code of business, in keeping the direction of change, again in theory, moving along morally and technologically acceptable lines. 'Scientific' farming was under way in the United States by the middle of the century and in the United Kingdom the time of 'high farming' had

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid, pp 264-266; this theme is also treated in James T. Lemons's The Best Poor Man's Country: a Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania (Toronto, 1976).

\textsuperscript{63} Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (New York, 1955), pp 41-42. It is asserted for the purposes of this study that this tradition pertained only to native farmers of the continental west; obviously it could not be applied to groups settling for religious refuge or to pauper immigrants from countries outside the English language orbit.
arrived. The conquest of nature was to be aided by inventions and the removal of dire poverty would pave the way for the moral advance of the whole population. Farm machinery revolutionised field work by 1875 and the sobriety of the old Jeffersonian model of the yeoman was replaced by the rise of the idea of a farming career and the expectation, uncommon to that time in rural milieux, that something much to the profit of a common farmer could happen in the course of life. And this matter of the change to be expected in one life is at the core of the reasoning of this study. The social theory that accompanied the liberal ideas of economic expansion was largely apologetic and was certainly what could be called synthetic—something which logically could have happened but would not have been missed if it did not. That is, social progress as a concomitant event to individual economic progress was not needed as long as most individuals were upwardly mobile, but once individual progress slowed demands for reform became intense. Much of the recent scholarship of the protest movement has attempted to explain the 'biformity' of the social psychology behind the movements—the appearance of radicalism with conservatism, of compassion and bigotry, and of other combinations such as democracy and autocratic sentiments. These studies make interesting reading but it is possible that they investigate something which exists only because an inappro-

priate paradigm of progress has been applied. If the importance of societal progress in the paradigm is removed and replaced by an assumption that each citizen was concerned about progress in his own life alone—that is, upward mobility—then the action of the political arena becomes the inchoate product of a large number of grasping individuals concerned to retain the conditions under which they felt they had opportunity to advance. These matters receive extensive comment in Chapters IV and V. It is interesting to speculate that the failure of socialists to gain a numerous following before and during the Great War was due not only to the failure of the Socialist Party of Canada to support the war but also to the fact that there was not a large number of persons convinced that the old days of laissez-faire liberalism were gone forever. The progressive reform movement was an effort consciously to return to the ideals of democracy and economic individualism that many thought had been destroyed by the large corporations and the political machines, and the movement signalled a revulsion against the 'great scramble for natural resources'. But it was largely ineffectual for the

65 Ibid, pp 5-6.

exact purposes claimed, and its important contributions were as a catalyst for regional issues.

The Role of Technology and the Issue of Frontier Stages

The subject of technology has not received stress in this chapter, although it was implied that attitudes to technology are influenced by culture. The technology of agriculture is at the focus of the rural society because the means of making a living and the place that it is done are intimately related at the place of residence for most rural groups. In this study technology is considered to be a tool of the producer and to have been influenced by cultural habits. But the role of technological change was relatively less in the parklands of Alberta than it was on the earlier frontiers of the United States, and even less than on the dry prairies of the western provinces because of the timing of settlement and the mildness of the physical environment. There was little technological adaptation needed for the Minnesota or Ontario mixed farmer to make a living on the Red Deer River because limitations to earnings came from lack of capital and markets rather than from a deficiency of technique or of serviceable machines. Machine technology was essentially unchanged after the early nineties at which time ball bearings and dust seals were introduced. That period was coincident with parkland colonization. Thereafter the competition was on price, durability, advertising gimmickry, and the availability of service parts. It would have been feasible to farm indefinitely under
the market conditions of the time with the sorts of machines available, say, after the turn of the century. There were a small number of hardware innovations in the Red Deer region. The first gasoline tractor in the province was bought by James Bower, later the first President of the UFA; several threshermen devised enormous scythe-like brush cutters to hack through scrub; a blacksmith near Alix invented a large breaking plough and the van Slyke Plough Company attempted to establish in Red Deer. But these events were peripheral. Crop adaptation was relatively of more importance, but even in this field the conservatism of the bulk of the farmers precluded any substantial change in the nature of land use between the turn of the century and the Second World War. Dairy and beefstock technology were changed radically during the period of this study, and deserve the attention they receive. Horse farming was typical of the whole period under study and the needs of horses led to some habits on land use that disappeared with the

67 The word 'technology' has achieved a number of meanings in modern usage, including the pejorative. In this work we adhere to the conception that technology is intimately linked to 'technique' in the manner postulated by Ellul. (Jaques Ellul, The Technological Society [New York, 1964].) In the farming milieu, especially that of the family farm, technology and the manner in which it affects land use is usually conservative. The recent proliferation of studies on innovation and diffusion should not be allowed to conceal the reality that the lives of most farmers are lived out with the education and the methods received at the sides of their fathers. Consequently we are concerned in this study more with what was ordinary rather than exceptional.
introduction of the tractor after the Great War.

More important to the farmer than being informed on the latest alleged advance in technology was an appreciation of the essential steps in the opening of a homestead and the necessity for industry and thrift.68 The technique of building a dairy herd from the family cow brought from Ontario, the sequence of ploughing and backsetting, the learning of the seasons for sowing, cutting hay and harvesting, the planting of the kitchen garden and the shift to better types of hay were some of the tasks. It may be that the stages in frontier economy noticed by some commentators and scholars were but a collective manifestation of the sequence of homestead opening in areas of simultaneous colonization.69 In fact the risk to the investment of the farmer did not result from undertaking the risk of the untried as was often the case in the capitalization of industry,70 but from the timing of well known


69 The attempt of Bennett to devise a model of homestead development and to put the choices of the settler in a framework of rational choices made from a restricted set of alternatives lends plausability to this argument. See John W. Bennett and Seena B. Kohn, "Characterological, Strategic, [punctuation sic] and Institutional Interpretations of Prairie Settlement", op. cit.

70 The matter of the existence or non-existence of stages in the evolution of frontiers has been debated over and over; the balance of opinion seems to be against the hypothesis. It seems that social ecologists adapted Turner's idea of waves into what Bogue calls a faulty analogy from the natural sciences; Bogue provides an ample historiography in "Social Theory and the Pioneer", op. cit., p 23. Andrew Clark notes that hard evidence cont'd...
steps which had become standardized over half a century or more of frontiering both in the United States and Canada.

for "...a sort of sequent occupance experience has not been adduced." ("Suggestions for the Geographical Study of Agricultural Change...", op. cit., p 171.) Sauer is more blunt: "...there was no single type of frontier nor was there a uniform series of stages." (Carl Sauer, "Historical Geography and the Western Frontier", op. cit., p 49. Still it seems common sense to reserve a term for the very early years on any frontier in which the conditions were noticeably rustic, and in this work the reader will encounter the term 'raw frontier' or homesteaders frontier' to indicate periods of time in which transportation was difficult, external markets few, medical and other urban services scarce and probably expensive for the resources of the settler, and when most settlers were working through a difficult early period after which they expected life to become better. The settlers, if they thought about the matter, were of the same intellectual generation as the social ecologists criticised by Bogue, and held the belief that society move through a number of stages while ever improving. To disallow the possibility of incremental change to the pioneers would be to introduce an element of methodological discordance into the research, and, in fact, to obliterate an important part of the vocabulary of the time. The idea that frontiers demonstrate successive phenomena reaches back in Canada at least to the end of the eighteenth century: "In general the farms in the United States of America have three sets of proprietors—the original colonist, who fells the timber, a second who builds an indifferent house, and introduces some degree of culture, and finally, the opulent farmer whose capital enables him to give it that improvement it is capable of receiving." (Comments from some "Canadian Letters", of unknown origin, "Description of a Tour thro' the Provinces of Lower and Upper Canada in the course of the years 1792 and '93", reprinted in part in Gerald M. Craig, ed., Early Travellers in the Canadas [Toronto, 1955].) Residential impermanence in the parklands of Alberta, as discussed in the next three chapters, implies that such a process was at work in the west one hundred years after these comments.
The men who survived the first two decades of the parkland frontier themselves divided frontier process into at least two phases -- the pioneer phase involving land breaking and the building of herds, and the later phase of consolidation and expansion. In the first phase markets were few and receipts low, but in the later phase the expectations of the immigrants were more generally met. This trend received comment from farmers and merchants on the frontier itself, and the concept has been retained to the present in the writing of local history. In one of the numerous biographies of immigrants a writer for the Red Deer Archives, for example, claimed that the early period was represented by 'amateur' capabilities among farmers, but the maturation of the frontier economy involved a shift to 'high and systematic' standards accomplished by 'careful planning and well directed effort'.

Of more utility to the geographer are the concepts of the 'open' and the 'closed' frontier. These concepts, which are used later in the study for the understanding of regional dynamics in land prices and population density, are stated here in model form. In the early years of frontiers on which there is free or very cheap land the open condition prevails. There is a ready supply of land within easy access to towns. If the land stock is mixed between the public

and the private domains the less expensive offerings, historically those of the public domain, will be taken first. The taking of homestead land and land for sale by government agencies proceeds spatially in a spreading pattern away from the settlement nodes around which locations are more desirable. At first the offerings of the more expensive land will be ignored, but over time the rate at which such land is taken up will increase. This happens in response to the process of closure which we assume to be triggered by the movement of the fringe of general settlement on cheaper land to such a distance from service centres that the costs and inconvenience of access are reflected in purchasers' decisions. Potential purchasers are faced with a decision on whether to 1) buy company land at higher rates per acre than are involved in the opening of homestead land, 2) move to the homesteading frontier and pay through inconvenience for the financial savings 3) purchase a going farm, 4) pass over the region entirely and look for more suitable land in another place. It is assumed that the price of land in older districts is bid upwards by new arrivals willing to pay the premium of location and for the time spent in developing the district and, if the farm be an improved one, the costs of farm start-up. If enough farmers sell at low prices in older districts it is possible that the price of land will regionally be reduced below what land companies expect.
The worn stereotype of the land company versus the settler is not of any real utility because there were times during which land companies and the railways were forced to wait as were other sellers for an increase in local property values. It is even possible that land companies were in competition with farmers, a reverse of the usual stereotype, because it required only a few sales at low prices by local people to reset the value of land to a level below that which land companies had decided upon. Whether there was any justice in the prices and policies of such companies should be of negligible concern; there were few enough purchasers for land offered at low prices across much of the western frontier. There was always a choice during the decades up to at least 1920 of buying improved farms in various stages of development or raw land typically held by railways or land companies. In their complaints against the land companies farmers omitted to calculate that the premium paid for improved farms represented their wage labour and that such labour depressed rather than enhanced the value of raw land. It was one of the tenets of single taxation that general neighbourhood development added to the value of unimproved properties, but in the administration of the single tax few of the beneficial effects expected from it were noted in the degree anticipated. This was because the theory was in error of a commonplace of market forces: the value of a commodity is related to its scarcity and raw land was su-
premely common. Passing from this comment to the next logical step -- that there was no empirically valid contemporary theory of the generation of wealth on the frontier -- would involve trespassing on matters which more logically appear elsewhere in this work. It should be adequate to conclude this section with the observation that any strategy of frontier economic development at the neighbourhood level could not be successful without an appreciation of the source of wealth. In their failure to devise such workable models and in relying on land prices for wage returns, the farmers and stockraisers of the frontier compromised the possibilities for the development of utilitarian market organizations, taxation policy and rural political administration.
SUMMARY

The study investigates the facts of frontier life and the use of the land in a part of the parklands of Alberta around the communities of Red Deer and Lacombe. A wide range of documentary, field and interview material has been consulted in an effort to create a detailed picture of the frontier of the turn of the century from a number of complementary directions. It is postulated that the dominant cultural force on the parkland frontier, notwithstanding that in the popular imagery the frontier is expected to be a 'new' place, was a traditional complex of liberal social and economic ideas. These ideas varied somewhat from immigrant group to immigrant group according to origin, but because of the selectivity in the timing of settlement and the sources of the immigrants the liberal tradition proved to be a cementing influence among the arrivals to the parkland frontier. The farm and regional economy did not reach at any time before the Great War a stage of 'optimum production', and in fact there was misery, loss of ambition, and a high rate of vacancy in farm units. With despondency came a shift, not consummated during the period of this study, towards innovative economic and social political solutions, a shift which denoted the abandon-
liberal theory and the adoption of reform liberalism.

The role of progress in the life of the individual implied upward economic and social mobility, but the nature of farming was much different from industry and the failure of many farmers, accompanied by the rise of only a few, brought the paradigm of individual progress into question. These shifts are investigated by means of the concept of the culture area, and by the study of land use and attitude changes to land value and profits over time.

The importance of the study is thought to lie in the investigation of a group, Anglo-Saxon mixed farmers and small-scale ranchers, which has not attracted much attention as an ethnic unit; in the use of a wide range of complementary sources of data in the investigation of a relatively small region; in the outlining, probably for the first time in Canada, of the local economic effects of national policies and economic cycles; in the accurate identification of the early leaders of the protest movement according to their standing as prominent, literate and capable capitalists—-in effect the captains of farming; and in the detailed microregional analysis of frontier land values and taxation practice. The analysis culminates in a conceptual dynamic model of frontier land use which may be of wider implication than the area of the study alone.
CHAPTER II

COLONIZATION, AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMY IN THE RED DEER PARKLANDS TO 1898

PART I

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE STUDY AREA
AND EARLY TRAVELLERS AND SETTLERS TO 1883
Physical Geography

The Red Deer parklands \(^1\) lay in the so-called 'fertile belt' which arcs northwestwards across the Canadian plains. Customary usage arising from the manner in which Alberta developed dictates that Red Deer and Lacombe are situated in central Alberta despite the fact that in terms of the arrangement of the province Edmonton should occupy this role. The area under study lies to the northeast of the intersection of \(52^\circ\) north latitude and \(114^\circ\) west longitude, which intersection occurs in the near vicinity of Innisfail.

The mean elevation of the region is 2900 feet above sea level, and the topography can be characterised as a com-

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\(^1\) This study concerns the lands around both Red Deer and Lacombe as far east as Alix; for variety in exposition the study area may be referred to as 'the southern parklands', which in fact is the relative location, or as some other logical combination of terms. The terms 'central Alberta' and 'north central Alberta' are sometimes used, and when capitalized refer to the data subdivisions, the latter for Edmonton and district, used in the Reports of the Department of Agriculture of the North-West Territories. The boundaries of the study area are as seen on Map I; within this region there are assumed to be districts which may be referred to logically and without further enumeration as 'central', 'eastern', 'southeastern' and so on. When activities reported upon are known to have been confined to a small area, or in cases in which there is no evidence that they were widespread, the name of the school district is used. This usage is in keeping with local custom. Also in keeping with local custom the legal coordinates of properties are given in a simplified form, for example, NE 35 37 27 W4, it being well known that the section or fractional section number precedes the township, range and meridian numbers respectively.
bination of mildly undulating nearly level plains of lacustrine origin to moderately dissected hummocky relief. The generalized topography and physiographic units are presented on Map I. In the canyon of the Red Deer River may be seen steep exposures of Tertiary bedrock through which the river has incised.

Red Deer lies in an area that was at the western edge of the Laurentide ice sheet of the Pleistocene epoch. The effect of the ice, which had reached the limit of advance in this area and laid down a number of marginal features, was to rework features already controlled by bedrock. Earlier patterns of bedrock were responsible for the path of a preglacial Red Deer River which flowed near the site of the present town of that name in a northerly direction and continued to the vicinity of present day Wetaskiwin before turning east. This channel was buried and left as a topographical legacy the low broad valley which trends north from Blackfalds to Ponoka. The pre-existing topography controlled the flow of ice to some extent and consequently exerted an influence on the sorts of glacial deposits that were laid down. Stalker has divided the study region into a number of physiographic units which reflect these processes, the Red Deer Lowland being a corridor along the line of the old channel between a Western Highland and a Central Highland. (To the North of Ponoka, in an area which is not of direct concern to this study, the Red Deer

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2 This section is adapted from A. Mac S. Stalker, Surficial Geology of the Red Deer-Stettler Map Area (Ottawa, Geological Survey of Canada Memoir 306, 1959.)
Deer Lowland expands from a corridor configuration to that of a fan. These physiographic divisions are largely reflective of the generalized glacial history; the western section is characterized by rough ground moraine, the lowlands by the deposits from a series of lakes, and the central (eastern) area by a moraine system. The moraine system is responsible for some rough topography which is inhospitable to farming; this condition is especially marked around Alix and Delburne. The till deposits of the lowland system from Innisfail north were laid down on a surface of low relief and were of a sedimentary composition that in the main is highly amenable to agriculture. The exceptions in this latter category are some sandy deposits which were avoided by early farmers. Many small lakes exist as remnants of the periglacial lake system and the well known sloughs of the area are evidence of kettle effects.

There are notable differences in parent material composition and consequently in the utility of soils and physiographic units for agricultural use. The lacustrine and alluvial deposits of the Red Deer lowland are potentially better soil material except in the localities such as near Blackfalds and Morningside in which coarse excessively drained material is found. On the other hand some of the lacustrine deposits are sufficiently fine to impede drainage, and ponding, especially in wet years, may result. At the time of colonization much of the low lying land was spruce swamp, muskeg, or willow scrub swamp.
The hummocky lands to the east exhibit wide variations of parent material, from small pockets of clay and alluvium to very coarse outwash material. The topography of the hummocky area, notwithstanding the wide variation of soil qualities, does not offer opportunities for arable farming beyond the so-called patch farming of the few level areas. The rough portions of the western highland were long ignored by settlers because of muskeg accumulations in the hollows, heavy timber and a reputation for early frosts. In addition it was clear from the early years that railway development would proceed east before going west, the rails trending southeast to the Saskatchewan boundary. Settlers first followed in this direction.

Soils have been formed on a variety of parent materials. Local variety in slope, drainage, exposure and microclimatic conditions has encouraged considerable differences in soil formation.\(^3\) Despite the local variety the following generalization can supply sufficient information for the purposes of this study on the major soils of each of the physiographic units.

Most of the floor of the Red Deer Lowland from Innisfail to Morningside is covered by loams developed on alluvial lacustrine material. Associations are found in various com-

\(^3\) This section on soil genesis is adapted from the Soil Survey of Red Deer Sheet by W.E. Bowser et al., University of Alberta [Department of Extension] Bulletin 51, (1951 and 1976).
binations among the Penhold Fine Sandy loam, which is a black earth; the mildly solonetzic Ponoka loam developed on some of the mildly saline materials; the Penhold Meadow soil; the black earth Antler loam; and some minor types found on small bodies of coarser parent material within the body of the lacustrine deposit. To the west of Red Deer there exists a considerable tract of an association between solodic Cygnet loam and the black earth Antler loam; this area was subject to inundation and much of it in fact was occupied by a lake until drained after the turn of the century.

The western boundary of the Central Highlands, an area known locally as 'the Divide', consists of large acreages of associations of several types of loams, the major component of which, to the mean extent of 70%, is Falun loam, a degraded black earth developed over glacial till. Most of the Central Highlands are covered by associations among the black earth Beaverhills loam, which typically occupies approximately 70% of the area, and loams developed on finely textured deposits in low-lying locations. Most of these soil types have been named above in connection with the lowland unit.

The morainic area on the east of the study area is a melange of associations which reflect the notable variety in parent materials and soil forming factors. The most extensive single component is black earth developed on coarse alluvial-aolian material.

Such variation in soil type and quality leads to
widely differing agricultural capabilities, even within soil types. For example the Falun loam is a medium-textured grey-black soil developed on glacial till, and is found in phases which exhibit different degrees of leaching. Local variety within the body is found in numerous included small areas of black soil, grey soil and peat. As another example the Beaverhills loam is known to be a very good soil for arable agriculture but the undulating topography prohibits ploughing hilly areas. Variation of fertility and physical soil properties within soil units should have encouraged field arrangement on the basis of the soil qualities to avoid as much as possible differences in such factors as water supply and ripening time in a simultaneously sown crop. Most of the soils in the study area are sandy and many are slightly alkaline; many do not retain moisture well and all except the meadow and slough soils will respond to the inclusion of green manure crops and to the periodic use of legumes and fertilizers. This last option of course is not one which would have existed in the period which we are studying. Most of the settlers were concerned with excessive moisture in the soils of the study area, which problem was linked to depressional topography and to an exceptional interlude of wet years at the start of the century. As was common throughout the sub-humid west, the first crop taken from black soils was of spectacular growth; decline of fertility in soils was not generally

noticed during the early frontier period because of the short time the soils had been in use and because most farmers cleared only a few acres each year and perpetually were able to sow into new breaking or into recently cleared land.

The Canada Land Inventory *Soil Capability for Agriculture* \(^5\) shows that most of the land in the Red Deer Lowland is of the second and third class. The limitations are of climate, presumably frostiness in the low lying areas; wetness; and topography where this is not level. The rolling Central Highlands to the south of the Red Deer River are classes four to six, the limitations being topography and wetness. The largest expanses in single categories are in classes four and five. There are pockets of class two in the Great Bend area. \(^6\) Most of the land in the portion of the study area to the north of the Red Deer River is of class two and three, but the area around Alix and toward Buffalo Lake possesses amounts of class five land. Adverse topography is the important limitation to the north of the river.

The vegetation of the area at the time of colonization is discussed later. The term parkland was devised at the time of exploration to describe the appearance of the numer-

\(^5\) *Soil Capability for Agriculture*, Canada Land Inventory, Department of Regional Economic Expansion, map "Red Deer 83A", Ottawa, 1971.

\(^6\) See Map VI for the place names occurring in the study.
The forested middleground is the Red Deer - Ponoka corridor, a lowland formerly accommodating the pre-glacial Red Deer River. Today this locality maintains at least as much, and, perhaps, more vegetation than at the time of colonization. Presumably the aspect presented in this plate is similar to that prevailing over much of the region before agrarian settlement. Photograph taken from sw 5-42-25 w4.

Settlers were attracted to the parklands by natural features evident in this plate. Stock could shelter in groves of trees in such vallies. The water was clear and the meadow flats, resulting from the underfit nature of many of the streams, supported lush stands of wild grasses and vetch. The wild component of the grass complex has by now almost completely disappeared. Photograph taken from Highway 53.
ous groves of aspen and poplar which spotted the countryside. The native vegetation is of the poplar association.\(^7\) It is possible that overgrazing by buffalo and elk kept the advance of woodland in check, and that the setting of fires by Indians and from natural causes had a similar effect. Grassland communities and poplar communities are the major components of the ecology, although there were small areas in the Red Deer area that were at the time of settlement occupied by muskeg. Virtually all this has been drained and it is now rare even to find depressions supporting willow scrub.\(^8\)

The aspen is a soft-wooded tree that rarely attains any great age; as a rule it is found in pure stands, but in localities in which drainage is imperfect admixtures of balsam poplar may occur, and in cooler areas, such as on north-

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7 The ecology of the vegetation is reported in E.H. Moss "The Vegetation of Alberta: IV. The Poplar Association and Related Vegetation of Central Alberta", Journal of Ecology 20 (1932), pp 380-415; and in Ralph D. Bird, Ecology of the Aspen Parkland of Western Canada in Relation to Land Use (Ottawa, Canada Department of Agriculture Publication 1066, 1961), [being Contribution No. 27 of the Research Station, Canada Department of Agriculture, Winnipeg]. F.J. Lewis et al. wrote a paper which is peripherally of interest to this study in the interpretation of bog ecology: see the Journal of Ecology 16 (1928) for Part II of the "Vegetation of Alberta" series, "The Swamp, Moor and Bog Forest Vegetation of Central Alberta" (pp 19-70). The demise of the buffalo is treated in the next section and minor components of the fauna elsewhere in the text.

8 See Plates I through V for views indicating both topography and vegetation. Plate IV shows one of the few remaining patches of scrub willow, in this instance near Gull Lake.
facing slopes and at higher elevations numbers of white birch may be found. The association of trembling aspen, balsam poplar and birch is common in the study area, the birch becoming more common on the north faces of the many knolls of the hummocky region in the eastern sector. Much of the scenic appeal, which was a matter not ignored by many immigrants, comes from the aesthetic combination of rolling hills, small lakes and the slender silvery trunks and twirling leaves of the common trees of the parklands.

Unfortunately we are not able to see the stands of grass which the oldtimers used for forage and hay; there is little wild grass left with the exception of roadside stands, and even these have been altered in composition by escaped species, by chemical weed control and by opportunistic mowing by nearby residents.

White spruce may be found in stream valleys on north slopes or in moist places. It was preferred by settlers for building and many stands on unsettled wet land were cleared out by homesteaders or by lumber dealers who may or may not have had a timber licence. In later days the spruce was intentionally cultivated around homesteads as a shelter belt because of its non-deciduous character, scenic appeal, longevity, hardiness, and local availability.

Fire was an important determinant in the specific composition, age, and spatial extent of tree stands. Most groves of aspen are of a single age because growth commenced
from sucker stock after complete burning of the parent stand. 

Research in the twenties discovered that many of the stands in central Alberta dated from 1908 to 1919, a period of colonization during which much land was either cleared or burned, and subsequently abandoned. It will be shown that this process was responsible for many of the groves occurring in the Red Deer area, especially to the south of the river in the Hillsdown district where severe fires raged in 1910 and 1912.

Understory vegetation is diverse, but not of great interest to this study because relatively little of economic benefit was derived from it. Numerous varieties of berries were used by settlers, but only the Saskatoon, or Juneberry (Amelanchier alnifolia) was commonly found in woodlands. Blueberry stands were of greater density after burning and when not overshadowed by higher vegetation. Many of the smaller plants have been pushed near extinction by grazing and more recently by chemical weed control. The loss of the array of wildflowers was keenly felt by inhabitants.

The grassland component of the vegetation of the parkland belt is a complex association of grasses and small le-


10 For a well written resume of the local vegetation from the viewpoint of the settler and an inventory of the local plants of economic use see the local history of the Alix area Pioneers and Progress (Alix, Alberta, 1974), pp 8-9. The local histories, once introduced, will henceforth be cited in a simplified form, in this case by the title alone.
gumes. Elderly inhabitants describe a now rare grass which they claim was of superb nutritional quality and which seems to conform to a Carex; lower water levels probably explain its disappearance. We do not possess sufficient information on the grass constituents of the Red Deer parklands to enumerate with detail what they might have been at the time of settlement. The important genera could have included Agropyron spp; Stipa spp, (Stipa comata having been reported from the Buffalo Lake area in the early years in connection with digestive disturbances in sheep); Koeleria spp; and Festuca. The fescue grasses were conceivably a proportion of the upland hay that was much prized by the settlers in the years in which the stands remained dense. After a time the extent of this hay was diminished and the vigour was reduced by fire and by overly intense use. Local examples are now difficult to locate, but old-timers are able to point out a few relics. Parkland sod was but lightly matted and more easily ploughed than plains sod, but because of this looseness afforded only enough strength to last a season or two as structural material in sod houses.

This discussion of vegetation has focussed only upon important features. We do not consider the ecotonic relationships of the various associations or what might have been the natural succession in the absence of human interference. The settlement of the area was an event of profound importance to the natural vegetation. Fires caused by man, whether acciden-
tal or purposeful, ironically stimulated tree growth in some areas and in others left a tangled brûlé which settlers avoided. The specific composition of grass communities was changed by burning, mowing, grazing, and by the introduction of foreign plant stock. Understory and ground flora in woods were grossly altered by browsing stock and by the shading of trees which grew to unusual heights after the imposition of fire prohibitions. Bog vegetation has all but disappeared with the draining of low areas and the spread of cultivation to formerly wet areas. Common weeds, imported soon after 1900 in contaminated seed, have contributed to the shifting of plant associations.

No reliable meteorological records were kept in the frontier period in the study area. The means published for later decades are of little importance because the major influx of settlers to the Red Deer parklands took place in an interlude of exceptionally heavy rainfall from 1900 to 1903, and the economic effects of this period and of the vicious winter of 1906-07 were of such intensity that no statistics are needed to offer elaboration. Red Deer is subjected to the long cold dry winters typical to a northern continental climate, snow accumulation usually being slight and sometimes melted by chinook winds. The growing season is typically four months from May to August, but frost has been experienced from time to time in each month of the year. Frost was con-
sidered to have been more dangerous to the farmer west of the rail line in the pioneer period, but there were low lying frosty pockets on the plain around Red Deer and Lacombe, and presumably in other locations. In a 'good' year the precipitation will amount to approximately 20 inches and be distributed so that much of it falls in May and June. Excessive rainfall occurred in several years at the beginning of the century and it has not been uncommon for heavy rain or wet snow to interrupt haying, harvesting or threshing. Modern combining methods avoid the last difficulty; few things were as discouraging to the early farmer as the sight of a good crop standing in stook under a foot or two of wet snow. In addition, summer hailstorms are not unusual and much of the growing season rainfall arrives in the form of violent thunderstorms. Because of different rates of evaporation the efficiency of rainfall is greater in the parkland areas than in the grasslands in the south and east of the province. In drier years the precipitation can be as low as 12 inches and considerable variation occurs over short distances in the study area. As a rule the eastern side of the region receives 5 inches less rainfall than the western, but the effective difference is probably greater because the soils of the former region are generally developed on more permeable parent material, and typically possess lower percentages of organic matter in the natural state. In addition, the rougher topography of the eastern area, with the exception of the Chain

Lakes vicinity and Buffalo Lake, would contribute to the acceleration of runoff.

**Summary**

The rolling to hummocky terrain of the Red Deer parklands is composed of glacial material overlying poorly resistant level or slightly dipping strata of Tertiary origin. The mean elevation of the area is approximately 2900 feet above sea level and there is a mean slope of about 8 feet per mile to the northeast. Alluvial and lacustrine deposits in a corridor from Innisfail to Ponoka reflect a preglacial Red Deer River, the channel of which was aligned northwards to Wetaskiwin and thence eastwards. Uplands of sandstone to the south of the present Red Deer River combined with the sequence of northeastwards deglaciation to influence the present path of the river. Consequently the study area is composed of 1) a small segment of highland to the west, 2) a long low alluvium-filled channel of predominantly rich soils and 3) to the east a highland area of coarse parent materials, adverse topography and lower agricultural potential. Numerous sloughs and small lakes are remnants of the glacial history, and some depressional areas of relatively impermeable soils are susceptible to ponding in wet years. In the west, in areas of mild relief and fine parent material, the soils are generally loamy, naturally fertile and at the time of settlement were occupied with alacrity. The eastern half of the study area has a more spotty pedological heritage and there were many localities which were of little appeal to settlers and were used only for
ranching or were sparsely settled and abandoned. Soil capability varies in the general pattern from west to east, decreasing from between class two and three to around class five. There have been profound changes caused by settlement events in the ecology of vegetation and wildlife. The location and the ages of wooded areas has been shifted, some plants have virtually disappeared and the introduction of weeds has altered field and wild area specific composition. Lamentably, some of the more flamboyant wildflowers are almost extinct, and it is not as easy as in earlier years to locate stands of the berries that were widely used by the settlers for preserves. With the disappearance of fire as an important influence in ecological dynamics the countryside became more wooded than in the days of the buffalo and of the early settlers. This condition prevailed until the introduction of the bulldozer as a land clearing implement after World War Two. Arable farming is now more the rule than in earlier decades, and clearing of woods is proceeding as of the date of writing in the last of the large stands. The rainfall of the region is adequate for arable farming without the use of dryland techniques, but for reasons to be explained below coarse grains only were raised in the frontier period along with large acreages of hay, both wild and tame. Frost has been known in every month of the year and there were years in the frontier period which were excessively wet. Much of the area was drained either by individual effort or on government contract and the water levels of the present day are much lower than at
the time of colonization.

The features of the physical environment were of importance to the settlement of the parklands. The land provided three important requirements for life on the frontier for only the work of gathering: water, wood and animal forage. In addition the lakes abounded with fish, the forests with small animals, and there were large quantities of berries available for the picking. The first settlers were able to choose land that was inherently fertile, free of stones, relatively clear of heavy timber and, unlike some of the purely prairie areas, not matted in a heavy sod. Later settlers were forced onto stoney, sandy or waterlogged land, and were left the heavier tracts of timber. The favourable features of the vicinity around Red Deer and Lacombe meant that the area would be singled out by settlers in preference to the dry prairie to the south and settled in general a decade before the dry prairie. This sequence was of some historical importance in respect of the type of settler that was attracted to the parklands in the eighties and nineties. Success at farming was to be expected in this environment under conditions of adequate capitalization and intelligent management, and men that made good were an advertisement for the region in further attracting settlers.

On the adverse side of the ledger the region possessed some features that were not altogether helpful to settlement. The courses of rivers and streams were inhibitory to cross-country travel and the crossing of the Red Deer was
possible at only a few points. Certain soils are rather sticky when wet and the laying of roads was not rendered simpler by this fact; freeze-up was eagerly awaited annually as a sign to start carting grain to rail points. The topography was inimical to the laying of road allowances along the straight lines of the survey and the numerous wet spots or 'soap holes' made roads veer crazily. For similar reasons railway construction was rendered more expensive than on the flat plains, especially by the bridging of the Red Deer River. Parts of the region were unsuited to arable agriculture and forage cultivation because of topography and shallow ill-developed soils. The Central Highlands to the south of the Red Deer River remained undeveloped and unserved by rail due to the lack of natural endowments. Some districts to the north of the river remained for years in a backward state.

On balance, the southern parklands around Red Deer and Lacombe were a haven for a part of the generation of landless or land hungry men that came from dried out sections of the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas and from other points in the west; those who had been pushed nearly to ruin by the forests of Minnesota or Wisconsin could find good soil that needed only minimal work to raise a crop. Young Englishmen could find groves and streams that were the equal of the landscape enjoyed by the country gentry in Britain, and the young from Ontario could attempt to duplicate the countryside of the east substituting the poplar for the elm, and the spruce for the pine.
Early Travellers and Settlers to 1883

The Red Deer parklands do not occupy a prominent place in the literature of travel on the Canadian Plains. As a small portion of a nearly uniform tract which extended from Lake Winnipeg to the mountains it was not intrinsically remarkable. The explorer Anthony Henday passed through in 1754 in pursuit of his commission from the Hudson’s Bay Company to investigate the interior of the continent. Travelling from the east he passed southwest across the Red Deer district and wintered in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, but the trip does not appear to have excited much comment; Henday’s travels were consigned to oblivion to the extent that the spelling of his name was nearly forgotten.¹² Local pride in the Red Deer area demands that David Thompson passed by the site of the town in the course of an exploring expedition in 1787¹³, but it is more likely that Thompson’s route, which for this part of the journey was imprecisely reported, lay near the present

¹² Specimen entries from Henday’s journal and a short commentary are contained in John Warkentin’s, *The Western Interior of Canada* (Toronto, 1964), pp 50-54.

The establishment of Rocky Mountain House in 1799 as an outlier to the important fort at Edmonton meant that there was little travel through the Red Deer country by non-Indians. Rocky Mountain House was on the outskirts of the influence of the Blackfoot Confederacy--close enough to attract trading Indians, but far enough away to avoid involvement in conflict with what was regarded as a bellicose group. What furs were traded out of the area drained by the Red Deer went either to the latter fort or to Fort Edmonton, and sometimes were handled by independent traders. By the 1850's reports of conditions in the parklands to the south were entered in the Post Journals at Edmonton. These are especially interesting when recording hardship in the lives of the Indians, but the entries are neither regular nor easily ascribed to a precise geographic area. It appears that there were periods of privation which were reflected quite naturally in the failure of the Indians to appear for the trading ceremony, or in the appearance of numbers of destitute and starving people who were then considered a burden to the post as they sat waiting for the appearance of either charity or game. A small post was opened in the late 1870's by the company at Wolf Creek,

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14 The Journals are in the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company; the writer has made only a cursory examination of the material. Blackfoot/white contact is under investigation by Ms. Barbara Mayfield, Department of History, University of Victoria.
where the creek of that name joins the Battle River to the West of Ponoka. It catered to the Indians for a time but probably gained most of its business from the trade of the Mission operated by the Methodist church; later it served the need of incoming settlers, was sacked in the Rebellion of 1885 and closed sometime after that.

It was not until the great scientific exploring expeditions of the fifties that the Saskatchewan Country, as the parkland belt was called, came to the notice of the Canadas and of Britain. James Hector discoursed at length, after a trip in 1858, on the potential qualities of the 'partially cleared country' which lay to the south of the continuous forest. According to Hector the woods were 'very scanty' and were dominated by aspen poplar, a wood useless for all but fuel. There were few coniferous trees and the small extent of forest was ascribed to the Indian habit of burning. The soil of the northern district was of great variety because of differences in the Pleistocene parent materials. The sharp frosts which occur in the foothills of the Rockies were noted by Hector.15

The settlement possibilities of the area were compromised, in Hector's opinion, by a lack of good timber of the sort found in Canada and by the remoteness of the region.

But constant burning of the prairie tracts among the groves of trees and presumably the grazing of buffalo held the advance of forest in check. Agricultural settlement of the land would be much easier than it had been on the frontiers of eastern Canada. The advance of the settler to prosperity might well be slow, but Hector thought that

"With all its disadvantages, the Saskatchewan Country offers a most desirable field to the settler who is deficient in capital, and who has no desires beyond the easy life and moderate gains of simple agricultural occupations; and it is only the difficulty of access that, for the present at all events, prevents its immediate occupation..." (16)

The remoteness of the region would be made less disadvantageous by the laying of a railway from the settlement at Red River northwestwards through the fertile belt.

The great scientific explorations of the fifties brought the west more into focus in the Canadas, functioning as one of the influences which led to the emergence of the idea of a transcontinental confederation. Other travellers were to comment on the qualities of the parklands in the years between 1860 and 1880 but their testimony added only necessary detail to the revelations of the Palliser expeditions. 17

Before the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway western travelers usually held to the corridor of the North Saskatchewan. Little was known of the Alberta parkland zone, and ex-

16 Ibid, pp 171-172.
17 For example see Chapters VI and VII of John Macoun's Manitoba and the Great North-West (London, 1883), in which the qualities of the parkland belt are lauded. There is little mention of land to the south of Edmonton, although a short reference is offered to the 'millions of tons' of hay to be found in the valley of the Battle River.
cept for the occasional missionary the Red Deer country was little visited. This state of affairs was prolonged during the seventies, the decade of the negotiation of treaties, the commencement of the railway, the opening of the Dominion Lands program, the start of the Manitoba boom and the debate over which type of physiography, arid or parkland, offered the best combination of qualities for settlement. 18

After 1880 the financial killings that were made in the Manitoba boom prompted far-sighted men to look to other parts of the plains for places that would at some later time have their day. River crossings, whether important at the time or potentially of some importance after the development of a transportation network, were logical points for early settlers and speculators to seize upon. Also favored, but less certain in terms of expected benefits from speculation, were the locations of the stopping houses located at intervals of approximately one day's travel on the more heavily used trails. What would later be the site of Red Deer provided both these features and, in addition, was well-endowed with

18 This debate is deftly covered in Frank G. Roe, "Early Opinions of the 'Fertile Belt' of Western Canada", Canadian Historical Review 27:1 (1946), pp 131-149. Roe, who, incidentally, homesteaded to the east of Blackfalds in the nineties, felt that Macoun compromised the reputation of the parklands by issuing inconsistent opinions that were not worthy of a scientist (pp 139-142), and was guilty of a 'disingenuous juggling with words'. A full bibliography is supplied. The important outcome of this inconstancy was of course the location of the line of rail in the arid zone.
the better qualities of the parkland: ample fuel, hay, timber and water.

Settlement in Alberta by other than ranchers involved in transient activities was confined at the beginning of the eighties to a small but thriving settlement around the old fort at Edmonton, some police posts such as those at McLeod and Calgary, and a number of Metis settlements, some of them seasonal, along the old Blackfoot trail between the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers. The 'old trail', as distinct from the Calgary and Edmonton trail, ran from a point on the South Saskatchewan River northwards to Tail Creek where it crossed the Red Deer River. Thence it skirted Buffalo Lake on the western side, passed east of Bear's Hills and met the North Saskatchewan near Fort Edmonton. Tail Creek was an important place in the days of the great hunts and the trail was busy. The last hunt occurred about 1877.

19 The term 'Alberta' as used here applies to the area of the Provisional District of 1882, or to the province as it was after 1905, depending on the requirements of the context.

20 This work does not treat the demise of the buffalo nor the settlements associated with the hunting of that animal due to the fact that the residual influence of the great hunts on the frontier of the farmer was minimal. The last herds disappeared from central Alberta in the middle of the seventies, and the last single animals were sighted toward the end of the decade; some obscure references date from the middle years of the eighties. The Metis settlements at Tail Creek and on Buffalo Lake are covered in Harold Fryer, Ghost Towns of Alberta (Langley, British Columbia, 1976); estimated figures for the population of the buffalo and the numbers taken in various years are available in Chapter XVII of Frank C. Roe's magnificent The North American Buffalo (Toronto, 1970). The buffalo apparently influenced the grassland/forests cont'd...
A small number of Methodist and Catholic missions persisted in bringing the habits of civilization to the savage, while a few trading outposts of the Hudson's Bay Company, the I.G. Baker Company, and of independent merchants served the needs of ranchers, missionaries, traders and other travellers. The first surveyor to visit central Alberta was Angus McPhee. His comments on the area visited in 1878 were favourable and probably exerted some influence on the choice of destination of some early settlers.

Anglo-Saxon settlement around the site of Red Deer dates from late 1882 when George Beatty, James Beatty and William H. Kemp located at the river crossing. George Beatty was born at Lansdowne, Ontario and unlike most of the men who would come to the area as pioneers, had some experience in the west. He had been with the Wolseley expedition of 1870, and had returned to Ontario where he worked in the timber industry. After working his way west as far as Winnipeg he met up with a cousin, James, and they accompanied Walter Beatty, a brother of George's, on a surveying expedi-

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20 cont'd ratio and their disappearance commenced a period of vigorous growth in both haylands and woods.

21 Several crossings over the Red Deer have been used over the years. The earliest, and that referred to here as the Crossing, was at Sec 13 of 38 28 W4. The location of the railway crossing dates from 1891 and was an arbitrary choice. There was a crossing further downstream at the site of a sawmill and another about seven miles from town where later a bridge was erected.

22 William Kemp's name is spelt 'Kempt' in an inventory of 1884, but there is no further authority for this spelling.
tion in 1882 to the north of Edmonton. In the course of this trip they saw the countryside at Red Deer Crossing and stayed long enough south of the Crossing to build a crude shack. After the surveying assignment was over George and James Beatty and Kemp returned to homestead. The land chosen by George Beatty was found after survey in 1883 not to be homestead land, and George moved to the east ¼ of 2 38 28 w4. The Beattys had enough money to purchase about a dozen good horses, some implements, wagons and harness. Kemp bought what is reputed to have been a team of 'huge' oxen from an Edmonton freighter. The first breaking at the Crossing was accomplished in the early spring of 1883 before the survey was established and was seeded to a small garden and a patch of oats.

The settlement of Red Deer is popularly, but not accurately, dated from the arrival of these three men. The district was home to a number of others, some of whose names have escaped the record. Ad. McPherson and Robert McLellan arrived in 1882 and erected shanties at the Crossing. A horse ranch was started by Jack Little with a stock of 67 mares.

The details of the first settlers come from the biography of George Beatty contained in the Pioneers of Central Alberta series in the Red Deer Advocate. This biography is one of approximately one hundred which were compiled about the time of the centennial of Confederation; these articles perform the role of a local history for Red Deer in the absence of an organized effort along those lines. Henceforth cited as RDCS, (Red Deer Centennial Series); the examples used in this study are from the folio collection, filed alphabetically, in the Red Deer Archives.
brought in the summer of 1882 from Montana, and Roderick A. McKenzie, a Metis of Headingly, Manitoba, arrived and set up downstream from the ford. Other settlers arrived in 1882 and by that fall the entire settlement possessed 41 cattle and 15 horses other than those of Little.

One William Kamp reported to the Bulletin in June of 1883 that the course of the river for a distance of seven miles above the Crossing was populated by some 30 persons, a few of whom probably were on river lots. Most of the territorial river lot surveys were laid out in 1877-78, a date which coincides interestingly with the passage of Angus McPhee, Dominion Land Surveyor, through the district. Some river lots have been confirmed in T 37 28 w4 which is recorded as having first been surveyed by Tom Kains, DLS, in August of 1883. It is interesting that these lots were not near the Crossing and that they abut the river by means of a bank of some steepness which rises 150 feet from the water. These lots were later obliterated and one can only assume that the removal was accomplished as a convenience to European settlement and perhaps

24 Red Deer Advocate, "Early Days", Jan 6, 1973. The Advocate has published a series of informative articles by the local historian E.H. Meeres of Red Deer. A folio collection of these and other similar items is available at the Red Deer Archives, and material from it is cited here as 'Early Days'.

25 Idem.

26 Lewis H. Thomas, The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North-West Territories (Toronto, 1956), p 123. The surveyor's notebook, which we did not examine, might provide information on these interesting lots.
as a signal retribution to the native population.27 Almost all evidence of a documentary nature has disappeared.

A correspondent to the Bulletin provided a sort of verbal strip map of the Red Deer settlement at the end of 1883. There were signs of intended habitation along the river for some distance above the Crossing and well below it. The land to the west, as the traveller proceeded north, was seen to be densely wooded, while much of the open land in the vicinity of the river was covered by scrub willow and consequently not of a pleasant aspect. In sec. 8 of T 36 28 a pile of house logs was noted and further north the house of a Mr. Clancy who was said to have been setting up to farm. The hewn log building of a Roman Catholic mission was encountered in sec. 15 of T 36 28. In the six miles south of the Crossing were a number of patches of ploughing but no building. One half mile to the south of the Crossing, the claim of the Beatty's was reported; unfortunately the year had not been a good one, the crop being poor with the exception of a few roots. Some of the difficulty with the grain was the result of sowing on the coarse sandy soils, noted above in the physical geography of the region, of which there is a pocket

27 Only a tabular reference remains in The Sess. Pap. of 1892, Paper 13, Part VI, Schedule 24, p 87 in which are listed scores of lots on which the posts were removed by J.S. Denis on a sweep through the west in 1887.

28 Edmonton Bulletin, Dec 15, 1883
on the right bank of the Red Deer River. There was a cluster of buildings at the Crossing consisting of a store operated by an absentee Calgary merchant, the buildings of Ad MacPherson and Robert McLellan, and a number of shanties presumably occupied by now-forgotten Metis. There were shanties on all the flats downstream, and Rod McKenzie was operating a sawmill on one of the bluffs near the intersection of the Blindman and Red Deer Rivers.

The settlement of 1883 was of the primitive pioneer type in which little sign of permanence was evident. No official land survey was available until the end of that year and the activities of the settlers were directed to winning a living from the land, selling or trading to passers-by and establishing the first stages of an agricultural community with the barest minimum of cash resources. Some settlers guessed at the survey and inevitably there were errors, few of which fortunately cost dearly. John Richards, formerly a freighter for the I.G. Baker Company, had always wanted to farm and set up in the Horn Hill District only to find he was located on the land which had been reserved for his father.29

29 From an informant John Richards, of the same name as the father. And see the Schedule of Homestead and Pre-emption Entries for...Nov. 1884 (PAC RG 15 f 43012, Part III) on which the father and the two sons are noted to be living on the same quarter in 1884. The Public Archives of Canada citations in this work omit the volume numbers in RG 15 because at the time of the visit of the author the lists were in transition necessitating the use of a conversion list; under the circumstances it cont'd...
PLATE III
VIEW OF RED DEER LOWLAND FROM THE WESTERN FLANK OF 'THE DIVIDE' EAST OF SPRINGVALE

This view, from 28-37-26 w¼, overlooks the northern portion of the tract claimed by the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company, and the portion of the region first settled.

PLATE IV
SLough GRASS AND WILLOW SCRUB NEAR GULL LAKE

Such sloughs have been enormously reduced in extent by the extermination of beaver and by draining and cultivation. This is one of the few in the region which preserve the complex of hydrophytic grasses and willow scrub. A few settlers purposefully attacked the tough work of stumping willow land knowing that the high natural fertility of marsh soils provided heavy crop yields. Photograph taken on the east half of 11-41-28 w¼.
The magnet of the river crossing and the lure of the river itself meant that settlement to the north in open country near modern Lacombe was relatively slow. There were a few forelopers in the area, the first having been Edward Barnett, a discharged Mounted Policeman who had been advised by one of his superior officers to go north and 'help open the country'. He spent the winter of 1882 at the Red Deer Crossing and moved to what is now the north side of the town of Lacombe in 1883. At the time of the survey of that same year, Barnett and twelve other settlers were listed, but accumulation was slow, only four others arriving by 1887. The Rebellion reduced immigration to a standstill. Barnett operated a stopping house and the settlement was dispersed in form and was little changed until the arrival of the railway in 1891.

The physical landscape was the major attraction of the area. Much of the land was open, especially to the south of the Red Deer River, but numerous references concerning the growth of scrub willow may indicate the effect of the seven years' absence of buffalo. Township 39 27 w4 was said to have been covered by thick but small poplar while along the Blind River, the earlier name for the Blindman, clumps

cont'd

is thought best to leave the number out.

The contributions of informants are listed under the initials after the first instance; the full names and brief biographies where necessary are provided in the Bibliographic Notes.

Wagon Trails to Hard Top, the History of Lacombe and Area (Lacombe Rural History Club, Lacombe Alberta, 1972), p 469. Henceforth, Wagon Trails.
of spruce and tamarack swamps were reported. The land to the north of that river, the northwestern portion of the study area, was rolling and partly wooded; eastwards the whole of the valley of Lacombe (previously referred to as the Red Deer Lowland unit) was free of timber. The low hills to the east and west of present Lacombe were covered by groves of spruce, and the northern end of the valley, towards Morningside, was overspread by almost two feet of matted vetches and pea vine. Valley bottoms were under water on which lived flocks of geese and ducks. North of the location of present-day Ponoka there was not much timber and clear rolling prairie extended from the north side of the Battle River.

The reports of surveyors add touches of detail to this broad sketch. Township 37 27 w4 was comparatively open undulating country with scattered clumps of willow and poplar, the north part being watered by numerous creeks and marshes. The soil was considered to have been generally of the first class, but there were patches of inferior quality. Township 38 27 w4 was of nearly the same description except for some heavy poplar on the north side of the Red Deer River, and in the northeastern quarter of the township.

31 Edmonton Bulletin Dec 22, 1883.
32 Edmonton Bulletin Jan 5, 1884.
33 This information from the Description of the Townships of the North-West Territories, vol III (Ottawa, Department of the Interior, 1886), passim. The surveys near the Crossing were executed in 1883 and 1884, and many outline surveys away from the Crossing in the ensuing years.
Spruce was found near the river. Township 37 28 w4 was said to have much the same description as 37 27, but along the course of the Red Deer there was 'fine spruce and poplar'. A settlement was noted by the surveyor of 1883. Both this township and 38 28 adjacent were of good agricultural potential and were alternately open and covered with scrub. Wide haylands extended around the shore of a lake which submerged the northwest of 38 28 and in 1883 settlers were noted.

North of the Red Deer River in the area of present-day Lacombe, the land was found to be of excellent quality. Wide expanses of hayland were interspersed with ridges supporting stands of spruce. On the northern limit of the study area in township 41 27, brûlé accumulations and youthful willow made visible traces of fire, and much of the land was inundated with water behind beaver dams. Lacombe Lake, not named at that time, covered parts of six sections in contrast to the one section it later occupied, and there were expanses of water to the east of the Calgary and Edmonton Trail. Township 40 26 w4 was referred to as a 'very superior flat of land'. To the east, on the rise, were stands of heavy poplar.

In their haste and optimism surveyors probably overestimated the quality of some land. The majority of the study area was reported to be of first or second class, with much less of the latter. Only when the surveyors came upon the sharp local relief of the eastern districts did their enthusiasm wane; typically, references to the quality of land
in the broken areas was simply omitted. Sandy loam soils on coarse parent materials rated second class listings; township 41 23 W4 attracted this rating along with the comment, which appears to have been the surveyors' limit of criticism, that "For agricultural purposes, this township is rather too much broken, but the growth of pea vines, vetches and grasses is luxuriant, and therefore it is probably better adapted for grazing." 34

34 Comment of C.F. Miles concerning the outline survey of 1884, from Description of the Townships..., op. cit., p 275.
PART II

THE RED DEER AND LACOMBE REGION,
COLONIZATION AND ECONOMY TO 1898
The Methodist Hegemony, and Colonization to 1891

While the first inhabitants of the Crossing were hewing logs for stables and clearing the small patches on which they sowed their crops, developments which profoundly affected them were taking place in Ontario. A liaison of the Methodist Church and a number of businessmen was struck in response to the December 1881 offer of the Department of the Interior concerning colonization companies. 'Plan Number One' of the Dominion Land Regulations of 23 December 1881 provided that companies inducing settlers onto Dominion Lands might purchase adjoining land cheaply for their own profit. Furthermore, rebates were offered for each settler so installed, with the effect of further reducing the cost of land to the company. The companies, however, did not enjoy mineral rights, nor the right to cut timber beyond certain specified amounts for the use of settlers.\(^{35}\) The logic of the plan lay in the belief that the companies would receive profits from enhanced land values after the complete colonization of the homestead quarters had forced a rise in local land values.

\(^{35}\) These are the important features of the agreements; there were understandably a large number of technical provisions, most of which were of little actual importance.
At the time of its inception the Manitoba boom was still in full swing and there seemed little reason to doubt that this apparently very practical partnership of government and business would be anything but beneficial to both parties.

The provisions of the indenture bound the companies to a number of payments over a period of time to make up the full price of the land they claimed at $2 per acre. It was expected that two settlers per section would be placed on the homestead sections (even numbers), with the rebate applying equally to the sold (odd) sections in the colonization tracts once the even sections were full. Theoretically, the land then cost the companies $1 per acre while it might be sold at any price they were able to obtain.

The Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company, soon to be the controlling influence at the Crossing, was an amalgamation among Toronto businessmen and the Methodist Church. What the ratio of interests was on the part of each party is difficult to determine since the businessmen were inevitably members of the Church; John T. Moore of Toronto, for example, was Secretary of the Provincial Board of the (Episcopal) Methodist Church and General Manager of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company.


37 The early eighties was the time of church union among Methodists; we refer to the 'Methodist Church' for convenience, but it appears that most men concerned in the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company [SLHC] were Episcopal Methodists.
Homestead Company. Rev. Dr. Sutherland and Mr. C.D. Warren of Toronto were other officers, and the avowed aim of the firm, probably in keeping with the Episcopal alignment of that time, was to import settlers of a good class from Britain.38

The fortunes of the SLHC were contorted and pervaded the development of the Red Deer region at least to the outbreak of the Great War. Unlike most colonization companies, it survived the Rebellion and the stagnant economic conditions of the nineties. Means of survival, not always above board and possibly even illegal, were contrived by John T. Moore, the man who would manipulate the politics and economy of Red Deer for the next thirty years. Moore was born in a log cabin in Markham Township, Ontario in 1844,39 and was

38 Moore's original application is undated, but another more detailed application to the Department of the Interior is dated March 5, 1882. Moore claimed in the first to 'virtually represent' the Methodists in Canada. The citations in this section, unless otherwise noted, are from the enormous file 43012 of PAC RG 15.

39 See the RDCS, biography of John T. Moore; also the entry at p 819 of The Canadian Men and Women of the Time..., Henry James Morgan, ed., second ed. (Toronto, 1912). In the RDCS Moore is regarded as 'Red Deer's capitalist and promoter', but the biography is only barely critical. Moore never resided in the town, and even when serving as the Red Deer MLA from 1905 to 1909 he journeyed between Edmonton and Toronto with stopovers at Red Deer to superintend financial matters. Of this the RDCS allows "...he never was a very permanent resident." Concerning the scandalous assignment of the SLHC lands to Edward Leadley of Toronto, a matter covered below, the biographer writes "...Moore's financial genius and optimism carried [the company] much longer than other companies lasted."
educated at Berlin, Ontario and at Toronto. By profession he was a chartered accountant, possessing some medical and legal training as well. By his mid-thirties, Moore had considerable experience in Methodist lay matters and was a well-known speaker and political 'bagman', to use an uncomplimentary but irreplaceable term. As a result, he was approached by Methodist laymen to head what became the SLHC. It appears that Moore's associates possessed inside knowledge on the projected plans for the regulations of December 1881, for Moore made a reconnaissance trip through the west in the summer of that year to select promising locations. The Crossing of the Red Deer was chosen along with the area which was later to be Crescent City, Saskatchewan. By the spring of 1882, the SLHC was prepared with a list of the best lands they could find in the west.

Of the 106 applicants for company indentures, only 27 actually paid the first installment 40 - one fifth of the amount owing. The SLHC land was in three blocks, near Crescent City southwest of Yorkton in eastern Assiniboia, to the east of Battleford, and a block on the Red Deer River which was neatly superimposed over the trail, river ford, and the lands which would be colonized by the end of 1883. The original indenture of Sept 19, 1882 concerned 202,993 acres, and interestingly the townships concerned were ceded entire, the even numbered sections being reserved only in the tract on the

40 A.N. Lalonde, "Colonization Companies...", op. cit., p 104.
North Saskatchewan. This arrangement meant that the whole of the little settlement at the Crossing of the Red Deer was blanketed by the SLHC claim, a provision which did not long survive.

By April of 1882 Moore claimed that the company had the support of over 200 persons of influence in the country and that the Department would do well to treat the SLHC kindly as it represented the Methodist sentiment in favour of law and order in the west. Moore's admonition arose from a query that some lands applied for were being granted to other parties, but the question received no answer. In the summer of 1882 Moore went west and in September the company paid the first installment of $81,197.58.

By December Moore had asked for an amendment to the schedule of lands allotted to the SLHC. The application of March 5, 1882 had requested about 30 townships in the vicinity of Red Deer Crossing, of which only six were granted on the indenture of September 19: townships 36, 37 and 38 in range 28 w4; township 38 in range 27 w4; and townships 37 and 38 in range 1 west of the fifth meridian. Moore apparently realized that the company land at the Red Deer Crossing was not arranged in a manner that would secure all the possible crossings of the river, but the Minister was not inclined to pursue the request for a variation until the efficacy of the

41 Moore to Minister, Department of the Interior, April 29, 1882.
colonization scheme had been proved.\textsuperscript{42}

Over the winter of 1882-83, when the first settlers were feeling out the land at the Crossing, the company was faced with the problem of finding settlers and installing them in preparation for an enumeration the following summer. Speedy action was necessary to convince the Department and the public that the plan would work, but colonization lagged due to the unsettled financial atmosphere typified by the collapse of the Manitoba boom. Some 'Lancashire interests' had allegedly been contacted to supply English settlers but little had come of the scheme,\textsuperscript{43} and in 1883 Moore prevailed upon a prominent Methodist, the Rev. Leonard Gaetz, to go to the Red Deer tract on a prospecting trip. Gaetz was minister of the Queen Street Methodist Church in London, Ontario, and a farmer in East Flamborough. Where Moore was Red Deer's 'capitalist and promoter', Gaetz was the symbol of the parochial side of the colonization scheme. He had been warned that his health needed respite from the pressures of work and took the opportunity offered by Moore to find a new life in the north-west. Gaetz arrived in mid-1883 at Calgary, the end of steel laid by the CPR. His tour of the Red Deer district convinced him

\textsuperscript{42} Moore to Minister, December 6, 1882; Memorandum, Minister to Privy Council, December 6, 1882.

\textsuperscript{43} Moore to Secretary, August 1, 1883. At this time Moore seems to have treated the matter of colonization seriously enough; some English settlers were actually installed at Crescent Lake, ambitiously called Crescent City.
of its potential and he returned to Ontario intending to emi-
grate with his family the following summer. In the process
Gaetz contributed heavily to the importation of the Ontario
model of settlement and Methodist ideology to central Alberta.

The ideals of evangelism, thrift, upright behaviour,
optimism, and perseverance in the face of great odds were im-
plemented by the Methodists in what they saw as their mission
in the north-west. A savage land awaited taming, but more
than that, it was a land which could supply homes and susten-
ance to many of the 'honest but poor' persons who were the
victims of adverse trends in industrial society and farm ten-
ancy. The appeal of the north-west was eloquently summarized
at the Methodist Conference of 1881 by Dr. Rice of Winnipeg:

"Now I want Ontario to empty itself into that coun-
try. There are multitudes of English tenant farmers
to whom our Ontario people could sell out their pro-
perty and invest in larger farms in the North-West.
We want to keep our sons in that country, we want to
preserve a high ideal in regard to morality and tem-
perance, and we want a class of men who understand
what is meant by freedom—not licentiousness politi-
cally, but freedom. Give us Ontario men to lead
political opinion, then let the tide come from the
Old Countries and they will harmonize it, and with
the establishment of schools and churches all through
that land we will have one of the finest places on
our earth for humanity to dwell in." (44)

It is clear from pronouncements of this sort that Methodists
were interested in erecting a society of classes in which an

44 Reported in the Missionary Outlook, November-December
1881, pp 138-139. The theme of land for the poor was an
ancient one in English-Canadian history, but the Ontario
hegemony was a new twist.
agrarian group of impressionable intellect and perhaps self-defeating restraint would be served and quite literally herded by an elite of professionals, clergy and politicians. It is probably sound conjecture that John Moore thought the reputation of Leonard Gaetz to have been sound advertising for his colonization scheme. In the summer of 1884 Gaetz went to the Crossing as agent of the SLHC.

Only three colonization companies started operations as planned in 1882; ten started in 1883 and among these was the SLHC, but the initial effort was put into the lands at Crescent City. A number of settlers were located in that area but a controversy on the modus operandi of the company arose after William Pearce reported unfavourably on transactions at the company's field office. In an undated letter Pearce alleged that the only entries at Crescent City were in the name of the managing director, Moore, and that pressure had been exerted against settlers taking Dominion Lands pre-emptions. The refusal was enforced by withholding application documents which, under the terms of the indenture, were administered by the SLHC. The benefit to Moore in the prohibition of pre-


46 This issue trailed on for some time. It was the position of Moore, who was quite correct on the logic of the matter, that pre-emptions were useless to settlers and reduced the chances of success. But no one ultimately cont'd...
MAP II A

This copy taken from the version of the survey of 1884 in PAC RG 15, f 43012.
emptions lay in the devolution of lands that failed to be pre-empted to the company at its option, the land being paid for at the regular rate. It was thereby possible for the officers of the company to secure blocks of land essentially in configurations of their choice, a procedure which they apparently had commenced by the fall of 1883.  

The surveys from which the land descriptions outlined in this chapter were taken were carried out in 1883 and in ensuing years; SLHC lands, however, were not completed in 1883 and Moore claimed in November of that year that old-country settlers coming in 1884 would be greatly inconvenienced by a lack of surveys in the Red Deer tract. There was confusion in the area already on the rights to various parcels, and Moore felt that the SLHC, being one of the few companies which had managed to pay the second installment, had a right to the surveys which commonly were possessed by other less dutiful

cont’d

could be found to testify against Moore, a development which Pearce attributed to coercion. Pearce seems to have developed an early hatred of Moore which coloured all their dealings.

See the correspondence between Moore and the Minister, various dates in September of 1883. Another practice which raised the hackles of the Department concerned liens on the homestead for staples settlers needed at the Crescent Lake tract; the store was operated by a brother-in-law of Moore. In addition the company had a policy of forcing the settler to plough and later backset a given number of acres per year, in excess of Dominion Lands requirements pre-emptions included. See various Departmental memoranda, December 1883 and January 1884. And for a separate compilation of the problems of 1883 in Assiniboia see PAC RG 15, f 65600.

Moore to E. Deville, Inspector of Surveys, Nov 23, 1883.
MAP II B

A PORTION OF JOHN DALTON'S SURVEY OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER SECTION 13, TOWNSHIP 38 RANGE 28, WEST OF THE FOURTH MERIDIAN, SHOWING THE FORD OF THE RED DEER AND SAGE BANNERMAN'S IMPROVEMENTS

Source: Manuscript survey dated June 18th, 1887, PAC RG 15, f 43012.
The cut, shown here in actual size, was ordered by John T. Moore, and is in error in not showing townships 39 to 41 as fractional. Audaciously a railway was included, although the Canadian Pacific had only reached Calgary by the summer of 1883. Source: PAC RG 15, f 43012, Part 1. Shading enhanced by the author.
entrants in the colonization race. To expedite matters Moore put forward the names of J.J. Dalton, Walter Beatty and George Beatty, surveyors. Walter and George were already at the Crossing; the name of Dalton would come up again, much to the tarnishing of the reputation of Moore in the Department.

The location of settlers on land that was not properly open to homesteading and which might have been part of the company tract was legitimately of concern to the SLHC. This was especially an issue with squatting on the southwest quarter of sec. 13 38 28 w4—the logical place for the planned 'Deerford' townsite, but also the farm of Sage Bannerman. Moore, instead of facing the matter openly and asking the Department for a ruling on the status of settlers found on company land before adequate notice might have been given concerning the rights and intentions of the SLHC, simply asked the Department for a patent for the whole of section 13 in April of 1884. Preparations were already well under way for the removal of the Gaetz family to the Crossing. Moore explained that it was the intention of the company to erect a town on the land, the patent therefore being necessary for the preservation of the company's investment. The land was to be paid for with funds rebated to the SLHC on account of water areas discovered during the survey, the original payment having been based on the assumption of whole townships.49

49 Moore to Minister, April 2, 1884. At this point there is a lapse in the correspondence (PAC RG 15, f 43012) until the middle of 1885.
FIG. 1


INcorporated

SASKATCHEWAN

HOME STEAD CO.

JOHN T. MOORE, MANAGING DIRECTOR.
CHIEF OFFICES.
82 KING ST. EAST, TORONTO
CANADA.

Toronto, Sept 25th 1883.

The Deputy Minister of the Interior

COPY FOR RETURN

10 L. J. E. T. G. R.

Ottawa.

Sir,

I have the honour to draw your attention to the probability of some embarrassment being caused to the Government, as well as to the company, should the notice to the public (provided for in Sect. 13 of the Dominion Lands Regulations) in respect of the lands indicated in red on the accompanying diagram be much longer postponed.

Source: PAC RG 15, f 43012.
The claims of most settlers already on the land at the arrival of Leo Gaetz in the summer of 1884 were neatly solved; they were treated as if they were settlers imported by the SLHC and their claims were carried on the books as if the company had been there all along. Bannerman and a few others refused, or neglected, to relocate and no patent was issued to the SLHC for his land; the company proceeded to survey the townsite of Deerford in his wheat field anyway. An inventory of the settlers at Red Deer Crossing in November of 1884 listed 40 names of which 19 are known certainly to have been present before the arrival of the agent of the SLHC, or to have been related to some one who was present. Others unknown to us may have been similarly situated suggesting that the efforts of the company to induce settlers from Ontario and the Old Country to settle in the Red Deer tract amounted to a mere dozen entries in the season of 1884, with a handful more arriving in the winter of 1884-85.

The homestead claims of settlers and accompanying pre-emptions are shown on Map IV. Interestingly there were no

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50 The survey, which was never used, was of a most orthodox configuration, completely lacking in imagination. Rectangular blocks straddled the river, the long sides parallel to the water. A parkland reserve along the watercourse was the sole concession to variety in a plan marked by narrow streets, miniscule lots, and no allowance for functional diversity in urban space.

51 See "Return of Homestead and Pre-emption Entries for ...November 1884", in f 43012 of RG 15, PAC.
Bannerman's entry, rejected by the company.

MAP IV
HOMESTEAD AND PRE-EMPTION ENTRIES IN THE RED DEER TRACT OF THE SASKATCHEWAN LAND AND HOMESTEAD COMPANY, 1884.

- Homestead
- Pre-emption

Source: Leonard Gaetz' Return of Homestead... Entries... to November 18, 1884. PAC RG 15, f 43012, Part III.
entries in Township 38 28. The spatial arrangement of the claims indicates that settlers were on higher ground around the marshes on the south side of the Red Deer River in the vicinity of the present town, and southwards into the later Horn Hill District. There was no heavy timber near the claims of 1884. The soil was rich, except for some pockets of sand, and abundant hay grew in the marshes of the Waskasoo Creek which meandered northwards through the lowlands. There is no mention on the Schedule of November 1884 of the disputed southwest of sec. 13 38 28, but it is shown on our map as an entry.

Local lore in Red Deer attributes the character of the early town to the qualities of the founding family, that of the Rev. Leonard Gaetz. On his arrival in 1884, Gaetz was accompanied by a number of sons and was followed later, in 1886, by a brother. Other distant relatives came to the vicinity exerting a dynastic influence on the settlement. It is popularly supposed that the Gaetz' family was one of true pioneering spirit, motivated by flames of idealism typical of the missionary call to the wild, and by the urge to be of service in the expansion of the young Dominion. Whatever Gaetz' emotions, it seems clear that he came as the agent of a land company and permitted his name and reputation to be used as advertising for the aims of a corporation. It was true that the SLHC claimed to be a missionary enterprise, the directors denying the accrual of any benefit to them in the
operation of the company. But events proved otherwise, and if Gaetz were sincerely moved by idealistic abstractions he must soon have come to regret an association with a company which came to be as hated as the SLHC. There can be no doubt that at the beginning he was in concert with the aims of the directors and with the Ontario model of settlement. As agent for the SLHC, keeper of the documents concerned with Dominion Lands, and as Postmaster he was at the core of Ontario invasion.  

One can only imagine the disbelief and antagonism felt at the Crossing when it became known that the little settlement had come under the control of a colonization company. According to the Bulletin such companies were a sham. They had promised to bring in thousands of immigrants, but intelligent persons remembered the old Canada Company and would give the new scheme a wide berth. The companies,  

Moore later tried to argue that Gaetz had been an agent of the company since his inspection tour of 1883, from which time Moore wanted the rights of the company to run in the effort to dislodge Bannerman. See PAC RG 15, f 43012, declaration of Moore to William Pearce, Feb. 19, 1887. Edward Barnett of Lacombe believed Gaetz and Moore were close. See "Reminiscences of Edward Barnett", MSS., Glenbow Alberta Institute.  

Edmonton Bulletin, Jan. 12, 1884.  

The parallels between the Canada Company and the SLHC were almost uncanny. Forty years had changed little in the methods of Canadian frontiering. The system of resident company agents; the holding of lands against price advances; the use of sawmills as the core of settlements; the model of the ideal township; the encouragement of religion; suspicion of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants; and the gouging of settlers were shared by the two enterprises.
the bulletin continued, always took the best land for themselves, and there was not a single instance of money being put out to loan to poorer immigrants, of a mile of road being installed, or of a bridge being erected. The worst features of the scheme were the withholding of land from settlement and the promotion of speculation. The land laws in general were absurd, according to a later editorial. The alternate section system kept settlers too far apart and the mingling of railway lands and settlers’, or of company and settlers’, forced the emergence of two classes with different interests, a trend to which the Ontario colonizers had no aversion. Speculators would garner profit from land that had been surrounded by settlers genuinely interested in the hard work of setting up a farm and a home, but in taking this profit the speculator performed no work. In addition, he was not interested in churches and schools and would oppose the levy of taxes. In placing these points before the public, the Bulletin correctly outlined the trends and issues in land use in Central Alberta for the next three decades.

The issue of the alternate sections and the holding of land for speculation was of more than passing interest in the Red Deer area. In 1889 a letter of complaint was sent to the Minister of the Interior by the elder brother of Leo Gaetz,

55 Edmonton Bulletin, Sept 6, 1884.

56 Letter, Isaac Gaetz to Minister, dated Red Deer, March 1, 1889, in PAC RG 15, f 43012.
asking why it was permissible for companies to purchase land
for speculation when such was not possible for individuals.

"There is no doubt that the present policy is fatal
to the settlement of the country. Persons who come
in here with a view to settling when they find that
you can't get land without going a couple of miles
...get disgusted and go away."

Gaetz said that there were other problems in the operation of
the company, but they were of a general nature concerning the
strategy of management and were typical of all districts
affected by the operation of colonization companies.

The Red Deer tract was on the outer fringes of the
western frontier at the time the SLHC attempted to organize.
Slow economic conditions, despite heavy advertising in Toronto
papers, kept immigrants at home, and there was little response
from the vast and allegedly eager pool of upright tenant far-
mers in Britain. By 1884 57 the Bulletin revealed that im-
migration had ceased. The boom of 1881 had left a sour legacy
of bankruptcies and unpaid bills. "The North-West undertook
to supply the world with corner lots and glutted the market",
lamented the paper. 58 The slowness of the economy was respon-

57 Edmonton Bulletin, Sept. 20, 1884.
58 The general pattern of economic cycles in the last quar-
ter of the century is discussed in E.J. Chambers, "Late
Nineteenth Century Business Cycles in Canada", Canadian
Journal of Economics and Political Science 30:3 (1964),
pp 391-412; for the period of the 70's and 80's see es-
specially pp 399-400. Chambers argues that there was a
tendency for immigration to swing upwards two or three
years after an improvement in the economy, but all other
factors were required to stay equal. The 'contraction'
of the seventies took a heavy toll, but according to
Michael Bliss the downturn of the 70's has been over-
rated. The effects were less in some sectors than
cont'd...
sible for the mere trickle of immigrants; the Rebellion of 1885 put a stop to the flow altogether, and caused indirectly a drastic reorganization of the affairs of the SLHC, one which would give the company a virtual stranglehold on the countryside from modern Innisfail to Blackfalds.

It was the habit of Indian bands to range over the country during hard winters locating game and collecting furs which were merchantable; in the winter of 1883-84 approximately two-thirds of the Indians left the reserves on the north side of the study area to hunt and trap when it became clear that the usual payment from the government was not forthcoming. A favourite retreat was the country between Buffalo Lake and the intersection of the Calgary-Edmonton trail with the Battle River. In February of 1884 a cordon of traders ranged between these points buying furs. 59

The winter of 1884-1885 was harsh. There was snow on the ground of "...a quantity which defies the efforts of others and there was some considerable general growth in the period. See A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business 1883-1911 (Toronto, 1974), p 11.

Edmonton Bulletin, Feb 7, 1884 and Mar 1, 1884. This was not the only occasion on which the Indians found themselves without support and resorted to the eastern district. In 1890 the support was withdrawn for November and December, and the people were thrown into 'excitement and dissatisfaction for a time...'. Later they went to the east, but this was said to have been the first occasion for years that they had done so. See "Five Days In the Cree Camp on the Plains", by [Rev] E.B. Glass, The Missionary Outlook, April 1891, pp 51-53.
the hardy cayuse to paw his living." 60 The only safe place to winter stock was in the protection of the haystack, according to the Red Deer correspondent to the Bulletin. A fish train bound south from the Battle River was lying at the mercy of the Indian dogs 'and other marauders', and the stopping house was doing a booming business with snowbound travellers. A large band of Stonies was camped at the Crossing and had traded about $500 of beaver, marten and deer pelts. (The Indians were willing to take religious services but the white community at the Crossing was said to lack religion.)

By the beginning of April, 1885 the sensation of rebellion was abroad and the columns of the Edmonton Bulletin were occupied with little else for the ensuing three months. The role of the Crossing in the event was peripheral; all but one of the inhabitants fled to Calgary for the duration and there was looting of merchants' stock, some of which was taken by the Expeditionary Force as supplies. A small fort, afterwards abandoned and later turned into a police post, was created from the structure of the stopping house around which a palisade was erected. It was named Fort Normandeau, apparently after one of the men stationed there. 61

61 A photograph of Fort Normandeau appears under the entry of that name in Harold Fryer's Ghost Towns of Alberta, op. cit.; the fort was on the flat of land, not near the river where the recent reconstruction has been placed.
The Rebellion directly caused the loss of a few thousand dollars' merchandise, but the indirect effects were profound. Instantly central Alberta lost its appeal to the few immigrants who were willing to move, and it was not long before the SLHC, in concert with the other companies, complained about the reversal of fortune. By November of 1885 Moore wrote to the Minister that the investment the company had made was showing no signs of returning, and that shareholders were not only disappointed by the paucity of settlers, but also by the competition offered by scrip and by what were called '50c land elsewhere'.

Whether the SLHC was in genuine financial difficulty or not will probably never be known. Presumably investment funds available from Toronto Methodist businessmen were in theory unlimited, but the company was not refinanced from internal sources, a sign either of lack of confidence from that quarter or the fact that Moore had something else up his sleeve. Indeed, it seems that Moore rarely consulted shareholders on company business, and on more than one occasion he was denounced before the Department for his obtuse reti-

62 The claim for losses sustained by Leo Gaetz is in f 158376 of RG 15, PAC; it amounted to $1862.90. Rev E.B. Glass at the Battle River Mission put in a claim which is now in f 147297 of RG 15, and there were other claims of a routine nature in the area.

63 Moore to Minister, Nov 7, 1885. The mis-estimation of the amount of land left in the United States has been held to be one of the critical reasons for the failure of the scheme. The harping criticism of Canadian papers such as the Globe, eagerly picked up by anti-Canadian land dealers in the United States, probably exerted a considerable cont'd...
Certainly, about this time, all pretence to the company being a missionary enterprise was dropped and it was revealed for what it had in some likelihood been all along—a method of grasping some fertile and strategically located land for favorably placed men who could hide behind a respectable veil of philanthropy and Protestant nationalism. There were some at the Crossing who had seen the ploy from the beginning, and 'NOXO', a correspondent to the Bulletin, announced in the spring of 1885 that resentment was evident against the forceful piety of the Methodist arrivals and against the company they represented. It was called "...the only and original religious and secular colonization company which lords it over our most fertile lands."  

A school was needed, according to NOXO, but it was possible that the settlement would have a church forced on it beforehand.

The Rebellion, instead of putting an end to the company, propelled it forward. In February of 1886 the Department of the Interior took steps to re-negotiate the agreements with the colonization companies. The refinancing, designed not to prolong the companies so much as to pay off their investments, was to take place on the basis of assets...


64 G.P. McKay of St. Albans Ave., now in Toronto, wrote to the Minister on May 10, 1887 with such a complaint.

at the end of 1885, and was directed toward making allowance for the funds actually expended in efforts at settlement rather than toward the reduction of the price of land through which the companies, though hard pressed at the time, might have eventually recovered their losses and a profit. This latter course was favoured by a few companies which were suspected by the Minister of having put little money into their lands. The discussion surrounding the methods of settlement is less important than the outcome. 66

The SLHC submitted a listing of all funds invested in the promotion and improvement of its lands, and on the basis of $2 per acre received scrip which could be used to purchase lands in the vicinity of those previously held. With the surrender of the old indenture, the arrangement of the tracts was dissolved and the SLHC chose lands in the same manner as did the railways, thereby being empowered de facto to dislodge squatters on odd sections on which it previously had no claim. The settlement was made by July of 1886. 67

The SLHC allotment was 119,200 acres representing an investment of $238,400, a figure somewhat less than Moore had claimed due to his attempt, as he was to do again years later in civil litigation, to fob off inflated and spur-

66 There were a number of interim proposals put to the companies, one of which provided for the agreement of 1882 under the Regulations of 1881 to remain in force. Under this scheme the companies would have continued to receive rebates. See the correspondence for the spring of 1886 in PAC RG 15, f 43012.

67 Order in Council of July 1, 1886.
From an undated map compiled by the Department of the Interior, PAC RG 15, f 43012. The Stephenson referred to on the map was Rufus Stephenson, Inspector of Colonization Companies and the official responsible for the selection of lands in the transfer of 1886 which made the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company a commercial concern.
ious charges. Some 54,000 acres were chosen in the Red Deer tract and this time the SLHC managed to blanket fully the entire region from Antler Hill north to Lacombe Lake. (See Map V.) Now, however, the holdings were in a checkerboard configuration.

For the geographer the first chapter of the story of the SLHC was over by 1886, but an amount of bickering continued before the company got patent to the lands. Sage Bannerman, whom Moore tried to eject in 1884, was located on sec. 13 of T 38 28 w4 and would not move. He was a man of small means with a large family, his wealth consisting of a few animals and the improvements of four years on his claim—not exactly a legal one it must be admitted. But he was symbolic of incipient class strife between the squatting settler and eastern corporate interests, a clash in which the Department was forced to take an intermediary role. Although the company needed the land for a townsite, the Department held up issuing patent until the matter was resolved. Clearly there was no inclination to use force to remove Bannerman, whose only rights to an odd section rested on the lack of survey when he took up residence in 1883. No such move could have been made without the compliance of William Pearce who had developed an abiding hatred of Moore over the years since 1883 and was in no hurry to take the side of a corporation against a squatter. Despite the truculent appeals from Moore to the Minister to speed up the patent, the Department was occupied
until the spring of 1887 with getting the ends of the matter tied up; the SLHC was forced to back down on the issue of section 13 after the matter was arbitrated by Pearce in the winter of 1887-88.

Further delay was caused through 1888 in the reconciliation of the water areas. The surveyor, Dalton, whom Moore had hired to estimate water areas for which the company might be repaid, was found to have made them much larger than in reality, and to have mapped water where it was possible to farm. Dalton was sent up on criminal charges in February of 1889 and found guilty with a verdict that was expected to act as a lesson to other surveyors. It was not mentioned in the Departmental file whether the case was also expected to be a lesson to the proprietors of land companies and there is no sign that Dalton took instructions by Moore as a defence.

The folding of the SLHC-Methodist link turned the company into an absentee landlord which controlled virtually all the land except the even sections still open to homesteading. Forty entries had been registered by 1884, and between March of 1885 and the end of May 1886 68 a further 35 were made. When SLHC lands, School and Hudson's Bay lands were eliminated, there was not much remaining near the Crossing for homesteading. Leonard Gaetz felt that the loss of the Agency for Dominion Lands provided by the SLHC indenture was

a heavy blow. There had been no settlement at all since the Rebellion, he wrote in 1887, and he felt that the personnel at the Dominion Lands Agency in Calgary worked to discourage settlers from going to the outlying areas. Gaetz' appeal to become the resident Dominion Lands Agent was denied, and settlers were forced until 1891 to go to Calgary to make entry, or to make entry on land sight unseen.

The complaint of Isaac Gaetz concerning the amount of land held by the company on the alternate section system was covered above. It was now the turn of the settlers on the Blind [Blindman] River, a group of some two dozen among whom there appear to have been some Metis. Their colony was smaller than the Crossing and in the summer of 1887 they complained that "...great ignorance prevail[ed] as to the object, aim and methods of the different Colonization Societies in the Country, which ignorance extend[ed]...to the House of Commons..." The memorialists alleged that residents had left the vicinity because of the SLHC, and that those remaining were afraid that the normal development of schools and municipal facilities would be greatly impeded. Apparently, the transition of the corporation from a colonization company to a commercial land company had not been mooted in the dis-

69 Letter, Leonard Gaetz to Minister, Nov. 3, 1887.
70 "The Memorial of the Settlers in the Tract of Land on the Blind River at its Confluence to the Red Deer, Granted to the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company", PAC RG 15, f 152919; no date supplied, but from receipt stamp 1887.
trict, for the complainants were critical of the SLHC's failure in putting settlers on the land. Of course, this responsibility had lapsed with the re-negotiation of 1886, and had not been exercised since 1884. The cancellation of the rights of the SLHC in the lands to the north of the Red Deer River was sought in the petition, but no action was taken by the Department. A copy had been forwarded to John T. Moore for comment, but as in other dealings with the Department, Moore chose to disregard that which did not please him and the matter remained on the list of unanswered correspondence kept by the Clerk of the Privy Council until April of 1894.

But because of the alienation of odd sections to both the SLHC and CPR, the complaints of the settlers to the north of the Blind River were in any event ineffectual. In consequence the relative desirability of the lands to the north of the SLHC tract disappeared and the only distinction between Red Deer lands and those of Lacombe became one of price. While the CPR lands sold off rapidly near the line of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, the lands of the SLHC sold very slowly, only about half being gone by 1906. In addition, they were implicated in a protracted litigation which both delayed the sale of some SLHC lands until the war and
 retarded the development of the country surrounding Red Deer relative to the country around and to the east of Lacombe.

A further and important legacy of the abortive colonization phase of the SLHC was the imposition of a Methodist stamp on the culture of the Crossing. Leonard Gaetz, said often to have been a patriarchal figure, was more the leader symbolically of the settlement than in fact. It was by his influence that Methodist, and coincidentally Conservative, business-minded farmers, shopkeepers and professional men came to the Crossing. A school was started in 1886, and a Methodist church shortly after that. Many of the persons whose residence at the Crossing pre-dated the arrival of Gaetz and the SLHC moved on, presumably because of the changing culture of the place and the developments surrounding land tenure. They are not remembered in the local history of that area, which has in effect also forgotten John T. Moore and the SLHC while preserving the heroic qualities of the Methodist pioneers. To them is given credit for taming a country that was well-known to traders, Indians, freighters, policemen, migrant Metis (some of whom had families), and to a few white settlers. The conservative stuffiness, and, one may presume, the assumed superiority of Red Deer people came to be detested by the more republican and liberal population of Lacombe and of American settlements to the east of that town. Ed Barnett, the first white settler on the site of Lacombe, was highly critical of the SLHC because of the effect the company exerted on the countryside. Farming settlers
were too far from markets, the management of the company was inept, and the country not ready for agricultural development, being more suited to ranching.71

But there were times in later years when the unique qualities of Red Deer were of great benefit. The finances of the town were always in excellent health and it developed not only with commercial strength, but also with some thought for urban aesthetic values; the background of proficiency in public affairs possessed by many of the men who came to the area in response to its already solid character meant that the town would contribute more than an average share to the political life of the province and to the institutions, such as farm and breeders’ organizations, which eased the birth pains of the frontier economy.

71 Edward Barnett, "Reminiscences...", op. cit., no pagination.
Cooperative Settlement Schemes of the Eighties

The SLHC was not the only organization interested in group settlement in the parklands near the Crossing. The eighties were a time of intellectual awakening among working people; Henry George finished his tour of the American west at the end of the seventies and landmark strikes among the steel and railway workers of the United States had drawn harsher lines than ever before between the interests of workers and managers. Union organization was proceeding in eastern Canada and an offshoot appeared in the men who seized upon the opportunity of settling in the North-West as a path to the independent life. Among the union and cooperative movements which were looking in this direction were two which specifically indicated interest in the Red Deer area; their motives were inspired, but their failure to deal with the simple necessities of coherent objectives and effective internal organization was typical of many utopian plans.

Apparently in response to the offering of land to colonization companies under the plan of December 1881, the Workingmens' National Cooperative Union of Canada, centred in Toronto, became interested in settlement in the west. An application in the spring of 1882 requested land near the

72 The information in this section is found in PAC RG 15, f 43582; the original application is missing.
forks of the Rosebud River—short grass range country. At the beginning of August 1882, a further application from the Secretary of the Mechanics’ Colonization Society requested that six more townships involving river frontage be set aside. Later again, in admission of the ignorance of the geography of the west involved in the first application, a request was made to colonize on the Red Deer River. By September of 1883 correspondence was received from the Colonization Land and Supply Association of the Workingmen’s National Union of Canada, but the proliferation of groups and splinter groups in the movement apparently left the Department baffled. The union failed to deal in keeping with the most elementary business principles. Correspondence on which answers were urgently requested was sent to John A. MacDonald having then to proceed through the channels of the civil service in search of a file. It is much to the credit of the service that this process usually took only a few days, and replies were typically cordial and in the mail within a week. While colonization companies such as the SLHC were attempting to put settlers on the land, the WNCU was engaged in internecine battles over which officer had the right to receive title to the lands and which splinter of the movement held the confidence of the whole. By mid-1883 the issue exhausted itself and no more was heard from the WNCU.

This particular plan came to naught for several reasons. Urban workers were not as a group ideal candidates for
colonization, and in its infancy the union movement seems to have been permeated by business ineptitude. At all times the Department, although it was not the defined policy of the government to encourage emigration from the east, was cordial to the objectives of the Union and there was no hint of discrimination based on politics or social philosophy. Whether working men from the shops and factories of Queen Street would have made farmers was never answered.

In the late eighties another Toronto cooperative scheme, the Alberta Pioneers, applied for lands. The cooperative aspect was designed to help homesteaders over the years before patent, and the motto of the group 'Enough reading of Henry George' was meant to indicate cooperation in action. The organization was non-sectarian, and hoped to counter some of the exodus of 'poor but honest' people to the United States. The capital of the scheme was intended to be $30,000 and judging from the detailed publications of the group, including a 'Constitution and By-Laws' and a list of the needs of settlers in the tradition of the earlier Ontario settlers' manuals, the effort was well-organized.

The Council of the Alberta Pioneers consisted of nine men. The Secretary, E.B. Wade, was in touch with the Depart-

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73 This section on the Alberta Pioneers, which styled itself a 'workingman's syndicate', derives from PAC RG 15, f 165035.
FIG. IIA

REPRODUCTION OF THE COVER OF THE PUBLISHED
"CONSTITUTION
AND BY-LAWS" OF THE ALBERTA PIONEERS

CONSTITUTION
AND
BY-LAWS
OF THE
Alberta Pioneers,
A
WORKINGMAN'S
Colonization
SYNDICATE.

TORONTO, MARCH 1st 1889.

Source: PAC RG 15, f 165035.
ment at the end of 1887 concerning the availability of colonization land, but it was explained that the policy, which as we know allowed the WNCU to plan its colonization, was against such companies. The close settling of families could be achieved by looking for tracts of land in homesteading districts and delegating one member of the group to make the entries, but permission from the Minister was required for this procedure. In view of the configuration of lands north of the Red Deer River, the answer of the Department was cynical.

Wade was interested not only in compact rural settlement but in the construction of villages. He claimed to have found provisions in the law by which this could be done. It is obvious that Wade, and the other 20 families that he had managed to enroll by the spring of 1888, were not eager to live on dispersed farmsteads after the life of the city, or because of a heritage of English village life. Some of them were desperate for a way out of their economic troubles, and many of them had friends in the old country who, they claimed, were eager to join them. Wade, after his appeal for village settlement had been stalled by the Department, wrote to the Prime Minister saying he was only a poor mechanic and felt his scheme could help the nation and the poor at the same time.

There was grumbling among the poor of Toronto:

"I believe that one half of the people who have joined us would be in the states before twelve months. They have to go somewhere and they take

74 E.B. Wade to Secretary, Department of the Interior, Feb. 13, 1888.
INTRODUCTION.

In introducing the workingmen of Canada the Constitution and By-Laws of the Alberta Pioneers, it will be necessary to give a short outline of the need of such a Society; the plan of operation; and the advantage to those who take a share or part in it. As this information may not be readily discerned by reading the By-Laws, we will give a condensed idea of these points in this preface.

It is well known that the old Provinces of Canada are, as far as the labor market is concerned, overrun by men who barely make a comfortable living for their families, during the warm or working season, and after three or four months of winter come out in the spring with accumulated, butcher, grocer's and other unpaid bills.

Now is this state of affairs to be overcome by preaching Henry George “theories,” by organized labor strikes, or by cursing the Government of the day for allowing immigrants to arrive in the country? No! But there are millions of acres of land being rapidly developed in the Northwest which requires mechanics of every grade—foremen, mechanics, stonemasons, shoemakers, and laborers; men who are tired of holding down a meagre existence in the cities, and who can work, and earn good wages, pp. 29-30.

This Society guarantees its members 150 acres of land each with a house and necessary implements, as a homestead; and in creating its manufactures provides employment to those who prefer a rural life to one of agriculture; is being intended to manufacture as a beginning, building material, furniture and agricultural implements.

Write for further information to

W. WAGHORN, Sec'y,
135 Richmond Street West, Toronto

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.—Name.
This Society shall be known as the Alberta Pioneers.

ARTICLE II.—Designation.
The phrase “The Society” hereinafter used in the Constitution and By-Laws of the said Alberta Pioneers shall be held to mean the Alberta Pioneers.

ARTICLE III.—Objects.
The object of the Society shall be, 1st. The furtherance and assistance of emigration to the District of Alberta in the North West Territories of Canada. 2nd. The promotion of Farming, Manufacturing, and other industries on a basis of mutual benefit. 3rd. The assistance and protection of its members against loss, imminent through sickness or otherwise; in accordance with the regulations hereafter set forth in the By-Laws of the Society.

ARTICLE IV.—Incorporation.
The Society shall be incorporated under the General Acts of the Dominion pertaining to the incorporation of benefit associations.

ARTICLE V.—Government.
The Society shall be governed by a Council elected from its membership, as hereafter provided in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE VI.—Membership.
Any male person of good moral habits of ordinary health and of the full age of eighteen years shall be eligible for membership on payment of the prescribed fee and signing of the Declaration hereafter provided.
the cheapest railway journey unless something equivalent be offered, which we do." (75)

The Alberta Pioneers insisted on settling at the confluence of the Red Deer and Blindman Rivers. This location was chosen because the mother and brother of a Council member, Walter Waghorn, were early homesteaders on the north side of the Red Deer River. The Waghorns were English working people and presumably had contact with cooperative methods. On arrival in Canada, Sarah and William came west directly and Walter stayed in Toronto where he worked on the proposal for the Pioneers. He left for the west in 1888, presumably expecting to be on the Blind River for the arrival of the body of the group.

There was much in the way of the scheme of the Alberta Pioneers. Their plan embraced the confluence of the Blindman and Red Deer Rivers, an area which had either been homesteaded or ceded to the SLHC. In the five years since the proposal of the WNCU the attitude of the government to colonization companies and group settlement had changed. The Department answered few of the Pioneers' letters, and ultimately explained that the scheme was to be turned down because of the termination of colonization plans as a strategy for settlement and the experience of the Department with groups. Group immigration was sound in theory, but in practice it was 

75 E.B. Wade to John A. MacDonald, April 21, 1888.
76 Reply of A.M. Burgess, May 12, 1888, to letter of E.B. Wade addressed to John A. MacDonald.
found that as soon as members were in place inevitably some
became disgruntled with a feature of the scheme or with their
land and left. Consequently the first purpose of the propo-
sal, and all the work of the Department in arranging special
permission, were for nothing.

With this snub the effort of the Alberta Pioneers to
settle on the Blindman River dissolved. Walter Waghorn, des-
pite the failure of the group, came to the district on his
own, bought out his mother and lived the rest of his life in
the area. For a time in the 90's he ran the mail route, the
Post Office east of Blackfalds being named after him, but
there is no record of his having participated further in or-
ganizations of a cooperative nature.77 The failure of the
Pioneers was not the last of group settlement in the region,
but the later examples followed the requirements of the De-
partment in using proxy entry men who usually prospected vir-
tually vacant districts open to homesteading the year before
the arrival of the group.

77 The Waghorns were settled on the north half of sec. 14
Colonization and Demography 1886-1891

Only three of the settlers resident at the Crossing in 1884 went on to achieve any semblance of prosperity: Leonard Gaetz, George Beatty, and John Richards. Several others remained for years, but most of the early inhabitants left and many are lost to the record. In 1886 Leonard Gaetz returned to the east to promote the district and procure supplies. On his return he had with him some fine cattle and Percheron grade horses. Gaetz was in the habit, as were a number of other residents of the area, of placing exhibits in the Calgary Fair, and on several occasions produce from the Crossing brought prizes. Visitors noted the large size of vegetables, and the adaptability of the region for dairying and ranching was often remarked upon. Some of the regional promotion was instigated by John T. Moore, and much of the rest by Gaetz, who, if he felt less interest after the Rebellion in the prospects of the SLHC, must at least have wanted the settlement to prosper as the sort of place the eastern Methodists had imagined. The deficiency of the area was one

78 The important events of the eighties are covered in the "Early Days" articles of June 2, June 23, June 30, and Aug. 25, 1973.
of investment capital, though Gaetz, all other requirements being present, and underemployed eastern labour was clamouring for work.\textsuperscript{79}

Gaetz took on the role of major-domo for the Crossing settlement and publication of his testimony before the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization influenced the plans of a number of immigrants to the area. This testimony claimed that the 'valley' leading north for about 200 miles from a point north of Calgary was well wooded and offered an environment in which the starting settler would not become exhausted in means or spirit before there were returns for his labour. Irrigation was not required, water being available by well within only a few feet of the surface. Crop returns were reliable and the yields exceptional, even phenomenal at times, Welcome oats having returned over 90 bushels at Red Deer. Gaetz claimed that he had been a man of modest means who was faced with the necessity of a change in life, and in light of the number of his sons there had been no opportunity of settling on an adequate farm in the east.

In Gaetz' view, the well-to-do farmer should not leave the east, but those who were labouring under debt or tenancy should take the opportunity to get out from under. To

accomplish the full peopling of the west

"...the indications suggest the necessity of a vigorous immigration policy for the North-West country—a very vigorous immigration policy indeed. With the strong competition of the Argentine Republic, Brazil and Mexico, Australia and the United States, and a great many other countries, is it reasonable to expect that the peoples are going to flock into Canada ...?" (80)

Looking to the future Gaetz could see the west becoming a major consumer of eastern products while producing staples for sale in the orient and beef which would reach Britain by the Hudson's Bay route. But the west was like an infant that had just been removed from swaddling and needed some impetus to get up and go.

That impetus was something which the little settlement at the Crossing found lacking under the circumstances. There were few immigrants, minimal markets, and little cash. A few Crossing residents were Canadians returned from the United States, but the lack of firm export markets until the middle and late years of the nineties meant that little inducement existed for most families to move, and through the eighties the country lost population to the United States.

By 1890 the population at the Crossing had crept up


81 E.J. Chambers, "Late Nineteenth Century Business Cycles in Canada", op. cit., explains at p 401 the existence of a cycle from 1888 to 1891 in both Canada and the United States; following Chambers' observation of a three-year lag in immigration, an influx could have been expected, other things being equal, in 1893.
to approximately 200, not a large increase in numbers over
that of 1884 considering the span of time. And the rate of
departure and replacement was probably considerable. About
100 homesteads were occupied, while a few people were invol-
ved in keeping store, running the stopping house, sawing, and
other peripheral activities. Evidently there were few children
and a mean population per homestead of just over one. Most of
the men were between 25 and 32 years of age at their time
of arrival in the district and they commonly batched together,
the rule about residence on the homestead being liberally in-
terpreted.

In the absence of Census material, the figures for
population in the years to 1901 may only be estimated indirect-
ly from other sources. The Annual Reports of the Missionary
Society of the Methodist Church provide figures on accre-
dited church members for both Red Deer and Lacombe during the
early frontier period. The figures in Table I are of value
only comparatively for the years 1888-1900, but show that the
increase at Lacombe was relatively greater than at Red Deer.

82 Leo. Gaetz, Report of Six Years..., op. cit., p 76.
83 Birth dates are supplied for the men, about 100 in number,
in the RDCS series; wives, when present, tended to be
younger than husbands by about four years.
84 Missionary Society Annual Reports, Archives of the United
Church of Canada, Toronto, various years. The Minutes
of Assembly of the Presbyterian Church are very detailed
in the reporting of Church membership, but there were too
few of that denomination in Red Deer to comprise a useful
sample, and there were very few Baptists until the turn
of the century. The figures do not concern church attend-
ance as such, but the lower number who were actual mem-
bers.
**TABLE 1**

**METHODIST CONGREGATION MEMBERSHIP**

**RED DEER AND LACOMBE 1888-1900**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Red Deer</th>
<th>Change +/-</th>
<th>Lacombe (Formed 1892)</th>
<th>Change +/-</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1888-1899</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889-1890</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>+ 9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-1891</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>+18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891-1892</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>+18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892-1893</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>+20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893-1894</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>+13</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894-1895</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895-1896</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>+24</td>
</tr>
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<td>1896-1897</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>-11</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>+16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897-1898</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>+10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898-1899</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>+12</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899-1900</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>+13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** *Annual Reports* of the Missionary Society, Various Years.

1 Innisfail split off.
2 Listed as 'Heads of Families as Adherents'; members probably 30.
3 Innisfail lost 8 members for a total of 61, 1897-1898, and for 1898-1899 added 14.
4 No longer a mission.
The decade from 1890 began with what the Red Deer correspondent to the Society called a 'temporal depression' but finances were in good condition. By 1892 the Red Deer Field was looking for early independence, a fact which did not occur until 1899. Although Red Deer Mission may have lost some members on the formation of the Innisfail Field in 1893, the dip in membership after 1894-95 was coincident with a period of economic stress during which many people, most of whom had arrived in 1892 and 1893, left the land. In the Annual Report of 1896-97 it was noted that the Red Deer field had lost 'several liberal contributors', but the conditions were much better in 1898.

Many of the early settlers in the Lacombe area were connected to the village of Almonte, Ontario. Ed Barnett, the first white settler, had experience on the plains, similar to some of the early settlers at Red Deer Crossing, having wandered west in 1877 with the intention of joining the RCMP. He was a native of Almonte and later induced acquaintances to emigrate from the town to Lacombe. His stint with

Barnett's manuscript biography is available at the Glenbow Alberta Institute as "Reminiscences of Edward Barnett", 62 pp; the papers are in sheaves which appear as if the writer made a number of sallies at compiling his biography, and the chronology is haphazard.

The naming of residential locations before the time at which lasting names were applied is problematical. Modern Lacombe was known as 'Barnett's stopping house'; and the district as Strawberry Plain, but for ease of exposition it is probably better to call the area Lacombe.
the police lasted from 1879 to 1882; he then moved to a section of the Alberta parklands which, he claimed, was little known except to travelling Indians. In 1883 he erected a stopping house immediately northwest of the present site of Lacombe on the hill overlooking what became Barnett Lake. Business was slow over the winter of 1883 and 1884, interrupted in 1885, and presumably recovered in response to the heavy freighting traffic over the remainder of the decade. But no settlement of note developed in the area until the arrival of rail in 1891 at which time the village was named. Until that year the land north of the Red Deer River, except that homesteaded on the Blindman, was used by ranchers to summer range cattle. Ranchers came from Calgary with cattle which they left in charge of cowhands, but homesteading forced this activity further to the east. By the end of the nineties extensive ranching had died out in the study area with the exception of some ranging north of Alix, and to the east of Willowdale.

The majority of the ranchers in the region were itinerant, and most probably failed ever to obtain the necessary legal permission for the use of range. A few probably ranged on land leased legally to others, and cattle were always mixed. The Parlby brothers were an exception to this pattern. Their diaries and accounts concerning the 'ranch' at Alix provide an intimate view of the daily routine on a central Alberta
ranch during the last decade of the century. 86

Edward MacKenzie Hall Parlby, a native of Devon, was only twenty when he arrived in Canada in 1885. He worked in Ontario for two years and came to Calgary in 1887, moving north to the vicinity of Wolf Creek in the fall. For one year he remained at Wolf Creek, possibly ranching at a small scale, and in 1888 he went east in search of better opportunities, it being his impression that imminent settlement would spoil the land for the extensive rancher. He was joined by his brother Walter in 1890.

Entries in the diaries relate the routine and probably boring activities associated with the starting of a ranch—the cutting of thousands of fence poles, haying in the summer, long rides for mail and supplies, and the building of corrals and sheds for stock. Through February of 1888 the removal of poles from the woods for fencing was typical, the daily number being about two hundred. The building of the Parlby ranch took many years. Routine tasks were interspersed with the more meaningful such as calvings and foaling. A number of hired men were usually present and the diary contains a glossary of important working terms in the Cree dialect transliterated into

English phonetics: dollar, gun, man, Englishman, Frenchman, mare, bear, tent pole, come to the woods, come here, go away, and a number of others. From 1888 a large garden was kept, and by the early years of the nineties the ranch, from the number of activities going on, could have been considered more a mixed farm than a stock operation. Hogs were being fed in confinement by May of 1892 and over the years the number of stock on hand, both cattle and horses, increased. Arable farming began for an unspecified purpose in 1894. Work on the house continued, individual tasks such as the plastering of a room being done in the few short opportunities between ranch tasks. The house was of logs and like many erected by English immigrants to the Haunted Lake district, it possessed a large verandah. Almost daily one of the brothers would ride out to look over the stock.

Edward Parlby had left Devon as a young man, and had carried with him some of the burning sensuality of adventure that permeated the writings of authors like H. Ryder Haggard. He had read or was carrying at the time of the move from Wolf Creek King Solomon's Mines, Tess, The Witches Head, and a number of other books, some by Walter Bassant and Leon Tolstoy. His schooling, in keeping with the tradition of the minor gentry of England, had been in the classics, and the Greek script notations for the important events in the diary are indicative of that confluence between civilization and wilderness which was an important part of the romantic image.
of man. In the 12 years between his arrival in Canada and his marriage in 1897 he managed to accomplish what the young men of the time were expected to do—the establishment of oneself in the world by the intelligent use of toil and one's inheritance. The Parlbys were in the category known as remittance men. The majority of youths receiving allowances from Britain were ill-equipped for a new land, being almost totally lacking in work habits and business acumen. Some were dissipators and most were objects of ridicule. But the Parlbys put their £100 87 per year, not an inconsiderable sum on the frontier at that time, into the hiring of men and the purchase of supplies, stock and equipment. Over the years from 1888 it is likely that a sum approaching $6000 in the money of the day was put into the Parlbys were in the category known as remittance men. The majority of youths receiving allowances from Britain were ill-equipped for a new land, being almost totally lacking in work habits and business acumen. Some were dissipators and most were objects of ridicule. But the Parlbys put their £100 87 per year, not an inconsiderable sum on the frontier at that time, into the hiring of men and the purchase of supplies, stock and equipment. Over the years from 1888 it is likely that a sum approaching $6000 in the money of the day was put into the Parlbys ranch, an amount that would easily have ensured the success of the venture. In addition there were receipts from sales of stock raised for little but the gathering of hay.

By the age of thirty Edward Parlbys had become a frontier success, albeit a modest and not unusual one, and he was in a position to take on the responsibilities of marriage. He became engaged in the fall of 1896 to Ann Wilkins, daugh-

87 This figure is mentioned in some correspondence from the mother, who was passing on the concern of the father in 1895 over the expected settlement (dowry) to be paid on the marriage of Ann Wilkins to Edward.
ter of Francis Wilkins of Red Deer, and they were married on Sunday March 15, 1897. On Monday March 16 the diary recorded 'chores'. Edward's later life included appointment as a Justice of the Peace, a stint as a councillor for the Municipal District of Lamerton, and positions on the executive of the Alix Board of Trade and the Alix Agricultural Society. After sixty-five years' residence in the province he passed away in 1951 at the age of 85.

The Parlby partnership had been dissolved in 1894. Walter homesteaded the north-west ¼ of sec. 14 22 40 w4 and owned the north-west ¼ of sec. 30 in the same township. He was married in 1897 to Mary Irene Marryat, who visited Alberta in 1896 as a friend of Mrs. Alexis Westhead, a social leader in the Buffalo Lake colony. Mary Irene was descended from a family with extensive colonial involvements; she previously had lived in India where her father was an engineer. Later she became President of the United Farm Women of Alberta (1916), the first woman member of the Alberta Legislature (1921-1934), and a delegate to the League of Nations.

88 The Parlby story is exemplary of the difficulty of obtaining facts of undoubted veracity for a period which can only be regarded as the near past. As an example, the biography of Edward Parlby at the Glenbow Alberta Institute, said to have been contributed by his son John H., states that the dissolution of the partnership of the two brothers was in 1895 and the marriage of Edward in January of 1896. Edward Parlby's own diary indicates that these events occurred in 1894 and 1897 respectively. These are not important matters, but are illustrative of the degree of disarray that exists in the data, and of the amount of time, and sometimes futility, involved in matching facts.
Most of the Buffalo Lake colony had been attracted to the district by the ethereal wildness of the land and the remoteness from settlement. Picturesque small lakes were joined by meandering streams alive with fish. The broken terrain was not suitable for arable farming and remained a ranching area. The English of the colony were much attached to country sports, and although the district never pretended to the flamboyance of Cannington Manor, it was nevertheless a haven for those who found enjoyment in the chase, a game of polo or cricket, and formal picnicking. Once a few English, notably the Parlbyys and Westheads, had settled it was logical for others to arrive in response to information trickled through a sort of old boys' colonial network. A similar process caused the accumulation of another English ranching community at Pine Lake.

By 1887 homesteading or squatting had proceeded in townships 39 and 40 in ranges 26 and 27 w4, but there were only two settlers located in the northern pair of these townships.89

Most of those who came to Red Deer prior to 1891 were of eastern Canadian or English background. By 1890 a number of settlers had arrived in the Horn Hill district—the Carswell brothers from Oshawa, who had business experience and later contributed to the advancement of farming, the Red Deer

89 Because 22 of 25 locations were on even sections it is presumed that the settlers were homesteading. The odd sections were SLHC land. See "The Memorial of the Settlers...on the Blind River...", op. cit.
Cooperative and running of the Red Deer News; the Domoneys from Newfoundland; the Pyes who would later be active in the cooperative movement, and a number of other Canadian families put down permanent roots. By 1892 there were sufficient children in the Horn Hill and Springvale districts for schools. Among the settlers in Springvale who later had influence in the community were Andrew H. Trimble, an active dairyman, Joseph Cole, the instigator and first arrival of the 'Rosenneath Excursion', and George H. Bawtinheimer. 90

The lives of these men demonstrate the qualities of the successful frontier migrant of the period, and the rise in personal fortunes of a proportion of men who came to a new land to prosper. Their contributions to rural neighbourhoods and town economy were evidence of the combination of liberal social philosophy, the Protestant ideal of service, muscular vigour, and the importance of economic advancement which marked the frontier.

George H. Bawtinheimer was born near Hamilton, Ontario in 1856 and married, at the age of 21, a woman three years older than himself. They moved to southwestern Ontario where they farmed until coming west in 1890 with few resources. Bawtinheimer took a farm on shares near Calgary until the spring of 1891 when he moved the family to homestead

90 The biographies of George H. Bawtinheimer, Edwin and John Carswell, Joseph Cole, Andrew H. Trimble, and C.J.B. Ward are in the RDCS.
in the Springvale District. There were few settlers in the vicinity at that time. Clearing of prairie sod was done with mules, an unusual choice for the period, on the homestead on the hill at the northeast quarter of sec. 30 37 26 w4. The Bawtinheimers were strong Methodists and were interested in the strength of both church and school. In the latter sphere, and perhaps because he had a number of children, George served on the Board of Trustees for Springvale S.D. # 119 for a number of years after its inception in 1892. Gradually, through dedication to the production of cream, Bawtinheimer was able to buy more land and obtained all of section 30; by the turn of the century he was in possession of seven quarter sections and felt the urge to try something new. He became a moderately successful businessman in a number of ventures. He served on the Red Deer town council for several years and at one time or another was in control of significant amounts of money and property. But he finished life modestly, after a number of removals, as a farmer and municipal official in Armstrong, British Columbia, still vital, as many of the oldtimers were, into his eighties.

The Carswells were brothers who exhibited the sort of enterprising spirit, intellectual thrust, imagination and acumen which are beloved by writers on frontier society. Edwin Carswell was born in Oshawa, Ontario in 1859 to English immigrant parents and served an apprenticeship to his father in confectionary. Like many young men of the period, the Barnettts,
the Parlbys, the Beattys and uncounted thousands of others, he simply left home to make his fortune, the idea of spending life as a confectioner in Oshawa apparently being too oppressive. His wanderings took him to San Francisco, Victoria, Vancouver, and the Nicola Lake area of British Columbia which he reached at some time in the early 1880's. At Nicola, in 1883, he married a woman 18 years of age. Carswell remained to work as a sawmill employee and in this capacity later moved to Kamloops and Calgary where his brother John Alfred met him in 1890 while travelling for his health. In company with two men they journeyed to the Horn Hill District and entered a section among them, the pre-emption privilege having lapsed by this time. Another brother arrived and the three moved to the claim in the spring of 1891 commencing the arduous work of homesteading. None of the brothers had any farming experience, but Edwin's experience in industry, especially woodworking, was of great help. Having four children, he worked for the formation of a school district, on the board of which he served some years later. His farm income came mostly from the sale of cream and he was active in creamery association matters and later in the AFA, the UFA, the Co-operative Livestock Marketing Association, the Alberta Farmers' Cooperative Elevator Company, the United Grain Growers, and the Calgary Abattoir and Cold Storage Company Ltd. The secret of his success, aside from dedication, was experience in business matters, a feature which is repeatedly noted among the men who became farm protestors.
John Alfred Carswell, brother of Edwin, was born in 1856 and worked in his youth as a printer's devil. He published the Colborne Express for nine months before purchasing the Oshawa Vindicator in 1881, which paper he ran for nine years before a breakdown in health due to respiratory problems sent him to the west. In 1883 he had been married to Adela Augusta Lemon, six years younger than he and of United Empire Loyalist ancestry. As related above, he came to Alberta in 1890, his wife arriving in 1891 with children. Carswell was keenly interested in the progress of education and was instrumental in the organization of the Horn Hill school, one of the first rural schools in the District of Alberta. He was Chairman of the School Board for 13 years, was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1893, and farmed until 1906 when he moved to Red Deer and purchased the Red Deer News. Over the years he accumulated city property in association with the business, served on the school board for some time, and was active in the Anglican Church and the Masons. He was a staunch Conservative. The newspaper was sold in 1925 and passed out of existence shortly after. Three of John Carswell's children, including a daughter, Kate, attended the University of Alberta.

Joseph Cole was older than the average age of the male immigrants to the parklands, having been born in Looe, Cornwall in 1845. At the age of seven he came with his family to Upper Canada. The family resided for a time near Darlington, Durham County, but the parents died before Joseph was twelve, leaving
his upbringing to friends and two older sisters. By the age of 15 he was on his own. Cole prospered as a farmer, married in 1875, farmed near Coburg and then moved to a large farm near Fenella, Northumberland County. The Coles were active Methodists in Ontario, supporters of the Grange, and supporters and exhibitors at the Roseneath Fair. In 1889 the husband came west as a member of the Roseneath Party which was a combination harvesting and prospecting excursion participated in by a number of persons from the vicinity of that town. In the last year in which pre-emptions were allowed, 1889, Cole managed to homestead and pre-empt the south half of sec. 6 38 36 w4. The family arrived in 1890. The Coles remained active in church work in the new setting, being concerned in the building of the Red Deer church in 1892, and in the procurement of services for Springvale. Springvale School District was organized with their help and Joseph was the first Chairman; he was associated with the school for the rest of the time they were in Springvale. The prize list for the first Red Deer Fair in 1892 was drafted from the list used in Roseneath where Cole had served, and he was instrumental in the running of the various fair and exhibition organizations that existed over the years in Red Deer. The creamery movement attracted his attention when the so-called cooperative scheme was started in 1897, as did the Red Deer Butter and Cheese Manufacturing Company in 1901, of which Cole was President. He was the President of the AFA Red Deer Branch in 1906, served on the executive of the UFA at the
provincial level for a number of years and was the President in 1912. The Cole farm was a testing place for new varieties of plants sent from the Department of Agriculture, and by 1906 was 3½ sections in size. Cole moved to Red Deer in 1910 and kept a large garden and his interest in horticulture until his death in 1922.

Andrew Hill Trimble was of Irish ancestry and was moved by the spirit of self-improvement which, linked to desperation, propelled several generations of Irish in the New World. His grandparents had come from Northern Ireland with infants, and both generations became successful farmers near Bytown. Andrew was born in 1846 and in 1870 married a woman who died in 1886 after producing eight sons. He married again in 1888 to a second cousin from Carlton County and they went west in 1889 with a number of good milch cows to a farm to the south of Calgary. Trimble organized the first dairy company in the province at that time, but stayed only for 18 months while he looked over the country for an ideal setting. In 1890 they moved to the Clearview area where they enlarged the herd and sold butter to lumber camps in the foothills of the mountains. Trimble had been employed in a cheese factory as a youth, had attempted to run the creamery near Calgary, and in 1895 opened a creamery at Red Deer. The times were against such a venture and it was not solvent by the time the Dominion Government intervened with the cooperative proposals. Trimble rented the equipment to the government, took another farm and
enlarged his herd to 40 cows, a very large number for the time. By the turn of the century the 'co-op' creamery folded and Trimble took back the equipment and made a small beginning at what would become a flourishing business, and a boon to the settlers of the area in cash receipts during homesteading. Trimble was active in Methodist Church affairs, on the school board, and was an importer, breeder and exhibitor of Ayrshires which he brought from the east. The farm home became a show place over the years by the addition of gardens. Trimble became less active in later years but lived to the age of 90.

The details in these biographies indicate the rough outlines of the lives of the sort of men who came to Red Deer and district in the early years, or at least of those whose lives have been recorded. Obviously there were many of lesser achievement, and conceivably some who were scoundrels and layabouts, but the tone of the community was formed by the combination of individual enterprise and civic mindedness which is demonstrated by these examples. Missing, and possibly essential to the story, are references to men who were exceptional but did not conform to the stereotype of the dynamic self-made man of experience. Some of them were romantic, and might have been criticised at the time for a streak of foolhardiness. Such was perhaps Charles J.B. Ward, born 1852 in Chatham, England, dockyard craftsman and later photographer, who read of the west and moved his family to Calgary in 1890 or '91. The family came up the next year after a shack had been erected in the
Springvale District. The Wards were Methodists and contributed to the running of the church and the Sunday School; Mr. Ward served on the School Board for a time, and was active in the various creamery groups. Later he became an officer of the Red Deer Creamery and the family moved to the town in 1907, selling off the half section for $4000. Ward brought the Creamery considerable success, but left it and the district in 1909 when the family moved, like many others in good times, to the coast. Ward, like the Carswells and a few others such as C.A. Julian Sharman who came from Ireland after practising architecture, proved that farming could be carried on as a business with little prior training if the intellect were sharpened to the needs of animals, of the land, and the conditions of the market.

The cumulative effect of the immigration of men such as these was to stamp the area south of the Red Deer River with what can best be called, notwithstanding the slang, a 'solid family image'. The settlement of the area in the eighties when Canadians were still migrating to the United States and few Americans were coming to Canada, meant that the pool of immigrants was of British and eastern Canadian background. Most had families and a need for schools. Among potential immigrants Methodists were particularly attracted to the Crossing because of the early start that the denomination had made there. When the immigration of the nineties was under way Red Deer was not as favoured a destination for Americans as La-
combe because of the lack of homestead land, the existence of SLHC lands, and the sterner established Canadian and British flavour of the place. On the other hand, this flavour was accentuated by the arrival of several farmers of high ability who had sufficient money to purchase land, and by many businessmen of a conservative bent. Some well-to-do American farmers, such as George Root from Iowa, the owner of a large farm east of Red Deer and candidate for Parliament on the Conservative side, were attracted to Red Deer in later years.

For a time the children of Penhold (then called Essexville) were too few to warrant a school in that place, and some of them went up to the Crossing school which was located halfway between the ford and the Gaetz holdings on the site of the present town. But in the last years of the eighties an influx of settlers to the area of Penhold caused a sufficient rise in population for the formation of a school district. Among the newcomers of 1886 was Thomas Green of Tiffield, Yorkshire and his son, Ebenezer. Thomas and Mrs. Green were from a farming and droving background and were over 60 years of age; they were strong Methodists and conscientious farmers. Green became a member of the Innisfail Creamery and was the first

91 For information on the early schools, and the names of many of the early settlers involved in school administration see Schools of the Parkland, published by the Alberta Teachers' Association Branch 24, Red Deer, as a Centennial project of 1967. The information above is passim.
raiser of hogs in the area and a judge of swine at the first fair held at Red Deer in 1892. They remained in the country to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary in 1899, and then sold out to live with a daughter in South Dakota. Later they returned to Alberta, and afterwards moved to the coast.  

It was the arrival of the railway in the season of 1891 which gave the important boost to the opening of the lands between Calgary and Edmonton. By the winter of 1890 the rail had been laid to Red Deer and the full line was open for use the following August. A number of settlers arrived by rail in the spring of 1891, having made special arrangements to use cars on work trains. After the line was open it was not only easier for the settlers who had decided upon the parklands to reach the region with settlers' effects, but there were many men travelling on 'spying missions', or excursions, who were taken by the opportunities of the land and made arrangements to return. Some settlers disembarked in Red Deer or Lacombe without having had any prior intention of going there; the land simply looked good enough to get off the train for. With the end of the eighties and of the few good years that Canadians who had gone to the United States would experience the character of immigration changed. The incoming people were different and there were many more of them. And this time the government took an active interest in procuring settlers and easing their passage to the new land.

92 RDCS, biography of Thomas Green.
Red Deer as a Commercial Centre

By 1892 the population of the village of Red Deer was 150. The arrival of the railway in 1891 caused the emergence of a small business community which consisted of 3 general stores, 2 livery stables, 2 hotels, 2 churches, and one each of the following establishments: harness, hardware, liquor, drug, blacksmith, sawmill, lumberyard and brickyard.

Construction of the railway commenced in 1890, the grade reaching Red Deer by the end of that year; the line was finished in July of 1891 and was open for traffic in August. The railway was anticipated as early as 1884 when a charter was issued for the Alberta and Northwestern; the Rebellion and the slow settlement of the area retarded the plans and the rights were transferred to Ross, Mann, and Holt in 1889, and later to the CPR. The land grant of the C&E, as it was known, was between Calgary and Bowden, and is of no concern to this study. The Calgary and Edmonton Land Company was the holding company for the lands, and Osler, Hammond and Nanton the agents. Much of the site of Red Deer village was under the control of this company once Leonard Gaetz sold to the C&E to enable the shifting of the townsit away from the Crossing where other settlers were still impertinently attempting to cash in on the development of the area. To all intents and purposes the C&E was the CPR; the rolling stock was identical and only some debenture transfers existed to distinguish it from the main line. See the appropriate sections in Chester Martin, Dominion Lands Policy, Lewis H. Thomas ed. (Toronto, 1973), pp 50, 63, and 154-155; "Railway without a Roadbed", Early Days, July 21, 1973; and "The Sound of Trains is Heard", Early Days, November 17, 1973.
The brickyard was started by William Piper, an immigrant from Ontario who had come on a prospecting tour in 1891 and returned in 1892 with a number of immigrants who were to form a colony. Many of them left the area, but the brickyard became an important source of cash income for penniless immigrants during the hard years of proving up the homestead. The hardware store was a branch of the A. McBride store in Calgary and was run by one of the sons. The village of Red Deer was now located to the east of the Crossing which then became known as the Old Crossing, and the business centre was the intersection of Ross Street and Gaetz Avenue, the names and the intersection of which were an eloquent symbol of the partnership of religious and railway interests in the opening of the land. Many of the businesses were but lightly capitalized and the quality of the buildings in which they were housed was definitely of the frontier flimsy mode. One exception was the business 'block' erected by George Wellington Greene on the southwest corner of Ross Street and Gaetz Avenue. Sandstone was quarried from the banks of the Red Deer River and fashioned into the imposing and massive late Victorian style that marked the rebuilt Chicago and burgeoning Calgary.

Greene was one of the pack of young and eager professional men who set out for the west instead of attempting to

94 "City's William Piper, the Man and His Mount", Annie L. Gaetz, Red Deer Advocate, August 7, 1971. Other material for this section is taken from the Early Days articles of December 29, 1973 (for 1891); Jan 12, 1974 (for 1892); Jan 19, 1974 (for 1892-93); Jan 26, 1974 (for 1893); and Feb 9, 1974.
develop the legal and business contacts that would ensure a life of ease in the claustrophobic environment of old Ontario. He was born at Athens, Ontario in 1862; after high school he enrolled in Osgoode Hall and was called to the bar in 1887, the year in which he was married. He practised law in his home town for four years and was a member of the municipal council. He came to Red Deer in 1891 with enough money

95 The western town has been researched too much by methods which emphasize the uniqueness of the place and generalities in the events of town life. There has been little attention to the processes of urbanization and to the people who were the leaders in this process, and to such issues as the persistence, or lack of it, in the influence of important families. For these critical comments, and others on the corrective directions which might be followed see Oliver Knight, "Toward an Understanding of the Western Town", Western Historical Quarterly 4:1 (1973) pp 27-42. The advantage enjoyed by the early arrivals in the business community of Lethbridge is remarked upon by Andy den Otter whose research into the entrepreneurial activity redresses many of Knight's criticisms in the case of that community. See "Urban Pioneers of Lethbridge", Alberta History 25:1 (1977) pp 15-24. There are many parallels between the evolution of Lethbridge and Red Deer, but the patrimonial influence of the Galt family in the former community, although keenly felt, was much more benign than was the intervention of John T. Moore in Red Deer. On the other hand the character of the towns seems to have differed substantially, probably because the labouring contingent in Lethbridge lent a note of rowdism and occasioned a larger role for the calming influence of the police. In an analysis of the entrepreneurial elite of Calgary Paul Voisey found that there was a 'broad connection' among Protestantism, Anglo-Saxon culture and capitalistic achievement. See "In Search of Wealth and Status: an Economic and Social Study of Entrepreneurs in Early Calgary", in: Frontier Calgary, A.W. Raspovich and Henry Klassen eds., (Calgary, 1975). Early arrival by intending entrepreneurs was a time-honoured method of garnering privilege, and even if a man possessed little money but was endowed with education he would be "...appealed to for his judgement and inducted into several offices infinitely more honourable than lucrative." Samuel Strickland, Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West (1853; and Edmonton, 1970), vol I, p 81.
or credit to build the sandstone business block which he intended to house his law offices and a private bank. He was the local representative of the SLHC, and there were many points of similarity between the experiences of Moore and Greene - small-town Ontario origins, law training, and experience in municipal and provincial government. He was on the boards of a number of local companies and was active in fraternal and legal circles. He was reputed to have been a good public speaker and in 1913 was the originator of the Red Deer Branch of the Canadian Club. Greene was an Anglican at the time of his arrival in Red Deer and served for a time on the vestry, but later attended the Methodist Church. He left Red Deer in 1915 after appointment to the District Court bench at Medicine Hat. Over the years he held a number of municipal posts and was the town's financial advisor and legal counsel. The important keys to Greene's success, aside from the important qualities of conviviality and oratorical ability, were his early arrival in a new community and the gradual widening of his influence through contacts with municipal politicians and local businessmen. He had early realized the crucial connection between law and banking and had sought out a place to carry on law in association with property dealing, presumably attracted to profits that could not have been expected in any but the most lucrative practices in Ontario. Some of his services in the early years appear to have been rendered gratis.96

96 The details of Greene's life are taken from the RDCS biography.
Over the decade of the nineties numerous other businessmen came to Red Deer. Some were experienced and well capitalized, but there was more than a sprinkling of amateurs who thought that throwing their savings into a store would start them on the road followed by Timothy Eaton. The forging and the dissolution of partnerships was a constant feature of the business life of the village, and some merchants engaged in a dizzying number of associations over the years. Among these was Philisk Pidgeon, a wry and delightful man who is remembered for the number of his business partnerships and for sending a boxcar load of tourists' stray dogs from Banff to Cochrane when he was station agent at the former place. Pidgeon was born in Toronto, brought up in Stratford, and joined the railway in his teens. Because of an asthmatic problem he came west with the CPR as station agent to Maple Creek in 1885. After a number of other appointments he became the station agent at Red Deer at the inauguration of rail service in 1891, but his family did not come until 1893. Pidgeon left the railway in 1901 and went into business; over the ensuing years he presumably made a modest living in various enterprises, but the number of them is interesting. Between 1901 and 1905 he was in partnership with R.B. Welliver in the men's furnishing business as 'Welliver and Pidgeon'. Welliver sold out and Pidgeon moved to the top of the bill in 'Pidgeon and Wallace' which operated for the two years to March of 1907. This time Pidgeon sold out to L.M. Gaetz. In partnership with a different Wallace a real estate and insurance business was
started. That winter was one of heavy snow; the roof of the curling rink fell in and the economy followed, and by the fall Pidgeon was in the parcel delivery business, but without closing the real estate line. The following January D.L. Miller became a partner, and in April Wallace left to become a Justice of the Peace. 'Miller and Pidgeon' dissolved their partnership in May of 1910 and opened separate offices. Less than a year after that C.H. Chapman came in with Pidgeon and a third member, Turnbull, joined the firm. Pidgeon had been a good Red Deer Conservative and was appointed Dominion Lands Agent in 1914 after the retirement of Captain Cottingham. At that he worked until 1918 when he returned to the insurance business. Municipal politics attracted his interest, and he put much time into fraternal matters and the Old Timers' Association. He was said to have had a nearly perfect attendance record over several decades at Masonic meetings, and to have demonstrated in his own conduct the ideals of the order.97

The small industries and the stores of the village of Red Deer, and of Lacombe and Morningside to the north rarely returned a good living to the proprietors, but they were important as spiritual images of the spread of settlement, for the services they rendered, and as importers of credit to the frontier. Credit was available to the pioneer as merchants' stock, and the merchant in turn carried accounts with the

97 RDCS biography of Philisk Pidgeon.
wholesale houses in Calgary and Winnipeg. Periodic financial stringencies hit merchants hard because they held accounts that might be collected at a delay or not at all while they were pressed by wholesale creditors.
Immigration Policy and the Southern Parklands
after 1891

Selectivity in British and European Immigration

The railway meant commercial expansion, and dictated that the parklands would be the destination of larger and larger numbers of settlers. Among the arrivals of the eighties there had been resentment at having to travel to the Calgary Dominion Lands Office to make entry, and for the immigration season of 1891 the northern half of the Calgary district and the southern half of the Edmonton were amalgamated into the Red Deer Sub-Agency. The Agent, J.G. Jessup, was present only for two months of the 1891 season, in which year the main thrust of settlement went elsewhere to the Edmonton, Little Saskatchewan, Lake Dauphin and Touchwood Hills Agencies. In 1892 the Wetaskiwin-Battle River area was opened and settlers took the good lands of that region with alacrity, since much of the district was free of heavy timber, flat, and was well-drained. The colonization of the Red Deer parklands was consequently later than the Wetaskiwin and Battle River districts.

By an Order In Council of March 14th 1892 the field of immigration was transferred from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of the Interior, effective May 1, 1892. With this change the Dominion Lands Agents became Immigration Agents in addition to their former duties, and were required to keep
an employment register to aid in the placement of persons requesting work. During the season of 1892 Jessup had the office open seven months during the spring, summer and fall; the building housing the Agency was rented from L. Gaetz. The record shows that Jessup took 369 entries in that year, as compared to 90 in the year before, and the total for the district to the end of October 1892 was just over 600.

During the years after 1892 officers of the Department of the Interior were stationed on westbound trains from Port Arthur to Winnipeg for the purpose of easing the passage of travellers, especially those who were not familiar with the English language and with Canadian legal customs. These officers helped immigrants in putting legal documents in order and in answering questions concerning possible destinations in the West. In addition they were prompted to neutralize the efforts of American land agents in siphoning immigrants to the United States, and they were to ensure, if possible, that the

| 100 | Table II represents a tabulation of all the information available on the number of entries from the published sources. Fiscal and calendar dates have been reconciled as nearly as possible, and it has been assumed that there were about 150 entries in the district before 1891; this number is probably too low. The Red Deer Agency extended in a belt across the present extent of the Province of Alberta; consequently entries for years after the closure of the homestead frontier in the near vicinity of the towns in the study area do not apply to the region. The table is of direct application to the study area only until about 1904. |
### TABLE II

**TABLE OF ENTRIES, CANCELLATIONS, PATENT APPLICATIONS AND RATES OF SUCCESS IN HOMESTEADING, DOMINION LANDS AGENCY, RED DEER, NORTH WEST TERRITORIES, 1891-1905**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entries in Year</th>
<th>Sum Entries</th>
<th>C Entries Cancelled</th>
<th>Entries Net</th>
<th>Patent Approvals</th>
<th>Sum of Approvals in Year</th>
<th>Percentage of Entries Failing at 1 yr.</th>
<th>at 2 yr.</th>
<th>at 3 yr.</th>
<th>L Occupied But Not Approved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>28 28</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>55 83</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>32 115</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>92.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>[40] 155</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>[30]</td>
<td>[84]</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>64.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>214</td>
<td>1291</td>
<td>101 256</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>42.0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>70 326</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>25.3</td>
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<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>21</td>
<td>1381</td>
<td>44 370</td>
<td>1101</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>28.6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>108</td>
<td>1489</td>
<td>75 445</td>
<td>1044</td>
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<td>424</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>352</td>
<td>1814</td>
<td>103 548</td>
<td>1266</td>
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<td>538</td>
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<td>706</td>
<td>2520</td>
<td>131 679</td>
<td>1841</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>57.5</td>
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<td>2423</td>
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<td>37.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1466</td>
<td>5981</td>
<td>434 1748</td>
<td>4233</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1059</td>
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<td>75.0</td>
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<td>4877</td>
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<td>1326</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>66.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2115</td>
<td>9330</td>
<td>705 2943</td>
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<td>1620</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>74.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Annual Report of the Department of the Interior (Dominion Lands Branch), various years: printed in the Sessional Papers.

**Notes**

1. The data include the Lacombe Sub-Agency from May 1898; Ponoka from 1901; and Innisfail from 1902.
2. Various fiscal and calendar periods have been reconciled as nearly as possible. Only six months appeared for 1897, and after 1898 the fiscal year of July 1st to June 30th was used.
3. Includes a small number of pre-emptions.
4. No figures published for 1894; this approximate figure obtained by calculating differences.
5. In most years only the number of patent applications was listed; the number approved was less by 15% in 1898. The number of applications has been reduced by 10% where the number of approvals was not published.

Columns I, J and K indicate what percentage of all entries of year 1 failed by years 2, 3 and 4 respectively. The measure is only roughly approximate because new entries of year 2 confuse the later percentages. The formula for column J, for example is $E_{xy} \times 100$ where $E_{xy}$ is the value for year 2 in column E and $C_{yo}$ is the value for the base year in column C!

Not all abandoned homesteads were cancelled; this measure shows roughly by subtraction how many were occupied. The formula is $100 - \left[ \frac{(G \times 100)}{E} \right]$. This column shows by inference that conditions among homesteaders must have deteriorated greatly during the mid-nineties. The low figures of 1899 and 1900 were probably a reflection of the Department cleaning its books of the failures of earlier years; see the cancellations in column D for those years.
immigrant was not prematurely separated from his cash. These agents were assigned in relays so that one was present during daylight hours on all westbound trains.

In view of the impending rush of settlement along the C&E Railway the appointment of a similar agent for that line was made in 1892. The Dominion Lands Agency at Moose Jaw was closed as of June 30 1892, there being virtually no land left in the vicinity to justify the keeping of an office. The former Agent there, R.L. Alexander, was required to report to Edmonton where he was to commence the duties implied by his bulky title: 'Travelling Intelligence Immigration Agent in Charge of Immigration along the Calgary and Edmonton Line of Railway'. 101 Alexander made annual reports to the Department of the Interior concerning the origin and destination of settlers along the line, the numbers of animals imported, the value of effects, and the general conditions of farming and the countryside. In 1893 he removed his headquarters to Calgary which was a more logical location than Edmonton to supervise incoming immigration, and that year travelled 26,728 miles on the rail line. 102

During the season of 1892-93 the Red Deer Dominion Lands Agency was closed from December to the end of February, and accommodation was rented for the use of immigrants in transit. From July of 1892 to June of 1893 the Red Deer Agency em-

ployed land guides for only 42 days; eight men shared in this work and received $3.50 each per day. A small amount of money was spent on livery hire for occasional delegates' excursions but the season altogether was a quiet one. Most of the immigrants arriving by rail at this time were headed for the Wetaskiwin, Edmonton, or St. Albert districts.

Payments to land guides amounted to $381.50 in 1894 and $254.50 in 1895.\textsuperscript{103} By 1896 the guiding fee had slipped to $2 per day and at Red Deer only $23 was paid out in that year.\textsuperscript{104} The low figure is indicative both of little interest in settlement and of an attempt at paring expenses by the Department. The immigration shed was closed earlier than usual in 1896. During the years 1892 to 1896 operation of the Dominion Lands office at Red Deer cost annually something between one and two thousand dollars. The salary of the agent was just over a thousand dollars annually until 1896 when it was raised to $1295. Cleaning costs usually amounted to a hundred dollars or so and the agent sometimes claimed these himself.\textsuperscript{105}


\textsuperscript{105} The equipment of the office must have been sparse at the start, and was augmented over the years, a counter with pigeon holes being installed in 1894. A flag pole was added in 1895, and other bric-a-brac at various times, including a moose head which was shipped from the 1894 Chicago Exposition at a freight cost of $16.83. This information is available in detail from the Auditor cont'd...
It was postulated above that the immigrants who came to the parklands in the eighties were, to use a crude metaphor, 'filtered' by the historical conditions of that decade. Such a process operated in the nineties but the conditions differed considerably. Consequently, the type of immigrant and the numbers arriving to make a home differed. Economic conditions were selective, the appeal of the country was selective, the tendency of immigrants to send word to the districts from which they had come was of selective influence, and the policy of the government, enacted by the Agents of the Department of the Interior was selective:

"As regards [Canada] the only desirable classes are acknowledged to be farmers and farm labourers, or persons who are willing to engage in agricultural pursuits, and female servants." (106)

Immigrants were expected to have sufficient cash to become established after entry to the country. There were no assistance schemes for aiding the poor immigrant, although such plans were advocated for some of the allegedly hard-working groups such as English tenant farmers which showed every sign, except that of financial endowment, of being adaptable to the country. Assisted passages from European points were shunned since such a policy would have acted to

105 cont'd
General's Report, various years under the 'Outside Service', Dominion Lands Branch, Department of the Interior. According to local lore the animal head was that of the last buffalo killed in the region and was valued at the least in hundreds of dollars.

"flood the country with paupers, too many of whom, as it is, find their way over." The reticence to supply assisted passages probably had a profound but undefinable influence in deterring numbers of healthy and ambitious British persons who went instead to the African and Pacific colonies.

British immigration, which was desirable to the Canadian nationalists of the time was further hindered by the innate conservatism of the propertied British farmer, and by the adverse economic climate in the British Isles. Widely-

107 Sess. Pap. 1893-13-I-p 8. Charles Tupper, working at the insidious problem of undetected paupers slipping aboard ships bound for Canada, had devised an elaborate and, he claimed, effective scheme for disbarring them: he kept lists of the local assistance rolls and checked the names of immigrant applicants against them. See Sess. Pap. 1893-13-VI-p 5. It was of some annoyance to the Canadian authorities that the percentage of prepaid immigrants who received financial assistance from friends and relatives already in the country was always much lower for Canada-bound immigrants than for US-bound, 60% to 70% of the latter receiving assistance. See Sess. Pap. 1895-13-IV-p 10, for a sample complaint, which was only one of many. It seems to have escaped the officials that their attempt to build a capital-hungry agricultural industry implied the re-investment of savings, if there were any at all in such a risky business, while Canadian industry was staffed, in theory at least, by the emigrants from the farms of the east. For this policy to be effective it was necessary to locate agricultural settlers with savings. The reverse was true of the United States, which in effect imported Canadian farmers and staffed industry with Europeans. It seems that the immigration policy of the time effectively avoided gross changes in the society of eastern Canadian cities, but retarded the development of the agricultural west in failing to promote the internal migration of farmers to a level greater than that which naturally occurred.
circulated tenant farmer reports prompted much correspondence to the United Kingdom representatives of the Department of the Interior, and in some cases to the tenant excursionists themselves, but the influence of the reports in prompting departures was not impressive. Labouring people probably were more motivated by these reports. The nineties were deeply troubled years for the British farmer. The price of wheat failed at the beginning of the decade, recovered somewhat by 1897, but fell again from competition with large acreages coming into production in the Canadian west. By 1892 arable land was being turned to pasture, many labourers were out of work and emigration to cities commenced in a landslide proportion. Tupper's comment was an understatement of the crisis for agricultural labour:

"Prices of agricultural produce have never been lower and in many quarters a wise economy has undoubtedly been exercised in restraining the employment of labour, and in other ways." (108)

Most English rural youth read very little and was not reached by Canadian immigration propaganda. Letters decrying conditions in Canada were routinely inserted in British papers by failed returned immigrants who had a score to settle. The British Agents of the Department of the Interior tried to counteract such adverse publicity by mounting vibrant displays.

108 Sess. Pap. 1895-13-III-p 10-11. A resume of the effects of the tenant farmer excursions is contained in this report, along with extensive comments gathered from a number of sources on the general economic conditions.

on busy streets, by public lectures, by insertions in the
press and by the distribution of literature at agricultural
fairs, but there was no pool of British agriculturalists with
the mobility and capital required for Canada. Most of the
immigration enquiries were received from ploughmen, a class
that had been idled by the conversion to pasture; few of
these men had capital and most did not have passage money.110

Economic conditions in Wales were grim, most farmers endur-
ing a low standard of living and the exhaustion of capi-
tal.111 France might have been considered a logical source
of immigrants to a country with a sizeable French minority,
but prospects for immigration from there were poor. Agri-
cultural prices were low and few farmers had any capital; it
was the custom in France to lease a farmstead over a long term
and few persons who might have emigrated found that the termi-
nation of a lease and the possession of adequate capital coin-
cided. In addition, farm owners were encumbered by an ex-
tremely slow property market. The outcome of this combination
of conditions was the emigration of only a handful of French
farmers, most of whom apparently went to Manitoba.112

110 According to an informant, a number of British plough-
men did settle on the Alberta frontier, some of them
to the southeast of Red Deer. They were a source of
amusement to the local people as they awkwardly became
used to handling abreast hitches of Alberta horses pos-
sessed of considerably more personality than the calm
heavy horses they had used in the tandem hitch with the
assistance of a ploughboy or two.

Iceland and the Scandinavian countries provided substantial immigration, much of it taking place in groups. An Icelandic settlement was started southwest of Red Deer outside the area with which we are most concerned, and a number of Scandinavian settlers moved into the study area independently. They numbered only in the hundreds and will be discussed later. Many people listed on the statistics as Scandinavians, in fact had many years of experience in pioneering or farming in the American west. Northern Europeans were little inclined to resist cultural assimilation and were favourably disposed to using English and having their children taught in it. This habit and the dispersed colonization of Scandinavians in the study area meant the quick disappearance of ethnic identity among that group. Many of the Germans, numbering something over two hundred, who settled in the vicinity of Lacombe, were in fact from the United States and might have been a mixed group of Germans, Hungarians and persons of other origins.

Colonization recruitment was forbidden in a few countries in Europe and was heavily restricted in others. No activity of any sort was permitted in Germany and Austria and immigrants from these countries found out about Canada when discovered in transit at European points at which immigration agents were operating. Often agents were able to re-direct travellers they picked from a crowd as being suitable for Canada while the bulk of emigration, especially paupers, went
to the United States. Italy, Spain, Portugal and the near East were not regarded as sources of desirable immigrants.

Canadian immigration policy in the nineties was directed to obtaining a hard-working, well-capitalized, commercially aggressive and technologically expert class of agricultural settler which was already familiar, if possible, with English language political and religious traditions, or which, in the alternative, showed signs of being able to assimilate to this tradition. The major failure of this decade, although the reasons were far out of the hands of Canadian authorities, must have been the inability to capture large numbers of English farmers and agricultural workers. The importance of this for the country and for the parklands was that the evolution of a countryside built purely upon British rural values was forestalled. The parklands around Red Deer were settled by persons who were conversant with the traditions of English-language cultures; but a partnership among British, Ontario, Maritime Canadian and American components meant that there was variety and disagreement among the population while it was in agreement over certain other basic matters.

The attempts of John T. Moore and the other members of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company to obtain a 'good class' of English settler for the parklands came to nothing, and although British immigration during the frontier period was less than officials wanted, it nevertheless was not
inconsequential. But British immigrants differed from the mass of people left at home, and any hope that the British who arrived were about to settle down to a quiescent squire and tenant relationship was doomed to disappointment. Given the conditions of the nineties in rural Britain, the possibility of emigration fell only to those who were of an uncommon strain of mind or circumstance: those who were the failed sons of aristocratic families, or were paid to stay 'out of the way' in the colonies; others who were similarly sent regular remittances in the hope, sometimes rewarded and often not, that they would 'make something of themselves'; the occasional and atypical member of the squire class who sold out in the desire to use his capital to better advantage in a land with 'more room'; progressive people of business who wished to be more than the keepers of small shops; the occasional tourist on the colonial circuit who was captivated by the land; some idealists genuinely moved by utopian thoughts; some romantics whose sentiments were far from the demands of hard work necessary to set up a farm; and numbers of spunky, sometimes shallow young men without ties whose motive was literally to play cowboy. Among the few English labourers who saved passage money for Canada there were not many who reached the west. The men, and a few women, who reached the Alberta frontier with an English cultural tradition were in effect screened by the sorts of historical mechanisms implied in the above sentence. This screening focussed English frontier society in ways which
carried it away from the conventional interests and arrangements of squire and tenant despite the retention of the outward trappings of genteel country behavior--polo matches, formal picnics, social calling and the landscaping of farm home grounds on old country models.

Immigration Statistics and the American Contingent

Immigration to the southern parklands, slow during the nineties, reached a peak during the land rush of 1900 to 1903, the period concerned in the next chapter. Over the span 1892-1903 there was little fluctuation in the sources of immigrants; most were from Eastern Canada and the United States, and many of those from the US were at some time in their past residents of Canada or the British Isles.\textsuperscript{113} Migrants from province to province were not officially encouraged, but there was a concerted official attempt after 1892, the time at which immigration matters passed to the Department of the Interior.

\textsuperscript{113} The general lines of migration between the United States and Canada have been laid down in Marcus L. Hansen and John B. Brebner, \textit{The Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples} (New Haven, 1940). Few official statistics are available to estimate flows across the western border or within Canada itself. Attempts to tackle these problems are respectively Canadian Immigration Policy and the American Farmer, dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1963 (available from University Microfilms, Ann Arbor), by Karel Bicha; and C.M. Studness, "Economic Opportunity and the Westward Migration of Canadians during the Late Nineteenth Century", Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 30:4 (1964), pp 570-584. The recruitment of American farmers has been treated by Harold Martin Troper, \textit{Only Farmers Need Apply: Official Canadian Government Encouragement of Immigration from the United States, 1896-1911} (Toronto, 1972).
from the Department of Agriculture, to induce Canadians resident in the United States to return, and to encourage Americans to pull up roots and head north. The immigration agents who were the field men for this program perforce had much to do with the cultural complexion of the parklands through the selective manner in which they chose areas to canvass and the sort of people they were seeking. Blacks were virtually excluded but there is evidence of two, one a widow, making entry in the study area.

There were early attempts in the American immigration campaign to reach districts with a high proportion of poor farmers, on the assumption that poor people would be most likely to leave. This approach was terminated. The poor had no money to move—for farm start-up costs, for railway fares—and could not easily liquidate their possessions. The Agent was withdrawn from Wisconsin in 1893, for example, because the poverty of the district forestalled 'good work', and it was claimed that there were one hundred settlers eager to move for every one that could afford to do so. Many United States farmers found that it was impossible to sell their properties.


115 For references to farmers being tied to the land see Harold Troper, Only Farmers Need Apply..., op. cit., pp 37-38. Bicha omitted this issue in assuming that moderate levels of capitalization indicated tenant migrants. See Karel Bicha, Canadian Immigration Policy..., op. cit., pp 116-117.
and mortgaged them. Conceivably, attempts by many farmers in a district to sell or to mortgage would have depressed the property market and made it still more difficult for others to leave. A similar adversity resulted from attempts to dispose of stock, and large numbers of inferior animals were imported to this country because there was no market for them in the States. The immigration movement was impeded in Michigan in 1893 by the condition of the economy.

"The actual results are not as encouraging as I would like them to have been, but the financial depression in this country has had a great deal to do in detaining a great number who fully intended going this fall, as they were unable to dispose of their property, and I find in the northern part of this state a good many who were going but have not been able to even mortgage their property; but from letters I am now receiving I find that some have managed to dispose of their places..." (116)

Such conditions remained common in the United States for a number of years until the easing of credit and the upsurge of the economy after 1896.

It is repeatedly asserted in Alberta family histories that ancestors from the United States sold out at sacrifice prices to make the move to Canada and the evidence cited

here indicates that such assertions are based on fact; it seems to have been taken as a sign of confidence in the new country and as a declaration of the finality of the move that what little might have been left from a decade of plains frontier life was thrown over. Perhaps a substantial number of the persons calculated by Bicha to have been emigrating tenants were in fact farm owners who had only a small amount of cash to show for their work. Certainly it seems that for a period of years after 1890 many farm owners were not able to emigrate with their full theoretical worth in cash; furthermore there are the strong indications that many immigrants may have been carrying with them the proceeds not of a farm sale, but of a mortgage. The latter sum, usually in the range of $1000, might have been the money left from mortgage proceeds after the payment of chattel debts. Some emigrants were forced to give long terms when taking back mortgages on farm sales, and the money trickled in when they were in Canada.

The efforts of immigration agents in the United States came to be confined to the more prosperous areas, and to areas in which they deemed the effects of the depression of the nineties to be temporary. It is painstaking work to trace the

117 James C. Malin's landmark study on the farm population of Kansas confirmed that people tended to stay put in times of stress rather than moving for opportunity. See "The Turnover of Farm Population in Kansas", Kansas Historical Quarterly 4:4 (1935), pp 339-372. It was expected from E.H. Chambers' observation that, all external influences remaining equal, a migration might have been expected in 1893. (See note 81, this chapter, "Late Nineteenth Century Business Cycles in Canada", concerning a business cycle with a peak in 1891.) Of all the wholesale market prices affecting farmers only the price of cont'd...
cont'd

Western cattle rose sufficiently by the middle of 1892 to amount to a stimulus to emigration. Eastern cattle for some reason—perhaps associated with the advanced feeding practices of the Ontario producers—remained below $4 per cwt. for all months of all years in the early nineties, while Winnipeg quotations advanced to $5.50 for early summer deliveries in 1892. Summer deliveries of western cattle brought higher prices than fall deliveries in all years to 1909, but there was no annual cycle in eastern prices and very little absolute change until 1908. Time series analysis would show that the wholesale prices of all grains, stock, meats and animal products rose steadily over the period 1897-1909, but not perhaps pari passu with the decline in the value of currency. Fluctuations, so bitterly assailed at the time, were often of less duration than the life cycle of bunches of stock, and price declines in grains were rarely so great as to drive the price below the two or three year mean previous to the planting of the crop, that is, below the price at the time the frontier farmer set himself out on the land and started breaking. Grain prices in the early nineties, however, were involved in a vicious plunge from which they did not recover until 1897, and there was nothing in the grain market which would have caused families to move in 1892 had they an inkling that the plunge would accelerate. Migration clearly was not a simple economic decision for many people, and the relationship between prices and farm protest apparently requires more research. It is likely, as postulated in Chapter IV of this work, that farmers' troubles arose from a complex interaction among prices, ridiculously low capitalization, speculative ambitions, and the necessity of taking short term loans. For various prices see the appropriate charts and tables in R.H. Coats, Wholesale Prices in Canada 1890-1909,... [Special Report of the Dominion of Canada Department of Labour], (Ottawa, 1910). The migration of farm families depended not only on conditions in advance of the intended move, but also on matters, such as the mortgage market, at the instant of it. Consequently, the coincidence of long term economic trends and farm family migration is inexact, even with the insertion of a delay factor. In sum one is led to the conclusion that low farm capitalization was expected to be remedied from current receipts, something which was impossible in the period. With this failure farmers were in effect paid wages by an increase in property values, the collection of which involved selling out or mortgaging. Both these courses involved unpleasant changes in the rural economy which are treated in Chapter IV. For a lucid wide ranging commentary on factors affecting migration, including the price of wheat, environmental conditions and technological advance in agriculture see K.H. Norrie, "The Rate of Settlement of the Canadian Prairies, 1870-1911", Journal of Economic History 35:2 (1975), pp 410-427.
activities of agents to specific districts and to follow the trail of immigrants which resulted directly from that work. Many families had decided to emigrate before the agent arrived and merely confirmed their plans; some consulted more than one agent, or received information through the mail. Some were prone to move after good crops and others not. The agents prided themselves, at least in their official reports, on being energetic, and the calendar of activities submitted by some of them would support this claim. Immigrants were where one found them, and the Inspector of United States Agencies tracked across the middle states in an effort to contact groups. 118

118 Troper's study, Only Farmers Need Apply..., op.cit., on the immigration policy of Canada covered the published documents, but does not delve into the correspondence files of the United States Agents in their contact with the Department. In view of the amount of detail in which some of them reported and the intensity of their work, Troper's opinion that most of them were opportunistic political appointees with only minimal talent and motivation is at the least unfair. Lamentably, few such files survive, and only one example of an employment file in which the record of the agent in the opinion of the Department was recorded. Lack of time for a systematic analysis prohibited a detailed appraisal of the files that pertain to immigration directed to central Alberta; but references have been found on agents' name schedules to persons who are known to have come to the parklands at the beginning of the nineties and later. In most instances the amount of capital and effects they were carrying is revealed, and from the later prosperity of some who were said to have been well endowed, the agent's report can be considered to have been essentially accurate. Many are reported to have been carrying less than $1000, and the mean seems to have been about that amount. For the reports of one particularly hard-working agent see PAC RG 76, vol 7, f 67 for W.A. Webster of Aberdeen, South Dakota. Detailed reports were also sent to the Department from the important office at Omaha over the period 1895-1904 by Agent W.V. Bennett. (PAC RG 76, vol 120, f 23605, parts 1, 2, and 3.) The Reports of W.H. Rogers cont'd...
A series of crop failures in the Dakota Territory in the years before 1891 made that area a fertile ground for immigration propaganda.\textsuperscript{119}

A.F. Holmes, the Chief Agent for the United States, thought that the best system to promote large scale immigration would have been to get some families well settled "...and let their reports, with the assistance of the agents, do the rest."\textsuperscript{120} One Dakota Agent claimed hundreds of replies from one delegate's report.\textsuperscript{121}

cont'd
do Watertown, South Dakota and Indianapolis for the period 1897-1908 are available on PAC RG 76, vol 157, f 40043, parts 1 and 2. The reports of the Agents usually reveal the family size of the immigrants, an important consideration. Bicha's calculation that many of the Americans who entered left again is vitiated by the fact that immigrant children were counted but children were not counted in the Canadian Census. (See Karel Bicha, Canadian Immigration Policy..., op.cit., pp 131-133.) If there were two children per family, not out of line with the figures contained in the agents' reports, then Bicha's calculations of the number of departing Americans was 100 per cent too high. Many who left the prairies in fact went to British Columbia.

For the period 1887-91 see the Report of W.A. Webster, Special Immigration Agent, Report on Colonization from Dakota, Dec 31, 1891, in Sess. Pap. 1892-7-Report #36, p 207; A.F. Holmes also reports on Dakota in the same Paper at p 203. A killing frost descended on South Dakota on Aug 22, 1891, and the fact that the first frost did not hit Prince Albert until Sept 20 was expected to generate a lot of interest in the Canadian west. The Department of Agriculture circulated the opinions of Leo. Gaetz on agricultural matters in the Red Deer region; he said that frosting during the growing season was rare and local, and 'goes in veins or streaks, something like a hail storm..." See Leo. Gaetz, Report of Six Year's..., op.cit., p 71.

Sess. Pap. 1892-7-#35-p 204.

\textit{Ibid}, p 205.
In 1891 a few families per day were enlisted from the South Dakota counties of Brown, McPherson, Edmonds, Faulk and Spink. The next year activities were spread to include Marshall, Walworth and Potter counties where most of the emigrants to Canada were ex-Canadians from the Ontario counties of Elgin, Kent, Middlesex, and Simcoe. Most of these ex-Canadians were said to have immigrated to the Touchwood district in Eastern Assiniboia, but Agent Webster in South Dakota reported sending 300 families to the Dakota colony at Yorkton, 40 to the Prince Albert District, and 50 to Red Deer and Edmonton, while a remaining 40 were destined for miscellaneous locations 'west of Winnipeg'.

Delegates were often coached in the reports to their home districts, and news carried about the Canadian west was carefully vetted in editorial content by American local newspapers under an agreement with the Department of the Interior. It would have been difficult to misrepresent the qualities of the Red Deer region vis-a-vis those of contemporary Dakota; by one group of delegates it was considered to have been 'grand stock country', with plenty of timber, water, hay, and good soil. This claim, of course, was true. But all the good hay in the world was not sufficient to move farmers unless there were a good chance of economic success in a new land. In com-

122 Idem.
123 Idem.
124 Ibid, p 207.
pleting their report the delegates singled out perhaps the paramount reason among migrants for moving. They wished "...to lay stress on the fact that we met farmers all over Manitoba and the North-West that came here ten years ago poor, and are now rich, while the very reverse of this has been the case of the farmers of South Dakota." (125)

Subsidiary to the chance for economic development there were a myriad of reasons for immigration to Canada, and no one came for one reason alone. The family of Annie Mae Brown 126 returned from the United States because frontier life there was too rough, and the more orderly environment of Canada was considered better for a family. They were chided by acquaintances for going to live under a 'petticoat government'.

Land for sons was an important issue to many parents but the search for land in Canada was not evidence that United States land was exhausted. Land prices may have been more than young men could afford or more than they were willing to pay. Canadian lands were desirable to certain Americans for reasons intrinsic to North American agricultural frontiers;127 commonly frontier farms were started by men who had every intention


126 Her present name, after two marriages, is Chessor; she is an informant for this study, cited under the initials AMC. Her family left Ontario for the American west sometime in the eighties, and she was born in Idaho, near Palouse, Washington, in 1891. Two brothers had been born on the farm in Listowel, Ontario, before the departure.

127 The process outlined here is explicitly described in Samuel Strickland's Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West, op. cont'd...
of taking profit from the land and moving on. Opening a plains farm required not only capital, but also a complex of time and labour. Farmers without much capital could have substituted the latter during the wait for a rise in property values. Many frontier farmers were only passable agriculturists, but, more important, their place in the overall phenomenon of the frontier was functionally much the same as that of the breaking contractor. The residential persistence of such frontiersmen might have amounted to a decade or more, but still they must be considered as having been temporary residents and, as a group, as one of the forces causing social instability. Ironically frontiersmen of this sort contributed to long term stability in land prices since it was immaterial to them in what year they sold out, a living usually being available from the farm. A rise in the bid price of land, if it afforded an adequate percentage return on the savings spent on the farm and paid for the time spent there, was the sign to sell out.

Interest in the Canadian west was reported in the early nineties from southern Nebraska and around the community of Creighton in Knox County in the north of the state. In 1893 Creighton was the origin of 40 families which went to

127 cont'd

cit., vol II, pp 149-150. After some years with the Canada Company, Strickland sold a going farm, pocketed some cash and moved farther into the bush to await the repetition of the frontier speculative cycle. For a comment on this phenomenon in the eighteenth century, see note 69 of Chapter I.

Prince Albert, Yorkton, Calgary and Edmonton districts.

Some of those slated for the Alberta points may have decided to settle in the Red Deer region. It was claimed that year that there was much interest in Alberta among the residents of the Palouse country of Idaho and a number of settlers are known to have come to central Alberta from that region, the Browns being among them. They were among the 'covered wagon' contingent and took six weeks to trail from Idaho to Lacombe in 1894. They were destined for Clover Bar, but while camping for the Sabbath at Barnett Lake, Ed Barnett offered to guide through the district. Favourably impressed, they stayed.

Settlers arrived both by rail and by covered wagon, a contrivance which, as romantic as its imagery has become, was often little more than a farm wagon with a sunshade or a tent superstructure. Until the arrival of the railway in 1891 all goods arriving in Red Deer were freighted along the Calgary and Edmonton trail. Immigrants had no difficulty in following this well-worn route, typically being told at Calgary to keep to the most beaten northward track. In the heyday of the trail, 1887 to 1890, Metis freighters served the needs of stopping houses and carried bulky goods from Calgary to Edmonton. Stages for travellers and mail ran the four and five day trip twice weekly. After the laying of rail in 1890-91 freighters were not needed, and most settlers' outfits arrived in rail cars.

129 Ibid, p 151.
Still, many persons came by wagon for the rest of the frontier period. By and large they represented the poorer class of immigrant and came to be called by officials of the Department the 'prairie schooner type of settler'. In fairness, though, many men chose this mode of travel to avoid punitive freight rates on the other side of the border, although many travelled by wagon only to the nearest CPR border loading point. In other cases the home district of the immigrants was not served by rail, and the effort of freighting to a railway point and trans-shipping was more trouble than it was worth. In the latter case the farmer would not have moved heavy equipment from the farm.

Statistics on persons crossing the border were not kept even at rail points, and there is no method to estimate the number who crossed undetected at places on the plains that had no customs post. Consequently our estimates of the number of arrivals in the parklands and the demography of the first generation of pioneers must be compiled from disparate and incomplete sources. These sources are, however, generally complementary. The failure to report returning Canadians is especially annoying and surprising in view of the effort made by the Department to reclaim emigrants. What statistics are available for all of central Alberta will have to be assumed to be representative of Red Deer and Lacombe.

Registered immigrants passing through the Calgary Im-
migration Agency northwards were 732 in number in 1890.\textsuperscript{130}

For the year 1891 1465 arrivals at the Calgary Immigration Agency were divided as follows: 770 were Canadian, 214 English, 38 Irish, 73 Scots, and 100 of United States' origin. Germans numbered 110. About 40\% of the year's total, most of whom arrived between the months of March and May, were female, and 1456 of the number declared that they were bound for the north-west. This group had arrived at Calgary as follows: 298 via ocean \text{[and rail]} travel, 352 'via' the United States, and 815 from other parts of Canada. By a process of combination and elimination, the results of which can be only grossly approximate, it might be postulated that about 200 ex-Canadians were included in the 1891 contingent. A quarter of the immigration for the year of 1891 was said to have gone on to the Red Deer area, a quarter stayed in the vicinity of Calgary, and the bulk, one half, went to the Edmonton District. If 40\% of the 380 or so who went to the Red Deer/Lacombe area were female then 220 males would have arrived in the region out of the group reporting to Calgary. The 90 entries appearing under the Red Deer Agency for the season of 1891 are not out of line with this number, assuming that it was affected by non-registered immigrants and by the failure of some registrants to settle in the region at all. As during

\textsuperscript{130} Sess. Pap. 1892-7-Report \#16-p 127. Only a proportion of immigrants reported to the Agency for assistance. For 1891 see \textit{Ibid} p 131. Presumably only adults were counted.
the eighties each entry seems to have signified just over one grown man, and in total between three and four persons. A group of Dakota delegates reported in 1891 that they had found 'very many' Dakota farmers settling in the Red Deer district, but immigration was insignificant that year. In 1892 the figures picked up. (See Table II above for the annual totals.) The yearly influx of settlers in the early nineties seems to have been only in the order of a few hundred, assuming that one homestead entry, at a conservative estimate, represents three people. Interestingly, the ratio of men to women in 1891 was almost equal among the arrivals, a feature which probably reflects the migration of families and possibly the feeling that the parklands were not a hazardous environment for women and children.

In the years of 1892 and 1893 the influx of Americans continued, and it was reported that "... the majority of those who have arrived are from the western states." They were considered at the time, and with false optimism, to have the means and experience to succeed at farming. For the whole tract between Calgary and Edmonton for the last three months of 1892 male adult arrivals were 244, and female adults numbered 51. There were 61 males under the age of 12, and 57 females; probably there were between two and three children in each family, given that children were listed as those

under 12 years. Consequently the number of families arriving during the three-month period would have amounted to something, probably a little, less than the number of adult females listed, possibly about 40. If this calculation is approximately correct, then family arrivals would have accounted for only a small number of the adult males, and there would have been upwards of two hundred single or unaccompanied men coming into the study area in the latter part of 1892.

Autumn was not the most popular time of arrival, March to May being the months in which most persons arrived, but October was popular for many people. Ontario was the point of origin for 92 of the arrivals of 1892, Quebec accounted for 36, and the United States 193. These immigrants brought 33 cars of effects, 23 of which were from the United States. Fifteen cars were bound for Wetaskiwin, 2 for Lacome, 1 for Red Deer, and 5 for Innisfail.

Alberta was the destination of most American immigrants in 1893, and the appeal of the area was attributed to "... the character of the soil, the abundance of wood, hay, and pure water which characterize this region." The proportion of Americans reached one half of arrivals in 1893 at the Red Deer Dominion Lands office, with Canadians making up one quarter and British and Europeans a further quarter.

133 Idem; unknown or not recorded here were 413.
But Agent Jessup reported a year later that the quality of the 1893 arrivals was very poor.\textsuperscript{136} For the year to Oct. 31st 1893 there were 268 entries at the Red Deer office, 3 sales and 31 homestead cancellations. Travelling Agent Alexander recorded 200 cars of effects during 1893, of which 66 went to Edmonton, 10 to Leduc, and 54 to Wetaskiwin.\textsuperscript{137} One hundred and twenty-two cars came from the United States as follows: 'Dakota' 36, Nebraska 38, Washington State 22, Minnesota 17. More settlers arrived than reported by Alexander because he could not count all those travelling overland. The Red Deer area received 23 cars of effects in 1893, an enormous increase over 1892, and 15 went to Lacombe.

The bulk of settlement during the season of 1894 was said to have been into the "Lacombe townships", the general trend of arrivals being to the north and northeast of Red Deer and few by then going as far as Buffalo Lake.\textsuperscript{138} In May of 1893 the Lacombe townsite was put on the market and the hamlet of Lacombe started the year 1894 with 3 general stores, 1 hotel, 1 boarding house, 1 blacksmith, 1 butcher, a livery stable, a lumber yard, a money order office, a post office, and several dwellings. The school, as yet without a building, had been organized for 37 children, and a number of religious denominations were holding services without bene-

fit of regular church buildings. The composition of the vicinity was heavily American, a large percentage of these settlers being from the Dakota territory and Nebraska.

It was widely thought that the quarantine on stock at the border was responsible for the slowness of immigration. R.L. Alexander reported that

"...this I found from those who came in during the year, and if the quarantine should be raised a much larger immigration will no doubt come in this year [1893-94]." (139)

Most of the cattle brought in by the American immigrants was of an abysmal quality, and moved William Pearce, the Inspector of Mines, to the strongest language in the condemnation of the husbandry habits of the newcomers. 140

For the season of 1894 the number of arrivals both by rail and overland were estimated at 5000 for all the territory between Calgary and Edmonton 141 and about 10% were estimated to have come by wagon. The homestead entries of various

139 Sess. Pap. 1894-13-III-p 142. Much confusion surrounded the quarantine. Only animals without a certificate of health were confined at the border, and then only until veterinary advice was available. Sometimes stock was inspected without unloading but many immigrants resented paying a fee for inspection. The small number of cases giving rise to vociferous complaints were amplified out of proportion. For a compilation of complaints against officials see PAC RG 76, vol 17, f 147, parts 3 and 4, ["Customs on Settlers' Effects..."].

140 This issue is discussed in more detail below. Pearce's comments are in Sess. Pap. 1895-13-I-p 26.

nationalities for the period Oct. 1893 to Dec. 1894 were: English 160; Scottish 42; Irish 12; from Manitoba and the Territories 18; Ontario and other provinces 286; returned Canadians from the United States 97; United States 160. Some Kansas families arrived overland, and a sprinkling of persons of other origins was recorded. Lamentably, similar information was not published in ensuing years.

These entry figures are not representative of immigration to the west as a whole, during which period (c. 1894) it was said that immigration from points in Canada had fallen off, and that one fourth of Americans were returning Canadians. 143

For the calendar year of 1894 alone 2108 male and 878 female adults arrived between Calgary and Edmonton, along with 808 males and 723 females under twelve. Female adults still accounted for about 40% of the total of adults, and if allowance for unmarried female adolescents is taken from the total of 878 females the average family maintained, as before, between two and three children. Assuming that 600 males might have been family heads, and several hundred adolescent males

142 Ibid, p 69.
143 Report of A.M. Burgess, Sess. Pap. 1895-13-I-p x-xi. About one fifth of the families sent by Agent Webster of South Dakota were noted on his schedules as being returning Canadians in 1892, but the prior origin of all settlers on the list was not given. Most Canadians were from Waterloo, Leeds, and Elgin Counties, but there were representatives from around the town of Stratford. See the Schedule for the period March 1 to June 24, 1892, in PAC RG 76, vol 7, f 67.
over twelve might have been travelling with families, there still appears to have been about 1000 unmarried males travelling independently. Over half (2554) of the 4517 arrivals were of United States origin, 661 being from Ontario, 290 from Manitoba, 190 from England, and 236 from Russia. Lesser numbers were from other sources. The list of points of origin for the immigrants' cars in 1894 indicates Minnesota, 'Dakota', Nebraska, and Kansas as the major sources with 57, 48, 33 and 29 respectively. Six went to Penhold, 10 to Red Deer, 2 to Blackfalds and 31 to Lacombe. The arrivals were more evenly spread through the months of the year than previously, for example, 604 arriving in July, 554 in October, and 328 in November. Families with children apparently showed little selectivity in months of travel, but a disproportionate number of adult males arrived in the spring months if the sex ratio is assumed to have been 3:2. The states contributing most heavily to the American complement were Minnesota 487; Washington 462; Dakota 323; Nebraska 246; Kansas 227; and Michigan 197. The sequence of state names in this list follows that of the origin of settlers' cars except for the state of Washington.

In the ensuing year, 1895, only 26 cars of settlers' effects arrived at points between Penhold and Lacombe,

145 Ibid, Schedule B, p 156.
146 Ibid, Schedule D, p 159.
18 of these went to Lacombe. The number of new settlers reporting to the Red Deer Dominion Lands office fell off in 1895, and fell further in 1896 in a trend that the officials were hard pressed to explain. It was associated with the virtual monopoly of Red Deer lands by the SLHC and the slow economy. But 1896 found more male immigrants married, fewer looking for work, and fewer still of 'the prairie schooner settler'.

Only 14 settlers' cars arrived at the Lacombe siding during 1896, five at Red Deer, and one at Penhold. Adult males arriving between Calgary and Edmonton numbered 631 and females 309; there was a total of 441 children under 12 for a total immigration of 1381. About half came from the United States, and the number of unattached males travelling the railway had decreased to only a few hundred during the year.

Distress and Failure in Homesteading

During the mid-nineties the number of settlers received at Red Deer was consistently less than the number at Lacombe. The townsite of Lacombe went on sale in May of 1893 and a flourishing little village sprang up. In fact by 1901 Lacombe would have a population of 429 compared to 323 at Red Deer, and until Red Deer forged ahead in the years between 1903 and 1906 it seemed as if Lacombe was to be the business centre of the region between Calgary and Edmonton. The reason for the lagging fortune of Red Deer was the SLHC policy

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149 Ibid, p 137.
of demanding a high price for its land, about $7 per acre until the end of the nineties; it was then reduced to $5.
The relative standing of the two communities is further demonstrated by a comparison of the membership in the Methodist churches in the two places, if it can be assumed that the trend of church membership was indicative of population in general. A comparison of the columns of Tables I (church membership) and II (homestead entries) for similar years in the nineties reveals a close correspondence. A dip in the membership of the Methodist church at Red Deer commenced in 1894, two years after the level of 30.6%, the lowest of any year, was reached in the rate of homesteads proving within three years. The rate of proving within three years over the whole region remained at about one third of entries for the period to 1895, and it can reasonably be concluded that this level reflects the departure of persons under economic stress, most of whom did not immediately leave when their predicament was clear, but who trickled away from the region in response to conditions building up over several years. Table II also indicates that the chances of failing within one year were above average, but not extreme, in the early nineties; however, the chances of failing within two years in the first half of the decade were almost double what they were nearer 1900. Many settlers, probably the 'prairie schooner' group of 1893-94, stuck through one year and departed in the second.

On the other hand the church membership figures for
Lacombe show steady growth after 1894 despite clear evidence of another sort that there was considerable stress among settlers at that point as well. This difference can be explained by the failure of Red Deer to attract as many immigrants as Lacombe, and consequently those that left were not replaced by others, which process one may assume was in operation in the Lacombe townships. Even if homesteaders had no funds for extra land purchases at the time of homestead entry, they were not likely to locate in an area monopolized by a company as little trusted as the SLHC and which held out for higher prices than applied to the CPR lands around Lacombe. The persons who did locate near Red Deer were, then, on the chances of the situation, a slightly different sort of farmer from those north of the river—possibly more highly capitalized, more businesslike, less likely to be dabblers—but the historical materials do not present more than the sensation of this difference as outlined here. Certainly, however, Red Deer has always felt that it is different from Lacombe, and local sentiment traces much of this difference to the immigration history of the region.

Homestead entries fell to the ridiculously low figure of 21 by 1897, which trend was noticeable in other western Agencies as well, and were not back to the level of 1892 until

150 See "Distress Among Settlers in the Alberta District in the Winter 1895-96", PAC RG 76, vol 123, f 25253; and the report of Agent R.L. Alexander on distress near Lacombe, PAC RG 15, f 415107. This material is discussed in detail later.
the turn of the century. Interestingly, the rate of cancellations did not rise with the fall in entries, indicating that the economic pressures of the time were destined more to keep migrants at home than to force them off the farm entirely. But there were few patent approvals until the turn of the century, and, keeping in mind that all approvals pertain to entries that were made at least but often longer than three years before the granting of patent,\textsuperscript{151} then the rate of failure for homesteaders going onto the land shows a general decrease through the nineties. More than two out of three entries made by 1892 in the Red Deer Agency were cancelled, about half of those made by 1896, and only one third of those made by 1899. Throughout the homesteading period about one third of those who were going to fail did so in the first year according to Table II, but in actual fact the average was probably much higher because the table is calculated from registered cancellations and there was a common habit among failed homesteaders of leaving without being voluntarily cancelled. If the lands such men had entered were not wanted by anyone the parcel remained for a long time as an active entry on the books of the Department. The level of uncancelled but abandoned homesteads, which will forever remain unknown, dislocates other calculations in Table II and it is not possible to calculate the overall rate of failure for the region for the period of the study.

\textsuperscript{151} Approvals commonly were obtained five years after entry, and instances are recorded in the local histories of seven and nine years.
because numerous entries made after approximately 1904 pertained to properties outside the region in the eastern and western reaches of the Red Deer Agency.

Column 'L' of Table II shows approximately what percentage of the total entries registered up to any given year might have been active, that is to say, probably occupied but unproven. As could be expected, at the opening of the homestead frontier most of the entries represented occupied claims, but the rate fell as the decade progressed, reaching a low point of 57.5% by 1899, and climbing only to 65.5% in 1900 despite the doubling of entries in these two years from 325 to 706. After that it hovered just over 70%. But in the use of figures of this sort the annual rate of change is not as important as the biennial rate because obviously few entrymen left claims in the season of arrival. Consequently the pairing of years gives a more accurate indication of change in the rate of failure over time. Proceeding in this manner reveals that the greatest rate of change occurred between 1894 and 1896 when the number of unproven but probably occupied homesteads dropped almost 20%. The second highest figure occurred between 1895 and 1897. These figures cannot indicate failure on the part of homesteaders. They are only a measure of the number of homesteads that were unproven, but on
which in all likelihood there was some difficulty in meeting the requirements. Stress among settlers in meeting the requirements of patent within three years would be shown by a rise in 'I' and a deceleration in the rate of increase in 'F'; in fact 'F' not only slowed but fell in 1897. The figures in Table II indicate that there was a period of stress among settlers in meeting homestead requirements between 1894 and 1897. Insofar as statistical measures apply to real lives, it does not seem that 'recovery' occurred until about 1901.  

152 Malin's study of farm population in Kansas ("Turnover of Farm Population", op.cit.) showed that departure was most common as a percentage in the first five years after arrival, but the extraordinary sharp breaks in the graphs he presents indicate that some period other than five years should have been employed, and that the important critical period was something less than that. According to the figures presented in Table II above, the percentage failing within one, two and three years shifted as time passed, the first year rate increasing toward 1900, the second starting very high, decreasing and then recovering, and the third following a path similar to the second, but with a lag probably reflecting the conditions of some years before which had caused the economic debilitation of affected settlers. Malin found (pp 344-345) that departure within 10 years in the decade 1885-95 was at a rate of 52.3%, but since his study involved name searches and the residential permanence of persons who were in the sample, there was no accommodation for persons who arrived in year one and departed by year four. This phenomenon would be of no importance unless five-year periods were intrinsically different -- a possibility which arises from findings in this study. It can only be assumed that his choice of five-year periods was representative of all years, an assumption which now would be inadvisable in view of the sort of short term fluctuations in the order of two years that are evident in the figures presented here. Malin's population may have suffered the magnitude of failure shown here -- up to 70%. In any event the failure of homesteaders everywhere was incredibly frequent; figures for Nebraska which are of the same order as those presented here are found in Homer E. Socolofsky, "Success and Failure in Nebraska Homesteading", Agricultural History 42:2 (1968), pp 103-107.
Despite the favourable reports of R.L. Alexander, there is ample evidence that there was hardship in the park-lands in the mid-nineties. Nowhere was deprivation more crushing and the attitude of the surrounding community less commendable than at the Jewish Colony of Pine Lake.

Sometime in 1892 or 1893 a number of Russian Jews had settled to the southeast of Red Deer in the vicinity of Pine Lake (Township 35 25 w4). Through a lack of familiarity with the country, with Canadian homesteading laws and with farming in general they expended to no effect money provided by a Jewish philanthropic organization. Their plight came to the attention of Joseph Jacobs, chairman of what was called the 'Russo-Jewish Relief Committee' of London, England, who offered £100 for seed grain and relief and asked the High Commissioner to forward the funds. By the end of May 1894 the money and a Departmental official had arrived at Red Deer and the report of the official indicated that the settlers were in 'very destitute circumstances'. The colony was composed of 15 families and a rabbi, who needed, they said, 1000 bushels of grain and 50 sacks of flour. The colony was operated on cooperative, or possibly communist principles, and the settlers were loathe to accept money as individuals.

Correspondence between the Agent at Red Deer and the Commissioner of Dominion Lands reveals that the Agent had

Material for this section was obtained from PAC RG 15, f 350385.
warned the group to make legal entry on their lands, something that they were, curiously, unwilling to do. But the lack of entry may have been desirable since "Altogether... they are the most undesirable immigrants being miserably poor and knowing absolutely nothing about farming." No charity, advice or assistance with labour had come from the Red Deer or Pine Lake residents because "... the white settlers of the locality object strongly to them as neighbours and are dreading a further incursion."

Since the colony had omitted to make entry the Department could not extend seed grain assistance and it was necessary for a benefactor to secure any cash advances made to the group. A.M. Burgess felt that the colony, and its failure, were "very undesirable from all points of view.

It was reported by the Agent at Red Deer, Jessup, that the people in that village knew that the colony was needy, but they felt that the Jews might have some money hidden away; the 'gossip of the stores' maintained that Jews were very cunning people. If they entered the country with the connivance of the Department Jessup felt that some duty was owed them. A report made in the summer of 1894 by G.T. Thompson of the Office of the Superintendent of Mines revealed that they had grown some potatoes and had been netting fish in Pine Lake without a licence; "... so you see there is very little danger of a Jew starving." Their real problem according to Thompson was the inevitable machine agent. The settlers had
let notes for the fall of 1894 and the crop of which there was little, was spoken for. In addition they had bought a number of horses they did not need, and the country around Pine Lake was not suited to the sort of general farming that they were attempting. The colony was dispirited and talked of leaving "... much to the delight of the surrounding settlers who are in hopes that they will leave the district as they are of no benefit to any community."

By the winter of 1894-95 all but six of the families had left, presumably for cities; the committee in London was willing to put up more money, but only for the few that were persisting at Pine Lake. Not until the spring of 1896 did relief money arrive and by that time there were only eight people in the colony, none of whom had entry to the land on which he resided. In the early spring of 1896 a request from Jacobs for information on the colony prompted a visit from J.G. Jessup. The colony was near collapse with the freezing of the oat crop of 1895 and because potatoes were small that year. A merchant in town had entered a contract with the rabbi which turned out to be onerous to the group. In the spring of 1896 the hopes of the Red Deer residents for a white Anglo-Saxon countryside were preserved with the departure of the remainder of the Jews.

The winter that finished the stragglers in the Pine Lake Jewish Colony was also hard on a number of other settlers. The annual reports of the Immigration Agent and the Dominion
Lands Agent were typically contrived to present a rosy view of the district in keeping with the publication policies of the Department. But there were times when superficial optimism was by force of necessity supplanted by concern. A circular letter sent through the Department of the Interior in 1895 asked for reports on distress to be forwarded for central collection so that a policy might be devised in the event that distress were widespread. This was a cautious policy designed to avoid attracting attention to distress among settlers; a plan to send A. Ruttan as a Special Agent was scrapped because it was thought that his appointment might cause adverse publicity. A.M. Burgess was of the opinion that the demands for assistance came from many who did not need it, and that many who were genuinely in need might be dissuaded from revealing their condition if the glare of publicity were focussed on the issue. Consequently, a policy of discreet enquiry was devised.

The zone of greatest distress in the late fall of 1895 was an arc southeast from Wetaskiwin, an area populated mostly by Swedish persons under the tutelage of the well-liked Immigration Agent C.O. Swanson. Among non-Scandinavian settlers those from Nebraska were worst hit. R.L. Alexander re-

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154 Information for this section comes from PAC RG 76, vol 123, f 25253, "Distress among Settlers in the Alberta District in the Winter 1895-96". This winter was remembered by the early pioneers as the hardest, with excessive snowfall and a late spring. The year 1896 was one of the best in crop yield, however. Red Deer News (henceforth RDN), June 5, 1907.
ported in December that seed grain was in short supply between Calgary and Leduc, with 30 settlers at Lacombe in need of seed grain and the police keeping a list of names.

In the immigration season of 1896 William Pearce was concerned that land rushes were about to occur in a number of localities. But the growth of the country was being hindered by the abandonment of many homesteads, a process which receives comment throughout this chapter. Pearce was not, however, surprised at this trend because

"... considering the class of settlers that have come to Alberta, I am surprised at the large percentage that have remained. A considerable proportion of them have been nomads for years and will be until they go their 'long home,' or get so decrepit that they are unable to move. Another large class were really nothing but horse traders who never intended to settle."

There was no reason, in Pearce's view, to mourn for those in trouble because anyone with normal industry could survive a winter. But the problem, despite Pearce's cavalier comments, was serious. Pearce admitted that as a matter of policy it would be best to keep immigration away from Alberta for the next year. After that the country would be more on its feet and if another rush came and there were a bad year or two the downturn would not be materially felt.155

155 There is no evidence that such a policy was prosecuted, or was necessary. The same economic conditions which held down the settlers of central Alberta seem to have kept potential migrants away from the west in general.
But the problem did not dissipate as easily as Pearce imagined and not all of the affected settlers were lazy. By the fall of 1896 R.L. Alexander was sending forceful appeals to his superiors concerning the dire predicament of some settlers near Lacombe. Emigration from the area had reached a proportion which should have been of concern and there were persons who were considering moving not only because of the loss of their crop, but also because they feared being left behind by their friends to a life in a depopulated neighbourhood. Most of those affected lived between the C&E rail line and Gull Lake, an area notable for pockets of frost and which did not settle fully until 1912. The Commissioner of Dominion Lands viewed the matter with sufficient gravity to propose special arrangements to re-settle the dissatisfied ones with an allowance for their improvements. The Department was agreeable to some special arrangements, asked for another report, and instructed the Secretary of the Dominion Lands Branch to conciliate the sufferers. This was an unusual step for the normally moribund upper levels of the Department.

The efforts by the members of the Outside Service to lump the failed settlers into the class of 'prairie schooner' migrants obscured much real suffering. One settler, his wife and six children were resident in a leased house next to their claim, the southeast of sec.16 40 28 w 4, and had been frozen

156 Other developments as presented here on the issue of distress around Lacombe in 1896-97 are contained in PAC RG 15, f 415107.
out. This man was not considered by R.L. Alexander to have been a practical farmer, but rather a horsebreeder with a business turn of mind whose horses had won a number of prizes at the Red Deer and Lacombe fairs. Another man who owned the quarter to the west of the horsebreeder was said to have been unmarried for want of money, having been frozen out as well. Other settlers in the same township were affected and many were moving, one Norwegian to Driedmeat Lake. Angus French of Minnesota, whose neighbours said he was hardworking, had arrived in 1894 with a large outfit, lost his crop to the frost of July 1, 1896, and was selling his implements for cattle and horses. He would not try crops again. Alexander reported: "Asking him where he was thinking of going he replied that he did not know, but he must go somewhere as he could not make a living where he was." Most of the settlers to whom Alexander talked were not badly off and the crop of 1896 was not threshing out badly for those not affected by frost.
The Later History of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company

Hardship in the nineties was not confined to rural settlers. Merchants made little money, and prices were low, cream being the only farm product that would bring regular cash. John T. Moore had waited since 1887 to sell off the lands of the SLHC but very few parcels sold in the nineties. The investment of the company, if the figures presented by Moore in the reconciliation with the Department of the Interior are to be trusted, was about $240,000. Compounded interest at 7% in sound mortgages or industrial stock would have doubled this investment in ten years, but as it was the money was sealed in unsold and temporarily unsaleable land in central Alberta. By 1893 the company was apparently in trouble, there being a lack of operating capital. This Moore obtained from E. Leadly of Toronto, a prominent Methodist layman. Leadly took a mortgage on 60,000 acres of the SLHC lands, most of which land it can be assumed was in the Red Deer tract. The SLHC received $100,000, but how this was spent is not known. Contrary to the hopes of Moore, the Red Deer lands continued to move slowly, and Moore did not increase the small amount of good will felt towards him in the district when he main-
tained that land companies were not subject to school taxes.\textsuperscript{157}

Moore rarely came to Red Deer although in later years he maintained a residence there. The capital of the company was supposed to have been $400,000, but during the nineties a number of directors exchanged stock for land, and it is possible that Moore was among them. The capital stock was reduced to $75,000 by 1898 and the inventory of land was down to 70,000 acres.\textsuperscript{158} For the next few years there was little news of the company, probably because the directors were pleased with the option of land for stock. They should have been at what appears to have been a price of less than $3 per acre, assuming that the company was never fully capitalized, as was common with land companies. By the turn of the century a flood of settlers, many of them with cash, put money into the local economy and land sales by the CPR were proceeding at a fast pace. In 1902 during the land rush, Moore sent out a circular announcing that the company had been wound up—a development which took some of the shareholders by surprise because it came just at the peak of the market that all had been

\textsuperscript{157} The dealings of the SLHC after the termination of the Department of the Interior file in 1887 are available only from detailed reports on litigation arising from the mortgage, in this instance RDN of Oct. 2, 1907. The school tax issue receives a passing reference in \textit{Schools of the Parkland}, op.cit., p 135. By implication the \textit{Innisfail Free Lance} of Dec. 1898 and Jan. 1899 is referring to the SLHC in editorials against land companies. See the material on the single tax in various issues.

\textsuperscript{158} RDN, Oct. 23, 1907. The matter of the transfer to the Leadlys is treated here instead of the next chapter to avoid the truncation of the story.
awaiting since 1882. The winding-up was caused by the imminent failure of the SLHC to honour the terms of the mortgage, or so it was claimed by Moore. There can be suspicion about his claim. Moore turned up in Red Deer still as the agent of the SLHC, but the company was now owned by the Leadlys who had purchased the remaining lands involved in the mortgage for $1 in lieu of taking proceedings for default. Later court testimony revealed that Moore had struck a deal with the Leadlys in 1900 that required only that the Leadlys get the just return of the mortgage from the sale of lands, and that Moore could keep any extra that he could wring out of the land sales. In addition Moore's office and travel expenses were written off against the company. In 1902 and 1905 Moore and the Leadlys made further agreements, but by 1903 the matter had gone into litigation on the instigation of the remaining shareholders. The case was to be one of the longest and most bizarre in the history of Ontario mortgage law.\(^{159}\) It ended only in 1909 with Moore completely discredited and the SLHC under the control of a Kingston, Ontario shareholder who transferred the affairs of the company to a real estate firm known as the Cunningham Land Company.

It is not possible to calculate exactly what might have been the real cost of the SLHC lands to Moore. That his behaviour was well over the line of propriety marking ordinary business conduct is without question, and there may be reason

\(^{159}\) RDN, Oct. 14, 1908; RDN, June 16, 1909.
to consider his activities grossly fraudulent. Without knowing what contribution was made to his wealth by business activities other than those in Red Deer. Moore remained influential in the Red Deer area although he spent little time there. It was consistent with his role as a land promoter that he pushed for trunk road development, but his failure to achieve concrete results in this field and in public works for the region even while he was a Member of the Legislative Assembly during its first term was a cue to the Red Deer News to denounce him for lack of effectiveness. His Alberta Central Railway was a tool of Liberal patronage which was intended to connect the Brazeau coal fields with the CPR system. It was completed after a number of extensions to its charter and promptly passed into the orbit of the CPR. Moore apparently possessed real oratorical ability but regarded the voting public with cynicism; at the time of Autonomy he was party to a charade in which he was put forward as a non-partisan candidate in keeping with the brief romance Alberta voters experienced with that idea. Within the week however he was a firmly declared Liberal and a staunch advocate of the spoils system.
By the end of the 80's there were approximately 200 people in the vicinity of Red Deer and a few score in the area that was to be the location of the town of Lacombe. Almost all of the farmsteads represented by this population had been homesteaded; there was no advantage in the purchase of land when it could be obtained virtually free under the homestead regulations. Some farms did change hands by sale after being improved, but few sale transactions took place until the arrival of the railway in 1891 caused an increase in land values.

A number of 'ranchers' maintained range cattle operations during the late 80's and throughout the 90's in the country to the east and west of the line of the Calgary and Edmonton trail, and typically were 'squeezed out' by impinging settlement. The district to the east of the line of the trail about thirty miles distant was known as the 'Buffalo Lake country'. It was widely known for the expanses of haylands, for the topography which offered ample shelter for stock, and for the dependable supply of good water. Despite the setbacks that occurred to many individual homesteaders the spatial trend of settlement in the nineties was one of the continual encroachment of settlers away from the rail line. Understandably pockets of sandy and marshy land were left unsettled, at
least for a time.

In the main the settlement spread east because land to the west of the rail line was a series of sloughs, even lakes in wet years, which ranged along the bottom of the buried valley of the pre-glacial Red Deer River. The willow on the wet land was difficult to clear and the district was subject to frost due to low elevation. A colony called 'Swea' comprised of 51 souls and a number of horses and cattle existed in 1893 in township 38 1 w5. The surveying of the western district proceeded at a slow pace, the subdivision survey of township 41 1 w5 being carried out only in 1895 at which time only one settler, a rancher, was found. The Agent at Red Deer appealed on a number of occasions for rapid surveying of the townships to the west of the Fifth Meridian to accommodate Icelandic and Swedish settlers who were interested in the area and were not deterred by the hard work of clearing heavy woods. Furthermore, it was only logical that railway development would spread east as railways were laid to meet lines coming from the southeast. Lands to the east were consequently expected to be of higher value than to the west. Logically, however, the better locations to the west within

161 Sess. Pap. 1899-13-III-p 256. The Icelandic colony at Tindastoll was not in the study area. It is interesting to note that at least one of the members of the Finnish 'Kuusamo' settlement chose the western district for the scenery, the lakes and woods of which, and possibly the rough topography and poor soils, were reminiscent of the homeland. See the biography of Andrew Woima in RDCS.
the distance of the daily travel of a team and wagon were developed; there were even small pockets of settlement further out, but they remained remote even for years after the turn of the century.

Local history delights to recall the dates of arrival of the earliest settlers in local districts, and it is undoubtedly of some interest that there were homesteaders in Brooksley in 1884, in Milton by 1894, in Spring Valley in 1892, in Arbordale by 1893, Woodynook by 1897, and other districts in the nineties. But more important to the geographer of agriculture and society is the time at which an area was generally settled, in which there developed some surplus of agricultural produce, in which the germ of social contacts were hatched, and in which community life came into existence. It seems that this point was reached in many of the districts with which we are dealing approximately two to three years after the first isolated penetration of the area by settlers.

This gestation period was longer in the case of some districts in the remoter east, such as Hopedale which the first homesteader entered in 1894. The general settlement of that district did not occur for another six years when the land rush, with which the next chapter is concerned, filled it quickly.162 Settlers straggled into some of the areas marked

162 The dates in this section are accumulated from the appropriate sections in Wagon Trails, op.cit.; Pioneers and Progress, (Alix-Clive Historical Club, Alix Alberta, 1974) henceforth cited by title only; and Land of the Lakes, op.cit. The dates for the school districts to the south of the Red Deer River are from Schools of the Parkland, op.cit.
by rougher topography and there were islands of less dense settlement left behind in the wake of the frontier, just as there were outliers of already settled areas ahead of it in a few locations. A serviceable index of the date of the general settlement of a locality is the date at which a school district was organized. This signified the arrival of a number of families, a determination on the part of the populace to become organized, some time on hand to make the arrangements and a taxation base for the support of the school. Map VII shows the date of founding of more than 60 school districts in the study area, and it is immediately evident that the majority of them date from the early years of this century. Before 1896 only a corridor of settlement is indicated along the Red Deer Lowlands. One school only was started in 1897 and none in 1898. These were the years of slow immigration and distress among the settlers, and indicate little movement or permanence in 1894 and 1895. In connection with the conclusion that the years 1894 to 1897 were marked by economic stress to settlers already on the land, it should be noted that those who arrived in the late eighties settled in districts, such as Horn Hill and Springvale, which established schools by 1892; the settlers who arrived in the early nineties either lived in areas which were too lightly populated for schools, went to districts which already had schools, or did not erect them until the times were better. The second alternative can be largely ruled out by the evidence in the
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*Schools which were formed by splitting districts
**Intermittent after first formation, or not held in schoolhouse
INEX TO MAP OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS, cont'd.

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<td>Scott</td>
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<td>68</td>
<td>1894?</td>
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immigration statistics that few settlers arrived in Red Deer in the years in question, but there were schools in the immediate vicinity of Lacombe for the newcomers. In general, the lack of school foundings in the middle and late nineties is indicative of stagnation in immigration and of economic adversity dating back some years.

During the nineties the Districts of Milton, Lakeside and Turville were colonized followed by Spruceville and Wil-lowdale. In the Milton District there were some early sales of CPR lands in the middle nineties and the homestead lands were gone by 1897 or 1898. Milton school was organized in February of 1896, but the local history does not provide a sample of the persons who immigrated in the nineties. Turville was homesteaded by a mixed group of English, American, Scandinavian and Canadian people who were attracted by the excellent soil. By 1899 CPR sales were being processed there because homestead land was gone. Lakeside had been first settled in 1891 by Percy Switzer of St. Mary's, Ontario, and the general settlement was during the middle nineties. Although there is not much information on the first settlers, it appears that they were evenly mixed in origin between Ontario and the United States, with a sprinkling of English and Scots. Not all the land in Spruceville District was taken in the nineties and some homesteading land was left in 1900. CPR land was purchased after the turn of the century. The com-position of the population, from the little information that
is available, was mixed between American and Ontario immigrants. Willowdale, to the southeast of the District of Balmoral (east of Red Deer) was not at first a densely settled area and was favoured by ranchers and stock raisers. Some of the farms in this district were large, and the eastern portion of it was adjacent to Hillsdown, a district used for ranching and by a few homesteaders, but which never attained a substantial density of population.

The local historical publications contain little on the immigrants of the nineties. There are occasional glimpses of men in the prime of life taking up the axe and the plough with resolution, but by and large the picture is one of an unsettled era. Permanence was not the rule; homestead claims were often sold for a pittance, though this was not strictly a legal practice. Families came and stayed only long enough to get patent and then sold out or leased the land to a neighbour, and disaster in the form of a death in the family, mutilation by machinery or an accident with animals intervened in all too many attempts to start a home. The dire need for money often called men away from home to wage labour in the mines and lumber camps of the Rockies, and there were examples of families left behind being ill provided for. Some people had no idea of the intensity of winter. For example in the fall of 1895 Joseph Grose of Pleasant Valley discovered a mother and seven children in a frame shack with insufficient heat. The father had gone in search of wage labour. In the frontier tradition a neighbourhood work bee put up a warmer
Not in keeping with the frontier tradition of neighbourhood charity was the fate of the Doblers of Springvale, a couple who had come from Ontario advanced in years in the days of the SLHC colonization scheme. They were hospitable for years to bachelors of the district who came for the excellent cooking and to enjoy a conversation in that lonely time. But Clearview settled quickly after 1890 and much of the helpfulness that had marked the decade of the eighties evaporated. The Doblers grew old and were unable to care for their animals, each of which they had named and pampered. Mr. Dobler had strokes, Mrs. Dobler had heart trouble and the police were asked to investigate. Some very distant relatives were located in the east and the homestead sold for the princely sum of $600, not an unusually low figure for the time. The Doblers sped by rail back to Ontario over the route they had covered so laboriously with oxen in 1884.¹⁶³

There were of course success stories, but usually only the seeds of prosperity were sown in the nineties. Peter Talbot, a school teacher, arrived at Lacombe in 1892 with a small family. Talbot had seen the harshness of winters in the range country and moved to a more generous land. The Talbots were indistinguishable at that time from the mass of 'prairie schooner' immigrants, having a wagon, a few implements, a

¹⁶³ RDCS, biography of Daniel Dobler. The article allows that this was rough handling of such tender people. It was not unusual for police to be involved in settlers' affairs.
few head of stock, and the ambition to enter raising of purebred stock. The beginnings were humble—a rude shack of exceptional frigidity, the first sowing of grain and threshing by flail, and the slow building of the farm. But in the raising of purebred cattle Talbot had made a sound choice, and over the years he became prosperous, politically influential and, at least by Liberals, respected.

Immigrants could prosper by dedication and hard work even if they possessed only modest means, but capital was always, as on other frontiers, a healthy boost to eventual success. This was true in the case of the Parlbys whose ranching was reviewed above. It was apparently also true of Joseph Grose who came from England as a young boy with his parents. This six-week voyage included the death of one of the family who was buried at sea. Joseph settled in Goldstone, Ontario with his family, married later and had seven children. Seeking land for sons he decided on Alberta after an excursion in 1891, and arrived with three carloads of effects and farming material in 1895. Grose rented land while he and his sons looked for a location, and then commuted miles to it during the early stages. Grose had enough money to put up a good two storey frame house on the claim in Pleasant Val-

ley, and this was the first such house east of Lacombe. The Grose men also operated a cattle ranch in the Buffalo Lake country between present Erskine and Nevis, and were acquaintances of the Parlby brothers. Grose seems to have accomplished his objectives of keeping the family together; the local history records that he lived to see all his children married. In 1914 at the age of 73 Grose sold out.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ Some details of Grose's life are in Wagon Trails, pp 229-231; Grose was said to have kept a journal which was available to the compilers of that section.
The Local Economy and Farm and Ranch Technology

in the Nineties

Ranching

The parklands appeared to immigrants to be a region abounding in water, hay, good soil, wood, and stock shelter. During the first seasons most settlers relied heavily upon stock, except hogs, to bring in a little money until enough land had been cleared for raising crops. Before the time of general settlement in any given district there was plenty of open land on unclaimed quarters and on unsold railway and colonization company reserves that was used by anyone who wished to range stock. The stock of itinerant ranchers, homesteaders, and ranchers who were permanently engaged in stock raising and later moved into more intensive forms of stock feeding was mixed together over the countryside. A roundup was usually held in autumn when stock could be cut out according to ownership and offered to various travelling buyers. There were minor sales at other times of the year and buyers contracted to have stock held in corrals until enough had been amassed to warrant driving to a rail loading point.

Strictly speaking, users of the common land desiring to pasture animals or to cut hay were expected to obtain a
hay permit or a grazing lease, but it was common practice in the parklands to ignore these requirements. Income from hay permits was never a large part of the revenue of the Dominion Lands Office at Red Deer. The custom of pre-emptive haying on unsettled land involved waiting until July 20, on which date persons interested in securing a reserve of hay for winter use would cut a swathe around the desired tract signifying that the hay was claimed. This custom, common in the early west, persisted for years until land became generally settled and better varieties of forage grasses along with the custom of grain and stall feeding were introduced through the advocacy of Experimental Farm personnel, the breed organizations and newspaper and farm education writers.

There were several disadvantages to the use of wild hay for forage. The food value of the grasses incorporated in it was low in relation to that of cultivated pasture grasses. The sale price of the two products reflected this inferiority, wild hay being valued at about three dollars per ton and the cultivated grasses at approximately nine dollars.

166 Sess. Pap. 1895-Report of the Auditor General-p G95 shows that for the year 1894 Red Deer collected only $140.50, Wetaskiwin $33.50, and Edmonton $65.60 for hay permits.

No research was done into the Public Archives material on grazing leases. A large proportion of this data was destroyed in the interests of conserving valuable shelf space. An examination of the printed lists of grazing lease holders revealed only a small number with any apparent connection to the study area, and there are no other listings known to us which give easy access to the issue.
The cutting of hay in the wild state meant that it was sometimes obtained at some distance from the farm and might remain in swathe during the harvest period to be picked up later. This practice caused some loss in feeding value. Wild hay was ricked but not covered, a practice which astounded British observers. The growth of hay, much of it hydrophytic, was dependent not only on rainfall but also on water levels in the many sloughs and in the shallow lakes. Consequently in some dry years, such as 1897, the growth of wild hay was much decreased. This would not have been of enormous concern to the average settler because the value of stock kept in the nineties was not high, and it was of a tough strain. But a specialized dairying or beef enterprise based upon more expensive higher quality stock could not be sustained on an uncertain supply of wild hay and after 1900 attention was paid to the cultivation of tame grass, almost always timothy.

The customs regulations allowed for the importation free of duty of one head of horned cattle or of horses for every ten acres of land taken up either by purchase or by homestead. This regulation met with criticism on one side from bona fide settlers who felt that the allowed number of animals was too small, and on the other side from William Pearce who felt the regulation was too lax. Pearce presented a thumbnail calculation to show that dishonest persons could conceivably have entered the west with what appeared to be a legal number of cattle after showing proof of purchasing some
large acreage of land. Of course, the cattle could have been sold and payment on the land defaulted leaving the 'immigrants' with a tidy profit, if the bill of sale for the land had been solid in the first instance.\textsuperscript{167}

Economic conditions in the regions of the United States from which immigrants to central Alberta came mitigated against the sale of stock before departure, and the stock brought by most of the settlers of the nineties was of a sorry quality. Pearce remarked that: "If one had not actually seen it, it would be hard to believe that such wretched stock would be kept and bred from."\textsuperscript{168} The cattle tended to be light of build, poorly muscled and of inferior butchering quality. As a rule they were intractable in shipment and were subject to high shrinkage losses, a condition partly attributable to their having been wholly grass fed.\textsuperscript{169} Careless breeding was consi-

\textsuperscript{167} William Pearce in Sess. Pap. 1894-13-I-p 22; a scanning of figures on the importation of animals with settlers' effects reveals that most settlers did not bring the maximum number of animals to which they were entitled.

\textsuperscript{168} Sess. Pap. 1895-13-I-p 26; and for the retention of poor stock by settlers: "It is a great pity that so much inferior stock has been brought in from the United States during the past season by settlers taking up their residence here, and when one sees them, one can easily understand these parties' assertion to the effect that they could not dispose of them in the United States. Five years from now they would be better off if they had left them behind." (\textit{Ibid}, p 22.)

\textsuperscript{169} These comments do not necessarily apply to most cattle from the short grass ranching portions of the North-West Territories. Most of these were of exportable quality and met with Pearce's approval; no cattle were shipped in the nineties from 'northern Alberta' to the British market. See Sess. Pap. 1894-13-I-p 21.
dered responsible for the low quality, and Pearce encouraged newspapers to disseminate information on rectifying the problem.\textsuperscript{170}

The market for common horses was badly overstocked in the early nineties and it was thought that "... the price will not improve with time as the market is completely destroyed."\textsuperscript{171} Low quality and a local oversupply were contributing causes. Large numbers of small weak specimens had been imported from the United States and the failure of authorities to institute rigorous regulations in prohibition of the reproduction of scrub stallions had worsened the problem.\textsuperscript{172}

By the middle of the decade a few animals of better quality had arrived and R.L. Alexander reported from the 'agricultural shows' at Red Deer, Lacombe, and Innisfail that

"... I had the pleasure of being at the fair held in Red Deer, and was pleased to see the marked improvement over past years in the exhibits of livestock of all kinds, horses, cattle, sheep and pigs being largely represented, many of the animals shown being thoroughbred stock." (173)

A number of farmers in the Red Deer District had ceased by 1895 to rely entirely upon the wild hay crop and had sown tame grass. L. Gaetz had harvested 100 tons from 13 acres, a high yield for any time in the pioneer period. Reliance upon wild hay was called 'precarious' by the Agent at

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{172} \textit{Idem}.
\end{thebibliography}
the Dominion Lands Office, and it was reported that the small number of hay permits issued were a reflection of a general shift toward the cultivation of forage. "In almost every instance the results achieved have been in the highest degree satisfactory." 174 It is possible, however, that the custom of haying on wild lands had somewhat diminished as a result of the lower rainfall conditions prevalent in the early nineties. The varieties of forage used were spring rye, green oats and timothy, 175 the last two of which were to become standard components of the type of mixed farming pursued in the parklands.

The early years of ranching in the parklands around Red Deer were characterized by the extremely extensive use of land. At the onset of colonization ranching operations moved eastwards, proved up and became more intensive, or went out of existence. The combination of farming and ranching pursuits on the same farm was common among the early settlers and it would be inaccurate to attempt to characterize farmsteads as either ranches or farms. The quality of both bovine and equine stock imported by the majority of American settlers was very low and excited adverse comment from officials. There was no opening in the British market for the cattle of northern Alberta, and the domestic market for horses was weakened by the large numbers of inferior animals which were re-

174 Ibid, p 144.
producing at liberty from scrub stock. Fencing was not common until the middle years of the nineties, and even then was usually intended to keep stock out of cultivated fields rather than being used to segregate it from adverse mating combinations. Purebred animals appeared in small numbers in the mid-nineties, and newspapers, such as the Edmonton Bulletin advocated enlightened livestock policies. Until an exportable quality of meat was produced in the central and northern parts of Alberta, cattle were sold at low prices for consumption in the non-premium retail trade.

Farming

Up to the arrival of the railway there was no outlet for commercial quantities of any crop grown in the Red Deer region, and consequently there was little incentive for the farmer to develop sizeable tracts of arable land. Local markets were restricted to the supplying of teamsters plying the Calgary and Edmonton trail, the supplying of stopping houses along the trail and the small settlements around them, and sales of commodities to incoming settlers. There were times when the local market was excellent, and 60¢ was not an uncommon price for seed oats sold to immigrants. The custom of selling products to incoming settlers as a means of keeping some inflow of household cash was common in the west, and was one of the mechanisms by which cash was transferred in effect to frontier communities from older sections of the country. But these outlets were impermanent and this fact in combina-
tion with the suitability of the area to stock raising meant that development of a mixed farming landscape was logical.

Mixed farming was both a system of farming and a way of life in portions of eastern Canada and in parts of the United States. Few plains farms in the period, with the exception of 'bonanza' farms, were not to some extent diversified. Most farms slaughtered a few hogs every year, kept some barnyard poultry, a large kitchen garden, and a few milch cows. The latter three pursuits were always supervised by women. But dabbling in sidelines for a bit of credit at the local store or for subsistence was not what the Department had in mind for mixed farming in the west. The failure of the English immigration has been commented upon above; part of the reticence of the English stemmed from the popular belief that the Canadian west was good only for wheat. Tupper remarked in 1894, just at the time the price of wheat was recovering, that the solidity of commodity prices was likely to stimulate emigration to Canada, but that the trend might have been aided by signs that mixed farming was being more generally adopted.\footnote{Sess. Pap. 1894-13-III-p 11; Sess. Pap. 1895-13-III-p 9.}

The advocacy of mixed farming by the Department of the Interior was intended to help protect the settler from caprices of nature and vagaries of the market. Each line of production on the farm was expected to be pursued with equal and substantial effort along practical and businesslike lines.
Increasingly complex technology in farm management was implied in the Departmental policy, and profit was seen to be the motivation for farming.

William Pearce was an advocate of the mixed farming mode and was an early supporter of dairying, which pursuit he thought provided an ideal activity if teamed with hog raising and poultry. Family farms were an ideal form of settlement because they provided the labour needed for this arrangement.

"For families especially who have the necessary labour within their own circles and a limited capital to invest, this affords excellent opportunities, and it is almost incredible that more of such enterprises are not now in operation in a district where such could be prosecuted under the most favourable auspices." (177)

Hog production in Alberta was less than local consumption through the nineties. For the lack of a packing plant and sufficient market offerings about 75% of the hogs slaughtered in Calgary and Edmonton were imported from Manitoba.178

Diversified farms were the rule around Red Deer and Lacombe. R.L. Alexander was pleased to find in 1893 that "... all the settlers were directing their efforts not to see how much grain they could grow."179 Peter Talbot moved from

178 Sess. Pap. 1895-13-I-p 27, concerning 1894. The importation for 1895 ran to $1000 per week, equivalent to about 100 animals and not a substantial number, but still money out of pocket for settlers and the start of a pattern which would become increasingly difficult to break. Sess. Pap. 1896-13-I-p 21.
MacLeod in 1892 to diversify his operations because he had seen what happened to the smaller ranchers in short grass country when adversity struck. In 1894 Alexander found in his travels among the settlers that

"... mixed farming is the main object aimed at by them. Everywhere one goes there are to be seen upon the homesteads horses, cattle, pigs and poultry, and in quite a few cases sheep are being raised. It is rare to see a settler who is making grain-raising his principal industry." (181)

The farm of E.R. Code, a homesteader previously resident in Beckwith Township, Lanark County, Ontario, was offered by the Department as an example of what a 'practical farmer and his family' could achieve in two years. He entered in December of 1892 and during that winter built a house of one and one half storeys and a log stable of a similar configuration. He and his son took out 2000 fence poles. The summer of 1893 involved breaking and back setting 50 acres and the crop of 1894 yielded 1750 bushels of an unspecified grain, probably oats. A further 60 acres was broken and backset in 1894, and a cattle stable, sheds and 'piggery' were erected. By that time 9000 rails had been put into fencing the perimeter of the half section, half of which was presumably homesteaded by a son. The son by that time had his own

180 Percy Talbot, "Pioneering on the Strawberry Plain...", op.cit.
buildings and there was a 'nice lot of stock' on the property. 182

Poultry was scarce in the early years. Some settlers brought settings of eggs, but it was difficult to find broody hens. In consequence the price of eggs for consumption as food was astronomical by present standards until the mid-nineties. Bloodline improvement in poultry did not occur until after 1910. Poultry was preyed upon by coyotes, and some settlers swore that Indian dogs were trained to scavenge chickens from farmyards and return them to Indian camps. Indians were blamed in addition for removing an inordinate number of eggs from the nests of wild ducks.

Part of the appeal of mixed farming in North American popular thought was the farmers' alleged self-sufficiency. However, as mentioned above, 183 farmers were required to buy

182 Sess. Pap. 1895-13-III-p 152. This farm was not typical of the time except among the capitalized, and was certainly unlike what the average American immigrant could afford. It was not discovered where the farm was located in central Alberta.

183 See Andrew H. Clark, "...Geographical Study of Agricultural Change...", op. cit.; Rodney Loehr decided that the concept of self-sufficiency was derived from the 'golden age' myth and was suited to the retrospective fantasies of Jeffersonian idealists. See "Self Sufficiency on the Farm", Agricultural History 26 (1952), pp 37-45. The fantasy still has a massive following.
some articles at least, even if the list extended only to nails and wire. But there was some sense in the theme if mixed farming were contrasted to grain monoculture, and if it were acknowledged that the parklands were a more resilient and 'giving' environment than the short-grass plains. Settlers were able to weather short periods of stress on diversified farms by cutting short purchases of essentials and by using second-hand and cast-off materiel. Conversations with old-timers revealed that they believed they were self-sufficient, and little account was taken of purchases they were forced to make in the towns. A few staples such as beans, sugar, tea, coffee, spices and similar items were purchased, but what could be done around the farm home with country materials made a long list. It was claimed by a number of elderly people that the combination of relative self-sufficiency on the farm and the immediacy of rural neighbourhoods based on the school district gave frontier society a sense of closeness which has since to some extent been diluted.

184 In Chapter IV it is postulated that the emergence of a politically motivated and powerful farmers movement could not occur until some period of economic depression arrived which was longer than the period the farmer was typically willing to weather under stress; it is also observed that bankruptcies were more common and occurred first among merchants who dealt in goods that were not essential to farm operation, such as drygoods and shoes, and that it was uncommon for hardware merchants to go under.
Despite the suffering of some, and the failure of many homesteaders, those who stayed in the parklands and worked to make it home effected over time profound change. Year by year reports of the various agents of the Department noted the drift toward a settled condition. Between 1893 and 1894, R. L. Alexander found that:

"... marked progress was to be seen on every hand, new houses being erected: the settler's "shack", at one time to be seen almost everywhere is fast disappearing and giving place to more permanent and comfortable abodes. Schoolhouses have been built, boards formed, and in almost every locality which is at all fairly well settled the children of the new settlers are being educated in their own neighbourhood and within easy reach of their homes." (185)

Alexander's comments are a concise rendition of the themes of colonization of the time, despite the failure of the suffering to which we have previously alluded to make its way into the Sessional Papers. The rudeness of frontier conditions was giving way through the medium of progress to a condition of civilization which was demonstrated by comfort and permanence; the neighbourhood school was at the forefront of

this process, and the state of normal civilization was considered to have been reached when children could get to a school within easy reach of their homes. The development of neighbourhoods was an important part of the civilizing process on the frontier. These units were of a scale that was forced on the settler, notwithstanding Territorial regulations, by the average tolerable daily trip that children could make through neighbours' fields and over poor roads to the school. Village centres formed at greater intervals and were dependent still on considerations involved in horse travel over poor roads. But the school was the social centre of the community, the instigator of rural taxation, and a symbol of the spread of civilization. To this day the geography of the rural districts around Red Deer and Lacombe is categorized spatially both by the inhabitants and by this study on the basis of the old school districts, some of which ceased to have any legal or operational existence decades ago. An early settler will be remembered as the 'first man to settle in Hopedale' and an elderly resident will be known as the 'oldest man in Stanton'. Such a division of space was a North American invention. The township and concession system of Ontario formed the basis for an identification scheme which was of some utility to residents, as did the parish system in Quebec. But the rectangularity of the grid survey was inimical to physiographic reality, and was not very adaptable to the identification of the countryside at the human scale. Effectively the residents
substituted units which were comprehensible at the neighbourhood level because almost every household had something to do with the school district. This could not be said of the units (Local Improvement Districts) which were used for the performance of public works, or other units, such as Fire Districts.

By the middle of the nineties R.L. Alexander announced, with the insertion of an unintentional bit of hilarity, that the country was proceeding nicely:

"New and commodious dwellings, barns and outhouses [sic] have been erected; farms nicely fenced; old trails along which one used to drive without interruption are now closed and fenced across; roads have been made on the regular road allowances, giving the country a much more home-like appearance."

(186)

But, as we know, the immigration for the season of 1897 was paltry; it was maintained that the quality of the settler was improving, however, and by 1898 the rate of immigration increased. This was the year in which settlers started spreading east of the railway line in meaningful numbers, and the proportion of immigrants from the British Isles was rising. Land sales became more common as good homestead claims disappeared in the first belt of settlement, and some of the improved farms homesteaded in the early nineties came on the market and were purchased by new arrivals with cash.

Red Deer and Lacombe had become sizeable settlements of perhaps 200 residents each, and they vied closely for pre-
eminence in the business life of the parklands. But the conditions of business which favoured economic development did not exist in the nineties, and the pre-eminence of Red Deer as a railway divisional point and a wholesaling centre was not established until the period of Autonomy. Both centres, and to a smaller extent places such as Morningside, Penhold, and Blackfalds, attracted merchants supplying general merchandise to the frontier farmer. Only a few specialized services were available in the two larger centres, which also attracted the sort of 'professional' men as bankers, lawyers, and real estate agents, that one even in kindness can only call shills. The activities of such men were veiled and reinforced by the same civic-mindedness which was exhibited by genuinely involved persons concerned about the growth of communities as places to raise the young and to act out a social gospel.

Export markets were few and the sales of most farmers were confined to incoming homesteaders and the creameries. Homesteads sold for only a few hundred dollars and residential impermanence was a common feature of the time. Most farms had little more than a few log buildings, perhaps a few tens of acres of arable land, some milch and neat cattle, a few hogs, and several hundred yards of pole fencing which was designed more to keep animals out of the fields and gardens than to corral them. Stock was of poor quality, but much of what was in the country had been imported by Americans who were unable to dispose of it in the place of origin. Hogs
were of American breeds but markets for them were poor in
view of the unsuitability of the lard type to Canadian mar-
kets and the primitive state of Alberta meat processing. Most
ham and bacon came from Manitoba and Chicago.

There was actual want among many families in the
countryside, and a colony of Jews near Pine Lake almost
starved before aid was sent from England. Some people came
with little knowledge of the climate and were not prepared
for winter; others were simply migrant poor of the sort which
had followed every frontier and would do so for decades after.
Some of these people broke the cycle to which they seemed
fated by a particularly lucky crop, a sharp land deal, turning
to the right line of business--such as horse raising--at the
right time, or by sticking it out. There were some who, ironi-
cally, delayed moving because they were too poor to buy pro-
visions for the road and later made good farming their land.

There was little indication of social stratification
until after the turn of the century. The processes which de-
termined status had not had time to run, and there were only
a few who had managed in the nineties to start the process of
of accumulation that amounted to success and social esteem in
the period. The essential business of setting up school dis-
tricts and the other routine tasks of the frontier such as
the maintenance of streets and roads were not the sort of pur-
suit which implied social advancement. To say that the opera-
tion of popular organizations which were designed to accomplish
these routine tasks assisted the process of democracy would be to ignore the essentially pragmatic nature of organization on the raw frontier and to maintain that the values of frontiersmen were wound around or changed by the functioning of schools and the grading of roads. Such was, of course, not the case; the people of the frontier counted their sturdiness not only in the physique required for work behind the plough or in clearing brush, but also in the ability, within the Protestant tradition, to forestall satisfaction for a period required to establish oneself. Social stratification was encouraged by the building of advantage over neighbours in monetary terms on the frontier as it was elsewhere, and the years put into opening a farm were regarded as equal to money in the bank. There was a practical conflict between liberal notions of the moral and economic advance of humanity at large and the efforts of individuals to gain status comparatively in their neighbourhoods by working up to more impressive farm operations.

Advancement in status was most easily accomplished either by money itself, or by land. The idea that hard work, perseverance and purity of action alone would advance the man was continually refuted by freakish changes in the weather, by disease in animals, by the disruptive habits of stock dealers and by many other forces, not least of which was the scepticism which each farmer felt toward the actions of his brothers in the trade—a scepticism which is probably the best in-
dication available that each farmer anticipated using leverage against neighbours for his own advancement.

Except for the Gaetzes and a couple of others, including John T. Moore, the veterans of the eighties did not finally measure highly in commercial or social life. But for some individuals the seeds of advancement were sown in the nineties. This was especially true of those who were in crucial lines of business such as creamery operation or the provision of legal and financial services to the fledgling communities. By and large, however, the social structure of parkland communities dates from the land rush at the turn of the century, an event which was of such grand dimensions that it carried everything before it. There were hundreds of ordinary people among the immigrants, and all had some amount of money; a few were unusual and were highly capitalized. New land companies were started, local railways were dreamed, big houses were built, and talk of provincial autonomy was in the air. New faces were seen on village streets every day, and before long some of them were well-known, better known than people resident for a decade or more. The property of leading farmers became larger, and some were showplaces of scientific farming. Great changes were accomplished by money. In the rush the idea of an organic, conservative society led by a benificent paternal professional class -- a distinctly non-republican and Canadian notion -- was left behind, and there grew in its place the notion that western society was composed of sturdy separate individuals whose sentiments en masse constituted government and public order.
CHAPTER III

FROM LAND RUSH TO AUTONOMY

THE RED DEER AND LACOMBE REGION

1898-1906
INTRODUCTION

The year 1898 marked the point at which the entries at the Red Deer Agency of the Dominion Lands Branch recovered from the paltry figures of the mid-nineties. The development of the west had been one of the themes behind Confederation, the rationale of which was largely economic. But in 1898 except for portions of Manitoba little of the west was settled at a density amounting to what the planners of the dream had in mind. The duties of recruiting immigrants had been transferred from the Department of Agriculture in 1892, but the advertising and agency campaign of the Department of the Interior was started during a time of economic unease. The expected flood of immigrants did not materialize, and there was concern that the plan of populating the west was practically too grand to be effected.

The Department of the Interior advertised the multiplication of wealth that might be expected for families taking up residence and farming in the north-west, and with the easing of economic conditions in the United States, and in the rest of Canada and overseas toward the end of the nineties more immigrants were inclined to respond. By 1900 a land rush was on. Week by week the Agents of the Department in affected parts of the west sent urgent telegrams to the Com-
missioner of Immigration asking that accommodation for immigrants be increased in their districts, that more money be allowed for guides, and that more office help be sent. Other requests demonstrated that the flood of people was unpredictable in its direction and nearly too much for the staff to handle. Such a rush occurred in the vicinity of Red Deer and Lacombe in the years from 1899 to 1901, and in the districts east of Lacombe through 1902 and 1903.

The frontier economy was slow to develop and experienced difficulty in finding markets. The local market in the early years, whether for horses, seed oats or garden vegetables, was rewarding but was largely stimulated by incoming settlers. After general settlement in a district and after most farms had a few acres under cultivation and some animals for market a period of slackness set in. The usual market for Alberta products during the nineties, the Kootenays, experienced depression in the early years of this century, and the Klondike rush was only a flare in an otherwise dull period. The oat crop of 1901 threshed out magnificently and most of it was contracted to the British War Office. Prices rose, but the war was short-lived and no oats after all were sent. It was thought that the orientation of the wheat-producing areas of Manitoba, Assiniboia and Saskatchewan to Europe might leave the Asian market open to Alberta. Alberta was nearer the Pacific coast, British Columbia was not a competitive producer except in horses and perhaps in dairy products, Alberta
could outperform European products on transportation charges to the Asian market and take advantage of empty freight cars returning to the coast.\textsuperscript{1} Some dairy products were in fact sent to the Orient, but the failure of Canadian commercial agents to perform effectively in overseas markets left most of the openings to Americans.

While there were thousands of farmers on the plains and in the parklands waiting for markets and for an affirmation of the promise of the country, the commercial spirit of the country lagged. Legislation surrounding business was marked by a lack of imagination and by sluggishness in planning. Americans had '... more than their fair share' of the oriental business\textsuperscript{2} and the market for wool in Canada, for example, was weak for reasons that were not easy to see. Americans could take Canadian raw wool out of the country at $2.10 over the Canadian price even while paying a United States tariff.\textsuperscript{3} There were problems in the grain export trade. Canadian commercial agents in Australia requested samples of oats which, when they arrived after delay, were dirty and not of the sort which appealed to Australians.

The scheduling of cattle on British soil had been imposed in 1892, but during the nineties this was not a great

\textsuperscript{1} Department of Agriculture of the North-West Territories, \textit{Annual Report}, 1902, pp 106-107. Henceforth cited as DANWT.

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Idem}.

\textsuperscript{3} DANWT-1904-p 151.
hindrance to Canadian exports. Over the nineties, however, the taste of the British market improved and the flesh of the typical range animal was not as much desired. The removal of the embargo and the finishing of Canadian cattle in Britain was considered for the remainder of the frontier period to be the salvation of the market. In the alternative a chilled meat trade might have been started, but the capital to start such a system was never forthcoming. Cheap stocker cattle from Mexico were imported into the parklands in 1902-1903 and depressed the market two and three years later when they were marketed. Mutton production, for which meat there was considerable demand, was never substantial on the prairies.

There were a number of unsuccessful attempts at finding a short-season wheat, and this grain was not popular in the parklands before the Great War. The important grain was oats, and most farms eventually maintained a sizeable acreage of pasture, usually timothy, along with oats. The combination of economic and environmental restrictions consigned the agricultural producer to low average income during the pioneer and frontier period. Some wet years at the beginning of the century ruined some families and caused the death of thousands of horses. A severe winter in 1906-1907 was destructive to stock, but the effects of that year properly belong to the next chapter.

DANWT-1903-p 159.
Still, there was in these events and conditions little that was distinctly unusual to the farming population of the continent. The environment of the parklands was ideally suited to the sort of family farm that most migrants had in mind, and when thousands of them from Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota and other states took up the challenge of the Department the task of settling the west was over. By 1900 the doubt that the west could be populated had evaporated.

"Judging by the increased stream of desirable agriculturalists which has been flowing into Manitoba and the Territories during the past three or four years, it would seem that the hitherto unsolved problem of opening up promptly to settlement the vast areas of arable lands lying within the western districts no longer offers any ground for apprehension." (6)

How this was accomplished in the parklands, the sort of people who came, the state of the economy inside and outside the parklands and the way it affected their lives, and the kind of landscape they worked toward are topics which occupy the rest of this chapter.

PART I

IMMIGRATION, SETTLEMENT AND DEMOGRAPHY

Immigration and Settlement

By the end of the nineties a combination of economic factors, advertising, and the work of agents over many years bore fruit and a tide of American immigrants was headed for Canada. If the statistics of origin kept at the various large immigration halls are reliable indicators of all immigrants, then year by year the proportional importance of immigrants from any one state shifted. These shifts were due to changing conditions in the states or regions of origin. Impediments to emigration occurred in both good times and bad, as we have seen before. In 1898 farmers of South Dakota used good crop returns as a springboard to emigration, and many of them seem to have turned up between Calgary and Edmonton with a new stake. The good years in the Dakotas were followed by a boom and farmers sold out with alacrity to eastern speculators as well as to other farmers.

7 Sess. Pap. 1899-13-p 287; consecutive pagination was used in the Report of the Department of the Interior in 1899 only. The difficulties involved in the interpretation of Canadian statistics on Immigration have been commented upon above, and the comments apply similarly to the period concerned in this chapter.


On the other hand migrants from Kansas and Nebraska seem to have been moved by adverse climatic and economic conditions. Railway rates for passenger and carload freight from points in Kansas to points on the C&E line plunged toward the end of the nineties from $134 per car to $98.50 (1898). Some departure dates were discounted to $75.50, and Kansas delegates could travel over the whole year by the end of the nineties instead of in fall only—not a time when many had been exploring. Passenger fares from Kansas to the boundary fell to $26.95 round trip. This price war was the result, or so it was said, of the railways' seeing the light after a period of blindness, but the reduction was short-lived and the flow of Kansas migrants was choked after 1900. Many leaving Kansas then did so by prairie schooner.

The railway rates were not the only impediment to travel. Flood sometimes disrupted rail traffic, and the demands of settlers were low priority to railways. Sometimes migrants were stranded without cars either because of a genuine shortage or from viciousness on the part of railway officials.

It has been claimed that many, if not the majority, of immigrants to the west in the period of the land rush were

10 Sess. Pap. 1899-13-pp 276-277, Report of the Agent at Kansas City. The Americans blamed the CPR for the rate war and many Americans used the Canadian line to get to Washington cheaply.

tenant farmers in search of their own land.\textsuperscript{12} There is little direct evidence to support the thesis. If tenancy had been an important issue to potential immigrants the Department of the Interior would surely have made use of the matter in advertising. On the contrary the Department thought it was cultivating the decisions of landed men of substance. Many thousand pages of local historical source material were covered in this study, and among reasons for moving which were as diverse as poor soil, land for sons, a desire to join relatives, frontier fever, and many, many others, the matter of tenancy is mentioned once.\textsuperscript{13} It was not an issue in the correspondence of Agents in the United States in communication with Ottawa. A puzzling and provocative reference to tenancy is found in an agent's report for 1902 claiming that speculators were making money in a form of slavery by selling off United States' holdings, buying Canadian land cheaply and transplanting their tenants.\textsuperscript{14} Most immigration agents were quick to isolate causes of unrest which affected areas with which they dealt, and tenancy might have been mentioned more often had it been a sore point.

\textsuperscript{12} Karel Bicha, in Canadian Immigration Policy and the American Farmer, op.cit., puts forward this hypothesis, and associates tenancy with extensive farming (pp 114-116). At pp 116-117 he argues that the mean valuation of farmers' effects demonstrates a condition of tenancy. His argument proceeds by associating features which have no demonstrated working linkages.

\textsuperscript{13} John Maurer left Gresham, Nebraska to avoid tenancy. See Pioneers and Progress, p 627.

\textsuperscript{14} Sess. Pap. 1903-25-II-p 106. One of the few references cont'd...
It is possible that tenancy was an important impetus to move. Perhaps it was common enough not to merit comment; it may have been a status, like a tendency to 'hereditary' mental disease, which most affected migrants chose to forget. Tenant farmers were not necessarily poor; investment requirements in farming were equal for landholders and tenant farmers alike except for the cost of land, and there were conceivably times when tenants were in a more liquid financial condition than landowners. Presumably, however, tenants spent less on farm improvement than owners.

But the low valuation of immigrants' effects is in no way an indication of tenant status. Many farmers borrowed to move, taking with them the proceeds of a mortgage, and others sold out and kept the mortgage. One man who did so was James Docherty of the Carroll District, who bought land in Alberta while still living in Illinois in 1901. He moved to Alberta only at the end of the frontier period, and had a mortgage in the United States from which money only dribbled in. Some men sold out at a loss and such sales are commonly cited in local histories. Byron J. Benson of Three Rivers, St. Josephs County, Michigan, made 'many sacrifices

14 cont'd to tenancy appears in PAC RG 76, vol 120, f 23605, part 1. Agent Bennett of Omaha reported that near Fairbury, Nebraska he found settlers who were paying both cash rent and crop share '... and getting poorer all the time'. (March 28, 1898)

15 Pioneers and Progress, p 226.
in selling out' in his move to Lacombe. He moved despite the loss for the thrill of speculation and knew that "... whatever losses he sustained in parting with his property in Michigan would be recouped to him tenfold in his new home as time went on." 16

Tenants would have been unable to borrow for migration and the refusal of credit to persons who were going to Canada by one of the midwestern banks would have caused little concern to the officials of the Department if the recruits came widely from the ranks of tenants. This measure, reported by an Agent working in Illinois and Iowa did, however, have an effect on immigration—a clear indication that it was customary to borrow and leave the United States. Possibly many of these debts went into default. 17

Some incoming settlers did not comprehend that the Canadian government was favourably disposed to the importation of cash, and may not have reported much of their family resources to Immigration Agents or Customs Officials. One family which settled near Lacombe crossed the border with $1500 hidden in an infant's diaper. Some came with what for the time was an enormous amount of money but spent or loaned foolishly and were reduced to the economic status of the average migrant. The father of one of the informants to this study arrived at the turn of the century with $4000 from a

farm sale and lent most of it to neighbours who were worse off. This man was not a frontier greenhorn—it was the third time that he had tackled a new one—but "if you got a little money you easily get rid of it soon as you get to a new country ... only two or three year and he was no better off than the rest of them. That farm in there never did pay." 18

Another man who came with $5000 according to the immigration record, ended up an influential breeder of cattle, a cattle buyer, and had a village named after him. 19

The Agent at Red Deer reported that the arrivals for 1898 were much more numerous than in the years previous and "... that in point of education, capital and experience in practical farming ... there has also been a decided improvement." (20)

Instead of the colonization being restricted to the corridor of the valley running north from Red Deer, it was spread

18 Some comments from informants deserve anonymous treatment; although all the informants were exceptionally gracious in the time and effort they expended in interviews, it was clear that some matters would best not be widely broadcast in the environment of a small town where family names are still well known. In addition some language was perhaps a little more colourful than one would want popularly disseminated. Some items have been left anonymous at the discretion of the author and some at the request of the informants.

19 See the Schedule for Jan., 1902 in the correspondence of W.V. Bennett, Agent at Omaha, PAC RG 76, vol 120, f 23605, part 1; another man destined for Lacombe was said to have left with an equal amount of money, but following his later history is not possible because his name was given faulty reference in the local history.

PLATE V

EASTWARD VIEW OF THE ROLLING COUNTRY NORTH OF THE RED DEER RIVER AND EAST OF LACOMBE

This view of a portion of Eureka District shows the more open aspect of the country flooded by the land rush of the turn of the century.

Photograph taken from 36-38-26 w4.
evenly over the whole of the area, and much was from Britain and Iceland. The shed at Red Deer had been closed that season as a result of an outbreak of measles, and at any rate there was not a large demand for it. In Lacombe there was some trouble with the ranchers who held sway over the valleys to the west of the railway line. It was explained in the previous chapter that ranchers used the land until the arrival of settlers, but some of them had no intention of letting farmers usurp the range. It was their habit to lounge around the station at Lacombe to give the place a kind of atmosphere which distinctly persuaded settlers to move on. The few newcomers who could not perceive this message had quite a bit of trouble locating homesteads in the absence of the pegs the ranchers had removed from the ground. Another ploy ranchers used was to maintain complete silence when asked for directions. There was no local guide at Lacombe and one was badly needed.

For details on the land guide service offered by the Department see PAC RG 76, vol 77, f 6382, part 1 (and part 2 of the same as vol 78). The service showed signs of going out of control and of becoming a drain on funds. An attempt was made in 1896 to restrict the hiring of guides at Departmental expense. Guides would have deterred intimidation of the sort described above, and Frank Oliver was critical of the small number of personnel the Department put in the field for the season of 1899 along the line of the C&E. Eventually the tightness with which the Department tried to run the guiding service brought ridicule from local residents and businessmen and antagonism from delegates, since high-level approval was needed in advance on each occasion a guide was hired.
A Lacombe man who claimed he was a good Liberal offered his services and said he could soon have large numbers of good people on the land. This application was referred to party channels for approval, which later came through. 22

The Department constantly was subjected to criticism for not anticipating the needs of various districts in the way of immigration facilities. To be fair, it was often difficult to see year by year where immigration would be heaviest, but there were many, according to complaints to officials, who were so emotionally broken when they arrived at their chosen destination and found no accommodation, that they passed on. 23 By 1899, if not earlier, an organization called the Lacombe Immigration Association had been formed to press for better facilities and to make representations to the government, and in 1899, guides were appointed at Lacombe.

In 1900 a rush hit Lacombe and there were over 450 persons in the town at the end of April awaiting help to get on the land. Some ranch houses and a disused grain warehouse were pressed into service to augment accommodation in the 'city hall' which had been rented at the beginning of the month. The emergency became an annual event in Red Deer and Lacombe as long as land was available within two days' travel

22 The details of this section are available in the file "Accommodation at Lacombe", in PAC RG 76, vol 49, f 1841.

23 In 1902 female immigrants to Ripley District had to stay at Red Deer over winter. They expected accommodation nearer the destination. Pioneers and Progress, p 552.
of these staging points. In 1901 immigrants were lodged in the railway station at Lacombe and there were equally urgent conditions at other points on the C&E line. In the season of 1901 colonization went into the area to the north of the Red Deer River and to the east of Lacombe; in 1902 the areas to the north of Lacombe in an east-west corridor through Morningside were filled and homestead land near Buffalo Lake was being picked out. Buffalo Lake was such a distance from the railway line that guides were hired to work out of Lamer- ton in the northeast of the study area. Settlers were sent off from Lacombe and were located by the guides on the second day of the excursion. The dates of the founding of school districts in the northeast quarter of the study area are confirmation of general settlement in the early years of the century. (See Map VII)

Some of the land guides were, in addition to being the appointees of petty patronage, also real estate agents, and may have put some immigrants under pressure to buy land instead of homesteading. One at least was flamboyant. Mat-

24 Sometimes the attempts of the Department to control the tide of immigration led to hilarity. On one occasion covered in the Immigration files cited, the demand for tents was so critical that a Cabinet order was issued to send militia tents from Ontario via special express cars over CPR rails. The car needed special clearance and its progress across the country was closely followed by officials. When the car arrived it was found that some man in the railway routing department had specially routed a car with 'tents', but not another marked 'tent poles'.
thew Cook of Lamerton wore a jacket woven from dried native grass as an advertisement of the excellent wild forage in the area of Buffalo Lake.\textsuperscript{25}

Sales of Dominion Lands had not been numerous in the Red Deer Agency in the early years of the 90's.\textsuperscript{26} The names of several purchasers recurred a number of times, and it seems that some people saw a good deal and resold the land, and that some bought a little every year as a variety of savings account. Sales of Dominion Lands were slow throughout the west at the turn of the century\textsuperscript{27} and this trend was thought to reflect farmers' buying railway and colonization land in preference to having the split farm that purchase of government land implied. After the turn of the century the sale of land was discontinued in an effort to increase the density of settlement. The Sharphead Reserve Lands to the west of Ponoka were sold as Dominion Lands by 1901 because the population of Indians had been so decimated by disease that the authorities saw no point in leaving them so much land.

Commercial sales of land followed in the wake of homesteaders. Some well-to-do men who saw some advantage to being near town on particularly good land had purchased around Red Deer and Lacombe in the nineties, and there were some

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Pioneers and Progress}, p 552.

\textsuperscript{26} The amounts sold and the names of purchasers are available from the appropriate sections of the annual \textit{Report of the Auditor General}.

\textsuperscript{27} Sess. Pap. 1900-13-p ix.
sales in Lakeside and surrounding districts, but these sales were not numerous. Cook Myer, a Land Guide working from Ponoka, managed to dispose of 18 quarters of railway land in 1899 and in the same year J.N. Burdick of Lacombe, who was also the sub-agent of Dominion Lands and a political appointee to a number of posts over the years, sold 41 quarters of CPR and 15 of SLHC lands north of the Red Deer River. In Red Deer Joseph M. Smith disposed of 14 quarters of CPR land and 30 of SLHC land. Improved farms were selling around Red Deer and Smith handled 10 of those in 1899.

The year 1900 saw the number of entries at the Red Deer Dominion Land Office double over the rate of 1899. At the Lacombe Sub-Agency the astounding total of 160 quarters of CPR land was sold in only the first six months of the year, and around Lacombe 1325 people, in families averaging five persons, went onto the land.

Smith was active around Red Deer in 1901 and guided 300 land seekers, among whom he managed to unload 20 improved farms, 160 SLHC and CPR quarters, and the first of the Hudson's Bay lands. By this time the fringe of homesteading was reaching Buffalo Lake, and it is easy to see why men with

29 Ibid, p 162.
30 Sess. Pap. 1901-25-II-p 152. The Sub-Agent was the J.N. Burdick mentioned above. Sub-Agencies were often hybrid offices--half governmental and half commercial.
money would put it into purchased land in preference to the long haul east. But even among homesteaders purchasing of additional land was common, most men attempting to procure a farm of at least 320 acres at the outset, according to the Agent at Red Deer.

The spatial trend of settlement to 1902 is easily seen from Map VIII, derived from a CPR source. The area to the northwest of Lamerton had been not only homesteaded but most of the CPR land had been sold by the end of 1902; other areas nearer the town of Lacombe had not been fully sold off. The land to the northwest of Lamerton is rated at class 2s in the modern capability system, while that in the Hopedale, Satinwood and Stone Districts is rated at 4 or 5, with some patches of class 3 limited by topography. South of the Red Deer River the sale of CPR land had barely spread more than 10 miles to the east of the rail line, except in the Horn Hill District which had been homesteaded early and was overlain by an extensive tract of class 3 soils. West of Lacombe and southeast of Gull Lake the slow sales in the Blindman and Woodynook Districts are notable; these districts did not organize schools until 1903 and 1912 respectively--quite late for the short distance from the rail line. This tardiness was due to a number of adverse features in the physical environment--sandy spots, dense poplar bush, excessive wetness, and

32 Sess. Pap. 1903-25-I-p 22. Interviews with old-timers reveal that everyone intended to get more land at any time possible.
willow underbrush--not all occurring, of course, at the same place, but in combination giving the area an unpleasant aspect. Some land of this sort--low and wet--was of the best quality once cleared, but there were few settlers who wanted it while there was open prairie available. Isopleths of five unsold quarters per block of nine sections (one quarter of a township) show that settlement or purchase of CPR lands had moved up to 20 miles to the east of the C&E rail line by 1903 and only five to eight miles to the west. It had moved much further eastward from Lacombe than from Red Deer, a reflection without doubt of the better soil resources of most of the northern districts.

By 1903 the homesteading frontier in the study area can be considered to have been over, although there were a few claims left to be taken in the topographically rougher places such as Hillsdown and Stone Districts. The merchants of the towns and villages along the rail line curried the favour of settlers passing through to the east country, since it was necessary at that time to disembark at a point on the C&E line. (The Lacombe-Stettler branch was not built until 1905.) The immigration halls at Lacombe and Red Deer were kept in operation only until 1903 to tide over immigrants, who, by 1904, were entering the Tail Creek country.33 Many of the arrivals of 1904 were British, and in that year a number of French came to Red Deer in connection with the setting

33 RDAA April 28, 1904; the Alberta Advocate was an early Red Deer newspaper, later changing to the Red Deer Advocate. In the short form it is referred to here as RDAA.
up of a cheese-making colony in Stettler. 34

As the frontier moved out from Red Deer and Lacombe the towns took on the commercial functions of service centres. Because Red Deer also performed administrative functions there were times when it was hopelessly crowded with farmers on buying trips to town, exploring settlers, incoming immigrants, and persons who were in town for such events as the sitting of court. There were calls for the reopening of the immigration hall even after Autonomy to relieve some of the pressure, 35 and the passage of groups of settlers through town received cursory comment for years after that.

With the moving of the homesteading frontier to the east processes of change were set in motion in the tenure arrangements in the already settled areas. Among these shifts was one of considerable interest—what we call the 'perpetual frontier syndrome'. Some merchants and farmers seemed to be addicted to living on the edge of the frontier, probably because the amount of profit as a percentage of investment was greater there for men who sold out in a short time than in the more settled areas. No sooner was a district settled than some of the population moved on to a newer place, in this case to the east—first to the Stettler area and later farther toward Coronation. It was common for merchants to maintain branch stores in the smaller newer communities which were out-

34 RDAA, June 16 and 23, 1904.
35 RDAA, March 23, 1906.
liers of Lacombe, and in a number of cases to be documented in the next chapter merchants moved and set up in the new place. With the opening of homestead lands around Stettler many young men around Morningside, which was a late-developing part of the country of less favoured soils, moved east and left a population lacuna. Gaps were filled, sometimes immediately with new settlers who might take up cancelled homesteads, and sometimes more slowly over a period of years. This process was diffuse and escapes detection in the Census materials, since the trend of population in most townships was upwards over the one or two decades concerned in this study.

After the passage of the homesteading frontier the sale of improved farms became more common, and some of the men who had paid their dues in years of toil took their profits and moved on. The immigrants of the middle years of the first decade of the century typically possessed some capital and most of the arrivals who were buying farms in the north-eastern quarter of the study area at this time appear to have been about ten years younger than the homesteaders who pre-

36 This phenomenon is yet another indication that the study of homestead records without the complementary correspondence files and without detailed information on cancellations could yield faulty results. The Morningside area was subjected to depopulation three times, in all of which periods homesteads conceivably were involved: in 1901-1903 in response to the wet years, which in this district caused the formation literally of marshes; during the period concerned here, 1904 to approximately 1910 when people left for the east, and during the Great War when men enlisted for service. A study of patents alone would show that the area was slowly settled from 1900 to whenever the last homestead was proven.
ceded them in the districts around Lacombe and Red Deer. That is to say that the population of places like Clive, Tees, Haynes, and the associated districts was younger on average by a decade than those who remained in possession of land along the western edge of the study area. Homesteading throughout the period seems to have been generally confined to men between 25 and 35 years of age.

John Maurer was typical of the arrivals in the period concerned in this chapter. His father had emigrated from Switzerland to Illinois where John was born in 1869; soon after the family went to Nebraska. Maurer married a German woman in 1895 and they spent several years farming as tenants at Gresham, Nebraska. They were enticed by Canadian advertising to explore the west and decided upon an improved Sargeant District farm that had been homesteaded by Elmer Van Eaton in 1894. The farm was typical of those that had been worked by men of little capital: a few acres broken; fenced; log building with sod roof (the first home of the Van Eatons, later the coal bin and henhouse); a newer log house with shingled roof; barn; well; and pump. Maurer sold out in Nebraska and arrived at Lacombe with a carload of effects comprised of a span of two large mules, two pigs, cows, chickens, a

37 The advertisement was preserved by the Maurer family; it was placed by W.V. Bennett of the Omaha office whose activities have been commented upon above. Maurer is considered typical because his family story contains a connected narrative of the sorts of events found in more fragmentary form in numerous other family histories. He was, however, not typical in his contribution to the debate on swine lard hog in later years.
sulky plough and an assortment of other farm and household goods. Over the years Maurer prospered, added more land, raised a large family and participated widely in community activities.

The ethnic composition of the wave which came to the parklands in the years 1898-1903 was mixed, but almost all of the immigrants were English speaking, and the great majority were either American citizens or had some experience in farming in the United States. Most were interested in personal advancement, and there were few in the vast number that came from the United States who seem to have been motivated by abstractions or by idealistic considerations in their move. In the United States most of them had operated small farms and sold out at no great profit, although there were exceptions to this rule. The social mechanism of immigration meant that numbers from one district in the United States might locate together on the parklands frontier, and the historical and spatial trend of settlement implied that numbers from the same state, entering the immigration stream at the same time, sometimes arrived simultaneously in one parkland district, while of course, others from that state terminated their journeys in other Agencies of the Dominion Lands Branch, concei-

38 Pioneers and Progress, p 627. The Maurer story is one of the more detailed and informative among the hundreds in the various local histories. Maurer was a breeder of Duroc Jersey swine, and later had an antagonistic relationship with the executive of the Lacombe fair when it refused to allow exhibition of that breed. See chapter IV, 'Swine'. 
vably also among emigrants from the same state.

A large number of Minnesota immigrants were on the trail at the turn of the century and a group of them turned up south of Ponoka. They were nominally lead by a man by the name of Bain who planned that the group would retain individual farms but co-operate economically. The plan was not a success and the group split up, Bain's own family being eventually dispersed. Other groups tried such plans but the results were almost always similar, and the considerable trouble undertaken by the Department in keeping adjacent homesteads open was hardly warranted by results. By the middle of 1904 the Department announced that it was not further interested in settling colonies.

One intentional colony which was a success, however, was the Nebraska excursion which settled in a District of that name in the northeast of the study area. By a series of coincidences the history of this group is well documented and provides an illuminating glimpse into the workings of the Department and the social process of immigration at the turn of the century. The people in the group came from the sandhills area of Nebraska which was badly hit by the droughts of the early nineties and the financial problems of the middle of the de-

39 In the years 1898 and 1899 the number of entries in the entire west by immigrants from Minnesota was second only to that made by persons from the Dakotas. Sess. Pap. 1900-13-p vii.

40 From informant JLB.

41 RDAA June 30, 1904.
The sandhills were colonized in the eighties by people from a number of sources, one of which was Canada. A few years of adequate rainfall and good yields were followed by drought at the end of the decade, and by the early years of the nineties the inhabitants were restless.

Among the restless ones were some ex-Canadians, or persons with former Canadian residence. The Henry Cottman family had moved from London, Ontario for reasons of health and had enjoyed a few good years in Nebraska. Cottman apparently had been a native of Ohio before moving to London, Ontario; later he was involved in the American Civil War and by the time of immigration to Canada was in his sixties. Robert Ferguson was born near Glasgow in 1850; in 1858 he moved with his family to Guelph, Ontario where he spent the remainder of his youth, marrying afterwards an Annie McLachlan, a Lowland Scot who spoke Gaelic. In 1882 or 1883 they moved to South Dakota and subsequently resided in various parts of Nebraska where Ferguson was involved in missionary work for the Presbyterian Church.

Ferguson was apparently a respected religious and community leader among the Presbyterian faction in northwestern Nebraska, and it was he who was chosen to be the delegate to

42 After the emigrants' departure much of the area they had farmed reverted to the Federal government and was later used for the Nebraska State Forest. It was unsuited to colonization in the first place.

43 Land of the Lakes, p 95.
search the Canadian west for suitable land for a number of families. Ferguson left Crawford, Nebraska in July of 1899 travelling by the St. Paul route to Winnipeg. He travelled as far as Edmonton but was most impressed by land he saw to the northeast of Lacombe. Having reserved 22 quarters with the Sub-Agent at Lacombe, J.N. Burdick, Ferguson returned to Nebraska where the preparations for the move were made in the spring of 1900. Ferguson's return to Nebraska with the news of good land has been described as being 'like Caleb and Joshua to the Israelites'.

The American Immigration Agent for the district was contacted and the strategy of the trip worked out. It appeared that rail travel would have been excessively expensive so a wagon train was assembled consisting of 40 wagons and 80 souls. One immigrant car of heavy machinery was, however, sent through to Lacombe. In the tradition of travel with a mixed wagon train the cattle and horses, which numbered 85 and 120 respectively were run ahead in the morning and behind by the evening, lunch being taken at a nooning ground when the wagons overtook the drive. The group was said to have left with $45,000 in cash and effects. The overland trip to North Portal, where entrainment for Lacombe oc-
curred, took about one month. Sundays were observed without travel and by holding Sunday school. The majority of the group, if not all, were Presbyterian.

The arrival at Lacombe occurred on the morning of June 17, 1900 and the group was accommodated in makeshift quarters, obviously of the sort that are referred to in the memoranda within the Department during that spring. The men preceded families to homestead locations, and the work of the first season involved building seven houses, various barns and sheds 49 and the gathering of an amount of hay, which the settlers found in abundance. The year of their arrival was, however, at the beginning of several wet years and cross-country movement was extremely difficult. The Nebraska settlement was approximately six miles north of the location of the later settlement of Tees, and the trail to Lacombe was in those years through nearly impassable muskeg. Consequently, a trail to Ponoka, 16 miles northwest was cut after a year of trading with Lacombe, but even on this trail horses were required to pack the contents of wagons through deep water.

The Nebraska group arrived too late in the year to put in gardens and most of the settlers came "... with barely enough money to last them a year". 50 The Departmental valuation amounts to $500 per capita, and this, if correct, must be

49 It is not clear how many buildings were erected the first season. Land of the Lakes, p 96.
50 Ibid, p 97.
reckoned at the point of departure. Expenses along the way, provisions at Fort Benton and ferry services might have reduced the figure by $100 more or less, but the amount still seems high enough to have forestalled living on bread and oatmeal, which diet the local historical sources claim was typical over the first year. Apparently the official valuation was too high. The crops of 1902 and 1903 were casualties of hail and early snow, and the men took to making cash by working on local ranches or going to British Columbia for forest work, as a large number of immigrants at the turn of the century were forced to do.

The Nebraska settlement was not the end of the pioneer road for a number of settlers. The Cottmans, who had moved to the United States first of all for the health of the mother, were forced by her pleurisy to move to Spokane, Washington in 1907. At some time after that they lived in Addy, Washington. The Robert Fergusons had eight children by the time of immigration to Canada, and left Nebraska District in 1905 for British Columbia. They apparently retained possession of the original homestead and returned to it in 1909 or 1910 on the request of two of the sons, Dick and Will, who wanted to go farming. A blacksmith, David Dougherty, immigrated with the original train; some of his children married

51 Idem.

52 These details are from the histories of the families concerned. See the appropriate entries in Land of the Lakes.
in Canada but he and his 'wife sold out. At some time before 1918 when his wife died, they returned to the United States to care for an aging relative. George DeGroff, formerly a resident of Sioux County, Nebraska where he married Alice Cottman, eldest daughter of Henry Cottman, lived for a time in Wyoming before heading for Canada on the advice of his in-laws. The DeGroffs arrived in the Nebraska District in 1901, and stayed only until 1906 when they left for Spokane.

These examples of mobility in the immigrant population are indicative of a common frontier phenomenon: the momentum which brought migrants across an ocean or across the continent, sometimes in a number of stages or 'leaps', was not always exhausted on the parkland frontier. For reasons essentially similar to those which sparked the move into the District of Alberta, many persons again moved away, some for a better opportunity, some to take the profits of a few years work at the end of a tiring life, some out of disillusionment and misfortune, and some because they were perpetual frontiersmen.

Ethnic, national, and place-of-origin concentrations occurred during the land rush throughout the study area. Many of the people in the Hopedale District were from Iowa. In the process of immigration there was what now would be called an 'Iowa connection' which emanated from news sent to a network of friends by the Cundiff and Bucknell families. The name of the district is the same as that of one in Iowa, one of the few examples of place nomenclature in the study area.
derived from immigrants' previous places of residence, and the name of one of the districts to the west of Morningside—'Iowalta'—is a conjugation of terms which describe the immigration history of that place. Most of the other inhabitants of Hopedale were from other states in the Union. Ripley District contained a percentage of persons from England who came to the eastern part of the study area for ranching, but the largest component of the population was a mélange of American settlers from the states of Minnesota, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Iowa, Kansas and Michigan. Most of the residents of North Star were from the United States and a large bloc of these were from Iowa.

53 Place names have been used in geographical study to deduce information on previous places of residence, but in the parklands there was little opportunity for this process to work. The naming of districts involved application to the postal authorities for post office names. The officials consulted indices of names to ascertain whether the new one would be a duplication. Hopedale seems to have escaped this process, but Valley City did not, there being a place of that name in North Dakota. Ironically Valley City was an invented name, however, and had nothing to do with Dakota immigrants. Brookfield did not become the name of a post office, being changed to Brooksley because of another place of the former name. The school district remained 'Brookfield', however. The outcome of this process was the invention of many district names of a cloying quality, such as Clearview, Woodyook, and Sunnycrest. A few places retained names of founding members of the School Districts, such as Turville and Milton. The place nomenclature of most of the important names in the study area is well covered in Eric J. and Patricia M. Holmgren, Over 2000 Place Names of Alberta (Saskatoon, 1976).

54 For the Iowa contingent in Hopedale see Pioneers and Progress, p 419 ff, and 450 ff.

55 Ibid, pp 559-560.

56 Ibid, p 458.
It was claimed by 1905 that four out of five immigrants to towns along the C&E line were of American origin, and that the towns themselves, like many others in Alberta, were 'thoroughly American in their character.'57 Such developments were favourably reported by visiting Americans who sent news of the American invasion home to others in the hope of making it appear as if the hard work of settling the country was done--by Americans--and that the northwest was a good investment prospect. A man from Iowa sent back information that

"Near the town of Red Deer on the road from Calgary to Edmonton ... one comes into a farming section that is a surprise to everyone who first visits this country. The cheap lands are being rapidly bought up by the settlers, many of whom are from the United States, and not a few of them from Iowa, who are doing remarkable things if the statements made to me are true, and I have reason to believe that they are." (58)

But resentment grew in the older component of the frontier society of Red Deer against the American influx. The settlers of the eighties and nineties believed that they had been an important part of a distinctly Canadian process--the movement westward of the spirit of the Loyalist settlers who had brought civilization to the eastern part of the country by stabilizing a land peopled by wandering adventurers.59 The 

'state' founded by Loyalist settlers was marked by Puritan

57 RDAA, Dec. 29, 1905.
58 Excerpt from the Muscatine, Iowa Journal, reprinted in the RDAA of Sept. 15, 1904.
59 This argument is taken from an editorial in the conservative Red Deer News, of March 27, 1906. The editor had been among the farming homesteaders of 1891.
ideals, by high moral purpose, and by a devotion to duty. It was not likely, according to the *News* editor that the American influx would tend to the preservation of these qualities; the Americans were too much concerned with money and there was a sensation of invasion surrounding their arrival. The survival of the Canadian nation required more east-west ties, and the arrival of the Americans was antagonistic to forging them. More British should be induced to immigrate, not only because they would preserve the monarchy and the old values but because they were the best colonizers the world had ever seen. The paper invited Americans who were not able to fall into step behind the Canadian tradition to leave.

The editor of the *News* was only one opponent of an unrestricted immigration policy. Halley Gaetz of Red Deer, a self-educated man, son of Leo. Gaetz and later mayor of the city of Red Deer and a single taxer, was opposed to the immigration of 'inferior persons', a class which to him encompassed the mentally degenerate; the ignorant, improvident, and vicious; everyone born in southern Europe or descended from such a person; the inhabitants of great cities; paupers; and all those who were unable by fault of upbringing to participate in the Canadian political process. If the immigration policy were directed, as it was, merely to the swelling of numbers, then the country was "... like a rainbarrel under a spout. We must take what comes and we have no filtering pro-
cess. Halley's list, if stated positively, included only monied intelligent white Canadian or British Anglo-Saxons of rural origin as suitable potential immigrants to the parklands.

The attempt by the conservative component of the Red Deer populace, which was large enough to stand in effect for the whole town, to imitate Loyalist behaviour was a feature which set Red Deer apart from the rest of the parklands. Alix and Pine Lake may have been British and Lacombe, Iowalta and Nebraska American, but Red Deer was Canadian with certainty. The town felt the thrust of ancient ideals pushing it forward with purity while unwashed immigrants from the south grovelled for profits. It was forgotten that many 'Americans' were in fact returning Canadians. But Red Deer was less affected by the 'invasion' than other districts. By and large American immigrants were capitalized, as far as we can tell, with about $1000 and the lands of the SLHC around Red Deer were not what they were looking for. Red Deer maintained what it thought was a more Canadian identity when Americans passed it like the tide around an islet, and those Americans who did settle there apparently had more money than average and were content with the place as they found it. Solid municipal management and planning with some aesthetic taste were matters of pride to the

60 From a speech by H.H. Gaetz supporting a resolution placed by him before the convention of the Boards of Trade of Alberta concerning the restriction of immigration, RDAA, June 23, 1904.

people of Red Deer, and were atypical of western towns. With the moderation which they felt they had inherited from their forefathers of the Upper Canadian frontier the public officials and merchants of Red Deer, with ample help from a number of capitalists and party men, assured the eventual pre-eminence of the town in the business life of the parklands.

While American immigration was the pre-eminent fact of the early years of the century there were many Englishmen immigrating to the region. Most went to the eastern districts and to the English colony around Buffalo Lake. Some had money to purchase land, but others were attracted to labouring positions on the ranches of English who had been there some time. One of the many who did this and later farmed on his own serves as an example of the pattern. Cuthbert Wolferstan was the son of the solicitor of John Hall Parlby, the father of the Parlby brothers, and was attracted, as many young Englishmen were, to the romance of the frontier. Having no country experience, he came to work on ranches in the Alix area and after learning the farming business obtained his own land. Like many of the English, he was inclined to the reorganization of society and later was very active in the protest and cooperative movements. 62

Many of the immigrants of the land rush period were

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62 Pioneers and Progress, pp 396-97.
returning Canadians, but no systematic data is available to show the proportion. One of the Agents of the Department claimed that half the persons viewing the Canadian exhibit at the Omaha Fair in 1899 were Canadian or descended from Canadian parents.63 He felt that many of them would go to Canada in the near future. It would be logical to assume that ex-Canadians were more susceptible to the Agents' propaganda than 'pure' Americans.

Many returning Canadians have been detected 64 in the course of this study, but because of the diversity of geographic sources in the United States from which they came and the various years of arrival, it is still not possible to say with any precision what percentage of the total immigration they comprised. From appearances it seems that the rate must have been at least ten per cent, and twenty per cent need not be disputed; it may have gone as high as thirty per cent in some years and from some localities in the United States.

Frank Roe reported that a number of the American immigrants near his homestead to the east of Blackfalds were in

64 One line of enquiry which might prove fruitful would be consultation of the ponderous volumes of farmers' biographies published after the turn of the century in various states. The volumes of North Dakota History and People in the "Outlines of American History" series published by the S.J. Clark Co. of Chicago, (1917) contains the names and particulars of many Canadians who went to the Dakota Territory. Another such volume is the Compendium of History and Biography of North Dakota...[etc], (Chicago, 1900).
fact returning Canadians.\textsuperscript{65} Neil McPhee was born near Mount Forest, Ontario in 1856, the son of Scottish immigrants.\textsuperscript{66} With his brother John he went to Dakota in 1881, took a homestead and American citizenship and ultimately entered the implement business. In 1891 he returned to Canada to marry a Canadian girl and they returned for one year to North Dakota before leaving for the Edwell District east of Innisfail. McPhee put up a log shack with sod roof for the first year, then a log house and in 1907 a brick house. The McPhees moved to the coast in 1920, but returned in 1937. George Reynolds was born in Prescott, Ontario in 1856; he married a woman in 1870 who had come from Ireland as a child and they moved in 1881 to Groton, Dakota. They arrived in Lacombe in 1895 and lived there seven years before going to the Sargent District to homestead. They were Methodists, and were active in community activities and the formation of the Clive townsite.\textsuperscript{67} Josiah Raven was born in 1870 in Owen Sound, went to Nebraska and returned in 1898. He married an American woman in Canada and homesteaded in 1902.\textsuperscript{68} Roderick John McLeod, born 1857, left his native Dalkeith in Glengarry County, Ontario as a young man and worked in the Michigan woods. He became an

\textsuperscript{65} Frank Roe, "Early Opinions on the Fertile Belt ...", \textit{op. cit.}, p 144. The comment concerns the nineties.

\textsuperscript{66} The story is in RDCS; the Mount Forest area was a notable source of emigrants from Ontario; few people were traced from Halton, Wentworth or Haldimand Counties.

\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Pioneers and Progress}, p 639.

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Wagon Trails}, p 150.
American citizen after a move to Davenport, Washington State in 1885. He returned to Canada to marry in 1890 and farmed in Washington. He had two children by the mid-nineties but economic conditions were adverse to advancement in the United States. 69 Finally he sold his farm and threshed crop for 400 head of horses and herded them north with the intention of selling them in Edmonton. In passing Lacombe he was taken with the locality and purchased in the Sargent District. Around 1900 McLeod lost most of his stock of horses to swamp fever, and as the range disappeared he went into other lines of farming. He did not use his homesteading rights until much later, and by the outbreak of the Great War the farm measured 560 acres. William Franklin Puffer went to Illinois as a teenager with his family and later accompanied them to Michigan. He married a Canadian emigrant in 1885 in what can now be seen to have been a pattern, lived in Michigan until 1890, and then moved to Calgary. Puffer became friends with Pat Burns and later was a butcher and cattle buyer of some importance in Lacombe. He was associated with the Liberal Party and ran for office, serving as a member of the Legislature for Lacombe from 1905 to 1917. He kept two farms and accumulated a number of properties in the town of Lacombe. 70 Joseph Todd was a per-

69 In support of what is written above concerning tenancy, the biography states: "Deciding to sell his farm, he found that there was very little money in the district and no credit of those wishing to purchase extra land." Pioneers and Progress, p 631.

70 Wagon Trails, p 508.
petual frontiersman and had experience in a number of places before coming to the Spotted Lake area. He was an ex-Canadian who knew that a sure way to money on the frontier was to have one's property surveyed into lots. His homestead became the site of Toddville, later called Alix.71

These examples of returning Canadians are illustrative of those involved in the trend. By the time the Alberta frontier opened there were thousands of Canadians in the United States with experience in the ways of the frontier, and a large percentage of them seem to have come from the second and third tiers of settlement in Ontario--an inverted arc running from Huron County eastward to Northumberland. This zone of Ontario was itself not far from the frontier stage by the eighties and nineties, and it seems that the reclamation of Canadians from the United States involved the return of a certain component of Ontario society which had learned front-tiering at the side of their fathers in Ontario, the United States, and in a few cases in other parts of the Canadian west--experience serving to adapt the easterner to western conditions. Many of them had emigrated for the money it was not possible to make in their home districts in Ontario, but it does not appear that many returnees had prospered. A few were moved perhaps by some faint tugging of loyalty, but for most the move to Canada was again a matter of economics. Many of them married Canadian women, either returning to Canada for a bride,

71 Pioneers and Progress, pp 156-157.
French Canadian immigration to the west was minimal, much to the satisfaction of those who feared such a trend to be the advancing edge of popery. A few French Canadians came to the parklands from the Saginaw country of Michigan. A group of them had become disgruntled with the conditions and after much discussion decided to leave; they set up a small colony on Snake Lake in November of 1899. A number of Irish Catholics arrived in the area of Ponoka from the United States. They had originated in the Ottawa Valley and their later history in Ponoka was not spectacular.

Only two black persons are known to have made their way into the study area, and one Jew, H. Podersky of Chicago, settled in the Fairview District in 1898. He drove neighbours to church apparently for an outing, and later opened a butcher store in Lacombe. One of his sons opened a furniture store which was the forerunner of the Podersky Furniture Company of Edmonton. The Poderskys went to Oregon to spend their later years.

Many Scandinavian settlers came to the study area. They were not often clannish, and were progressive in their

72 See the biographies of the Faucher and Loiselle families in RDCS.

73 Informant JLB. The informant felt that religious intolerance did not survive the mixing process of the frontier, and indicated that the group in question intermarried quite freely.

74 Wagon Trails, p 721.
interest in school matters and farming as a business. A number of them out of proportion to the percentage they comprised of the population were successful, and a few operated threshing outfits at a profit. Their behaviour in the economic sphere was much like that of the more progressive and prosperous American immigrants, and culturally they tended to assimilate rapidly to the average for the district. Many of the persons recorded in the Census as foreign had in fact spent a good deal of time in the United States, and their more distant origin was not of enormous importance. It was so recorded because the Canadian Census had no category for 'American'.
Demography

The year 1901 was the first time that a Census usable for this study was taken. The population figures are entered in the Census according to the Representation Acts of 1903 and 1904, but township figures may be obtained from Census publications of later years.\textsuperscript{75}

Map IX shows the population of the study area in township units for the years 1901 and 1906. Only adults were counted.

\textsuperscript{75} The difficulties in obtaining and making sense of statistics for this study would make a sizeable essay in themselves. Materials are rarely comparable from one Census to the next because the boundaries of spatial units changed, the criteria of assessment were altered, or the mode of gathering the data was modified. Some sets of statistics make no sense, and sometimes a simple shift imposed on the data can bring order out of apparent chaos. There are mistakes in arithmetic in the Census and a failure from one Census to another to carry over important information concerning the components of the tables that are used for comparison. Various units and levels of government used different spatial units to publish information, and under these circumstances the researcher must proceed with a heavy reliance upon the use of percentages and ratios. Where difficulties in the data are potentially threatening to the validity of the conclusions at a gross scale the reader is informed. Otherwise, sense has been made of erroneous and disparate material with the liberal application of the author's knowledge of the study area and of antagonistic sources, assisted by whatever degree of intuition the case demands.

The inclusion of figures for Innisfail and Ponoka does not imply that the study has crept outwards that far, but is for the understanding of gradients at the periphery of the study area itself.
ted by the Census. It is clear that most townships more than ten miles from the rail line in 1901 contained only a small population, and some none at all. The local histories indicate that some of the townships which were said to have no inhabitants did in fact contain a few settlers, but one must be sympathetic to the problems of the Census takers on the frontier. Only rumour and a consultation of the books of the Dominion Lands Office were sources for the less inhabited townships, and some entries conceivably included persons who would not have appeared on the books. It seems that some enumerators failed to enumerate persons resident on unpatented homesteads, and some may have omitted those not of Canadian citizenship. Whether the improved land pertaining to such persons reached the agricultural schedules is unknown. But an obvious deficiency in the figures seems to be an omission of those in the Nebraska settlement who were east of the line between townships 41 24 and 41 23; Robert Ferguson was on the northeast of sec 14 41 24 w4 and the Craiks were on the north half of section 24 in the same township. There may have been others in that immediate area. The population of township 41 23 w4 is not large enough to account for all the residents of the Nebraska settlement and the ranchers who were also resident there. Perhaps some of the problem arose from the absence of men between seeding and haying time, but in a new country it would have been expected that most men spent the winter away working and the summer on the farm breaking land.
The ten townships in the eastern side of the study area contained a mean population of only 20 per township in 1901, but by 1906 when the frontier had passed the number had much increased. The southeast of the study area was marked by very low figures in the earlier year, and there was still not a large population in 1906; this area was the last to be homesteaded or purchased, and many quarters of CPR and Hudson's Bay Land were still unoccupied during the Great War. Only 213 persons resided in the whole of the Lamerton Census Sub-district in 1901, a large block of townships numbered 40 and 41 from range 11 to range 23 w4.

The total population of the study area in 1901 according to the Census was approximately 3800. By the end of the year to June 30, 1901 the number of entries made in the Red Deer Agency was 3366, and 943 entries had been cancelled, leaving a total of 2423 potentially occupied Dominion Lands homesteads. A further quantity were probably unoccupied but not up for cancellation, or undergoing the process, and reducing the figure to 2300 homesteads would be a safe procedure.

One can only estimate the number of separate farms which were located solely on purchased land since most sales of railway and SLHC land were to homesteaders who wanted larger farms than homesteading alone allowed. If the reports of Agents are correct on the rate of sales and if the majority of men bought only one further quarter, then an additional 180 sections of colonization land might have been sold by the mid-
dle of 1901. By a process of rough estimation it may be assumed that another 300 farms were located solely on purchased land. The total number of farms in the study area would consequently have been between 2500 and 3000 in 1901.

The human population located on these farms was approximately 4600 if an addition of 900 be made for Innisfail and district. Children were not counted in the Census and the number of adults would seem to have been about 1.5 per farm unit; under this assumption it appears that every second farm was maintained by a married couple. Without consultation of school records it is not possible to say how many children households maintained on average. Many, probably most, immigrants to the districts east of Lacombe and north of the Red Deer River were in their childbearing years during the land rush and schools were founded close upon colonization. Exceptionally, Pine Lake did not obtain a school until the end of the period under study because the community of bachelor ranchers made no effort to provide one for the few children of the district. Schools were often started with the children of only two or three prolific families and schools boards were greatly assisted by bachelors in such matters as construction, well digging and the provision of firewood.

Because of boundary changes and other compromising factors, the published vital statistics of the Red Deer and

76 The figures appeared in the Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture of the North-West Territories.
Lacombe Divisions are of little use to this study after 1905, and only general conclusions can be drawn about the years before that. Births in the study area numbered between 100 and 200 in the years from 1899, when figures were first kept, to 1904, and rose to 233 in 1905 and to 288 in 1906. The lack of precision in the Census makes any computation of birth rate and mortality only approximate, but it seems that the rate of birth was high, measuring in all likelihood something between 30 and 50 per 1000. On the other hand the mortality rate was low—in the order of 10 to 15 per 1000. The ratio of births to deaths amounted to an average of 2.9 for the period to 1906 and did not differ from the Territorial mean to any appreciable extent. These figures indicate a young population producing families.

Upon the commencement of the Lacombe Registration Division in 1903, which encompassed the entire study area, some interesting shifts in vital statistics occurred which are indicative of shifts in the demographic composition of the parklands at the time of the land rush. The ratio of male to female mortality narrowed for a year, but the number of deaths was not sufficient to establish this as a matter of importance. The number of births jumped dramatically in 1902 to 203 from 138 the year before, but returned to 139 in 1903. It was 199 in 1904. The ratio of births to deaths rose in 1903 to 3.75 from 2.78 in 1902, indicating that many young and perhaps newly-married immigrants had children within one year of arrival.
Over the next three years the ratio fell gradually to 2.64. It rose to 3.73 in 1907; the winter of 1906-1907 was memorable for the amount of snow, distinct difficulties in outdoor travel, a shortage of heating coal, and a lack of social events to occupy the long winter evenings. It is not possible, lamentably, to discern any difference in the winter evening habits between the people resident to the north of the river and to the south because of the realignment of the Registration Districts. This trend was not noted in the province at large, incidentally, and only in the later Red Deer Division did the ratio rise to a substantial degree: ratios of 3.92 and 4.34 in the years 1914 and 1915 respectively. Depressed economic conditions from the autumn of 1912 to late 1913 and the optimism of the early war years probably accounted for this compression.

In the absence of statistics for 1901 and 1906 on the ratio of the sexes on the frontier, calculation of the male to female death ratio may be some use. Mortality was perhaps not equal in the sexes; there was probably less chance of a feeble man coming to the frontier, but on the other hand women were still susceptible to mortality in childbirth. Debilitating illness was probably more easily accommodated in females than males, but some farm wives made valiant efforts in manual labour at the side of an ailing husband. For such a marriage see the very detailed diary of A.J. Stewart, Glenbow Alberta Institute. Stewart and his wife had a small but ambitious mixed farm near Delburne and shared labour equally, often because of an invaliding but unspecified illness which caused the husband great pain.
tions may have cancelled each other. In any event the ratio hovered around 1.5, a number which, if the combinations of argument on relative better health in males be correct, indicates that there were two males to one female in the frontier population. The mortality figures for Red Deer Division must be approached with caution because the hospital was located there and many deaths of persons to the north of the river should not be ascribed to Red Deer.

There was no seasonality of death in any year in the study, nor did births exhibit any such trend. There was a slight seasonality in marriage dates, the month between seeding and haying, June, being favoured, but this tendency disappeared over the years, possibly because of the increasing importance of town social and demographic patterns and the compression of data from town and country sources.

The changes to the landscape and to the human geography of the parklands were profound between 1898 and 1906, the years concerned in this chapter. The figures for population in 1906 show that the population rose dramatically in only five years. Red Deer overtook Lacombe, increasing from 323 to 1418 while Lacombe moved only to 1015 from 499. The smaller commercial centres of Blackfalds and Penhold, both in existence since the early nineties, contained only 156 and 76 persons respectively in 1906.

The demographic statistics indicate an influx of a youthful population which was intent upon the setting up of
schools for the young children who came with the frontier. No precise estimate of intra-regional residential mobility is available, but passages from local historical sources indicate that it was substantial.

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THE AGRARIAN FRONTIER NEAR RED DEER
AND LACOMBE, ALBERTA,
1882-1914

Volume Two

Bruce Edward Batchelor
Simon Fraser University
February 1978
CHAPTER III

PART II

LAND USE, FARM PRODUCTION AND REGIONAL ECONOMY, 1898-1906
Introduction

The immigrants of the eighties and nineties to the parklands attempted to raise most of the crops that were grown in the continental west in the nineteenth century. Leo. Gaetz and numerous farmers had hoped that wheat would give satisfactory returns, but it became clear that the short growing season and the risk of frost as harvest neared made wheat too risky. The crop did not disappear from parkland agriculture but assumed a minor role in a mixed farming system. Some localities were less susceptible to frost than others and wheat was regularly grown there; mixed farmers did not lose heavily if a wheat crop were frosted since it could be fed, grain and straw together, to animals. Many forage and hay crops were tried, but timothy and green oats became the most popular.

In the first years of opening a farm the amount of arable land was usually very low, and land use was extremely extensive. The support of a family often depended on the cash from cream sales and the exchange of eggs at a store. Most farms, after a year or two of operation, developed a surplus of stock and commenced selling the excess, often to incoming settlers. Milch cows and heavy horses were especially sought in this market.
Over the period from the turn of the century to Autonomy the price of land rose. The dollar value per acre was higher in the Red Deer Lowlands than to the east, and the land in hilly districts such as Hillsdown never rose to a significant value in comparison with that near Red Deer and Lacombe. Land value statistics from the Census are not available for 1906, but the figures for 1901 show that the value of land, chattels and stock around Lacombe was higher than near Red Deer. The relative trend in the population of the two places is reflected in the relative values of the lands around them, and it is important to understand the processes by which Red Deer crept even with Lacombe and ultimately passed that town. Some of the explanation lies in the evolution of the transportation network. Lacombe was keen to develop railway connections, and chided Red Deer in the middle of the first decade of the century for being a stop on the railway while Lacombe became the terminus for a branch pushing into the east country. But while Lacombe laughed Red Deer grew. The excellent lands around the latter town were coveted by highly capitalized farmers, the physiographic arrangement of the river and the hills around Red Deer forced farmers to trade in the town, and the municipal leadership of Red Deer, and its business community, were stable, intelligent and far seeing. With the laying of the Lacombe Branch of the CPR in 1905, the prosperity of that town started to leak away to the villages along the rail. The municipal management of Lacombe in that period was, if not neg-
PLATE VI-A

LOG HOUSE IN BROOKFIELD DISTRICT

The majority of buildings were of such a vernacular form in the pioneer period, this surviving example on the sw of 14-38-25 w4 demonstrating the use of purchased sash, shingle roof, and the combination of rear entrance and shed. Houses invariably faced the road allowance unless a location near spring water were considered more important. The front entrance was little used, the side door typically facing onto the path to the remaining farm buildings located on two or three sides of an imaginary rectangle. There seems to have been no alignment to forestall wind effects, and survivors of the frontier period claim that their fathers put buildings 'where they felt like it'.
ligent, then typical for western towns. It is now impossible, for instance, to discover anything concerning the personal lives of the early leaders; they moved on and took the children who would have written their history with them, unlike the dynastic families of Red Deer. The published history of Lacombe, Wagon Trails to Hardtop, is an arch without a keystone. The local history and the newspapers of frontier Lacombe seem to have been written about two different places. Red Deer, with what it saw as its deep and intense Canadian roots, was unique, and it is still possible to speak to the sons and daughters of early pioneers.

Weather conditions at the beginning of the century were of profound importance to the development of the parklands and deserve short comment. It is generally agreed that the nineties were dry years throughout the western part of the continent, and this drought persuaded many Nebraska and Kansas immigrants to move north. In the parklands the phenomenon was not particularly marked, and some land came under the plough which was susceptible to flooding in very wet years, a series of which commenced in 1899. Most of the larger lakes in the region were not as extensive in the nineties as at the time of the land rush; Buffalo Lake was water only in the middle of

78 The wet years are mentioned in virtually all the local historical sources, and a good collection of anecdotes concerning them is in Frank G. Roe, "The Alberta Wet Cycle of 1899-1903: a Climatic Interlude", Agricultural History 28 (1954), pp 112-120.
its later expanse. When rain came the lake filled and ultimately there was six feet of water among dead trunks of trees which had grown along the shore. Soil generally became waterlogged and impossible to plough, and many stretches of land were under water entirely. It took years for the water to disappear from the ground.

The wet years commenced in 1899 after an ordinary early summer, and crops were deluged with rain through August. They grew rankly and were impossible to harvest. Wet snow added to the farmers' problems, and rain fell often during the autumn. Later the rains became colder and turned to snow. Crops were trapped in fields, and the little grain that had been gotten off could not be trusted for seed. Over the years to 1903 similar conditions prevailed, and winter frosts rendered the earth solid to a depth of six or seven feet. In summer the countryside took on a steamy appearance, and there was testimony from a doctor that malaria had been communicated to a number of people. Lakes formed where there had been fields, and rivers ran across previously dry depressions. Year after year there were losses in grains from waterlogging, lodging, rank growth and inefficient harvesting. Grasses started to re-colonize some land farmers had laboriously cleared in the nineties. Each year the rains started earlier in the spring until in 1904 they came as heavy spring snows, and there was no real sleighing through much of what should have been the winter of 1903-04.
PLATE VI-B
Frame houses supplanted log houses, but the form was an amplification of the gable and shed conformation of the log variety. This building is taller than the log house shown in Plate VI-A, but in internal function and in its contribution to farmstead morphology little is changed. The shed structure at the rear has been amplified to two stories, but the rear entrance still opens onto the driveway passing along the side of the house to the farm buildings.

PLATE VI-C
TYPICAL FRAME BARN.
This example is located on the sw of 13-41-28 W4, and demonstrates, with the exception of the flourish on the roof, a form which was so common as to amount to monotony. Barns were small because stock commonly wintered outdoors. Only milch cows, expensive heavy horses and farrowing sows were kept inside. Stalls were usually located along the rear wall. Machinery was kept in a separate drive shed, but commonly was not housed at all. Two or three small granaries completed the inventory.
By the spring of 1904 the wet years were over, but they left an inestimable legacy on parkland farms. The production of some types of crop was dismissed as unsuited to the locality, and many men had taken up ranching or hog production either in addition to cropping, or in place of it and in combination with dairying. Some of the settlers of the land rush were easily wiped out in the first tenuous year or two on the farm, and some districts, notably to the east of Morning-side, suffered depopulation that was not made good for several years.

Rainfall records during the frontier period are not complete, but from the scattered evidence available it appears that the amount of rain was annually about twice what the parklands usually received. In 1901, 29.11 inches fell, and 17 inches of that was in June and July.\footnote{DANWT-1901-p 19; it was common for rainfall reports from the study area to lack a month or two every year, but those for 1901 are complete; the rainfall for 1902 was about 24 inches with an incomplete record, DANWT-1902-p 15.} In 1902 rain was excessive, and in 1903 rain fell even in December.\footnote{Rain fell on the 23rd and 24th in Calgary and the morning of Christmas Day was like spring; cricket and tennis were played in summer flannels. DANWT-1903-p 13.}

The most stunning economic effect of the wet years was experienced by raisers of horses. With the damp climate the glanders bacillus was rendered more virulent, and the influx of immigrants' horses probably carried a number of cases des-
pite the veterinary inspection which was specified at points of entry. The disease was called 'swamp fever' by local people and by the official press, apparently because the desirability of central Alberta as a destination for immigrants would have been severely compromised had the word spread that glanders was suspected. Scores of men lost hundreds of thousands of dollars because of this duplicity. It was popularly assumed that the drinking of putrid slough water induced the disease, but horses which were given the best of water fell victim as much as drinkers of slough water. Slough water in the wet years was, in any event, not excessively foul because surplus water created a pattern of runoff from slough to slough that was so rapid that even mosquitoes did not breed. 81

The loss of horses to swamp fever is covered below in the appropriate section. The effect of the debacle was the

81 This was a blessing for the human population, and for animals. But stock reared in the wet years knew nothing of smudges, and when the weather, water levels and mosquitoes returned more to normal they were sorely tormented, while the older animals immediately moved to smoke. It took the newer ones some time to catch on. Frank G. Roe, "The Alberta Wet Cycle...", op.cit., p 116. Mosquitoes were the bain of free-ranged horses, and in the years of the open range horses grazed to the southeast during the day on the north side of the Red Deer River, and at night cantered at a speed slightly greater than that of a flying mosquito to the northwest. Foals were expected to keep up with the mares in this exercise, and it was said to give the horses of the nineties a sound conditioning that was reflected in high prices. This information is from local lore. It is interesting to note that the 'grain' of the stream network in the area concerned favoured a northwesterly journey, there being a number of ridges between stream courses running in that direction.
frustration of many years' work and investment on the part of many men through the death of good imported breeding stock. After a time the local cayuse mare was typically mated to an imported, and heavier, sire and the foal of this union apparently possessed some intrinsic resistance to disease. Indian ponies and mules were hardly affected and the price of the latter animal rose in consequence during the period of the land rush.
Land Tenure

A number of observations on the trend of colonization were made above in connection with comments on the spread of settlement; the statistical information presented here augments those observations.

Map X indicates the amount of land occupied in June of 1901, and the amount of that occupied land that was improved. This map represents the period of the land rush in-

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82 The district and sub-district information presented in the maps in this section and in those hereafter comes from hitherto-unused sources of data in the files of Statistics Canada. A series of ledgers were compiled, apparently during the Censuses concerned if the notations on the pages are correct, for the purpose of listing District data in a usable form. These ledgers were not published, nor does it seem that the data in them was used. A microfilm copy of the data is kept at Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture Division, which offers it for research use, but the offering has apparently never been taken up, or the potential users were unable to decipher the code designations of the units. There is data for 1901, 1906, and 1911, but that from 1906 is not available for scrutiny because of confidentiality questions, and certain pages of the other years are similarly affected. The data is only usable with the application of a conversion list for the designations of the districts and sub-districts, a matter that was not undertaken until the visit of the author in 1976. The data suffers from numerous internal discrepancies which have been ironed over to give what we hope is an honest and 'best' fit. Much of the material here represents a heavy re-working of the original. Citations appear as HTCA, a designation for the official title: Historical Tabulations of the Census of Agriculture.

83 The vocabulary used in connection with the Census material is that of the Census itself, and is not elaborated; the cont'd...
to the eastern districts of the study area. Only around Red Deer and in the District of Horn Hill did the amount of land occupied reach a level of more than 20%. But the map does not

83 cont'd
Schedules concerned are Numbers 3 through 7 of the Census of Agriculture. The values shown on the maps are not arranged according to the rectangular configurations of the original districts and sub-districts because populations do not live in squares, and in our opinion, rectangular choroplethic data presentation imposes a false sense of spatial order; some types of data are interpreted with isopleths, but in these cases there is firm evidence from supporting sources that such a gradient did in fact exist, for example, in property values. The 'centre of gravity' of each sub-division is the point at which numerical values are entered on the maps except for sub-districts crossing the map border. It is necessary to impose some coherence in the terminology used for the spatial areas in the Census. In 1901 all the Provisional District of Alberta was District 202 of the Census, and smaller areas making up this were called sub-districts. By 1909 Red Deer stood as a District but the units composing it seem to have been based on the polling divisions of the time. These units, which logically should have been sub-districts were not so called, but the usage is retained here as something logical and which will give coherence between the two chapters of this work in which Censuses appear. By 1916 the only detailed information published by the Census was based upon the Municipal District of the time, a unit which was on average about four times larger than the sub-districts with which we work for the Censuses of 1901 and 1911. There was no data available from the HTCA for 1916, and the information from this year is consequently of use only for comparison purposes at the level of one quarter of the study area per municipal district. Fortunately these districts possessed some degree of geographic uniformity and shared genetic features, which matters are commented upon in Chapter IV.
indicate the true rate of occupancy. Only owned lands were apparently entered on the Census and in consequence homesteads that were not patented might have been omitted; persons resident on them should have been counted. The pattern on the map, then, is in fact that of the homestead frontier of 1898 and before in respect of those who had managed to obtain patent, and of those who had purchased title by 1901. It is impossible to estimate even roughly what the occupancy of homesteaders would have been in the various sub-districts shown on the map, but there were over 1000 entries at the Red Deer Agency which could have been involved. There is no available data concerning the number of farm units. The map indicates a decreasing rate of occupancy as distance increases from the rail line. The rate of land improvement was understandably low in the newly-opened townships north of the Red Deer River, and was quite constant through the Red Deer Lowlands from Antler Hill to Morningside. An enormous upward deviation occurred in the Penhold Sub-District, which area was settled at the end of the eighties and presumably attained some headway in cultivation among those resident there. But it is important to note that less than 12% of the land surface was occupied overall near Penhold—a figure which reflected the policies of the SLHC and the avoidance of the area by settlers of the nineties.

Much of the vacant land around Penhold was used as hayland. Baled hay was exported in the nineties, and much was grown for this outlet by the turn of the century. A baler was
installed by Norman Stewart in 1897 or 1898. He was in partnership with W.J. Douglas and they baled for a number of years in Penhold and the surrounding district. Bales were sent to mining camps in British Columbia, the price at Innisfail being $5.50 to $6 per ton in 1898. The dairying interests of the Clearview and Horn Hill Districts are probably indicated by relatively high rates of occupancy and low rates of improvement.

The figures of Table II which pertain to the years of the land rush do not show any noteworthy trends. The percentage of entries proving within three years or more was a few percent higher for persons coming by 1900, but the downward shift to a mean of 55% is not spectacular. The rate of failure within one year as a percentage of all those entering that year who were destined to fail was something under 40%, and the three year rate rose to a mean of 67%, which large figure is possibly an indication of the efficiency of the Department in cancelling slouching homesteaders as much as any shift in the failure rate. In any event, the figures for the end of this period are not of precise application to the study area because a percentage of homesteads concerned were not in the study area. The important issue in Table II for the period

84 Innisfail Free Lance, Dec. 23, 1898. Later the two men started a threshing outfit which was similarly successful, and Norman later went into business with his brother Tom as an implement dealer. This business survives and has maintained a sterling reputation over the years. For the biography of Norman see the RDCS.

85 Table II is in Chapter II and concerns the rates of entry and cancellation on homestead lands.
of the land rush is that the percentage of persons completing homestead duties fell to about one half.

**Horse Ranching and Horse Handling on Farms**

During the nineties, as pointed out in the previous chapter, the market for light common horses was destroyed by settlers' importation of poor stock and by itinerant dealers posing as immigrants. Some heavy draft teams from northern Alberta were sold in the mining regions of the Rockies, but in general there was no breeding stock to meet demands from farmers who appreciated a heavier animal. Horses from the Territories were not favoured by various remount Commissions because they were of bad form, commonly possessing low-set tails which terminated sloping rumps. Although the few that had been purchased were found to be hardy on picket duty, the qualities of the average horse ruled out any military market.

The Department of Agriculture warned in 1898 that the treatment of horses intended for sale needed improvement if a better market were desired; grain feeding before breaking was desirable, especially over the first two winters, animals should have been shedded, and breaking and training could have been accomplished intelligently with a small amount of farming

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86 DANWT-1898-p 48.
87 Ibid, p 50.
by the rancher.\textsuperscript{88} This farming would in addition have provided the ranch with coarse grains necessary for feed. According to an 1898 editorial in the Innisfail Free Lance, neglect of stock was common in the study area. Many settlers spent much money on horses and were proud of them, but these facts were not reflected in the treatment the animals received. Some were tied to a fence on a cold night after an hour's hard ride, and the amount people spent on blankets for themselves was often more than that spent for horses.\textsuperscript{89} Sometimes horses fell victim to disease through no real fault of the owner, and there were scores of highly-bred heavy horses taken from railway cars at Lacombe and Red Deer in the years of the land rush that never did a day's work. The railway journey had been hard on them; they had drunk many changes of water, and were unloaded, out of condition, into pouring rain and chilling wind. The hauling of the family goods to the homestead was more than they could manage, so bad was the mud and the exhaustion of repeated mirings. At the homestead there was no shelter and the luckless animals declined rapidly and died. They were replaced by 'cayuses' weighing 400 pounds less which were bred to the conditions.

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid, pp 48, 49.
\textsuperscript{89} Innisfail \textit{Free Lance}, Dec. 30, 1898. Equally rough treatment was afforded to cattle, and it is known that the less complicated farm implements were not housed in the drive shed of the farm. This was a common habit in the west.
At the turn of the century there were few light or coach horses of any quality produced in the Territories.\textsuperscript{90} In the opinion of the Department, an improvement in the quality of horses produced could only come if it were realized that

"The day of 'bronco busting' has passed, never to return again, and the man who wishes to make a success of horse breeding should raise no more horses than he can thoroughly handle, and have for his breeding stock the best that his means will admit of. Horse raising on a large scale, particularly the raising of light horses, is a waning practice." (91)

Furthermore, it was claimed that horses which had run wild for five years, and which were brutally broken because of a shortage of time and qualified help on ranches, were no longer wanted on the market.

There was money in raising horses properly for the rising market caused by arriving settlers. Neil McPhee of the Edwell District was an expert horse raiser and seems to have prospered in the business.\textsuperscript{92} McPhee arrived from the United

\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Ibid}, p 51.
\textsuperscript{92} McPhee was a Canadian from Mount Forest, Ontario, one of the large contingent from that district who went to the United States in the eighties. He proved up in Edinburgh, Dakota Territory, was a sheriff and ran an implement business for a time. The family farm in Mount Forest seems to have been a large operation, and Neil met with success in his own activities. But his wife could not become accustomed to life in the United States, and the McPhees came to Canada in response to the testimony of Leo. Gaetz outlined in Chapter II. The information in this section concerning the raising of horses is from a son, Charles, (informant CMP), who was born in 1899; his comments on the working habits of his father apply to the years after the turn of the century. The details of the family are in RDCS.
States in 1892 and lost a number of the horses which he had brought with him in the severe winter of 1892-1893. The foundation of the herd was a number of good grade horses that were brought from North Dakota and two local ponies which were claimed to put some ability to work into the progeny. Neil later obtained a grade Shire/Clyde stallion which was the best he ever had, and by the turn of the century had gone into a line of Clydes. Some of the progeny were grade but he sold purebreds as well.

The location of the McPhee homestead was sec 34 of 36 26 w4, and it was chosen for nearness to water and range. The higher ground to the east, never homesteaded to a great extent, and the whole stretch of country from Edwell to Delburne was open range. The animals were free ranged in winter and rounded up in the spring for plough breaking. At round-up time the horses were fed a ration of oat straw, which in those days contained a large amount of grain. By April, after a month or two of this feed, the bedraggled winter condition of the animals was much improved, and they were 'running and kicking'. Only three-year-olds were cut out and the McPhees received a premium in the sale price of the horse because they performed the operation known as 'green breaking'. This involved training the horse to the collar and to the halter, and it was highly exasperating work for which only a few men in the vicinity ever found the patience. The harness was repeatedly put on and taken off the spirited horses; when they seemed
used to the procedure two were put on a plough with two calm
and seasoned mares to show the way. Usually the 'team' would
gallop for some distance and require untangling. After this
experience the shoulders of the animals were soft and they then
required gradual hardening to the collar. A horse broken in
this way was worth $50 more than a wild one.

The McPhees were adept at handling horses, and it took
a special touch to make money in their field. Much of their
success came from the good range they had, for which they paid
no rent and had no title, and from the fact that they were not
working the horses they kept. Many men lost horses because
they were forced by the geography of the farm and the use of
the mare on the plough to keep them close to the barn where
colts often fell ill.

There were a number of well known horse breeders in the
Red Deer region. John Richards, one of the early immigrants of
the eighties, sold Clydes which were crossed with the local
ponies, and from 1899 William O'Connor of Hillsdown was a bree-
der of note, also of Clydes. But the men who were interested
in the very good lines of horses were in a minority, and they
sold to a group of farmers which were above the average. Most

93 A similar method was used to break oxen by men in that
trade, but it was less refined. Two 'wild' oxen were
tied by a crude yoke which was chained to a large log they
were forced to drag everywhere. After a few weeks they
were tame, and the only human labour involved in this pro-
cess was following them to ensure they did not strangle
in fences or underbrush. This task was often given to
children.
men were interested in soundness alone in a horse, and a
day's travel through the countryside of the time would not
have brought one into contact with more than a few horses of
good conformation. The Scots are remembered by one of the
older farmers of the area for having held a sentimental
attachment to Clydes. No reason attached to their adaptability
to the parklands was responsible for this. 'More sensible'
people had Percherons or Belgians which were considered of bet-
ter disposition. There were a few men who showed horses and
tried to assemble matched teams, among them a man by the name
of Jarvis of Red Deer.

The syndication system had its adherents in Red Deer
and district. Several men involved in one plan were to put up
$500 each to send one of their number to Britain for a good
stallion. An advertisement from the Springvale Stud Company
which was handling the sire 'Jolly Prince' in 1904 and informa-
tion from elderly men reveals the use of the system in Red
Deer. There were numerous importations of good heavy horses
in the early years of the century and the market seems rarely
to have been satisfied. Probably there were tidy profits in-

94 Ronald Comfort of Red Deer. Ronald was born in Michigan
in 1899. His father was from the Niagara Peninsula; he
went to Michigan about 1894, married an American woman
and returned to Canada in 1901 or 1902.

95 The syndication method, although common in the United
States, seems first to have been advocated in the Terri-
tories in DANWT-1903-p 40. The 'Jolly Prince' was being
travelled in 1904; see RDAA, May 12, 1904. Syndication
was discussed at a Farmers' Institute meeting in Red Deer
in 1906; see RDN March 6, 1906.
volved in the importations. 96

The Department of Agriculture tried to improve blood-lines indirectly by enforcing the registration of all stallions which were travelled for gain, but until 1903 the effect of the Horse Breeders' Lien Ordinance under which the enrollment was carried out was almost negligible. Either the fee for registration was too high, or horse breeders did not desire the service, thought the Department. In 1903 the Ordinance of 1899 was repealed and a new one, entitled The Horse Breeders' Ordinance, took its place, 97 but the efforts of the Department did not bear quick fruit. Up to 1906 there was still a heavy preponderance of grade stallions enrolled. 98

Although horse production was an important part of the activities of a number of farmers and ranchers in the study area, none of these seems to have taken membership in the Territorial Horse Breeders' Association, the members of which were confined to the drier portions of the Territories. News of the Association and of its attempts to start a 'horse fair' were, however, carried in the Red Deer paper. 99

96 Importations of Clydes were advertised, among other times, in the RDN of May 15, 1906 and Sept. 25, 1906; exportations, which were considered evidence of the progress of the district, were also announced at various times.

97 DANWT-1901-p 67 and DANWT-1903-p 39. One difficulty with the older Ordinance had been the submission of falsified pedigrees; in 1900 the Department announced that 'the usual number of bogus pedigrees' had been submitted during the year. See DANWT-1900-p 63.

98 The ratio was 162 to 329 in 1906. See Alberta Department of Agriculture Annual Report 1906-p 73. Henceforth cited as ADA.

99 RDA, Nov. 17, 1904.
But many men were sent to the wall by the horse business. Swamp fever at the turn of the century was disastrous for many, and only a few examples need quoting. There were hundreds similar, many of which appear in the local histories. William Henry Wilkins came from Groton, South Dakota in 1900 with a number of purebred trotting horses, all of which were lost soon after.\textsuperscript{100} James Ferrier Gaetz ranched in Gaetz Valley near Great Bend and had some success with common horses. The demand was for heavier animals and he and his brother bought a large stallion which died. Half the breeding stock followed and the brothers gave up ranching and moved back to Red Deer to start a livery stable.\textsuperscript{101} Henry Jamieson of Red Deer lost nine good horses and a number of cattle valued at $2500 shortly after his arrival in 1900.\textsuperscript{102} Nearly all the horses in Iowalta District were killed\textsuperscript{103} and Bill Whitesell of Bentley and Red Deer recalls that "... it just about cleaned up every farmer; father lost about six horses in six months, and he brought a nice bunch with him. It took the best ones."\textsuperscript{104} According to officials the losses were up to 50%.

\textsuperscript{100} Wagon Trails, p 183.
\textsuperscript{101} RDCS, biography of James Ferrier Gaetz.
\textsuperscript{102} RDCS, biography of Henry Jamieson; the loss of the cattle could not have been from glanders.
\textsuperscript{103} Wagon Trails, p 806.
\textsuperscript{104} Bill Whitesell was an informant for this study. He came with his American parents to the Blackfalds area in 1898, and his father took a farm on sandy land. Later the family moved to a farm near Bentley and cleared willow land which produced heavily; the estate of the father amounted to $7 at his death in 1910.
in affected areas, but the last year of heavy losses was 1902.

Map XI shows the number of horses per Standard Township Area in 1901 the year in which the ravages of swamp fever were worst. Noteworthy values appear only near Red Deer and Morningside. The former town maintained a large number of horses for livery, draying, and for sale to incoming settlers. The latter area was a breeding district not generally settled until 1901-1902, and the large number of horses present there in 1901 indicates an extensive use of range land. The number of horses per Standard Township Area decreased to the east, as one would expect in the years of the land rush, and any concentrations on ranches are obscured by the large size of the sub-districts used in the data reporting. The statistics on

105 See DANWT 1901-p 77 and 1902-p 55. Glanders was reported near Red Deer and the officials exterminated the affected animals; in theory a farmer could claim for the loss of affected stock, but few did so because the rest of their stock would have been rendered suspect and unsaleable. For this see Frank G. Roe, "The Alberta Wet Cycle...", op.cit., p 116. It is only logical to assume that official reports of glanders were suppressed for fear of the effect such news would exert on immigration. In consequence, many settlers who might have been warned off were financially ruined.

106 A Standard Township Area has been devised for this study because measurements of such quantities as animal population and households are conceptually less meaningful in square mile units. A Standard Township is considered to be a potentially inhabitable area of 23,000 acres, and each of the sub-districts in the Census was screened to remove water areas, steep gullies, river courses and large swamps.
the loading of stock at various rail points in the study area show that the area to the south of the Red Deer River rarely shipped an appreciable number of horses before 1900, and that the Lacombe shipping point was the origin of increasingly large consignments, shipping hundreds every year in the 'local' trade. 'Export' shipments were low, probably because the region was heavily a net importer of horses for stocking new farms and for replacing those lost in the debacle of swamp fever. Many local sales of horses were executed on foot and such animals did not enter the railway system and the associated statistics.

Conclusions, Horse Breeding to 1906

Although a number of men were interested in good horses and might have made money travelling a stallion or selling purebreds, the average farmer required mere soundness in draft stock. Local breeders eschewed exotic heavy horses; until an epidemic had run its course, cayuses were bred to grade stallions. Nothing like a 'parkland horse' was however developed, but an adaptation was forced on breeders and farmers in creating a hard-working, medium-weight animal which was sure-footed.

The shipments of stock were reported in the Annual Reports of the Alberta Department of Agriculture against the name of the shipping point from which they originated. The shipments are divided between 'exports' and local shipments, and the former further divided between eastward shipments and westward.
on the poor roads of the time and hardy under frontier stable

ling conditions and plains weather. Pure-bred horses too of-

ten required pampering, a fault in horses that ranked with ef-

feminacy in men, and the horses of the average parkland farm

could not have been accused of any such weakness. One of the

old-timers of the area put the matter precisely to the

author in repeating a local saw:

"'They say my father was a darn good farmer; he raised

pigs and made money, and he turned around and bought

a stud horse and went broke.' Because you lost money

if you ever owned a stallion. That was the best way,

because you paid two and three thousand dollars for

them, and nobody would pay any price for a service fee

because they couldn't afford it because they had these

nondescript mares. And the poor fella that improved

the horses and the work stock in the country done it

for prid' near on his own... He just loved horses.

I know people that farmed just because they loved

horses. They knew there was no money in it, and a

number of the good farm horsemen were from the city

where they had handled horses, and they made good

farmers."

108 Informant JLB. The last Clyde kept by this man was

foaled in 1947 and died the day of the interview.
Cattle Ranching and Cattle
Production on Farms

The years to 1906 marked the emergence of the cattle trade in the parklands from the crude frontier phase of sporadic or once-yearly marketing of ranged animals to the more refined methods of grazing on the home farm or ranch and of feeding hay, green feed, or grain as a part of the ration. Over these years the number of cattle marketed increased dramatically, from about 1300 in 1902 for the area between and including Innisfail and Ponoka, to 7237 in the year 1906.\(^{109}\) Lacombe was the leading shipping point in the study area in the years before 1906, sending off more than one third of the total in 1903, almost half the shipments of 1904, and the lions share of those of 1905. Although the importance of that point lessened somewhat after the inauguration of the Lacombe Branch in

\(^{109}\) The figures come from the Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture of the Northwest Territories, and the Province of Alberta, as appropriate. The figures were sent by Stock Inspectors, who were acknowledged to have missed a percentage of the animals put aboard trains; the actual numbers would in fact have been higher, according to one estimate about eight per cent for cattle, and ten per cent for horses. See DANWT-1905-p 31. Wetaskiwin gained an early pre-eminence in the shipment of cattle, putting over 2100 aboard in 1900. There was no differentiation offered as to whether local shipments were for slaughter or for stockers, and local shipments were considered to have been destined for other points in the North-West Territories.
1905 when cattle were shipped from Alix, and later from Stettler, Lacombe remained, of those in the study area, the point from which the largest number of cattle were shipped until 1907.

The slow start to cattle shipments was apparently a function of the age of the animals at marketing. Typically cattle were held to three years at the turn of the century, and even longer if the market were not considered good and the rancher not in distress. Cattle sold in 1902 were calved in 1898 or 1899, before the main part of the land rush. During this time there was in all likelihood a very good regional market for young stockers, and many sales by ranchers may have been local and of stocker animals too young for the usual channels; such cattle did not contribute to the statistics because they were not loaded onto rail cars. The demand for stockers was sharpened by the amount of lodged and wet grain farmers held for cheap disposal in the wet years, and the heavy market offerings in 1905 and 1906 were, it might be sensibly maintained, the culmination of all these conditions.

Map XII shows the distribution in the study area of neat and horned cattle in 1901. There were noticeable concentrations in the Sub-Districts of Penhold, Red Deer and Willowdale, which areas were settled some eight to ten years before the Census. North of the Red Deer River the number of horses per Standard Township Area was greater in 1901 than the number of cattle. Over the decade to 1911 the number of cattle per
Standard Township Area remained more or less constant in absolute value in those sub-districts with a high population in 1901, such as Penhold and Red Deer, and increased in those further from the initially settled corridor. This phenomenon, and the facts that in 1911 the use and rate of occupancy of the land was still extensive by modern standards and that much of it was neither occupied nor used for anything except casual grazing, will be commented upon in Chapter V in connection with a model of land use. However, by way of introduction to the reasoning of this argument, the distribution of cattle in 1901 and 1911 may be taken as an indication that the intensity of land use was a reflection of the bid price of land, and that there was a regional spatial balance in the intensity of use during both the open and the closed frontiers.

The idea of the open and the closed frontier is a simple analogy to the similar ideas in systems theory. An 'open' frontier is assumed to have been one in which land values were depressed by the proximity of 'free' or cheap land, and a 'closed' one to have been one in which such cheap land was no longer available or was so far distant from the locale under consideration that it could not reasonably be considered to have affected land values except by inducing selective migration. In theory a rise in land values over the whole region would have been expected at the time of the closing of the homestead frontier. Such a closing occurred at the micro-regional scale around Red Deer in 1901, Lacombe in 1903, and in the eastern districts of the study area between 1904 and 1907. Land as far away as Coronation and points on the border of Saskatchewan continued to attract residents of the Red Deer area in the exercise of what we call the perpetual frontier syndrome until just before the Great War, but such movements, although interesting, were not sufficient to have prolonged the openness of the Red Deer-Lacombe frontier.
land, typically located inconveniently far from a rail point, would be chosen by certain settlers, usually those with little capital, in preference to land in settled districts. But there were upper thresholds in the settled districts which seem to have limited bid prices, stock intensity, investment per acre and the percentage of land held freehold. The effect of this process was to freeze the levels of intensity, including the populations of cattle per unit of land, and the potential value of lands in neighbourhoods that had been longer settled; in some localities, such as Morningside, an actual backwash effect may be noted.

The parklands were considered to be the ideal environment for mixed farming, and the Department of Agriculture of the Territories encouraged dual purpose cattle. But this policy was never practically implemented because the Department could not settle on a desirable breed. The Shorthorn, which had acceptable ratings from American researchers, was ignored because it did not qualify for any Canadian record book. It continued over the years to be boosted by local supporters, however. There were cultural impediments to mixed farming as well as in the introduction of the dual purpose cow.

"It is found almost as difficult to induce ranchers to engage in dairying as to persuade the wheat farmer to patronize the local creamery. If such an animal as the dual purpose cow can be produced as a breed, this difficulty would to a very large extent be overcome." (111)

111 DANWT-1898-p 39.
The crossing of Shorthorn bulls with the Ayrshires was thought to be the best solution for this problem which, however, was never solved in the manner that the Department anticipated. Interestingly, the attitude of the Department on this issue demonstrates that the solution of economic or logistical problems in agriculture was regarded much more as a technological issue than as one of culture. Farmers were considered by the Department to be infinitely adaptable and willing to move in any direction which the quest for profits required. In addition the issue demonstrates that the government saw itself as an advisor and stimulator and not as a partner.

Cattlemen as a type did not take easily to the work habits implied in keeping dairy animals, and there were those among farmers who were critical of the humanity of ranchers toward animals in their charge. It was said by some 112 that a cattleman, for example, would rescue a stranded animal if he could do so from the saddle, but that he regarded it beneath his dignity to dirty his hands in the process. Such a comment might raise hackles among aficionados of ranching lore. The dubious truth of the story aside, it is a manifestation of a cultural difference between two classes of men, and is reminiscent of the fact that in general they felt apart. In many localities they took their amusement separately.

112 Farmer-rancher friction, an ancient stereotype of the west, would account for the comment which has been left anonymous by the author.
The first years of the century were one of uncertainty for the cattle breeders of the parklands of Alberta. While the range cattle industry was accommodating to the needs of the twentieth century it seems that central Alberta producers prolonged, probably unintentionally, the difficulties in the trade which had been inaugurated with the entry of poor stock with immigrants in the nineties. Bull control was more difficult in populated districts than on range because more men insisted on running a bull or two. Without substantial investment in fencing and time spent for pound enforcement there was much indiscriminate mating. Some ranchers of what was becoming a distinctly elevated class could afford both fencing and expenditure on better stock. It was almost a reflex on the part of central Alberta producers to regard the British market as the natural one for the future, but the scheduling of cattle on British soil had never been lifted. There was no sign that the investment necessary for the chilled meat trade, looked forward to for years, was forthcoming. There was no tradition of selling Alberta beef in the U.S., and parkland producers did not have the expertise to open such markets alone. Most of the stockyards along the railways of the region were inadequate and in poor repair, and during the wet years at the turn of the century they became quagmires. In Red Deer the opening of new yards lagged while haggling went on between the townsite company and stock dealers. 113

113 RDAA April 21, 1904; see also RDN Feb. 27, 1906 for useful general comments. The following information on the CASGA comes from RDN Nov. 20, 1906; March 5, Aug. 4, Aug. 25, 1907; Jan. 1, Jan. 8, 1908.
In parallel with the emerging Alberta Farmers' Association an amalgamation of the more advanced stock farmers, ranchers and cattle buyers of the region came together in 1906 as the Central Alberta Stock Growers' Association. The movement was under the hand of George Root of Red Deer, an immigrant from Iowa who purchased a massive farm near Red Deer around 1902 and added other holdings throughout the region later, apparently for use as haylands. Membership in the CASGA extended geographically across the region as far east at least as Stettler. The organization was interesting in membership structure because it encompassed men from all walks of life associated in some way with the beef sector of the economy. As of the middle of the first decade of the century the top echelon of ranchers was rubbing shoulders with men like W.F. Puffer of Lacombe, one of the buyers who was later accused by the beef lobby of forwarding the interests of Pat Burns in establishing monopoly control. The early years of the CASGA seem to have lacked any tinge of class consciousness on the part of producers; meetings were typically social occasions much like the fraternal meetings of the time, speeches on various issues being presented by executive members who had taken some time to research the issues to which the CASGA addressed itself.

Beef prices to parkland producers for the years 1902 to 1907 ranged from 2.5¢ to 5.25¢ and it was a truism that this level was barely enough to cover costs. Efforts were
made to overcome what were thought to have been the exhorbitant profits of middlemen in the marketing network. A few of the larger producers of the region shipped to Winnipeg on their own account, but smaller operators who could not raise a carload were not able to use this outlet. Some thought was given to shipping to Chicago and an experimental consignment left for that market in September of 1907. It was the largest ever to leave Red Deer up to that time, some 400 head and many prime steers among them, and it helped to overcome the disadvantage of the small producer by combining the stock of many men. At first the shipment seemed to be a success. The prices were good and American buyers were impressed with the quality. When it came time to repeat the shipment railway cars for that destination somehow were not available and there is no evidence that central Alberta producers were at any time afterwards able to take advantage either of actual shipments to Chicago or of the psychological advantage which, in theory, could be used to advance local prices under a threat to ship to Chicago.

The rest of the history of the CASGA does not fall technically within the scope of this chapter, but it is not out of order to mention the later fortunes of the organization. The CASGA was an amalgamation of many sorts of interests in the stock business—both small and large producers, stock buyers, railway men and local politicians. Many of the breeders of purebred cattle were members and it would not be out
of line to assume that the organization operated as a fra-
ternity of cattlemen in the parklands, especially of those
who thought that the business should develop as a rational
industry. The leaders seem distinctly to have believed in
what could be called the 'organic' model of society and, un-
til later years when most of the members seem to have been
absorbed by the UFA, the platform of the CASGA was slanted
toward persuasion and illumination through public debate in
the political arena. The advanced producers who led the
cattlemen of the parklands believed apparently that they pos-
sessed some natural right to justice and that it would come
to them in the marketplace if they exercised originality, and
in politics if they merely asked for their due. They were not
rewarded. The many technical items in the program of the
CASGA appeared, perhaps by coincidence, on that of the new
UFA after 1909, and some were simply outdated by events.
Among those which fell into the latter category were requests
for better fireguards, a matter which rather took care of it-
self as the country became more settled between 1906 and 1909.
Bull management became more careful and fencing more gene-
ral as the years passed. The marketing activities of the
CASGA were taken over partly by the Red Deer Cooperative 114
Association after 1909. The assumption of the Presidency
of the UFA by James Bower of Red Deer earlier that year had

114 The Red Deer Cooperative Association was intended to be
an arm of the UFA and the Red Deer version was the pro-
totype of all those in Alberta, if not, as was claimed
by Bower, over a much wider area. It did not enjoy spec-
tacular success, having to breast apathy from farmers and
undercutting practices of merchants and buyers. Its inau-
guration was reported in RDN Nov. 3, 1909, and ensuing re-
ports appeared frequently until 1914.
added much to the status of Red Deer, one must assume, and Bower's leadership of both the Red Deer UFA and the Cooperative Association further impressed the ideals and personality of a volatile man onto the evolution of farm protest in the region. The CASGA seems to have slipped out of existence about 1909. Newspaper reports on it ceased to appear and the original leader, George Root, sold off his holdings in the region to the last head of stock and bushel of grain. His departure from the region was unusual. There is no evidence that he was given the sort of festive dinner commonly laid for important men undergoing a change in life and his property was advertised for sale by means of discreet entries in the Red Deer News' issues of early 1910. Root's departure, for whatever reason, was symbolic of the dissolution of the genteel mode of farm protest with which he had been associated, and of the dilution of the organic model of society which had underpinned the social style of Red Deer through the early frontier years. The field of protest was left to harder men, like James Bower, who were more accomplished in accusatory rhetoric and in the manipulation of ideas of class and social conflict which would carry logically into the reform politics of later years.

Although a number of ranchers were finishing cattle, this procedure was not yet economical for the average producer and despite the occasional flurry of interest in the newspaper columns of the time which indicated that greater profits could flow from better finished beef, no great percentage were treated to better feed until immediately before the Great War.
With the changes in the human geography of the parklands consequent upon the land rush there were massive shifts in the spatial aspects of the production of cattle. The ranging of cattle on land not owned by the rancher decreased except in districts to the south of the Red Deer River. The English ranchers of Pine Lake still ranged cattle over the rough land from Hillsdown to Quill Lake and drove cattle annually to Innisfail. The event took place in the late autumn and was commenced about noon, the cattle being driven toward Innisfail until evening when the drovers camped. The next day an early start was made and the cattle arrived in good condition. Early arrival at Innisfail was essential because the cattle were wild after a free-range life and the danger and inconvenience to townsfolk was an important consideration. After the delivery the ranchers repaired to the saloon, those under age going to a local restaurant, before the return to Pine Lake in the afternoon. Drives of this sort were common in Alix, Nevis and Stettler until 1909 as cattle were brought down from the range country northeast of Buffalo Lake, and cattle and hogs

115 These details are from the biography of Harry Raikes of Pine Lake in RDCS. Raikes was of Ontario background but claimed an impressive English ancestry, including Robert Raikes of Gloucester, publisher and founder of the Sunday School. Other ancestors served as Postmaster General and as Governor of the Bank of England, and a number were in military service. Raikes was one of the few ranchers with more than an empirical agricultural education, having attended Guelph Agricultural College. After delivering a load of bulls to the west he rode for the Cochrane Cattle Company and for the Oxley and Winder ranches. The original homestead quarter expanded to holdings of about 1000 acres. Raikes was considered a local authority on cattle matters and acted as a judge on many occasions. He moved to a small property in Whonnock, British Columbia, in 1919.
were driven from Delburne and Quill Lake to Red Deer as late as 1912, the date of the laying of a Grand Trunk Pacific branch line, to avoid a crossing of the Red Deer River.

By the end of the nineties a trade in stocker cattle destined for the southern ranges had developed in southeastern Assiniboia, eastern Saskatchewan and northern Alberta. These animals were products of a mixed farming system, and in the official view the breeding of stockers on farms was superior to ranch production because breeding stock was better treated than on the range. Poor calves could be culled at source for local consumption as veal, mating could be controlled, and the high annual loss of calves common on the range would be lowered. The farmers of the districts mentioned could not finish beef as cheaply as the rancher, but the day of grass-fed animals was considered in any event to be drawing to a close and a more elaborate further development was considered in which farmers would take the animals in hand later for grain finishing.

Wild hay was an important source of animal nutrition although the quantity of it available, as pointed out earlier, was variable from year to year. It was difficult to find in 1897 but the availability improved in 1898 without being exactly what the rancher would desire. The last two years of the century were poor for hay gathering, and the arrival of the

116 DANWT-1898-p 41.
117 Ibid, p 42.
wet years in 1900, contrary to what might be expected, caused great concern.\textsuperscript{118} Spring arrived late when feed was short and later in the season the grasses failed to cure properly.\textsuperscript{119} Natural increase in northern Alberta on ranges was 60\% in 1900 and on farms 75\%, the difference in that year being attributed to a lack of range bulls.\textsuperscript{120} The season of 1901 was much better, but it was clear that estimates made by farmers and ranchers as to the amount of hay necessary to carry over the winter were not adequate. The Department thought that the higher survival rate encouraged by improved shelter under farming conditions caused the mis-estimate.\textsuperscript{121}

As settlement spread eastwards through the region, wild hay became scarcer. At that time the Department initiated a campaign to induce farmers to grain finish beef. This was considered a necessity if the United Kingdom were to remain a major destination of Alberta beef. But the practice was not common until economic realities made it a foolproof choice.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{118} DANWT-1901-p 77. Much of the hay contained willow brush which had sprung up from root stock in sloughs.
\textsuperscript{119} DANWT-1900-p 58.
\textsuperscript{120} Idem.
\textsuperscript{121} DANWT-1901-p 77.
\textsuperscript{122} For comments on the grain finishing of cattle see DANWT 1902-p 57. The saving of the reputation of the nation was pleaded in DANWT-1904-p 135, and the winter feeding of cattle in central Alberta was expected to benefit the market by spreading the market offerings over more of the year. (ADA-1906-p 71) This latter report did not apparently refer to a general trend but rather to the commencement of one which would gather momentum within a decade.
Cattlemen, both in the early years of the century and later in the years concerned in the next chapter, showed a keen interest in the affairs of the breed associations. Many men of the study area were active in the Territorial Purebred Cattle Breeders' Association and in its successors, among which was the Central Alberta Stock Growers' Association.\textsuperscript{123} Ranchers on the executives of the cattle breed organizations were well-capitalized, well-known in their neighbourhoods, usually well-educated or experienced in public affairs, and stood to lose more than the average producer if the market were to fall. Some of them in addition were in positions of influence in other organizations and in political parties. In these respects the personnel of the cattle associations paralleled in social and economic characteristics those in the farm protest movement; they were not average and were hardly among the strugglers in the community. Most were in effect businessmen who happened to be in farming, and the avowed aim of all of them was to speed the incorporation of the frontier into the national economic life, and to force a hearing of the opinions of the western producer. If they maintained any ideas of the frontier as a forge in which culture was formed, those ideas were confined to the formative influence on character.

\textsuperscript{123} The Central Alberta Stock Growers' Association, or CASGA, was formed in 1906 to answer the needs of cattlemen for fairness in the market place and to advance the expertise of the average producer. Its operation was typical of the pre-war economic climate, and it is discussed in the next chapter.
of business opportunity—the production of a competitive product in a competitive world. The western producer asked for no favours, but at the same time asked for a fair shake in transportation rates, market information, technological evolution in transportation which would effectively shorten the distance to the European market, and in the formation of tariff and other trade policy.

The list of purebred cattle breeders published for the Territories in 1901 shows that there were 31 men in the study area who qualified for listing, although not all were members of the Territorial Cattle Breeders' Association. Short-horns were produced by the majority, among whom was Harry Raikes of Pine Lake, but there was one representative each for Ayrshire, Hereford and Angus. Two men raised Holsteins. Four of the 20 officers elected in 1902 came from the study area: Harry Raikes of Pine Lake; H.W. Metcalf of Lacombe; James L. Walters of Lacombe; and Peter Talbot of Lacombe. The rate of participation from the study area remained essentially constant over the years to 1906, at which time there were 19 members from the region.

A few purebred cattle had been imported in the nineties and more followed after the turn of the century. This stock was treated like any scarce resource and came into the hands only of those who could afford it. The effects on the whole were confined to the herds of the importers.

124 DANWT-1901-pp 173-175. The list pretended to be exhaustive.
125 ADA-1906-p 199.
themselves and of wealthy purchasers. There was no improvement in the general status of cattle by the turn of the century, a matter which caused official concern. The cost of importing purebred bulls individually was thought to be far beyond the means of the average farmer, and consequently the Department of Agriculture inaugurated a program of herd improvement by bull importation in 1899. The freight charges on one bull imported privately to the Calgary and Edmonton line had amounted to $36, a figure considered out of reach to the average breeder.

Of the first consignment of 48, 20 went to Assiniboia, three to Saskatchewan, three to southern Alberta, and 22 to northern Alberta. The measure was protested by the Purebred Cattle Breeders Association, but was defended by the CPR and by the government as being parallel to programs used in the United States. It was proclaimed that "The modern up-to-date railroad is not satisfied with merely performing the functions of a common carrier", and that the measure was in fact largely educational. In stressing this fact the government was carefully maintaining the role of advisor and prompter, and the resistance of the purebred breeders shows that the stance was well-advised. General herd improvement was slow not only from economic conditions but also from an apparent tendency of those keeping purebred cattle to act as a frater-

126 DANWT-1898-p 45.
127 DANWT-1899-p 56.
128 Ibid, pp 57, 58.
nity. Access to this select group probably depended upon money and few men from the region seem to have graduated into it. Monied immigrants more commonly were initiates.

The bull program was continued in succeeding years and provided a model for the development of a similar plan with swine. The importation of 1900 saw only 2 Shorthorns going to Red Deer from Manitoba; one from Port Elgin, Ontario to Red Deer; and one from Guelph, Ontario to Lacombe.129

The eastern bulls occasionally experienced problems with potency and it was generally allowed that they were too soft for western conditions. This problem was often confined to the first year in the new land,130 but there was probably more sense in attempting the development of a tough native animal than in trying to breed to eastern standards of conformation from eastern sires:

"Most of the imported bulls are sired by pampered individuals, are out of dams that have been accustomed to warm stables and heavy grain feeding, and they are themselves subjected to a rigid fattening process before being placed on the market. Every thinking person will readily admit that good results, under all the hardships of range conditions, could not reasonably be expected from the use of such bulls." (131)

The Talbots of Lacombe produced a number of prizewinning Shorthorn bulls in the years from 1901 onwards. The highest-priced bull knocked down at the 1901 auction of the Purebred Cattle Breeders Association was a Talbot product

129 DANWT-1900-p 61.
130 DANWT-1901-p 79.
131 Ibid., p 166.
and sold for $250. Seven Talbot bulls were sold at the 1902 show for an average price of $165,\textsuperscript{132} and prices were lower that year. The stock sold at the 1901 Auction came from four sources in Alberta: Lacombe, Urquhart (later named Valley City and then Clive), Okotoks, and Calgary. Clearly the prices paid for auction bulls were extreme, and were indicative of the inaccessibility of better breeding stock to the average farmer and rancher. The best stock circulated within a caste of influential and increasingly prosperous breeders.

In the first years of the century the average price received by producers for beef was somewhat below three cents a pound.\textsuperscript{133} Good steers would return $50 each in an average market, and average steers about $40 in a good year. However, payments as low as $20 per steer were not regarded as uncommon. The marketing system was known to be extremely inefficient:

"Under the present system buyers travel laboriously through the country picking up a few cattle here and a few there. Every little band or every head is bargained for separately, and, as the ultimate sale of these animals is by weight, it may be concluded that in sheer self defence the buyer is compelled to purchase on the safe side." (\textsuperscript{134})

In the instances in which selling was done by head the commentator claimed that the price was lower than it should have been. Sales were generally confined to the early fall and prices usually dipped in recognition of the increased supply.

\textsuperscript{132} DANWT-1901-p 167; DANWT-1902-p 162.
\textsuperscript{133} DANWT-1902-p 54.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid, p 59.
In concert with a collapse of the British market in 1903 prices took a severe plunge. Numbers of inferior cattle, among them "eastern dairy-bred dogies" and "a very inferior type from Mexico" were expected to upset the market for several seasons. Prices fell to $16 for yearlings and to $20 for two-year-olds. In the ranching district to the east of Red Deer (in the vicinity of the eastern side of Buffalo Lake and the territory eastwards from there which shipped through the Lamerton corridor and Lacombe) some inferior animals were put out to range in the winter of 1903-1904 "...as an experiment", and insufficient provision was made for winter feed. The losses were heavy and, aside from the cruelty involved, the 'experiment' was decried because it might have given the area a bad name:

"It is not claimed that this is a ranching, but rather a mixed farming district; however there is no part of the North-west where cattle, with proper care, do better, or where raising them can be made more profitable, but they must be run in small bands, and receive ordinary care and attention. (136)

Over the years from the end of the nineteenth century to the period of Autonomy there was a clear and successive trend in the Red Deer parklands toward an intensification of the production of beef on smaller ranches and the institution of better bloodlines. Involved in this process was a change in the feeding patterns of the bands amounting to a

135 DANWT-1903-pp 44, 159.
shift to the use of cultivated forage or tame hay. While at the turn of the century the cattle had been "... allowed to pick their living from the prairie", the poor markets and faulty finishing of beef evident after 1903 accelerated a shift to a more sophisticated system. By 1905

"Many of the cattle men in this district [were] reducing their herds, or disposing of them entirely, and turning their attention to the raising of thorough-bred [sic] stock." (138)

The year 1906, the conclusion of this chapter, does not mark a real division in the chronology of beef production. But the closing of the homestead frontier about this time marks the start of a persistent trend toward more modern systems of beef production. Markets had changed in taste and there had been important alterations in the technology of transportation and storage. Beef producers found it necessary to produce quality animals with changed feeding technology, rather than aiming for a profitable survival rate under crude range conditions. The percentage of profit under the newer improved conditions was presumably less than that under range conditions and required firm management practices and intimate knowledge of market trends. The evolution of the Central Alberta Stock Growers' Association after 1906 was symptomatic of the confluence of the demands of the market and of ranching technology which occurred about this time, just as the rise of the Society of Equity and the Alberta Farmers' Association was symptomatic of developments in farming circles.

Hay and Forage Production

Gradual disappearance of open grazing land and improvement in methods of feeding cattle implied that hay and forage would become increasingly important in the parklands economy. During the nineties production of wild hay had been erratic because of a mild drought; in the wet years the chaotic conditions in the horse trade and in the harvesting of crops meant that there was little local demand for cultivated forage. The exportation of baled hay to British Columbia grew as a source of income to parkland farmers and in 1902 a surplus was sent to British Columbia and the Yukon Territories, 8718 tons in all. But it was found that American traders had already 'snapped' most of the market by superior organization and what Alberta hay had found its way to market had not left an enviable reputation. Producers had delayed mowing in the hope of gaining weight and bulk; this habit led to a nutritionally inferior product which could not compete with the American and British Columbian products. Native hay, the grass found in sloughs and on upland prairie, was often nutritionally acceptable, but it did not travel well, tending to develop an offensive mustiness. The substitution of brome had been considered

by William Pearce,¹⁴⁰ but this grass never became popular, probably because of the uninviting colour it developed when baled.

Timothy, a grass native to the Alberta foothills, eventually gained favour and became an important component of the land use of the parklands. Timothy was a nutritious palatable product which kept its colour when baled. It was resistant to mustiness and to crumbling, and was well suited to the environmental conditions of north central Alberta.

As of the end of the century the lease regulations in force concerning vacant Dominion Lands provided ¹⁴¹ that a settler could cut any amount of hay desired on unreserved land. However, should the settler desire a more secure supply he might lease on a hay permit not more than 40 acres over a period of five years at the rate of 25¢ per acre per year, payable in advance. But quantities of School Lands between 160 and 640 acres could be leased; conflicting applications were opened to bids and the date at which cutting could commence was set by the Minister of the Interior. By long-standing custom the date was July 20.

Many settlers did not trouble to obtain leases but the larger ranchers were playing dangerously if they did not have a regular assured supply. The number of cattle that could be kept over winter was gauged carefully by ranchers on

the amount of hay laid in. Haymaking was a slow process and the parklands winter required a 'longfeed' supply unlike the plains of the south. The Lawrence ranch of Pine Lake maintained a lease in the rough country to the south of the Red Deer River and erected a camp there in the haying season. Before the wet years slough grass was harvested but this was flooded out.

After the turn of the century a newer type of mower with a higher blade speed made it possible to cut the tougher upland hay. In places it was so thick that the cut portion could not be separated by the mower divider board from the uncut. Lawrence claims that this hay was the best that there ever was; cattle would fatten on it, and tired work horses put out after threshing would return 'rolling fat' in the spring. The land which supported the growth of such hay is now covered by brush and forest because of a series of events which will be detailed in the next chapter.

The available Census material for 1901 does not include a Schedule on the use of the land by types of crops.

142 "Haying" is the apt title of one of the very few articles available on the agricultural technology of Alberta. The author, V.H. Lawrence, was a boy at the turn of the century and was early put to work on his father's ranch in the Pine Lake district. See Alberta Historical Review 21:1 (1973), pp 18-20. Some details of the life of Henry Frank Lawrence are in the RDCS.

143 Lawrence notes that the arrival of the wet period was so rapid that some farm machinery was stranded in sloughs for a time. One rancher was forced to cut grass above the surface of ice. Many of the sloughs remained wet in the Pine Lake district until the 1930's.
and it is not possible to say what proportion of farms or sub-districts might have been used for the production of cultivated hay. It seems clear that over the years the percentage must have increased on a majority, if not all, farms. Some farmers specialized in the production of hay by the middle of the first decade of the century, and a percentage of oats were fed green, usually in the shock; there was never any attempt to ensile material, but it was not an uncommon practice to bed cattle on straw to allow the heat of composting to assist in keeping the animals warm. The straw of the period was richer feed than the modern variety because of the imperfect performance of the threshers of the day. Barns were sometimes banked with straw, or hay, and until the advent of well-constructed barns animals were often housed in structures thrown up by blowing threshed straw over a framework of poles. Such a building commenced in the autumn with the appearance of a large ball punctured by a few passageways which enlarged over the winter as animals ate their way through the walls. Such straw barns were not common after the Great War.

Hay production was not a glamorous activity, as important as its implications were for the economy of the parklands and there were few notices in the local papers which assist in delineating the course of the industry. Large tonnages of hay were sent to the Crowsnest Pass area from Red Deer. It was compressed by hay contractors who received it in the autumn from men who responded to advertisements calling for
hay by the wagon load. The Crowsnest Pass Coal Company ordered 700 tons from Springbett and Sewall of Red Deer in 1904 and this business continued at least for a few years in the same form. Baling contractors travelled considerable distances to locate supplies of hay; in the fall of 1906 William Springbett of Red Deer was shipping hay loose from Erskine for baling in Red Deer and subsequent shipment to the mountain camps. The market for timothy remained firm through 1905 but softened in 1906. Hundreds of cars of the grass had been sent from Penhold in 1905, but in 1906 the call was for upland hay, and men with land to the east of the railway line were coming into Penhold with shipments of that variety.

The adaptation of agricultural plants to the North-West was an important issue in the years of the frontier. Until 1908 there was no experimental farm in Alberta, and farmers felt that they were operating in a technological vacuum. Introductions were left to the enterprise of individual men, and the effects of experiments carried on at the Lacombe station, opened in 1908, were not felt for years. The editor of the Alberta Advocate commended to its readers a 1905 editorial in the Farmers' Advocate on the possibilities of growing alfalfa in the Territories. Anyone who was successful

144 RDAA Nov. 10, 1904; RDN Oct. 23, 1906.
145 RDN Oct. 9, 1906.
with such an introduction would have been regarded as a great benefactor to the province. 147

The chopping of grain for swine feed became common after the turn of the century, and the government dairies served as a centre for this activity just as they did for the protest movement, for the dissemination of farming information, and for other projects such as the fattening of poultry. Farmers brought cream to the dairies and had grain chopped at the same time. 148

Summary, Hay Production 1898-1906

In summary, the production of hay and forage crops was indicative of the passing of the raw frontier and the implementation of more intensive land use practices. The sale of large amounts of baled hay to the mining regions of the west was one factor which led to the confirmation of the parklands as a mixed farming region, and which contributed to the firming of a land use complex based on oats and pasture grass, usually timothy. The amount of land put into hay production increased over the early years of the century to a high point before the Great War, at which time a shift to the feeding of grains in animal rations reduced the relative importance of

147 RDAA April 14, 1905. Alfalfa was not suited to the cool climate of the region to the north of the short grass plains, and the plant performed best in sandy, somewhat poor, soils—and not the sort encountered near Red Deer.

148 RDN Jan. 30, 1906. The availability of small reliable gasoline engines was responsible for the revolution in feed chopping.
the hay component of the land use mixture. In this respect
tame hay production on improved land was an intermediary fea-
ture in the land use history of the frontier, falling between
the harvesting of wild hay and the use of grains for the
finishing of stock. Of course, the importance of pasture in
the production of dairy products, and in supporting draft
stock, remained firm, but without Census information on land
use in 1901 it is not possible to estimate the concomitant
trends in dairy cattle populations and the use of land for
hay production.
Dairy production was an important part of the mixed farming of the parklands, especially in the districts immediately tributary to Red Deer, Blackfalds, Penhold and Innisfail. The creamery started in Red Deer in 1895 by Andrew Hill Trimble proved commercially unsuccessful from the effects of the depression of the nineties and from competition with merchants. It was taken over by the Dominion government in 1897 as part of what was called the cooperative creamery system. The rhetoric of cooperation concealed intervention by the government in business. Cream sellers were charged a service fee of about 4¢ per pound of butter for the privilege of using a creamery which had been there for some time; the advantage of the government system was the removal of marketing from the concern of farmers. By holding butter in warehouses and using commercial attachés overseas the government plan overcame some of the drawbacks to individual enterprise. At no time did the government system run into deficit, and in no way, except in marketing expertise, did the government accomplish anything that farmers could not have done had they been inclined.

and educated to the task. In this field, as in others, farmer organization was unimaginative.

The industrialization of the Territories' dairy economy commenced in 1893 with the concentration of production in factories around Moose Jaw.¹⁵⁰ Near Red Deer farmers sold home-made butter on their own account until the opening of the commercial creamery in 1895. Some Red Deer butter went to lumber camps and to mines, and a quantity to local merchants. Cream receipts were an important part of family income in the early years of the frontier and were often the only source of actual cash.

In 1898 it was said that the "... greatest obstacle to successful dairying in [the Territories] ... is the absence of good dairy cows."¹⁵¹ Breed improvement could be accomplished only by importation of quality stock from eastern points at the expense of the Department because, in the opinion of the commentator, there was no interest in improvement among dairy producers. In this respect the dairying men were thought to differ from the beef producers, many of whom had imported stock on their own account. Only a couple of good dairy sires were known to have entered the Territories in 1899,¹⁵² and it was a common practice to mate dairy cows with beef sires, perhaps in a hapless attempt to breed into

¹⁵⁰ C. Church, "Dominion Government Aid to the Dairy Industry...", op.cit., pp 50-51.
¹⁵¹ DANWT-1898-p 39.
a dual purpose animal which was suited to the conditions of the country. This seems to have bred the offspring out of milk production. In 1900 only one good dairy sire was imported to the Territories and the Department concluded that dairying lacked direction and expertise.

Certainly, many of the habits of the Territorial dairymen were open to question, but one must not be too critical in blaming the producers. Every dairymen held a fantasy of reaching a standard of efficiency set by the demonstration farms of Ontario, but the conditions of the frontier were against rapid progress in that direction except for a few men of exceptional calibre and capitalization. At the time that some producers in the Red Deer area were grading their herds to a higher standard, most of the mixed farmers who kept a few milch cows around the farm were still grazing dairy cattle with other types. Few men could find or afford cowherds, and there was not adequate fencing on most farms for some time after the opening of the farm. Most dairy cows could not supply enough milk for calf and dairyman both, and the standard of intelligence in the herding of the animals was often low. It was common for dairy cattle to be turned out too early in the spring to suffer chilling and the effects of sparse vegetation. Most farmers were content, under the circumstances, with a low financial return because further investment of time

153 DANWT-1900-p 51.
154 DANWT-1898-p 40; DANWT-1899-p 48.
in breeding, herding and milking cattle might have been vitiated by a turn in the conditions of the roads or a change in the market.

The home production of butter ceased when cream separators came into use at the turn of the century. By 1900 milk was no longer submitted to creameries.

"An interesting feature of the creamery work is the diminished quantity of milk which was supplied and the increase in the quantity of cream. Cream separator agents have been very active throughout the Territories during the last year or two, and evidently their labors have not been in vain, as the reduced quantity of milk is, of course, directly due to the introduction of hand separators in the various dairy farms tributary to the creameries." (155)

The wet years were not disastrous to dairy operators. The wetness boosted growth in pasture grasses, and grain crops were fed green if not fit for threshing. Cows were said to have been less worried by flies than in normal years although the chilly temperatures were not ideal.156

Map XIII shows the number of milch cows per Standard Township Area at the time of the land rush (1901), and the mean number of milch cows per household. North of the Red Deer River the number of milch cows per household seems to have been about two, but south of the River there were noticeable concentrations in the Springvale and Willowdale Districts, and a very large number in the Horn Hill District. West of Red Deer in the Burnt Lake Sub-District there was a

155 DANWT-1900-p 51.
156 DANWT-1899-p 45.
large concentration, but for this there is no further substantiation. The number around Red Deer itself was bolstered by animals kept in the town itself. Householders commonly kept a milch cow in an outbuilding even in the centre of town.\footnote{157} Some town cattle were blamed for wandering around Red Deer ruining lawns.\footnote{158}

Except for a small decrease during the last of the wet years, cream production increased perpetually in the Red Deer district. The numbers of contributors to the government creamery varied widely from year to year. Possibly the decrease in business in the wet years was due to impassable roads rather than to a decrease in cream production on farms. The dollar receipts to farmers were substantial in view of the paltry costs paid for the operation of the creamery. The Red Deer creamery was followed in 1903 by similar operations in Blackfalds and Lacombe. The development of the dairy industry around Lacombe had been impeded by poor trails and a failure to find someone to haul cream.\footnote{159}

\footnote{157} The habit is mentioned in the biography of Julius McIntosh in the RDCS; when G.A. Love sold his interest in the Red Deer \textit{News} in 1906 and auctioned his effects the notice of the sale included his fine Jersey cow. See RDN May 29, 1906.

\footnote{158} During winter, as was common throughout the west, dung from urban cows was piled in the yard. On a certain day each spring it was to be cleaned up and other refuse removed. Red Deer was at the forefront of municipal beautification in the west and had a by-law against running cattle at large within the town. RDN May 29, 1906. All towns in the study area experienced problems with urban cattle, a common complaint being the fouling of tennis courts.

\footnote{159} RDAA June 30, 1904.
The development of local creameries in frontier districts seems to have followed first settlement by about five years. For instance near Tail Creek, an area colonized in 1900-1902, A.A. Content sold his retail business with the intention of entering the creamery business in 1904; he claimed that there were 500 cows in the area. The collection of cream from the Valley Centre, Balmoral and Hillsdown areas, however, was not started until 1905. The Evarts Creamery was started in 1905 and the Bentley in 1906. In the spring of 1906 the Content Creamery was said to have been using a little steamboat to collect cream around Buffalo Lake, and the Trenville producers were considering running their production into Content.

The Dominion creamery system was effective for the limited purposes of stabilizing dairy income and disposing of the increasingly large product of farms, but it is doubtful whether it was effective in the education of farmers in cooperative action. Surely the potential for the power of cooperative action was demonstrated, but the loyalty of producers to the creameries was not as ironclad as required. The failure in planning the cooperative pork packing plant in later years arose in part from the sort of suspicions among producers.

160 RDAA Aug. 4, 1904; RDAA Dec. 1, 1904.
161 RDAA May 12, 1905.
163 RDN Feb. 27, 1906; RDN Mar. 6, 1906.
which were clearly evident in the dairy movement. Merchants were practically in favour of anything which would advance local business prosperity but were antagonistic to cooperative schemes which would save the farmer the slice taken by middle-men. Farmers for their part were altogether too willing to sacrifice the long term and the ideal to immediate profits. At several points in the Territories merchants managed to close Dominion creameries by offering temporarily higher prices. This same process later doomed the Lacombe Creamery, but for some reason, perhaps having to do with a commitment to citizenship, the producers at Red Deer staved off the blandishments of merchants and saved their creamery. 164

By the time of Autonomy the dairy industry of central Alberta was firmly launched. Stock was poor in general, but there were a few men showing the way with purpose-built stables and with purebred stock. The Dominion creamery system, by pretense a cooperative but in fact a prototype of the crown corporation in a non-profit form, was instrumental in imposing grading standards, in providing warehousing, sanitary production, and marketing facilities and in nominally pointing the direction in cooperative theory. There were times when far-

164 Letter from J.A. Ruddick, Alberta Dairy Commissioner, to C.J.B. Ward of the Red Deer Creamery, published in the RDAA of June 16, 1904. The merchants who closed the creameries at two points in Assiniboia were now in a fix according to the paper; they had no grading or marketing expertise and no control over the product. In effect they had ruined the business locally and had no prospect of gaining from their brutal scheming.
mers' loyalty to the system faltered, but it was adequate to the end of the first decade of the century at which time the dairy industry was able to survive without government supervision. There was still an enormous amount of technical education to be accomplished in the dairy field, and as late as 1906 creamery patrons were being reminded to keep cream cool until called for.\textsuperscript{165} By the end of the period covered in this chapter it seemed that "... the creamery industry in [Alberta] has passed through its critical period and is now firmly established under government control."\textsuperscript{166}

\textsuperscript{165} RDN Aug. 28, 1906. Further comments on the improvement of dairy technology on the frontier are made in the appropriate section in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{166} ADA-1905-p 40.
Swine

Several features of raising hogs ensured that they would have an important place in the evolution of mixed farming in the parklands. Hogs were usually cheap to buy, indiscriminate in food habits, rapid reproducers, relatively resistant to all but the most negligent treatment, and a convenient method of turning excess grain and milk into cash. In the frontier era when transportation facilities and markets often were not developed the hog was an excellent method, as the Department of Agriculture eloquently observed, of shipping grain 'in a condensed form'.

Hog raising was, however, a pursuit requiring more talent than had typically been applied.

"Very enticing statements have been made in the public press as to the enormous profits awaiting the farmers of the west when they have been 'educated' up to selling their grains in the shape of pork. These agricultural prophets, however, do not sufficiently appreciate the different degrees of skill required in feeding and eating pork." [sic]

167 DANWT-1898-p 58.
168 Idem. Some of the pork carried to the homestead probably required some skill indeed in eating--the rattlesnake bacon of the frontier is firmly embedded in the lore, but it is not clear what the writer actually intended to say. A problem with pork, as mentioned elsewhere in this work, was that it was easily raised but required industrial finishing to render it durable and palatable--such as smoking, brining, or canning. The complaints cont'd....
During the nineties the price of pork was low enough to obliterate the margin between selling pork and selling grain. Feeding damaged grain was not regarded by officials as an intelligent expedient, and the prices of milling by-products were too high on the frontier. Cleverness was needed.

"The economical and profitable feeding of hogs is a fine art and a necessary adjunct to intensive farming. It requires a thorough knowledge of the feeding value from a chemical point of view of the various grains and by-products of the farm."

and:

"There can be no doubt that the hog industry ought to be a prominent one in the Territories, but at the same time it must be admitted that the country has hardly reached that stage in its development where our farmers are able successfully to compete with Ontario and Central United States pork, taking into consideration the cheap corn in these places and a community of feeders thoroughly impressed with the importance and the utility of the 'balanced ration'." (169)

In the late 90's few hogs were kept in the Territories, but prices offered at Calgary and in northern Alberta were below Winnipeg quotations, a condition which was perennial for the next two decades at least. Massive importation of cured ham continued after 1900, and the wet years (1899-1903) caused an enormous demand for store hogs as farmers

168 cont'd about standards and prices in pork meat in the Territories, and about the prospects of starting a packing plant went back to the eighties at least. See the Edmonton Bulletin of Nov. 29, 1884, in which the perpetual paradox of difficulty in selling hogs on foot and freshly killed is contrasted to the high price of bacon.

169 DANWT-1898-p 58.

170 Ibid, p 57.
cast around for a method of using damaged crops. This demand was not met in 1899 because "Needless to say, the hog business is not one which can be taken up and discarded at pleasure."\(^{171}\)

The great majority of farmers approached raising hogs either in a state of sincere ignorance, or intentionally with little care for an animal regarded as intrinsically hardy and filthy. Most hogs were allowed to follow cattle but this practice was criticized by the Department: "The feeding of hogs around a straw stack during the winter is a business to which is attached the minimum of profit."\(^{172}\) Similarly, the close penning of hogs was criticized as wasteful of labour, since everything has to be carried to the animals. It was advised that a system of paddocks of some acres extent supplied with a natural or an automatically controlled water source was superior, and farmers were entreated to feed rape.\(^{173}\) The commentator could hardly have been less realistic. Hog fencing was not an item which incoming settlers could easily tackle, especially in the long lengths required. In fact, William Pearce advised potential hog raisers to wait 2 to 5 years after settling, during which period adequate facilities could be constructed.\(^{174}\) Few, if any, parkland farmers constructed special pens for hogs, and farrowing was accomplished in a corner of the barn cleared out for the purpose. One old-timer

\(^{171}\) DANWT-1899-p 69.

\(^{172}\) Idem.

\(^{173}\) This plant was characterized as 'a rutabaga run to top'. DANWT-1901-pp 93-94.

remembers that pigs "... just went where there was room for them." 175

Buyers and government officials appealed to producers to send off hogs at less than 250 pounds but few did so. There was little market for local pork in the nineties and Annie Chessor of Lacombe remembers that only family use was made of swine up to the turn of the century on her father's farm. After that, however, there was a market improvement and hogs paid in effect for one of the CPR quarters her father bought for pasture. 176

The raising of pigs on one ranch in the Pine Lake area has been described by V.H. Lawrence in a story which contains elements of both hilarity and pathos—hilarity for the robust daring of trying something ineptly for the first time, and pathos for the fact that the general level of knowledge about farming was probably not much greater in the district than that shown by Henry Lawrence. 177 The elder Lawrence had a plot of ground which had been badly trampled by cattle seeded to grain. It grew enormously in response to the legacy of the animals, but no one on the ranch knew anything a-

175 Statement from R.S.C.
176 Information from Annie Mae Chessor, concerning a farm to the northwest of Lacombe.
177 See V.H. Lawrence, "Pigs", Alberta History 24:2 (1976), pp 9-13. The biography of Henry Frank Lawrence is in the RDCS. He was born in Devonshire and was educated at St. Paul's School, London. Lawrence was no greenhorn, except in hogs. Before setting up at Pine Lake, Lawrence worked on various ranches in the south of Alberta. The year of the escapade is not mentioned, but context sets it about 1901.
bout stacking grain and the heavy crop, some of which had to
be moved to let the mower and team out of the field, was held
up by fence rails. A ramshackle thresher mounted on a bob-
sleigh and powered by one of the first gasoline engines seen
in the area arrived far into the winter. The engine failed
to run for any length of time, and the threshing of the small
field took six weeks for about one thousand bushels of grain.
Henry Lawrence decided to obtain some pigs to consume it. A
local man chopped the grain in only a few days and eleven
girls were purchased. The progeny was numerous beyond fair
expectations--most litters were large, there being 116 shotts
in all, and the mortality was nil. Efforts to sell young pigs
to neighbours were futile because the animals enjoyed swimming
home across or along Pine Lake. Some ate neighbours' gardens,
and it was only later in the year that Lawrence constructed
pens into which the nearly wild hogs were herded with diffi-
culty. For a time they were fed barley chop and a contract
was made for the sale of some slaughtered animals in Red Deer.
The candidates were dispatched with a .22 rifle, but the
boiling vat into which the carcasses were to be dropped was
too small and the animals had to be withdrawn and turned end
for end. Even then they still exhibited a belt of intact
hair around the girth. This was shaved off. The killing went
on for many months, presumably because Red Deer could not ac-
commodate over a hundred animals at the same time, and there
was no other adequate market.
This story illustrates that not everyone approached hog raising as anything near a science. That animals raised under these conditions were fit at all for market indicates that the results obtained by the Lawrences were probably not at all unusual among the farmers who kept a few hogs to bolster the receipts of the farm and to consume farm by-products. Much of the produce of the frontier period was well below the quality that has of recent decades come to be expected by consumers. Lawrence was a rancher by training, and the escapade into hogs can be excused for the elements of levity that it contains. Unfortunately, there were many farmers involved in the hog business on a greater scale who approached the business with approximately the same degree of expertise as Lawrence.

It was clear during the nineties that the sort of hog imported into Alberta by American settlers was not only an animal of poor conformation, but also one poorly suited to the requirements of the Canadian domestic and export markets. The 'lard hog' of the Duroc Jersey, Poland China, and Chester White breeds was commonly imported by Americans, but a 'bacon' hog longer in the side was required.

178 This was a theme to which the officials of the Department were to return time and time again over the ensuing years. John Maurer of Sargent District kept Duroc swine until 1920, and some comments on his dispute with the officials of the Lacombe Agricultural Society are contained in the section on swine in Chapter IV. Also see his family story in Pioneers and Progress, pp 627-630. A detailed discussion of the unsuitability of the lard hog and the details of the auction is available in DANWT-1901-pp 92-93. The glutting of the market with vege-
In a plan similar to the importation of purebred bulls, the Department sponsored a plan for the importation of desirable stock, both boars and sows. It was assumed that the distribution of some good boars would be the fastest way to ensure the improvement of hogs, and the first efforts along this line were made in the districts settled by the Americans who had brought in the lard type of hog. The Red Deer-Lacombe region was one of these.

The first importation took place in 1900 as a cooperative effort among the Department of Agriculture, The Calgary and Edmonton Land Company, and the Canadian Pacific Railway. Each animal was assigned an upset price, all sales were by cash, and the purchaser was required to agree not to move.

Table oils was an important contributing cause to the demise of the lard hog. For an editorial essay on the raising of swine, contrasting American and Canadian methods and costs see the RDN of Feb. 6, 1906. The conversion efficiency of the bacon type was considered to be as good as the lard hog, but the cost of raising pork, if a value were placed on all the inputs at book value, was 5¢ per pound, or just what the producers received on average. Apparently the profit of frontier hog raisers resulted from cost-free inputs, the savings left from failing to erect proper housing and fencing, and from the use of under-valued commodities and services, such as the use of cheap or damaged grain and the swapping of labour for chopping services. See the RDN of Oct. 23, 1906 for a letter from a hog raiser from Ontario who championed the mixture of Yorkshire sows with Berkshire boars.

For details of the auction see DANWT-1900-pp 68-72.
the animal from the district in which it was sold. Efforts had been made to secure sows in pig, but no guarantees were made to that effect. Most purchasers preferred the Berkshires of the three breeds offered. Tamworths were often a cause of comment "... not always of a favourable nature."

Most of the men attending the sales were newly arrived American immigrants from Nebraska and the Dakotas, and the breeds kept in Canada were new to them. There were many inquiries for Poland Chinas.

Of the 209 swine sold, 60 were knocked down in Innisfail, Red Deer and Iacombe. Fifty purchasers participated in the sales at those points. The sellers lost $141.51 on the entire experiment, the average sale price of an animal being $14. The loss in fact was inconsequential and it was claimed that an effect could be seen from the distribution as soon as the next year.180

This variety of sale was carried out again in 1901, but the Tamworth breed was dropped from the inventory.181 Subsidized swine auctions did not, however, become a fixture in the Territories and there was no sale in 1902 or 1903. When complaints were received in 1903 concerning the prohibitive express charges for the importation of good stock on private account a sale of swine originating solely from Territorial points was organized for 1904.182 In this instance,

180 DANWT-1901-p 94.
181 Ibid, p 95.
182 DANWT-1904-p 52; RDA Sept. 8, 1904.
no sales were conducted in central Alberta, and no further auctions of the sort are known to have occurred in the study area.

The success of creamery cooperation caused the Department of Agriculture of the North-West Territories to encourage cooperation among pork producers. In 1903 the Territorial Swine Breeders' Association was constituted as part of this plan but endured apparently only a short time. Many of the Executive were from the Lacombe area: Dr J.B. Harrington, President; T. Russell, H.F. Flewelling, and Fred Butcher, Directors. The Chairman of the organizing meeting was Peter Talbot, who by this time had been on the frontier ten years and was nearly ubiquitous in political, breed and boosting endeavours. By turning up at numerous public meetings and assuming roles of importance, always at no pay, he erected a reputation for public mindedness which would culminate in a responsible position in the Liberal Party, a number of lucrative coal leases, and eventual elevation to the Senate. Later, Talbot served as a Director of the Swine Breeders' Association, but the interests of the group seem to have lapsed, as did other efforts at cooperation in pork production, and by 1906 were amalgamated with those of the emerging AFA.

The pork cycle, so much a feature of modern swine production, was part of the frontier as well. Until 1901 or 1902 there was a net importation on a weight basis of ham, cured

183 DANWT-1903-p 193.
pork, and live animals into the Territories. The importation of 1899 to the Territories was 1925 head, and that of 1900, 670 (368 from Ontario and 302 from Manitoba). But of this latter number over 200 were destined for the auction described above. By 1901 live imports were said to be reaching a 'vanishing point', although substantial amounts of cured meats were still imported. The local demand at Edmonton was supplied from the district, and by 1902 the Territories were said to be exporting bacon from two packing plants at Edmonton, one at Calgary, and one at Innisfail.

After the enthusiasm caused by cheap grain in the wet years a number of producers sufficient to affect the market left hog raising. The liquidation of stock affected prices. Prices at Edmonton had ranged over the years 1899-1903 from a sustained low of $4.25 (per 100 pounds live weight basis) in 1899 to a sustained high of $5.75 in the fall of 1903. But in 1904 prices softened to between $4 and $5, and reached a low of $3.75 in December. Prices at Winnipeg were always higher for both live and dressed meat, the difference ranging from a fraction of a dollar to an enormous variation of nearly

184 DANWT-1900-p 67; DANWT-1901-p 91; DANWT-1902-p 73.
185 DANWT-1901-p 94.
186 DANWT-1902-p 73; but Table IX in DANWT-1904-p 51 refutes this assertion. Probably there were exports and imports, with the net result in favour of the latter. The Innisfail plant was short-lived, and was probably a crude abattoir rather than an actual packing plant.
187 For prices on a monthly basis for live and dressed meat see DANWT-1903-p 59 for 1899-1903, and DANWT-1904-p 52 for 1904.
$3 in dressed carcasses in mid-1901. The feed conversion efficiency of hogs fed on wheat amounted to selling wheat at 60¢/bu. if the sale price of the hog were $4.25. Correspondingly, sales at $6 would amount to 86¢/bu., and $7 a return of $1/bu. There was little sense, in the opinion of the Department, in selling wheat for less than 65¢ under such conditions, but conversely low pork prices forced casual producers back to selling grain.188

By 1906 prices rebounded from scarcity. "This out-and-in business only lands a man in the worst of it because he will always be out of hogs when the market is highest."189 It was considered a clever policy by officials always to work against the trend. By 1906 there was widespread discontent with pork pricing trends and the manner in which the processors were thought to be skinning the market. It was complained that Alberta processors saved freight charges when they quoted Winnipeg prices to Alberta producers, and skimmed the distribution costs vis-a-vis the Winnipeg product when they sold to an Alberta market at an equal retail price. From the turmoil over this issue came a call for a government pork packing establishment, and Red Deer businessmen and pork producers met to ensure that the plant would be located there.

The spring of 1906 was a time of ferment in the newly-created Province of Alberta. The feeling that great things

188 DANWT-1902-p 71.
189 ADA-1906-p 72.
could be accomplished now that the people of the Territories were on their own feet was tempered by the suspicion that matters, left to themselves or to the captains of business, were not moving in favour of the farming producer as they should. The call for the inauguration of a pork packing plant came at the same time as the recruiting drive for the newly-formed Alberta Farmers' Association. But while the farmers' movement gained momentum, the pork packing plant remained over the years little more than a topic of discussion, a nexus around which the complaints of producers revolved. Its failure was symptomatic of farmers' failure to grasp a vertical integration of their industry.

As mentioned above, the call for a pork plant dated back to the eighties, but it was only after the period of the early frontier that there were a sufficient number of raisers in the province to support a plant. It was envisaged that the plant would operate on the sort of cooperative lines used in the creamery business but interest in the Red Deer area was less than anticipated. Some consideration was given to following the Danish system, but the producers of Red Deer were loathe to undertake anything until the loyalty of farmers in adjacent towns could be tested by an invitation to the plan. Over the years during which the pork plant was discussed hog producers displayed a distrust of each other, of

190 RDN Feb. 27, 1906.
191 RDN March 13, 1906.
producers in other towns and in other parts of the country, and of those merchants who declared in favour of the scheme. At the end of March 1906, a mass meeting held in Red Deer discussed not only the pork plant but also the inauguration of a branch of the AFA.\textsuperscript{192} A petition was circulated asking how many hogs would be pledged to such a plant, and the replies were discouragingly non-committal.\textsuperscript{193} Farmers were reminded that at the commencement of the creamery system it was necessary nearly to go out and pull in indifferent farmers with a rope, and in the ensuing months of 1906 the Red Deer \textit{News} continued to hammer at the obscenity of importing Chicago meat to the frontier.\textsuperscript{194}

But while farmers seemed eminently capable of acting swiftly on the more abstract issue of the AFA (the Red Deer branch was formed immediately, and several others to the south of the Red Deer River shortly after; north of the river organization was slow until after 1910), there was a permanent reticence in getting down to business on the pork plant. It was perhaps fortunate that no progress was made in 1906 given the later state of the farm economy through 1907 and 1908, but the failure to deal with particular, as distinct from abstract issues involved in the protest movement is indicative of one of the crucial weaknesses in the free economy of small

\textsuperscript{192} RDN March 20, 1906.  
\textsuperscript{193} RDN April 3, 1906.  
\textsuperscript{194} For example see the editorial of June 19, 1906.
producers. Commitment to a pork packing plant was regarded as a gamble, albeit one which did not tie up more than a couple of hundred dollars for each producer, but unless each producer could be sure that all his neighbours were as much handicapped as he was by subscription to the plant, and with the failure of most producers to show more than indifference to the plant in the first instance, the idea was destined for limbo. Problems of this sort abound in the recent history of agricultural marketing in Canada, and there has not been to the present any satisfactory comprehensive solution. Producers expect that government will offer a form of insurance for their earnings, but they at the same time insist on maintaining an autonomy with which they can make a killing in good markets. The implications of this attitude for frontier hog producers was the indefinite continuation of the pork cycle culminating in absurd gyrations at the outbreak of the Great War.
Sheep raising was important on a minority of parkland farms. Many men involved in it were of old country origin, and the unique requirements of the industry induced some British shepherds to immigrate to Canada to take positions as flockmasters. Some of them came to the Red Deer region. William Gauld of Aberdeenshire was one such shepherd, although his arrival in Lacombe in 1908 at the age of 19 is somewhat out of chronology with this chapter. He responded to a newspaper advertisement apparently placed by John Morton, an influential local breeder of Angus and Clydesdales. 195

The Brookfield District, southeast of Lacombe, was settled in the early and mid-nineties by a mixed population of Canadian, British, and American background. This district, probably not alone, went through several cycles of landscape change one of which was a consequence of the sheep industry. Horse and cattle ranching gave way upon settlement to a combination of mixed farming and sheep raising. This latter pursuit was accompanied by the division of part of each farm into

195 See Wagon Trails, p 40. Morton himself was a Scot who had spent some years in the United States. See his biography in Wagon Trails, pp 63-65, and below for other comments.
small fields or paddocks separated by fences or hedgerows. Sometime after the period concerned in this study the district ceased to produce sheep and large fields were created with the obliteration of the paddock lines.

More settlers possessed sheep in the early years of the frontier than later. It is said that nearly all the settlers on the west side of the Fifth Meridian kept some in the late nineties. John Morton of Brookfield maintained 200 in 1902, 400 in 1903 plus increase from the original stock, and eventually ran over 1200. Morton was a Scot who had become expert at raising cattle and horses but knew nothing about sheep. His flock was started on a loan at 10 per cent. Annie Mae Chessor remembers that a number of farms west of Lacombe kept sheep in the early years of the century; the flocks of three men in township 41 26 w4 were customarily combined and a Scottish herder with trained dogs took them to the west country in summer and returned in the fall. This, of course, was before the colonization of the western districts. Morris Schnepf recalls that there were a large number of sheep in the Alix area around the time of the Great War; they were sheared in the last week of June, the time when the fleece was starting to lift, and a period conveniently between seeding and haying. Edward Day says that there were few sheep in the Red Deer area, and the few notices in the Red Deer papers concerning sheep are perhaps indicative of this.

196 From the biography of Andrew Lindholm in RDCS.
Announcements at the end of January 1906 that J. Burns and a man by the name of Harris of Pine Lake had purchased sheep, the former a large flock and the latter a small, were the extent of the news. The commencement of the Territorial Sheep Breeders' Association in 1902 attracted little attention from the region; three members were from the Lacombe area, and one of these, C.M. Smith, was a Director.

The sale of fleeces and sheep for slaughter was a cyclical business on the Alberta frontier. As a large-scale industry the raising of sheep was confined to the southern portion of the province and to several districts around Carstairs. The sheep raisers of northern and north-central Alberta participated in the market as numerically inferior outsiders swept along by outside developments. The price for wool throughout the frontier period ensured that the returns per animal per year were well less than a dollar, and the market for meat was not firm for any length of time.

Good prices prevailed from 1886 to 1891 but they hit a low in 1892 and edged upward by 1894 to 7 7/8¢. The average price of wool in the period 1895-1898 was 10¢/lb. The average clip from American Merino grades under prairie conditions was between 6 and 8 pounds.

Sheep raising suffered from the same problems of low prices and undercapitalization as the beef and pork sectors.

198 DANWT-1903-p 184. S.W. Paisley, a member in 1903, was a Director in 1904 (DANWT-1904-p 149).
199 DANWT-1898-p 56.
Low prices failed to generate income, and the capital demands of frontier farmers for routine matters in developing a farm implied that purchases of good blood were postponed. There tended to be a higher percentage of longwool sheep in the northern portion of Alberta than in the southern range district, but there were very few animals of quality and good rams were critically absent. Coyotes were a perennial problem and unseasonable storms at lambing accounted for some losses. Northern flocks occasionally suffered from a fatal disease involving lumps in the throat. But the parklands held advantages for sheep raisers. Water was abundant, but sometimes too much so as in the wet years of 1900 and 1901 when losses were attributed to footrot. But the trees and hollows common to the area provided good shelter in lambing and forestalled erecting shelters for which lumber had to be purchased in the barren parts of the province.

Mutton sellers found, as did beef producers, that the market demanded a better finished type of meat after the turn of the century. Range feeding of common grade sheep during the nineties had produced meat which found a ready market in the undiscriminating mess halls of the Kootenays and the Yukon. But the Merino stock imported from the United States, 

200 DANWT-1899-p 68; the disease might have been goitre; DANWT-1900-pp 66-67. Some sheep were lost near Buffalo Lake from ingestion of spear grass, a nutritious grass which is harmful in the seeding stage.

201 Idem; and DANWT-1900-p 89.

202 DANWT-1901-pp 84-85.
which had been the basis of most flocks in the province, was not suitable for the new taste in the meat trade. At the turn of the century, consequently, the custom arose of breeding in some Down blood to improve the meat side of the industry.  

The lack of good rams was still critical, however, and numbers of small flocks were liquidated in northern Alberta for lack of solid leadership. Freight charges were prohibitively high, as they were for boars and bulls, for the importation of good rams privately and the improvement of flocks was eventually encouraged in a manner similar to the development of better bloodlines in beef and swine. Ram importation commenced in 1902.

The story of the sheep industry in central Alberta was one of immobility in the face of uncontrollable events. The crossing of Down rams with the grade Merino ewes resulted in a meat product of increased palatability, but by 1901 it was clear that a strategic error had been made which partly contributed to a fall in the price of wool by 3¢ to approximately 8 or 9 cents. Canadian weaving machinery was incapable of handling the sort of fibre which resulted from the cross. This development, which implied that the average animal would yield a gross return in 1901 of about 20¢, prompted a masterpiece of understatement from the Department to the effect that

203 Idem.
204 DANWT-1901-p 90.
205 Ibid, pp 87,88.
the wool market was subject to 'apparently unreasonable and erratic fluctuations'. Prices in northern Alberta were less than elsewhere in 1901 by up to 2¢ or 3¢ per pound and remedy was sought in the grading of wool at district sales or on the farm instead of relying upon buyers' grading. In 1901 the Medicine Hat Woolen Mills went into liquidation taking with it the hopes of Alberta producers for a local outlet. The mill had been killed partly by undercapitalization and partly by the conditions of the market.

By 1902 matters did not look favourable and it was

"... a peculiar fact that, in spite of the unprecedented prosperity in almost every branch of business, the wool industry seems to be undergoing a prolonged period of depression." (208)

The effect of the Laurier preferential tariff had been an increase in imports of British woollen goods. An early storm in 1903 was disastrous to lambing in the south, but there were no storm losses in the Red Deer region. Some of the southern flocks were sold off in their entirety, the owners entering the cattle business. Wool prices in 1903 were between 5¢ and 11¢, a level which indicated that wool was "... gradually sinking to the level of a by-product of the sheep industry upon which little or no dependence is placed for revenue." The year 1904 was good for lambing but flockmasters continued to leave the field everywhere except in the south. Until 1907 prices remained at the moderate

207 Ibid, pp 87-88.
208 DANWT-1902-p 175.
210 DANWT-1903-p 185.
211 DANWT-1904-p 48.
level giving an average return per animal of 60¢, but the market was not of a type to receive the attention from farmers and businessmen looking for yearly advances in price; by 1906 it was considered that the market was in general decline, and by 1908 the absurdity was reached at which frozen mutton from Australia was sold by an Innisfail butcher because the local supply was uncertain. Coyotes were blamed for making the business unprofitable and the government was blamed for a lack of common sense in not declaring a bounty.

212 DANWT-1906-p 71.

213 RDN May 6, 1908; mutton remained high-priced and the 'problem' of the coyotes unsolved. See the editorial in the RDN of June 23, 1909. A similar irony pertained in the importation of poultry to Alberta. Grain was exported east and poultry and eggs shipped back to the value of $400,000 in 1905. Albertans paid the freight both ways. RDN Sept. 4, 1906.
Arable Farming Practices and Crops

Without Census information on crops in the study area at the turn of the century it is not possible to tell with accuracy how much improved land was under crops, and how much was new breaking, pasture, or in the process of being cleared. By mid-1900 the number of homestead entries that might have been occupied in the area of the Red Deer Agency was 1,841 but the 1899 returns of threshers who visited farms in the part of Alberta roughly coincident with the study area show that only 236 farms were threshed. There were perhaps some among these which were worked on purchased land. The mean area under crops on farms using threshers was 26 acres, and there was 1000 acres of new breaking in the season of 1900 among these same farms.214 But 1899 was the first of the wet

214 DANWT-1899-pp 18-19; 'Northern' Alberta was more developed than 'North Central' having 1622 farms with a mean area under crop of 40 acres. Red Deer was in the portion listed as North Central Alberta. To the south was Central Alberta in which there were only 154 farms. Northern Alberta was said to have accounted for 1/3 of the Territorial oat crop. The official statistics can only be approximate and even a resumé of the difficulties encountered by Departmental statisticians and by this researcher would make a sizeable essay in itself. No material of consequence was kept before 1898, and figures from later years were not trustworthy. The CPR would not publish figures of any real use and the boundaries of the districts used were changed often enough to frustrate the geographer supremely. William Pearce launched a program to gather information at the turn of the century but even he was frustrated. For various cont'd...
years and the number of farms contracting with thresher was not an accurate indication of acres sown. The yield of spring wheat fell by approximately 15% from the yield of 22.25 bu/ac. attained in 1898 for those who were able to get the crop off. Curiously the yield of oats increased somewhat, probably in response to the wetness. A peak in the threshed acreage was reached in 1901 and thereafter a decline set in which denoted a conservative trend in planting. The absolute level of threshed acreage remained more or less constant until 1906 in the Electoral Districts of Red Deer and Lacombe despite the fact that a flood of settlers was entering areas covered by the statistics. Even after 1906 the increase in harvested acreage did not advance pari passu with the tide of settlement. One of the effects of the wet years, and a lasting one, was the realization that the parklands were best suited to a

comments on the problems involved see DANWT-1898-pp 5, 7, 8; DANWT-1899-p 15; DANWT-1900-pp 30, 58; Sess. Pap. 1900-13-p 33; and for disparaging comments from Leonard Gaetz, RDN Sept. 25, 1906; an editorial comment followed in the RDN of Oct. 2, 1906. All the original data have been destroyed, and the figures gathered in the present day are not kept beyond five years. (Communication from C.E. Sterling, Assistant Head, Statistics Branch, Alberta Agriculture, to the author, April 13, 1976).

The yield statistics are in thresher's measure and may be found in the appropriate sections of the Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture of the North-West Territories.

This information is taken from a table of retrospectively compiled figures which apparently followed the boundaries of the Electoral Districts as they were constituted in 1909. See ADA-1909-p 44.
mixed farming system which involved a combination of grains, almost always oats, tame pasture, the breeding and finishing of stock, and the keeping of dairy animals. Government advice encouraged this process, and in reality each farm probably had some inclination to following of a specialty which coincided with the cultural and aesthetic predilections of the owner. In addition there was a trend to micro-regional specialization which saw dairying and horse raising carried on around Red Deer, ranching near Alix, ranching and finishing in the Pleasant Valley district, grain farming and the raising of hogs around Lacombe, and various other developments in other districts. Still, the variety of agricultural products remained wide, and with the exception of the 'hot weather' crops and a few horticultural products and tree fruits, there was hardly anything in the inventory of temperate latitude crops that was not tried at least once by someone. There was even an attempt by the Agent of Dominion Lands at Red Deer to cultivate wild rice in Burnt Lake. 217

217 RDN May 6, 1906.
Oats soon became an essential element in the mixed farming economy of the parklands. More tolerant of moisture and of cool conditions than wheat, high yielding, palatable both green and threshed, and providing an exceptional bulk of straw on new breaking, oats were ideally suited to the ecological conditions of the parklands and to the economy of the frontier in the era of horse farming.

Along with the desirable features of oats which made it a good field crop were the conditions of the market. Until 1901 heavy production of oats in central Alberta caused no concern that the market would be glutted. During the nineties oats were sold from points on the line of the C&E Railway, but the lack of elevator capacity until 1897, the lack of reliable market information, and the avarice of dealers kept prices low, sometimes around 12¢ per bushel. Occasionally prices recovered when the true extent of supply and demand were clear.

Oat production did not decline as much as wheat during the 'wet years'. A rain storm and severe hail in July 1899 forced much of the crop to be cut green, but losses were minimized by using the crop as green feed. Hay was selling

218 DANWT-1898-p 6.
at the time for $5 per ton, the usual yield being 4 tons per acre. The oats of 1899 yielded an average of 43 bushels and the price per bushel would have to have been 50¢ to improve over the price received for the sale of green oats—a clear and fortuitous impossibility.

The oat crop of 1899 around Lacombe was said to have been "... way above average ... running 75 to 100 bu. per acre," but in general the wetness of the year caused a 'deficiency' throughout the region. In Northern Alberta, to the north of the study area, 79 threshing machines operated but in North Central Alberta only twelve. The price of oats fell from 38¢ to 22¢ and farmers were holding for thirty cents. Plantings in 1900 rose regionally by 176% and continued to increase every year until 1905 when acreage reached 30,000. The crop of 1901 was so heavy that special freight rates were levied to induce Manitoba threshermen to attend the Territorial harvest. Whether any such threshers reached Red Deer is not known; threshed oat acreage there was only 27% in advance of 1900, but it is possible that approximately 5000 acres were not salvaged from wet ground.

By 1901 oats had become known as 'the great staple crop of Northern Alberta'. Before the turn of the century the region served by the Manitoba and North-Western Railway

220 DANWT-1900-p 20.
221 DANWT-1901-pp 33-34.
222 Ibid, p 36 and ff passim for the following.
had been the source of most oats sold to British Columbia, but

"It has come to be recognized that that portion of Alberta lying north of the Red Deer River presents almost ideal conditions for the growing of this cereal of the very finest quality."

The quality of the oats was "... something never before attained in Canada", and the crop of 1901 so exceeded the demand from British Columbia that alternative markets had to be found. The ensuing events in the disposal of the crop are a case study in the evolution of frontier economies and the forces to which the farming producer was subjected.

Representatives of either producers, grain dealers, or the Provincial Department invited the Dominion Department of Agriculture early during threshing in 1901 to locate alternative markets for the large oat crop. Speedily a contract was closed by Oct. 12 with the Imperial War Office for the purchase of a large quantity of oats, the grading specifications of which were supplied. The price was to be not less than 24¢ per 34/lb. bu. payable at point of loading on the railway, but the oats were to be delivered at 38 lb. Grain dealers were to gather consignments after which the Dominion Department of Agriculture would take over as agent for the War Office. Not one oat ever reached South Africa, the destination the War Office had in mind. In fact no large shipments left Alberta on the account because the contract had the effect among grain dealers of causing what was called 'activity in the market', and prices rose in consequence.
The government bid up to 30¢ eventually to quell the market but the increase was not sufficient to re-commence deliveries to the War Office. That was not the end of the matter. The Western Grain Standards Board met in Winnipeg and invented a pair of new oat grades because, as they maintained, most of the oats coming from Alberta which appeared to grade Canada #2 were in fact frosted. The new grades were intended to isolate poorer grades in the market and disastrously were named 'Alberta #1' and 'Alberta #2'. The market collapsed, Alberta's reputation was tarnished, and it was not possible to find buyers for the crop which by now was held speculatively by farmers in the hope of prices even higher than the original War Office contract, which of course had been intended originally to rescue farmers from a glut.

Coupled with these tortuous events had been the so-called 'wheat blockade' of 1901, a period when railways failed to transport wheat because of negligence in planning the allocation of cars. By these events farmers across the Territories were aroused and awakened

"... to the fact that combination and cooperation are necessary if any headway is to be made against the various grievances by which they are each year harassed in the disposal of their produce..." (224)

The organization of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association,

223 The problem with the oats was not an invention of the grain merchants. The seed appeared sound but did not germinate. See Frank G. Roe, "The Alberta Wet Cycle ...", op.cit., pp 113-114.

224 DANWT-1901-p 38.
formed to voice the discontent of grain farmers, followed
the outlines of the stock breeding associations. Local dele-
gates reported to a central Association and it was hoped that
the Association would have the same beneficial effects as
similar associations in Kansas and 'other parts of the Ameri-
can Union'.225 The Commissioner of Agriculture was requested
to use nominees of the Association for Farmers' Institute
meetings. There seems to have been no attempt at farm or-
ganization around Red Deer before 1906, but a farmers' coop-
erative scheme was tried in Lacombe in 1898 and in 1903 the
Lacombe Farmers' Association was organized. This latter or-
ganization is remembered as a forerunner of the Alberta Far-
mers' Association but little more than its name and date of
inception seems to have survived.226

The efforts of the Department to dispose of succes-
sively larger crops continued in ensuing years. Beef produ-
cers were entreated to try oats as part of a finishing ration
in a Departmental program, but it was

"... an undoubted fact that the bulk of the
farmers of the Territories are very sceptical
as to the value of oats as a fattening food." (227)

225 Ibid, p 39
226 See David Grant Embree, "The Rise of the United Farmers
of Alberta", Alberta Historical Review 5:4 (1957) pp 1-
5; Embree's original master's thesis on this subject was
not available for this study. For persons with unlimited
funds for reproduction or with limitless time to spend
in the libraries of the University of Alberta it is
available under the same title, unpublished thesis, De-
partment of History, University of Alberta, 1956.
227 DANWT-1902-p 57.
Many immigrant farmers were American and were prejudiced in favour of corn feeding. But the Department produced nutritional data to show that "... with the enormous crops of oats that can be produced in Saskatchewan and Northern Alberta, the necessity for corn is not apparent." Barley was said to be an excellent addition to the ration, and a detailed argument, somewhat difficult to follow in logic, was presented to show that the yield of oats in the Territories obliterated differences between American and Canadian costs of finishing.

The crop of 1902 was marketed with difficulty because of the disappearance of the heady conditions of the Boer War. Some examples of grain were sent to Australia, but the quality was nondescript; it was difficult to break into the Australian market which had become aligned with New Zealand sources. In addition, Canadian officialdom demonstrated laxity in handling requests in connection with commercial expansion, in the opinion of the commercial attache. Observers of the grain market were sceptical of an unlimited market for Alberta oats and although 1904 was an average year there was concern that 'the narrow market for oats' would become 'hopelessly glutted within a very few years.'

Improvement in oat production was fostered by the Red Deer Agricultural Society with the importation of a car of seed oats from Brandon in 1904, and the results were said to

228 Idem.
229 DANWT-1902-pp 110-111.
230 DANWT-1904-p 135.
have been worth the expense. The crop of 1905 was enormous and weighed out at 40 to 44 lb. on average for all of Alberta, substantially above the required 34 lb. The threshed acreage of oats in the Red Deer and Lacombe areas in 1905 rose about 50% from the 20,638 acres of 1904; by 1906 it had fallen to about 23,100 acres and the day of reckoning for oat producers might have been at hand. According to the Red Deer News, the 1906 market for oats, which was limited in the first place, had been saturated. There was just too much oats on the market. But by the fall of the year market prospects had changed dramatically. The crop in Russia was short, United Kingdom yields were below average, and the United States and Ontario crops had not filled properly. Even the Manitoba crop was down somewhat and the Winnipeg price rose in consequence to 31.5¢ for Alberta #2. Early delivery in October brought a 3/8 premium. The paper advised no one to hurry, since local consumption in 1905 had been enormous and the railways were consuming vast quantities. It was the kind of market that producers waited for and savoured slowly, and was perhaps one of the factors which slowed the enthusiasm for opening a pork packing plant. But the good feelings were not to last long. The winter of 1906-1907 was of appalling difficulty, the spring of 1907 was late, and a

231 RDAA April 21, July 7, 1904.
233 RDN July 24, 1906.
234 RDN Oct. 9, 1906.
severe business recession blew in with it. Oat yields per acre dropped from about 40 in Red Deer to 29, and from 37 to 27 in Lacombe. Some who saved the enormous crop of 1906 in hope of rising prices still held portions of it two or three years later.
Wheat and Barley

Wheat was never destined to become an important part of the parklands agricultural identity. In 1898 almost all the wheat planted in the area covered by the Red Deer Dominion Lands Agency was Red Fife, and most of it was expected to grade Northern #1 Hard. There was a good deal of caution concerning the cultivation of wheat, caution which was to be well understood in the developments of the next five years:

"Hitherto the farmers of this district have approached the cultivation of wheat with a certain degree of hesitancy, proceeding, for the most part, from doubts as to the adaptability of the climate, but the results of the last few years have had a tendency to dissipate this as well as other misconceptions." (235)

The optimism referred to by the commentator was responsible, along with the fact that more producers were setting up farms, for the rise of wheat acreage around Red Deer and Lacombe from 1,246 acres in 1898 to 2,025 in 1901. The rains of the wet years and early wet snow turned back the tide of parklands wheat cultivation. In 1899 the crop at Lacombe had to be cut green,236 and in 1900 half the crop in the whole of District 13, part of the study area, was frozen and unsaleable. Still, the sowing of 1901 was greater again, but the

2000 acres of that year marked the high point of regional wheat production until 1910. Yields were low during the wet years, and it was common for crops on low lands to start poorly under excessive rain. While oat acreage increased from 1898 to 1903 by a factor of approximately seven, wheat acreage was essentially similar to that of 1899 despite the enormous influx of settlers and larger cultivated acreage. The quality of the 1903 crop was affected by a sharp frost on the fourth of September; threshing weather was however fine and prices were firm.\textsuperscript{237} With the end of the wet years yields increased but the conservatism of farmers with memories of bad weather is indicated by low planting, less, in fact, than in 1898. It seems that one or two years of bad weather were not sufficient to change cropping patterns, but four wet years were of profound impact in wheat cultivation.

In the first years of the period spring wheat typically was planted. Some farmers tried winter wheat and had been happy to get some return. Spring wheat was more common than winter until 1907, but the yield of the winter type was higher than the spring, and the acreages planted in each became essentially equal in the years before 1909. At that time the acreage of wheat on a regional basis was about one sixth of the acreage of oats, and it was less than barley. Fall wheat tried in 1904 was said to have yielded 50 bu. in some \textsuperscript{238} ca-

\textsuperscript{237} DANWT-1903-p 14.  
238 RDAA Oct. 27, 1904.
ses, but the appearance of such a report in a local paper indicates that there was still some novelty in success with fall planting of wheat. It was admitted in 1905 that fall wheat was still an experimental crop in central Alberta, and that almost everything was to an extent an experiment in the new country. But some of the results had been striking and "... no truer word can be said than this: we do not know yet what can be grown here. The resources of the country are marvelous." 239 But there was much winter kill on wheat planted in the fall of 1905, especially on higher land. 240 Some seed offered for sale in 1906 was of necessity brought from the south, 241 and it was clear that it was not thoroughly well suited to the northern climate.

There were repeated calls for the inauguration of a seed testing station, 242 since the Indian Head Station was considered to have been too distant. The requests were met by the Lacombe Experimental Station, opened in 1907, but the planting of wheat in the Red Deer parklands did not become widespread until the arrival of 'Marquis' during the Great War. 243 The use of winter wheat was not considered routinely reliable for decades, and only in the 1970's with the wide-

239 RDAA Sept. 1, 1905.
240 RDN April 24, 1906.
241 RDN March 20, 1906. One sale of seed wheat produced by W.L. Thompson of Spring Coulee sold at $1/bu.
242 For example see the RDAA of May 12, 1904 and the RDN of Jan. 30, 1906.
243 Information from JLB.
spread use of the 'Winalta' and 'Sundance' varieties has
winter wheat at last become part of the parkland agricultural
complex.\textsuperscript{244}

Barley plantings were not substantial up to the time of Autonomy, reaching only about 7100 acres in 1905. In 1906, the sown acreage fell back to 5000 acres. Barley was chopped as a feed and sold to the malting trade, but there was not much elasticity in the market. Feed chopping was performed by a few men who owned mills and by local creamery associations. Farmers, instead of having cream picked up, in some districts took cream to the government creamery and had feed chopped through a small mill on the premises. This activity presumably encouraged social contact among farmers and was a supplementary drawing card for the creamery. Some stock raisers made barley the grain of choice in fattening, and this custom was more common among Americans. Levi Whitesell was one of these, but it took him two years to locate seed after his arrival in 1898. A farmer in Pleasant Valley sold him some beardless in 1900 at about 30¢ per bushel, but it grew rankly and lodged severely. His son remembers harvesting a crop in one of the wet years, probably 1901 or 1902,\textsuperscript{245} When it was cut and attempts were made to bundle it

\ldots\, why, the bundle was almost as large across as it was long, and you could hardly tell which was the head end of it. So he thought, well, there's


\textsuperscript{245} Information from BW.
no use of puttin' twine on that and he hired his neighbor to do the cuttin."

It was impossible to stock the bundles and rain saturated them where they lay in the field. It was a commercial loss, but like many other crops in those years might have been grazed by animals where it lay.
Regional Economy and Land Tenure on the Land Rush

Frontier: Conclusions to Chapter III

A series of maps constructed from Census data and data in the Historical Tabulations of the Census of Agriculture has shown topically the spatial features of human population, the populations of stock, the value of farmlands and the total valuation of farms in 1901. These maps demonstrate the trends of the spread of settlement and of land use and a synthesis of this material is a fitting way to conclude the topical sections covered so far in this chapter.

Map XIV indicates the number of households per Standard Township Area and deviations from the regional mean, which in 1901 was just under 25 households per habitable township. The use of a regional mean in this context is an accurate measure of spatial variation in the density of households because at the time of the open frontier the region was functionally self-contained and operated as a culture area—a small region demonstrating coherence in cultural and economic patterns. Population density tailed off almost to nothing to the east and to the west of the rail line, and there were noticeable diminutions of the density of occupation north of Morningside and south of Penhold.

Lacombe and Red Deer were pockets of higher density than the surrounding countryside.
and gave commercial and cultural foci to the region. Lacombe was larger than Red Deer in 1901, but lost this pre-eminence by 1906. In 1901 Lacombe possessed a higher density of rural population than Red Deer and consequently was more advanced over the regional mean. Map XIV clearly shows that farmstead density, if the number of households be taken to amount approximately to the number of farms, declined in what could be called a dramatic fashion in the area of Morningside, to the west of Lacombe and Blackfalds, and to the east of Hillsdown. The whole of the Urquhart Sub-District to the north of the Red Deer River in the centre of the study area possessed about 18 households per Standard Township Area, but the rectangular arrangement of that sub-district unit does not show that most of the occupants were in fact resident in the central and southern parts of the sub-district, and that the northern portion was little inhabited. Map IX in this chapter indicates, for example, that there were no inhabitants in the northern pair of townships.\textsuperscript{246} The isopleths constructed on Map XIV

\textsuperscript{246} All the isopleths offered in this study are, of course, interpretive; they have been constructed only for maps on which they appear to make eminent geographic sense, and for which there is supporting information from other sources. The isopleths for human occupancy have been drawn on the map of number of household units because the figures for population by township are suspect. Not only do some townships show no population, in defiance of the facts of local history, but there is a curious tendency in the data for the number of families to be greater by up to 60\% than the number of marriages. There is no systematic bias to this phenomenon and the author has decided that the number of families is more likely a figure close to reality. Some 'houses' may have been entered in the Census as a family if the father, for instance, had been present alone to clear land and erect a...
indicate the deviation from the mean number of households per Standard Township Area, and indicate that there was a corridor marked by the two pockets of Lacombe and Red Deer along the line of the rail, and that there was a rapid decrease in occupancy to the east and west. The mean for the region occurred in a crescent arcing northeastward from Horn Hill and connecting with Morningside.

Map XV indicates the number of animal units kept per Standard Township Area according to data from the Historical Tabulations. Also indicated are the number of animal units per household. There is a wide variation in the number of animal units per Standard Township Area, the highest numbers occurring to the south of the Red Deer River in the Penhold, Red Deer, Willowdale and Knee Hill Sub-Districts. The number of animal units per rural household in these districts ranges

246 cont'd
house, but if this were the case the outlying areas should exhibit a higher rate in this error. This is not the case, Lacombe having an error of 39.4%, Pine Lake 40%, and Lamerton 14%. Quill Lake, however, was 60%.

247 Sheep and poultry were not counted. There is no strict standard for calculating the animal unit, and we have used the following rates on the assumption that they are reflective of the feed requirements of animals on the frontier: milch cow, 1 unit; all other cattle .9; all horses .9; all swine .33 unit. In theory cattle, horses and swine should be divided by age, but this was thought to be an overly elaborate procedure for an era when there was still some free range, grain was cheap, and the bloodlines of animals could account for differences in feeding habits of greater magnitude than those accounted for by age. The modern Canadian system assumes a cow and calf at foot to be one unit.
from 24 in Willowdale to 34 in Penhold and 46 in Knee Hill. It seems that comparatively larger numbers of animals were kept near Red Deer by a population that was in turn quite dense, but that the number kept per household was not in itself substantial. South of the Red Deer River the number of animal units per Standard Township Area decreased with distance from the rail line, and it seems that the number of animal units kept per household increased. At the same time, of course, the density of households per unit of land decreased, and it is clear that there was spatially a tendency for more intense stock raising near the rail line, and extensive raising in the vicinity of Pine Lake. This interpretation patently is parallel to what we know about the evolution of the dairy and horse businesses around Red Deer and of the ranching near Pine Lake.

North of the river there is variation in the number of animal units kept per Standard Township Area and an increase in the number kept per household as distance from the rail line increases. In view of the lower absolute number of households further from the line of rail, it seems clear that the rule of more extensive land use is preserved in the districts to the north of the river, but the observation must be made that the number of units kept in total per household is lower than south of the river. This phenomenon may be explained, in the absence of a Census schedule outlining land use, by the shorter colonization period that the area to the north of the
river had experienced, much of the area being in the process of settlement at the time of the Census, and the trend of the area to a combination of grain farming, hog raising, and stock finishing. Certainly the trend to grain farming is noticeable in the immediate vicinity of Lacombe; that area had been settled in 1893 and immediately afterwards, but by 1901 the number of animal units kept there per household was only one third of that of the Sub-District of Urquhart, still under colonization, to the east.

The dollar value per acre of farm lands for 1901 is shown on Map XVI. This map indicates the pre-eminence of Lacombe over the areas to the south of the river, the value of land in the vicinity of the town being set at an enormous $13 while land around Red Deer was valued at just under $6 and most of the other populated districts to the south of the river hovered under five dollars. The drop in land values northward from Lacombe to Morningside is notable, and was probably a reflection of the low desirability of land in the latter vicinity and the shorter settlement history of the area. In general, land values decreased with distance from the rail line, but the decay was not constant. Land in the north-central sector, which we introduced in Chapter II as the Central Highlands physiographic unit, brought values of just over $3 per acre. This low value was encountered closer to Red Deer than to Lacombe—a reflection of physiography and local history.

The enormous variation in raw land values between Red Deer and Lacombe invites explanation. Part of the solution
lies in the tendency, as noted above, for Lacombe to develop along lines of mixed farming emphasising the grain component. Presumably charges for land clearing on average farms in the Lacombe area accounted for a percentage of the declared value of land; conversely the greater emphasis on pastoral pursuits in districts tributary to Red Deer probably involved fewer such charges. But consultation with Map XVII, which shows the total valuation of everything on the farm except household furniture, personal effects and garden produce, reveals that the total valuation of farms in the Penhold Sub-District was not only higher than Lacombe, but that this valuation was achieved with a much lower valuation of the land component. Of course, as we have noted, the number of stock kept in the latter area was the highest in 1901 of any in the study area and it is clear that most of the upward pressure in the Penhold values must have some from this source. It is interesting that the total valuation of farms in the Red Deer Sub-District was less than half that of Penhold, not much more than Pine Lake and Knee Hill, and even less than Quill Lake, which in 1901 was an outlying frontier area ranged by a few ranchers whose wealth was counted more in cattle than in land.

Land prices per acre in Morningside were just over $5, or more than those at Penhold, at a time when that district was not favoured by immigrants and maintained a population of only 14.3 households per Standard Township Area in contrast to the 40 to 50 common around Red Deer. Even assuming
the possibility of each farmer having maintained a half section, the Red Deer area was underpopulated and land values were low relative to the regional mean.

The historical explanation lies in the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company tract around Red Deer. North of the Red Deer River the company had some holdings in the vicinity of Blackfalds, but the divisions of the Census data do not show consequences there. Blackfalds was not favoured by settlers because of pockets of sandy soil and gravel. But south of the river the effect of the company was profound. So extensive were the holdings, and so slowly had they sold by 1901, that the valuation of land in the whole district was affected by the pool of SLHC land. Whatever price the SLHC demanded automatically became the upper price limit of land for the district, and at the turn of the century the price per acre was about five dollars.\(^{248}\) Farmers intending to sell out could not expect more than that figure for acreage because

\(^{248}\) In the immigration season of 1898 the company capitulated to reality and reduced lands held at $7.50 to $5, and those offered at $5 to $3.50. John T. Moore to Clifford Sifton, June 28, 1898, PAC RG 15, f 43012. The agent of the company in Red Deer was the eager young G.W. Greene who had come to town in the hopes of starting his own bank and had erected a sandstone office block. His biography was covered in Chapter II. By 1900 the price of some of the lands had crept up again to $6. Henry Jamieson, who was one of the prosperous farmers who helped move the AFA along, bought land from Moore in 1900 at that price. See his biography in RDCS. Jamieson sold out to speculators in 1910. Some of the SLHC land to the north of the river was unsold even after the Great War. See Wagon Trails, p 291 for the fate of the southeast of 19 39 26 W4, Canyon District, which the compilers of the local history incorrectly assume to have been CPR land.
they were in effect in competition with the SLHC and would be for the years it would take the SLHC to sell off. In the meantime the settler who did pick out Red Deer lands apparently was possessed of more capital than average, and some of them, such as George Root of Iowa who immigrated in 1902, intended to farm as gentlemen.

"The lands adjacent to Red Deer were, we are told, originally held at a far higher figure than those in proximity to other towns along the line; consequently men passed Red Deer by to locate elsewhere. In time, however, these lands were bought by men with some capital with the result that of late Red Deer has outstripped many other towns which four years ago were far more pretentious. There may be other causes for Red Deer's rapid progress, but the high price maintained on lands must be accorded a full share." (249)

The effect of the SLHC lands in the development of the region was similar to that intended by the modern land bank system, but the inhabitants of the affected districts apparently regarded the trend with disapproval. Everyone appreciated cheap land, but no purchaser wanted it to stay cheap for the next purchaser. For some reason Red Deer attracted buyers with much money--people who thought nothing of buying a half or whole section at $6 and erecting substantial permanent buildings the first year. Some of these men were from Ontario, others from the United States and a handful from Britain. Some were later important in farm protest and in political life. But generally the SLHC lands were a yoke on the development of the Red Deer, Penhold and Innisfail areas.  

249 RDN Oct. 2, 1906
and residents were chafed most at the company's resistance to paying taxes. If the SLHC would not pay school and LID taxes, and if their lands deterred the settling of a district, then the whole cost of the development of rural services fell upon the residents already present. The rise of the single tax movement in Red Deer, and subsequently the persistence of what could be called a Red Tory component among the population of that town, was in part a response to the SLHC policies. It happened that a number of the immigrants to the Red Deer area were from an English tradition of political economy, and a number were well educated; by the turn of the century there existed a full-blown debate on the merits of the George system.

The debate took the form of a series of editorials and letters in the Innisfail Free Lance over the winter of 1898-1899.\textsuperscript{250} The editor was at pains to distinguish between

250 The issues concerned have survived by the merest chance in a Department of Interior file which concerns a hearing on the competence of the local homestead inspector. The issues concerned date weekly from Dec. 23, 1898 to Jan. 20, 1899. There is little chance that the editorials, as was common in the period for items of refined reasoning, originated outside Innisfail, since there are references intrinsic to the argument which show that they were locally composed.
forms of capitalism; it was decided that the landlord was an undesirable influence in the community, but at no time was capital condemned or an approach made to a Marxist interpretation of rural economy. Rather, the true and beneficent capitalist was one who created profit, or wealth, which in turn was put to work to create further wealth. The landlord, unlike the working farmer who strove with his hands and by the privations of his family to improve his property, did not perform work and profited by owning property in the vicinity of those who did. Clearly the sparseness of settlement caused by the alternate section system still merited the criticism levelled in the eighties, and the fears of Isaac Gaetz had come true.  

It was clear that the SLHC was intended when the paper came to criticise what it called 'the system of modern slavery' in operation in Alberta. A man was not in essence free to create wealth because simply to start the process he was required to pay a penalty for land on which to work, land which in theory belonged to the community. The apparent increase in the national product had little influence on the average Canadian worker, thought the paper, and

"... in the last ten years it has become harder to make a living in spite of tons of statistics which show a large increase in the wealth and development of the Dominion. This increase of wealth is not distributed among the working people, but is concentrated in the hands of the monopolists.  
The landowner takes no more part in the production of wealth than the potato bug does in the production of potatoes." (252)

251 See note 56, Chapter II.
252 Innisfail Free Lance, Jan. 6, 1899.
The solution to the injustice perceived by the editor was the Single Tax, a method championed by Henry George which involved the taxation of land values only as distinct from total property value. It was thought that taxes on improvements were akin to a tax on industry. Over the ensuing two decades the Single Tax was instituted in one form or another in a number of western communities, but with ambiguous results which demonstrated that the theory of land rent proposed by George did not encompass enough of the complexity of frontier land values. In theory the tax should have stimulated building and encouraged the rational use of both urban and rural land according to the locational advantages possessed by various parcels. But in fact the effects were diffuse and swings in the economy between 1912 and 1915 so badly upset local economies, such as that of Red Deer, which were just at that time converting to the system that it was in most places abandoned.

In its main tenets the Single Tax masqueraded as a socialist measure concerned with the welfare of the whole population; in operation it was one of the vehicles forwarding the popular liberalism of the frontier. It preserved the idea of capital as a lever for personal advancement and the popular

notion that the advance of society was motivated by the actions of a large number of independent and equal entrepreneurs. One wonders at this distance how something so baldly based upon the slim metaphor of a community of responsible producers could have been treated seriously. Nowhere in the theory does there seem to have been any intimation of the manner in which the wealth of the producer, freed from the ravages of the landlord, was to be returned to the community. The use of savings for credit to other farmers or merchants would have substituted one form of landlordism for another; the accumulation of property with new wealth would lead to the creation similarly of a new landlord class. The Single Tax debate was carried on at a time in which the currents of reform liberalism were first being felt in the American west, currents which later, in their turn, would have their day in the Canadian west. The theories of George were the sunset of classical liberalism, the afterglow of an age which first proclaimed the possibility of wealth for everyone and ground to a halt in majestic ill-conceived explanations of why it had not occurred.

254 Halley Gaetz, one-time Mayor of Red Deer, was one of the rabid champions of the system, and the correspondence and editorial columns of the Red Deer News carried voluminous copy on the Single Tax measure in the years before the War. No such interest was noted from Lacombe or Alix, leading again to the observation that there was some social characteristic in the mixed Canadian and British heritage of Red Deer that made it markedly different from the communities to the north of the River. Debates on property valuation from Clive and Delburne are covered in Chapter IV.
George was the Jefferson or Thoreau of land economics and he was far from alone in his reliance upon metaphor and the call for a golden age of cooperation. As will be clear in a later discussion of the role of the economic cycle in the rural economy of the parklands, no one was capable of defining in the first place what wealth was, and there were many adherents of the paper theory and of the patrimony theory espoused by Ruskin. In consequence it was impossible to reform a world in which the yardstick of success had become the accumulation of real estate and personal effects. In the attempt to preserve the opportunity for the small man to become prosperous in the liberal mode, it was necessary for social and economic criticism to fall back onto clumsy stereotypes of class, a development which was treated with the thrill of novelty among the reformers of the time. But in the manner of a dog eating its own tail, criticism inevitably came to rest on those who had managed to prove that there was some opportunity for the individual progress of those who had not yet made any. Monopoly and individualism were founded upon the same rock, and little headway was made in putting the metaphor of community into effect among agricultural producers until the wind had been thoroughly knocked out of the sails of classical liberalism. This was accomplished only by repeated business recessions, decades of economic stagnation, and the development of a real community and class sentiment following the frontier described in this work.
But until the outbreak of the Great War the liberal notions that propelled the inhabitants of the frontier in their search first of all for economic security, and in some cases later for wealth, remained strong. Increasing property values were seen to be a sign of the progress of the country, the numbers of real estate offices the index of the vigour of small towns, the quality of the cattleman's or dairyman's stock a sign of status, and the annual influx of settlers intending to fill the interstices in the lightly populated districts an indication of the secure future of the countryside.

Over the years to 1906 property values near Red Deer crept upwards, one farm being offered in 1904 for $7.50 per acre, and another for $13. The North Alberta Land Company with its head office in St. Louis set up a Red Deer office in 1904; the objective of this company was to buy Alberta lands and to hold them for sale to American farmers. Town lots in Red Deer sold for $25 in 1904 and there was so much demand for shelter that not a free building could be found even though a building boom was in progress.

255 RDAA Aug. 4, 1904.
256 RDAA June 16, 1904.
257 RDAA April 14, 1904; for a sample advertisement see the RDAA of Aug. 8, 1904.
258 The prospectus of this company, published in Red Deer in 1904, is available at the Glenbow Alberta Institute as pamphlet 971.23/N867r: "Ranching and Farming in Alberta, the Great North West". It contains little of specific interest.
259 RDAA June 2, 1904.
260 RDAA June 9, 1904.
By 1905 a subdivision then outside the town was selling for $35 to $75 per acre and there was a move to divide a number of parcels along the town boundaries into five-acre lots for sale to market gardeners. Also in that year lots in the Parkvale subdivision were offered at up to $75 each, and by 1906 another small boom was on. Those who followed the admonition of the Advocate to buy land as security 'because it will set you up' were able to choose from town lots at $80 each and numerous farms and acreages at various prices, mostly in the range of $10 per acre. The CPR offered lands in the Red Deer district at an increased price of $6 per acre to the west of the rail line and $8 to the east, which prices were regarded by the Advocate as bargains. Hudson's Bay land was selling in the vicinity of Red Deer at $1000 per quarter section and George D. Campbell who had come to Red Deer in 1902 with $600 sold his farm to an American for $3750. The best farms near Red Deer town were selling for up to $25 per acre, and numerous new businesses

261 RDAA May 12, 1905; RDAA June 30, 1905.
262 RDAA April 14, 1904.
263 RDAA June 1, 1906.
264 These prices apply to Red Deer. Without newspaper coverage for Lacombe until 1907, prices there cannot be estimated easily, but it seems that they were in advance, as before, of those at Red Deer.
265 The price differential reflects the preference shown by settlers for the eastern districts. RDAA Jan. 19, 1906.
266 RDN Jan. 23, 1906.
267 RDN April 17, 1906.
268 RDAA March 30, 1906.
were setting up in the towns along the line of C&E. Much of the money financing these was American. William Biggs, formerly a Judge of the Supreme Court of Missouri, was one of the promoters of a land company scheme which pumped thousands of dollars of Missouri money into Calgary, Red Deer, and other places.  

The town of Red Deer, which had lagged behind Lacombe for years and had boasted shallowly in 1904 that it had never had a boom, overtook its northern neighbour by 1906 with a population of 1,418 to Lacombe's 1,015. About this time the role of Red Deer as an important commercial point was established. It became a railway centre of importance, and railway cars were easier for agricultural shippers to obtain at Red Deer than elsewhere in the region because many commercial shipments were offloaded at the town leaving a surplus of empty cars. Some of these cars carried implements and other goods which were warehoused in the booming town, and among the goods brought in were those of the International Harvester Company which chose Red Deer as the wholesaling point for transactions between Didsbury and Ponoka.

Some spoiisports detected folly in the buoyancy of the economy as 1906 passed but the intelligent person was admonished to pay no attention to the predictors of doom.

269 RDN April 3, 1906, excerpted from the Calgary Herald.
270 RDAA Dec. 1, 1904.
271 RDN March 6, 1906.
272 RDN Sept 11, 1906, commenting on an article in the Calgary Herald on the buoyancy of the western economy.
Money by-laws continued to pass easily in Red Deer and Edward Michener, then in the real estate business, promised purchasers between 75 and 100 per cent appreciation on Parkvale property.\footnote{273} But later in the fall of the year the seams of the boom started to split as the spoilsports said they would. Just as the agent for the Cockshutt Plough Company was announcing that the Red Deer area was producing 25\% more cash sales than any other agency in the province, it was announced that a scarcity of labour for the town's public works program had developed,\footnote{274} and men already at work on the sewers struck for higher wages to offset what they thought was the exhorbitant cost of living in the town. In a hurried meeting the town council capitulated to the labourers' demand for 25\% per hour. Despite the encouraging sale of the livery business of J.J. Smith, one of the guides who had ushered in the land rush frontier, for the enormous sum of $10,000\footnote{275} the real estate business had gone into decline. The News mused that "No doubt real estate like all other businesses must expect periods of comparable stagnation." The high prices of property were thought to have slowed the market, but the paper thought that it was probably better to have a slow high mar-

\footnote{273}{RDN Aug. 7, 1906.}  
\footnote{274}{This and the remainder of the material in this paragraph come from the RDN of Oct. 2, 1906.}  
\footnote{275}{Smith's short biography is in the RDCS. He was a nephew of Leonard Gaetz, a Nova Scotian, and one of the early homesteaders on the site of Red Deer. He died of typhoid in the summer of 1906 and the sale was for the estate.}
ket than a fast low one. The development of the town had been dramatic over the last four years and the townspeople might have given much of the credit to the high price of land.

If there was something unpleasant in store for the farmers and shopkeepers of the parklands, it was not evident at the crowded 1906 Thanksgiving service in the Anglican church. The text for the day was from Ezekial 36: 35-36: "This land which was desolate is become like the garden of Eden ..." The sermon compressed the evolution of the frontier into a few breaths, and reiterated the cherished theme of the triumph of education and religious instruction over the savagery of the natives. The decorations, which were in imitation of those of the harvest festivals of the old country, symbolically united the old world and the new. At the Methodist service a travelling preacher raised the themes of moral and material progress, and there was no reticence in the generosity of the Springvale Methodists who gave at their service an offering of $300 to clear the church debt and to erect some new sheds. Perhaps by now the horses which had seen the frontier through its rough days would have proper shelter, even at church.

The winter of 1906-1907 arrived in the Red Deer region on Sunday, November 18th and bells were heard throughout.

278 RDN Nov. 20, 1906.
the town. By the twentieth a coal famine had developed, and the people of the southern parklands were into the worst winter they would experience.
CHAPTER IV
THE LATE FRONTIER: FROM RECESSION TO WAR
1907-1914
INTRODUCTION

In the two decades up to 1907 the Alberta frontier had been susceptible to changes in the continental and international economy which determined the rate at which it would be populated, the kind of persons who would come to it, and the success of the new immigrants in the marketplace. This chapter concerns the period from 1907 to 1914, from a severe business recession to the wild imaginings over a prosperous future which arose as Europe lay bound in war. It was a period of adjustment and experimentation more than of immigration and colonization. The days of the raw frontier were nearing an end—muddy winding trails and rude stopping places were giving way to the surveyed, but usually still impassable road, and to hamlets and small towns. The experimental farm at Lacombe and a few enterprising farmers tried new crops, and unusual marketing practices were undertaken by some producers, notably cattlemen. There were changes in the patterns of dairy exploitation because of the improved service after the railway expansion which terminated in 1913, and the improvement of stock to types in keeping with modern ideas of breed excellence was accelerated. Town services became more diverse and the differentiation of town society continued.
But frontier conditions, despite some signs of improvement and progress, were prolonged to at least the outbreak of war. Only half the land was occupied in the study area in 1911, and only about 30% of that amount was improved. In some districts the percentage was lower. Red Deer and Lacombe, like most frontier regions of the west, were dependent on outside capital imported by settlers, merchants, and builders. Few farmers had erected buildings of quality or had sufficient machinery and draft power to farm according to their ambitions. Farm cash income was low, and many mixed farms were confined to cash available from eggs and cream. Few farmers had savings to wait out low markets, and low markets were the times in which bankers' credit was tightened. Merchants carried customers on 'tick' and stock on wholesale credit payable in Calgary or Winnipeg. No doubt the hidden costs of these arrangements were passed to the consumer in the form of higher prices. The banking system was an essential underpinning to the economy of the parklands, as it had been indeed for every frontier of the continental west during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Dependence on outside capital is an important feature of any frontier.

Secondly the Canadian west had not developed a stable external market on which it could systematically build for a future. In addition it had not developed a diversity of specialized products or internal markets to stimulate the emergence of a strong regional economy. W.L. Morton has poin-
ted out in clear terms the weakness of the western economy: as long as commodity and land prices remained firm the potential handicaps of the west could be carried, but any weakening in these sectors created chaos. Politics were the avenue through which frustrations were vented.

The objective of this chapter is the description of the economic and social processes of the parklands frontier of central Alberta from 1907 to 1914. The topical arrangement of activities such as dairying, hog raising, and cropping is preserved, but more attention is paid to the ways in which farmers dealt with the external economy and with the political milieu, much information being available for this period from the newspaper record. The years before the war were supposed, at the time, to constitute the maturation of the frontier—the years when months of work and privation would pay out; but only enough men and women collected on the dream to keep the vision barely alive. Much of this chapter concerns what occurred to those who did not collect and how their ideas changed.
THE ECONOMIC CYCLE

The years from 1907 to 1914 demonstrated conditions from boom to bust. To the recession of the money market of late 1906 and early 1907 was added the devastating effect of the harsh winter of 1906-1907; the years 1907 and 1908 were devoid of economic progress. A number of Alberta creameries which had been operated by the Dominion government, but which had been financed through notes from local men, were put near the wall by the demands of banks calling in credit. The sad economic condition of cattle ranches and stock breeders was responsible for the failure of the Alberta Cattle Breeders' Association to clear the inventory at the Calgary auction of May 1908.

"The result of the last sale was in a measure the natural outcome of the general conditions prevailing at the time. The hard winter of 1907 and the severe losses which in some cases were sustained largely as a result of the system of ranching carried on in Alberta, resulted in a number of cattle raisers deciding to go out of business as soon as they could dispose of their stock without too great loss." (3)

2 ADA 1908-p 84. At least one creamery in the study area was affected; see the appropriate section below.

The prices at the sale were what the commentator called 'very low', and the sale list indicates that they were in fact lower on an average per animal than at any time since the first sale in 1901. These low figures were attributed to a lack of ready money in the province and

"while Alberta did not feel the financial difficulties any more, if as much as the other provinces of the Dominion, or as was felt throughout the United States, money was undoubtedly very scarce..."

There are numerous reports of distress in the parklands during the winter of 1906-1907. Cattle floundered in deep snow, became lost and moved away from shelter or from the vicinity of farm buildings where there might have been some possibility of putting out feed. Many became disoriented and in searching for food were found roaming streets and alleyways in the settlements of the district. As the winter passed the snow mounted and more and more cattle fell into difficulty. The Parlbys, according to one of the labourers of the time, lost a large number of cattle.4 Roads became so rutted and choked by snow that it was nearly impossible to move hay by sleigh to affected stock, and the ever-increasing burden of snow, little of which drifted, simply added to what was already on the ground. In places it was six feet deep.5 A meeting of ratepayers was cut short in Red Deer in December, 1906 because of the extreme coldness of the meeting hall;6 by Febr-

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4 Pioneers and Progress, p 212; from a story submitted by R.W.C. Wilson.
5 Land of the Lakes, pp 36-37.
6 RDN Dec. 4, 1906.
ruary temperatures had dipped to the minus 50 degree Fahrenheit range and the requirements of the Dominion Lands Branch on homestead residence were dropped for the duration of the emergency. Canon Hinchcliffe of the Anglican Church complained that the burial of the deceased was far from dignified when pallbearers were forced to stumble with their solemn load through great drifts of snow punctuated only by the footprints of the gravedigger. News travelled slowly in the countryside and sleigh drivers were implored to drag some bulky object behind the sleigh in the hope that the passage of later travellers would be eased. In early February the Lacombe Branch, which had been opened by the CPR in 1905, froze up, but as bad as conditions seemed in central Alberta they were much worse in the south according to returning travellers. The roof of the Red Deer ice rink fell in from the weight of snow just after a crowd had departed, and in consequence the churches of the town were immediately filled with worshippers offering thanksgiving.

Because of the coal deposits in the banks of the Red

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7 RDN February 12, 1907; surprisingly this terrifying winter did not receive much comment in the local press. Perhaps the phobia which westerners felt against 'knocking' prohibited it; more likely, it was well known that reports on vicious climatic episodes in the Canadian west were culled from Canadian sources by speculators with American lands to sell in the hope that the information would keep potential purchasers in the United States. The information in this section is taken variously from the issues of the Red Deer News of Jan. 22; Feb. 5; Feb. 12; and Feb. 19, 1907.
Deer River near Great Bend, the residents of the southern parklands did not pass through the winter without warmth as did some of the settlers in the south of the province. Bob-sleighs were gathered in at the mines and made the westward trip back to the point of origin in convoys along the river ice. Some men had a reputation as good pilots along the treacherous course and made a winter business of repeated trips from such places as Red Deer and Blackfalds.  

The 1907-1908 downturn in town trade is amply shown in the advertisements of merchants who were struck hard in the spring of 1907 by the demand of wholesalers for cash instead of credit. Many merchants attempted to rupture the old customer credit system by taking advertisements in the local papers to point out that the era of cash sales had arrived. The recession of 1907 was underway in Lacombe by April causing the editor of the *Western Globe* to appeal to townsfolk to do all their buying locally to keep money in the town. By the end of May it was clear that everyone had been working his credit to the limit, and banks were calling in "... all they can get ..." By July a number of merchants had announced that they were going into the cash business, Campbell and

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9 Lacombe *Western Globe*, April 30, 1907; this was a common plea in times of stringency in all papers studied. Except for an occasional sally on principle against the Timothy Eaton Co., the appeals seem to have been confined to hard times. The early files of this newspaper dating from 1904 are apparently lost, 1907 being the first year available. Henceforth cited as LG.

10 LG May 28, 1907.
Titworth of Lacombe proclaiming that it was the modern way to operate and that 'multitudes' agreed with them.\textsuperscript{11} By the end of July a combine of blacksmiths in Lacombe advertised their conversion to the new system.

In Red Deer the effects of the recession, probably compounded by the lack of country trade coming in to town, were felt by February, 1907. Ouimette and Wright, general merchants, called in the Dominion Brokerage Company to sell off their entire stock,\textsuperscript{12} and in March another merchant announced transparently that he was selling off $4000 of merchandise in the interests of expansion. In April the Red Deer Mill and Elevator Company was wound up, which event was lamentable because this firm was the first and the last example of multi-partite financial cooperation among farmers, businessmen, townfolk and a municipal council, and the only time at which 'cooperation' had amounted to more than the rhetoric of boosting.\textsuperscript{13} The Red Deer Board of Trade was for-

\textsuperscript{11} LG July 9, 1907. And for the blacksmiths, July 23, 1907.

\textsuperscript{12} RDN Feb. 26, 1907. This event was somewhat ironic since Ouimette was at the time the President of the Red Deer Board of Trade. Further material for this section is taken from the issues of the RDN for Feb. 19; March 19; April 2; April 9; May 1; and June 12, 1907.

\textsuperscript{13} The town of Red Deer provided the property for the mill and elevator on liberal terms to the company, which was managed by a board of directors partially drawn from the community. There were many shareholders in Red Deer and general meetings were held there. The mill failed because of poor record keeping and management, and because of foreclosure of a chattel mortgage on the equipment. Several farmers lost heavily because they were owners of grain attached along with the building, and this experience soured district farmers thoroughly on future cooperation with businessmen. The later Red Deer Cooperative
ced into reorganization in the spring of 1907; it was the sentiment of the town that the Board could no longer be run effectively for the benefit of all townsfolk if the membership were confined, as was the custom, to the elite of local merchants. By the end of April a membership of 80 had been enrolled from those who were interested in the financial rejuvenation of the town and the Ontario hegemony, and presumably the paternal Ontario model of settlement, was thereby diluted. The Board lost the grant which annually had been entrusted by the town council for boosting, and Board activities moved into more popular and pragmatic channels.

Property sales continued at the rate of the months previous while retail trade diminished. The price of town lots was maintained in the $75 to $300 range through the spring of 1907 with no apparent lack of buyers, but signs of pessimism seeped in by the beginning of May with the announcement, common to towns of the west which were sulking through a stagnant period, that the town had never had a boom. By June of 1907, however, the price of subdivision lots had fallen to around $60 and despite sporadic news that new businesses were to open and the surveying of a new subdivision on the Burnt Lake Road, the recession of the spring had deepened by July nearly to a de-
The recession took the people of the parklands by surprise and there was some searching for explanations. The Red Deer News borrowed an editorial from the Winnipeg Commercial which reported that some people thought Canadian money had been sucked away by the United States. But the editor of the original item allowed that this view was not tenable because the United States was also in recession. An excerpted editorial from the Toronto Globe claimed that the softness of the economy was due to the failure of banks to finance the crop of 1907; the demand for money had been so hectic in the fall of 1906 that banks had simply lagged behind the pace and had run dry. These editorials demonstrate that commentary on national currency policy started from the assumption that paper money was real, with limits of supply similar to those of gold. This interpretation is not surprising in a time when currency was backed by gold and in which governments were not adept at managing national economies by the issuing or recall of paper, but it is interesting that there existed no popularly applied theory of wealth, and especially of the creation of wealth, which extended beyond the assumption that prosperity amounted to the expenditure of a national patrimony which had absolute limits. Capital formation was typically regarded as the result of capital expen-

14 RDN July 31, 1907.
15 RDN Aug. 21, 1907.
diture, more money returning than was spent with the surplus becoming part of the national treasure on which still further growth might be based. Economic stagnation was, under this assumption, due to a spendthrift attitude to the reserve of wealth; to a lack of confidence in the economy; to reticence in spending; or to the flagrant use of unbounded credit. The confusion to which the popular application of liberal economic theory had come by the decade before the Great War is best seen in the blaming of diametrically opposite processes for the recession--too much spending and too little, too much confidence in the potential for a rise in prices and too little. In fact no one had any accurate idea of what was happening and the typical antidote to uncertainty was to put on an optimistic bluff and hope that the next upturn in the business cycle would occur before one's own credit ran out utterly. It was the hope of everyone that the next upward trend would place him beyond the need for credit.

Land prices during the years up to 1913 seem not to have changed in dollar amounts per acre according to the asking prices published in the advertisements of real estate agents. But, as has been pointed out by Morton, the value of the dollar changed, the price of wheat started to soften after 1909, and the prices of purchased commodities started to rise against the value of agricultural products. When

land values started to level off in real terms the farmer came to identify external political factors as the cause for the souring of the frontier dream.

Prices indicated in real estate advertisements were, of course, asking prices, and only rarely did information of an actual sale price filter through the paper. There must have been many sales completed at lower than asking prices. But some consistency throughout the period may be expected if the habits of sellers in posting asking prices remained constant. A stock farm offered for sale near Lacombe in 1907 was listed at a rate per acre which would have been a not unreasonably low figure until the Great War. For the price of $25 per acre the buyer was invited to investigate a half section of land with 65 acres in stubble, 15 acres in tame hay, 30 acres in wild hay, and 60 acres ready for breaking. There was a seven room house on the property along with a horse stable, 2 colt stables, a hen house, a granary, and a good well. The property was fenced and cross fenced. 17

Land prices near Red Deer remained firm through the spring of 1907 but softened badly near early summer. Like the reconstituted Board of Trade and the Lacombe blacksmiths, the real estate agents of Red Deer formed an association for mutual exchange of information and for putting the business on what they called a 'sound footing'. 18 No local combina-

17 IG April 30, 1907.
18 RDN May 15, 1907. About 30 men were present at the founding meeting, and some of these were newcomers to cont'd...
tion of real estate agents could turn around a recession, and it was not until late 1908 that the property market commenced an upswing. The year 1907 was an unfortunate, but not disastrous one for the municipal finances of Red Deer. Money

18 cont'd
the business who had sold all to enter what appeared at the end of 1906 to be a sure route to riches. Philisk Pidgeon, whose business alliances were outlined from the RDCS source in Chapter II, was one of these and by the fall of the year he was operating a parcel delivery service. Another was A.T. Stephenson who had variously been a soldier, surveyor, school teacher, first principal of the brick school built at Red Deer in 1902, hardware merchant and town councillor. On July 13, 1908 he was appointed Treasurer and Financial Commissioner of the town after some discrepancies had been found in the town's accounts. Stephenson's advocacy of the commission system of municipal government and of sound fiscal policies ensured the solvency of Red Deer through the depression of 1913 which sank so many western towns. He retained these posts for an astounding total of 27 years, and in 1927 and 1928 was president of the Union of Alberta Municipalities; in 1927 he was a member of the Alberta Taxation Commission. These later developments are not strictly of interest to the study except to indicate that Red Deer was a proving ground and a place of intellectual ferment over such mundane matters as local taxation policies. Stephenson was a native of Orillia, Ontario, the junior chess champion of Canada in 1891 and the national champion in 1898. He was active in Masonic, Rotary, and Canadian Legion circles, and was associated with Halley Gaetz, a champion of the George system of single taxation. See the RDCS for the details of Stephenson's life, and for his entry into the real estate business the RDN of May 8, 1907.
by-laws continued to appear until October of that year, but the debentures failed to sell even when interest was advanced from 4% to $\frac{5}{2}$, and to 5 5/8. Halley Gaetz, Mayor of the town, went east to hawk the debentures in the fall of 1907 and had no luck. The town finished the year with a small surplus of $600 and money by-laws did not reappear until the middle of 1908. The high interest rates implicated in the debentures passed by voters were allowed to stand on the unsold issues to avoid rescinding and re-drafting of by-laws, and such debentures were sold into 1909 at a premium adjustment for the high rate of interest. By the end of 1909 the council felt that the town had rallied from the uncertainty and danger of the last two years. The bank overdraft had been reduced and by early 1910 regular debentures were selling, also at a premium. Conditions in the town remained rosy for a period of approximately four years from the spring of 1909 to early 1913 when another severe recession was responsible for a further hiatus in the development of the towns and villages of the parklands.

19 Comments on the health of municipal coffers were common in Red Deer and rare in Lacombe. Lacombe elected what was called a reform council in 1907, but the effect seems to have been to ensure the dormancy of intelligent municipal administration, a trend which delighted Red Deer and contributed to the relative rise of that town. For important items concerning municipal administration in this period see RDN for April 16; June 26; July 10; Sept. 18; Sept. 25; Oct. 23; and November 27, 1907.


21 RDN March 16, 1910.
In the years in which Red Deer was going ahead and consolidating a position of pre-eminence in the commercial life of the parklands some smaller centres were faced with stagnation and even retrogression. Alix, first called Todds-ville, was started in 1905, but by 1909 had not attracted a bank or newspaper. The Alix Free Press was opened in the latter year and the editor announced that there were some pessimists in the town who felt that the place was in a comatose condition.  

The editor of the paper cited the twice-daily arrival of the 'Blue Flea', as the local Alix to Stettler train was known, in comparison with the earlier once-daily run as evidence that the prosperity of the area was on the upsurge. A week later, apparently after some thought, the editor was convinced that 1909 had been, if not a stellar year, then one of average import in the development of the nation. In a paragraph he managed to pack in most of the popular notions about the economic development of the country and the manner in which the advance in social welfare was expected to parallel economic progress.

"This great Dominion has continued its forward march along lines of broad development and has enhanced its position among the nations of the world. All parts of the country have shared in the benefits of this development in the form of abundant prosperity, and because of the record made in 1909, the Canadian people are enabled to feel a greater pride in their country and to be more confident than ever as to an assured glorious future."  

22 Alix Free Press, Jan. 7, 1910; henceforth cited as AFF.  
23 AFP Jan. 12, 1910.
Canadian development, as outlined by Fallis for an earlier generation, was expected to be linear. Abundance would alleviate the pain and injustice caused by want almost as a by-product of economic activity. The end of this process would be the achievement of a 'glorious future' with Canada at the apex of influence and popularity in the international community.

Such rhetoric was of little comfort, it may be assumed, to the merchants who were going under because of the accumulated debts and the softness of business over the last two years. One of the thriving businesses of the period was that of the stock elimination and bankruptcy sales companies which, with the swiftness of morticians and the puffery of born promoters, liquidated for a commission fee the stock of numerous merchants throughout Alberta at the rate of 50¢ or so on the dollar. The turn of Alfred J. McLaughlin, clothier of Lacombe, came in December of 1909 and there were many others who failed in business in the settlements of the district. Another form of interment for failed businesses seems to have been the custom of 'buying out' in which, with the swiftness of a shark feeding on a wounded comrade, a competing storekeeper announced that he had bought up the stock of another merchant in the same line in the interests of 'expansion'.

But during 1910 there was a gradual improvement in business and a firming of the price of rural land. More auction notices appeared in the Red Deer News than previously, an indication variously of an increasing number of farmers selling out by this means, an increasing tendency to advertise sales, or an increase in the number of such sales. In all likelihood with the rise in the number of farm units accompanying the frontier, more sales could have been expected, but it seems clear that some farmers of the perpetual frontiersmen sort took advantage of good times to sell out. The townsite of Delburne went on sale in the fall of 1910 and caused speculative excitement in Red Deer. Town lots which had fallen to $60 each in Red Deer in 1907 were selling well and one subdivision of acre- and five-acre parcels advanced steadily in price over the years to 1912 from $125 to $300 per acre.

By the spring of 1911 the local economy again slowed slightly. Property sales decreased in number around Lacombe, and there was perpetual dispute and delay in the financing of a local railway venture, The Lacombe and Blindman Electric Railway. The larger railway companies were tardy in surveying and filing of plans for the branch lines which were assumed of key importance to rural development. Construction delays were common on lines that had been started, several proposed lines were not built at all, and the four major companies were per-

26 RDN Sept. 28, 1910; the sale was held on Oct. 4, 1910 and reported in the RDN of Oct. 5, 1910.
petually engaged in a sort of rooster dance designed to entice opponents into showing their hands early, or into making a foolish or expensive choice of routes.

Reciprocity was an important topic in the parkland economy of the first decade of the century. The Red Deer News reported favourably on what was called the 'New National Policy' of the Conservative Party in 1907 and claimed that Liberals would not admit that they operated a tariff program; they had not the guts to call it that. The News took every opportunity in pointing out the graft and mismanagement which it felt marked the Laurier government, and was especially harsh on the petty patronage exercised by Peter Talbot in Lacombe. On Talbot's trip from Ottawa to the west in the spring of 1908 the News admonished that there had been a lot of resource handouts and that the "... Senator himself has been very fortunate in the matter of coal." Talbot had become a Senator after only one year in Parliament because, according to the paper, he was willing to handle the dirty washing of the Liberal Party. In the summer of 1908 the proclamation of the reform platform which would carry the Conservatives into the election of that fall was in full swing and a Montreal reformer by the name of H.B. Ames visited Red

27 RDN Oct. 16, 1907.
28 RDN Dec. 18, 1907.
29 RDN May 6, 1908.
30 RDN Sept. 16, 1908.
Deer on a lecture tour. He revealed that there were scandals in the Dominion Lands system which amounted to approximately 15,000 unaccounted homesteads, that the reports of a number of Agents had been suppressed, and that some land which should have been homesteaded was somehow held down in various parts of the west by local representatives of the Liberal party.\(^{31}\) Shortly after the visit of Ames it was alleged that Talbot was one of the local officials who were holding homestead land "... which should have gone to the hardworking settler."\(^{32}\) These complaints were presumably of some avail in Red Deer which carried the Conservative candidate heavily in the fall election as did Erskine, Kanata, and Red Willow, but since the riding was a large one and the northern and southern parts were firmly in the pocket of Liberals, the majority carried the Liberal candidate.\(^{33}\)

31 RDN Aug. 26, 1908.

32 It is hard to see how this could have been done within the controls maintained by the office of the Commissioner of Lands, unless the civil service were itself involved in the sham. There were reports of land seekers being told that land was 'all taken' in certain neighbourhoods, and certainly there was room for local omnipotents to hector land agents. But it was possible as well for seekers to apply to Winnipeg or Ottawa for the cancellation of obviously vacated land, or for information on the status of any even-numbered section. See the RDN of Sept. 16, 1908 for the allegations.

33 RDN Oct. 28, 1908, and for the final returns see the issue of Nov. 18. The number of voters in frontier ridings was usually low and the margin of victory in most polling divisions slim. There was no apparent spatial pattern to the voting behaviour.
In voting Conservative the Red Deer citizens were demonstrating a distinction in central Alberta. The appeal of the "Grand Old Party" was to good government, the Imperial tie, a preferential tariff, an emphasis on the importance of the individual, and the exercise of 'common sense' in the allocation of resources. The party offered a natural political outlet to many Ontario immigrants with a history of Conservative adherence, and to a number of men from the southern states. But the numerical predominance of conservatively-minded persons in Red Deer did not forestall the exercise of Liberal shenanigans there. The patronage involved in the construction of the Alberta Central Railway (ACR), the major project of the now-aging John T. Moore, ensured that the essentially conservative population of Red Deer needed constantly to work uphill against odds created by the Dominion bureaucracy, by the CPR, and by the Liberal patronage machine operating smoothly in the districts around the town and in Lacombe. The designation of the Conservatives of Red Deer as a 'nest' by one of the informants of this study whose father had been 'born a Liberal' is geographically correct, if somewhat unkind, and is probably indicative of the impatience that was felt by Red Deer Liberals against what they felt was an anachronism in a developing society.

Comment from RSC. Ronald Comfort's father had been an active Ontario Liberal and was in the party organization in Red Deer.
Wilfrid Laurier visited Red Deer during the prosperous year of 1910. The United Farmers presented him with a list of grievances and he drove the first spike of the ACR, a line running west from Red Deer to Rocky Mountain House and the Brazeau coal fields. (Red Deer's Liberal railway left a terminus on another Liberal rail line and ran to Liberal coal fields.) Before departing Laurier observed that Red Deer would have difficulty attracting more railways because the bend of the Red Deer River necessitated expensive bridges.

The election of 1911 was, of course, that concerned nominally with Reciprocity, and all the artillery that opponents could throw into the battle was used locally to prove or to disprove that the move would destroy the Imperial tie, entice the United States to consider annexation, accelerate the cultural Americanization of the west, and generally mark the start of the road either to ruin or to riches. Scholarship has decided that the effect of the tariff would have been minimal or dilatory and little can be added to that discussion.

35 RDN Aug. 17, 1910.

36 The election and the associated issues were widely covered in the Red Deer News, but not so much remarked upon in the Lacombe Globe, a Liberal paper which seemingly regarded the issue as one which needed no debate. See all the issues of the News for the period Aug. 16 to Oct. 11, 1911. The complex of issues involved in the election are reviewed in Paul Stevens, (ed.), The 1911 General Election: a Study in Canadian Politics (Toronto, 1970).

37 See for example K.H. Norrie, "Agricultural Implement Tariffs, the National Policy and Income Distribution in cont'd...
The regional voting patterns of 1911 are more interesting than those of 1908. The winning Red Deer Conservative candidate McGillivray carried newer districts heavily such as those to the east of Tail Creek. He did poorly in East Red Deer where a number of the middle stratum of merchants and tradesmen resided, and merely tied South Red Deer. North Red Deer, a separate village which was across the River from Red Deer in the manner in which other towns possessed appendages across railway tracks, voted heavily for protection, or possibly for the reform platform. The long-settled rural parts of the region see-sawed with no apparent pattern except in heavily American districts to the north of the Red Deer River and in English-dominated Alix. In these sections of the country there were a number of polls McGillivray won heavily. In all, the election was carried for the Conservative by the labourers resident in North Red Deer, by the voters in districts east of Lacombe including Nebraska, Clive and Tees (many of whom presumably had been in the American immigration at the turn of the century), by the English ranchers of Alix, and by voters in districts to the east of Tail Creek. Many among this last group were probably not of the English language tradition.

Some of the votes in the election were apparently cast on perverse and unexpected grounds. Neil McPhee, an

37 cont'd
accomplished horse rancher and a dyed-in-the-wool Liberal, voted Conservative only once in his life—in favour of protection when he feared that Americans would flood the market for horses with cheap mules. Andrew Urquhart, a member of the executive of the Lacombe Liberal Association who created a local constitutional furor by supporting protection, was so convinced of having made the correct choice that he entered and won an essay competition run by a conservative Calgary newspaper on the topic of "Why I Voted Against Reciprocity". Urquhart, a merchant of Clive, stressed the Imperial tie, and argued that the rejection of reciprocity would "... strengthen the hopes of Britishers for close Imperial unity". He did not fear annexation, nor did he feel that the British flag was more representative of freedom than "... some other flags [he] could name ..."; his vote was at bottom an attempt purely to spite what he called 'rebel thoughts in politics'. On another point Urquhart was concerned that Canadian negotiators had been turned down repeatedly in Washington until the United States needed reciprocity, and even then the Canadians had come home only with 'a tariff for a tariff'. This exchange smacked of incompetence or negligence to the essayist, and he felt that the Canadians should have found out how much the United States wanted freedom of trade and then should have asked a good price for it. The annexation issue would occupy much less time in the future because of the just and stinging

38 From his son Charles McPhee.
rebuke which the Americans had sustained. 39

The defeat of reciprocity was not simply the defeat of an economic proposal. The Liberals were under the illusion that the election of 1911 was being fought on grounds that they had created themselves, but they committed some imperfect electioneering in assuming that farmers as a class and merchants as a class would uniformly be interested in the measure. Not only was this not true, but Canadian society, and especially the society of the frontier, embodied much more variety than the Liberals had bargained for. Much of this variety was represented in the Alberta parklands. The successful insertion of Imperial, reform and resource issues into the election by Conservatives meant that, at least in the Red Deer-Lacombe region, voting was not simply for or against reciprocity, 40 but for or against what the electorate, and a culturally diverse one, correctly identified as active combinations of issues. Consequently a life-long Liberal such as Neil MacPhee voted for Imperial Unity and against the threat of an onslaught of American mules. The normally Conservative merchants of Red Deer reversed their normal colours and voted for a measure they thought would improve agricultural markets and

39 LG Oct. 25, 1911.

40 The result in Red Deer was a flip-flop from the rest of the province, but Red Deer has often shown reversed polarity. The Liberal party came out of the election on a provincial basis as the party of the rural areas, but in the Red Deer riding the rural vote carried the Conservative candidate. See Thomas Flanagan, "Stability and Change in Alberta Provincial Elections", op.cit., p 5.
provide them with lower-priced imported goods to sell in a rejuvenated rural economy. American immigrants to the north of the Red Deer River, and perforce we are talking here of the ones who had taken citizenship, voted against freer trade with their old homeland. Only speculation can surround their motives at present, but it would probably not be far wrong to assume that the Conservative vote was a vote for 'Canadianism', in effect for a smaller and tighter ship than the one they had left. Some immigrant 'Americans' were in effect returning Canadians anyway. Only the pro-Imperial vote of the essentially English countryside around Alix is understandable on conventional grounds.

The election of the Borden government was expected by supporters to ensure the transfer of resources to provincial control, but in defiance of election promises the transfer was not made. The control of resources had been expected to alleviate endemic land use problems, problems of taxation, patronage and conservation, and the endemic undersettlement and underutilization of agricultural districts. The provinces had to wait until 1929 to try their hand at land policy and in the meantime the old problems remained and were further exacerbated by continued wild swings in the economy.

A sensational boom occurred between the middle of 1911 and the autumn of 1912. The building of the Mirror-Trochu rail line by the Grand Trunk caused a burst of optimism in a corridor running from the north to the south along
the east side of the study area. The town of Lamerton disappeared almost literally in the night because the owners of the planned townsite asked a higher figure for their land than the owners of the future site of Mirror just over two miles away to the southwest. The village of Lignite was boomed but never came into existence before the onset of the depression of 1912-1913, and most of the lots were seized for taxes. The village of Delburne, inaugurated as a Grand Trunk Pacific townsite, did struggle into existence and served as a minor shipping point and a provider of commonly needed services. The hamlet of Content dissolved from a serious fire in 1910 and failure two years later to become a railway point.

A Canadian Northern branch line was laid between North Red Deer and the eastern districts in 1912, passing through Alix which by this time possessed through railways. This branch was scheduled to enter Red Deer by bridge from the north but delaying litigation by John T. Moore, whose Alberta Central Railway was nearing completion, ultimately caused the cancellation of that plan. The agglomeration of secondary industry in northeast Red Deer is a legacy of that period. On completion the Alberta Central was passed into the Canadian Pacific system which paid Moore for his trouble.

There was a belief throughout the frontier period that mineral wealth would be the basis for many personal fortunes and for the commencement of a number of regional indus-
tries. The coal seams along the Red Deer River had excited comment since the first white contact with the area, and it was still thought that they could be the source of great wealth. In the eyes of the promoter or boomer the distance from the first rumour of resources to a highly capitalized industrial agglomeration was but a hairsbreadth. When a well driller discovered a coal seam north of Lacombe in 1910 the puzzle of the future at once fell into place:

"It is well known that Lacombe is underlain by limitless coal beds which will sooner or later be developed. In fact capitalists are already taking the matter up and prospecting." (41)

The coal was said to be first quality steam coal and was discovered by someone who was digging in fact for oil.

Perhaps the coal sample was of the same doubtful provenance as the gold nugget which allegedly was taken from the Red Deer River in January of 1912, starting a small rush. Nothing came of this matter either, and the gold claims were put up for sale a year later: "... they are just as good as they were twelve months ago. No gold taken away except the rich sample that was sent to Washington." (43)

The coal mines along the Red Deer did serve the local market with a low

41 IG June 29, 1910.
42 AFP Jan. 5, 1912.
43 Delburne Progress Jan. 10, 1913 (henceforth cited as DP); but according to A. MacS. Stalker gold was let down into the river bed from a formation through which the river incised. It was later removed by a small-scale placer operation. See "Surficial Geology of the Red Deer-Stettler Map Area ...", op. cit., p 112.
FIG. III

LIGNITE

GRAND TRUNK PACIFIC TOWNSITE

Will be sold at auction at

Lacombe, December 14

SALE BEGINS 2 P.M.

LIGNITE is situated on a high bluff overlooking the winding Red Deer River, with an unobstructed view of the country for miles.

LIGNITE is the constructional point of the G. T. P. between Calgary and Edmonton.

LIGNITE is pregnant with vast coal deposits—steam and stove.

LIGNITE is a choice manufacturing centre on account of its undeveloped water power.

LIGNITE IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY.

LOCAL AGENT IN ALIX, CHAS. W. FREDERICK

THE WESTERN TOWNSITES INVESTMENT CO., LTD.

HEAD OFFICE, WETASKIWIN, ALTA.

SENIOR PETER TALBOT, JOHN F. RISLEY, W. J. McNAMARA,
President. Manager. Secretary-Treasurer.

quality of domestic coal, provided a much-needed wage employment from time to time, and exported a small surplus to the Edmonton and Calgary markets. The district around Alix was alone responsible for spawning rumors or exaggerated truths concerning the development of industries based upon abrasive cleaner, brick clay, potters' clay, gas and oil.

The 'boom' was the tool by which the promoter applied psychological leverage to increase the value of both undeveloped and developed properties. Booms were possible only as long as capital flowed to the region or the community, however, and they commonly left a wake of unpaid taxes, vacant lots, idle farmland and businesses struggling against a foolish overextension of credit and heavy mortgages. Some towns rode a boom intelligently or fortuitously and dismounted at the right moment, preserving some of the effects in the form of a larger variety of urban services, and more tenacious transportation links with the countryside than competing neighbours. The failure of the railway to lay a line through a settlement was a sure kiss of death as demonstrated by the disappearance of Content and Lamerton, and by the failure of a settlement to develop at Pine Lake after the Langton Line of the CPR was cancelled. Towns which had a railway but no

44 The use of lignitic coal was banned from locomotives in 1907 because it sent off large numbers of dangerous sparks. See S. Raby, "Prairie Fires in the North-West", Saskatchewan History 19 (1966), p 87. Consequently the local railway planned for the region was forced to consider gasoline or diesel power, if it were not inclined to purchase better coal.
boom sometimes sulked forlornly, claiming that the lack of
a boom was in fact a positive feature: "... the solidity of
the merchants in the town may be attributed to the fact that
it has never been struck by a boom." Some towns were kept
waiting for their boom and those kept waiting after the end
of 1912 had a very long time to wait indeed.

The first persons anticipating Delburne arrived
shortly after the designation of the site by the Grand Trunk
Pacific in 1910. They settled in and waited for the boom,
but, "The boom was a long time coming, and up to the present [Jan. 1913] has not arrived. The salvation of the village is
to a large extent due to this feature." 46

If some towns were content with not having boomed,
there were other places that took extreme liberties with the
truth to attract the gullible. At one time Lacombe styled
itself as the major centre between Calgary and Edmonton. Per-
haps the grand prize in extravagant boosting was carried off
by Red Deer in the summer of 1910 when the promoters of the
Inglewood subdivision east of town took a number of advertise-
ments in a Calgary paper. 47 A claim that the town of Red Deer

45 IG Feb. 16, 1909, referring to the village of Blackfalds
which never did have a boom, and in the last few years
has lost all but the simplest retail services in the
process of becoming a bedroom suburb of Red Deer.

46 DP Jan. 31, 1913.

47 The advertisements defied the dictum of J. Bruce Walker,
Commissioner of Immigration at Winnipeg, who said "The
art of boosting is a fine art only when it is exercised
with skill and prudence ..." (AFP Aug. 6, 1909).
was surrounded by vast iron deposits was accompanied by a map which showed what were called nine lines of railway 'converging' on the town. The method of counting involved totting up all the rail lines both built and proposed and giving credit for both arriving at town and for leaving again. In the tradition of municipal rivalry common at the time the Lacombe Western Globe announced that it would be glad to enter a contest with Red Deer to pit the two railways which Red Deer actually possessed by this method of counting against the four which ran in and out of Lacombe. Anyway, the Lacombe paper added, the Red Deer people had shortchanged themselves by failing to count the Langton line, which was proposed to terminate at Red Deer from the southeast, both arriving at the town and then leaving again to return to Langton.

The booming of the frontier towns in the Alberta parklands was little different from custom throughout the American west, with the possible exception of the existence of an

48 For the announcement of the commencement of the Englewood subdivision see the RDN of Aug. 10, 1910; for comments on the boasts involved in Red Deer's publicity campaign see the IG of Jan. 25, Feb. 22 and March 8, 1911. Alberta centres rose, declined and disappeared much the same as those in Nebraska. See Everett Dick, The Sod House Frontier, 1854-1890, (New York, 1937), pp 51-54; the ephemeral settlements of central Alberta receive adequate treatment in Harold Fryer, Ghost Towns of Alberta, op.cit.; R. Rees has portrayed the insanity of the Saskatoon boom in "The Magic City on the Banks of the Saskatchewan ...", op.cit., pp 51-59; and an anecdotal account of the Edmonton boom is available from John G. Niddrie, "The Edmonton Boom of 1911-1912", Alberta Historical Review 13:2 (1965), pp 1-6. The Calgary boom is covered in two sections of Frontier Calgary, A.W. Rasporich and Henry C. Klassen, eds. (Calgary, 1975). See "Birth to Boom to Bust", by J.P. Dickin McGinnis, pp 6-19; cont'd...
amount of intellectual ferment on the single tax system and on other matters concerning the optimal organization of local governmental units. But since booms were dependent upon the flow of capital from outside the region, it was understandable and indeed obvious that hard times would cut off funds for the 'development' of the west. The business downturn of late 1912, which was first noted in one of the local papers in October, was a decisive one for the parklands as it was for all the rural west. The era of the boom had passed, and with it went a number of frontier features, the removal of which had lasting and important implications for the social, economic, and political development of the prairies. Railway development ceased and the branch line network as it existed in 1913 carried the prairies to the middle of the century. Municipal spending was cut to a bare minimum and the building of local improvements was discontinued. Municipal bonds sold at a high discount, if at all, and unemployment in the urban area and the larger towns was high. Political experimentation died with the economic and patriotic demands of the war and the appeals of socialists who would not support a popular war fell on deaf ears.

48 cont'd and "Land Speculation and Urban Development in Calgary, 1884-1912", by Max Foran, pp 203-220. Not mysteriously the problems of Red Deer were much like those of Calgary.

49 AFP Oct. 11, 1912; The Red Deer paper did not report the recession until after it was in full swing, and the quality of reporting in Red Deer and in other papers declined noticeably about this time. Social events were cont'd ...
As usual the effects of the 'bust' were heaviest on merchants who obtained most of their business from rural customers. In January 1913 the Delburne Trading Company made an offer to customers which it claimed was unique in the province. In an effort to bolster sagging business the company offered to take animals, butter, eggs, hides, and wool on account in advance. The credit balance of the seller would bear interest at 5% until the account were closed. The borrowing of money from customers at 5% for the sustenance of a business was indeed unusual, and was probably met with little interest from the farming population; no more was seen of the matter in the columns of the paper. The legal advertisement sections of the local papers were sprinkled through the spring of 1913 with notices of judicial sales. Not all of

49 cont'd

covered in less detail, political commentary became less sophisticated, rural news was rarely carried and sports coverage consumed more space than before. It was as if the frontier lost its heart. Commentary on rural economy all but ceased in the Red Deer News after approximately 1911, although the affairs of the Red Deer Cooperative Society were reported in great detail and the paper contained much on the debate over single taxation. Between mid-1909 and mid-1914 the paper carried only five items on swine and about twenty items on dairy matters, most of which were reports on the arrival of better-off farmers with carloads of purebred animals from the east or rumours of the erection of dairy factories.

50 DP Jan. 1, 1913. The rest of this paragraph is derived from AFP Feb. 7, Feb. 28, March 14, and Aug. 8, 1913.
these, nor in fact even a large number, were prosecuted against hated non-resident speculative idlers. In February 1913 the pool room and restaurant opposite the Grand Hotel in Alix went under the hammer, and there was a notice that the coal mine of Mr. Conger was being taken over by the Stettler Mining Company. Joseph Todd of Alix, the man after whom the town originally was named Toddville and the seller of town lots and proprietor of Todd's Hall, was forced to sell his Maxwell automobile, and there were numerous declarations by the merchants of the towns and villages that the era of the cash business had finally arrived. The general store of Everett A. Tate in Alix was put on the cash business in February of 1913, and was the first known to so advertise in the recession; the action was but a stalling motion in an unequal race and Tate called in the receivers in midsummer. The asking prices of town lots slid substantially from 1912 boom prices, and there was a note of desperation in many of the advertisements. Main street lots sold for an average of $300 to $500, and corner lots even more, to outsiders such as banks in boom times; it was possible in 1913 to pick up five commercial lots in Alix for only $1100. Corner residential lots were being offered at $250, which was said to be one half the earlier average for mid-block lots.

The depression was either less severe in Red Deer or was mooted less; the number of properties advertised for sale decreased markedly after the fall of 1912, and it was rare to see an asking price listed. The growth of Red Deer had been
enormous during the boom of 1912, an increase of 33% having been registered in population and large numbers of buildings erected. Some merchants had erected opulent houses, often with modern central heating, and business expansion was stunning. A large industrial park associated with a nursery was planned and partially built on some property which had been the farm of George Root, gentleman cattle raiser, leading light of the Central Alberta Stock Growers' Association, and Conservative candidate in the election of 1908. The scheme was financed by Toronto and British capital and was just underway in the fall of 1912 when the recession struck.\textsuperscript{51}

Inevitably much of the expansion was hollow and the expenditures of the municipality, as conservative as Red Deer was, were $40,000 over allowable debenture levels for 1912. This amount stood as a bank overdraft and the city fathers, which status Red Deer felt it merited by the end of 1912, were concerned at the high level of arrears in taxes. As it turned out however, the arrears were largely confined to unserved new subdivisions which over the next few years were seized. By the end of 1913 the city found that it was in uncommonly sound financial condition by the standards of the time.\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{51} The details of the scheme, modelled on 'Factoria', are available in various 1912 issues of the RDN as follows: Feb. 28, Sept. 11, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, Oct. 9, Oct. 23. It was called the Red Deer Development Company and was under the direction of W.P. Bull of Toronto.

\textsuperscript{52} RDN Feb. 13 and Dec. 3, 1913.
Red Deer merchants went under at about the same rate as those in other centres, and one of them, a jeweller by the name of Humber, might have taken an award for frankness in a time when other men were having 'stock unloading sales', 'renovation sales', and 'expansion sales'. He offered reductions up to 50% in a 'money stringency sale'. As in other recessions the merchants who were apparently most affected were those in luxury goods or in goods that could be manufactured at home--jewellers, milliners, general merchants and dry goods retailers were particularly hard hit.

The prices of farmlands changed little as the period closed; a number of properties were advertised around Alix in 1913 for up to $25 or $30 per acre, and even more in the case of properties which possessed something unusual in the way of improvements. Raw land around Red Deer went for approximately similar values, but there were a number of very much improved properties in older districts near the town which commanded very high prices indeed. An offering in 1912 involved a superior farm one mile to the southeast of town, consisting of 453 acres fenced and cross fenced; 350

53 RDN Nov. 26, 1913. In fact Humber had already had a 'clean up' sale in May of 1913. Mid-1913 seems to have been the most common time of reckoning for merchants, probably because it was financially the end of the farming year and there was little money in town economies until September at the earliest.

54 Six property advertisements in the AFP of March 14, 1913 are typical. Prices seem to have been little affected by the depression; it lasted slightly more than a year and consequently was shorter than that of 1907-1909, and shorter than farmers in general were capable of weathering.
acres cultivated; a good brick house and a number of ancillary buildings; numerous implements; 13 horses, 45 cattle, 27 hogs, and 150 hens; and miscellaneous equipment. The asking price was $35,000 with $15,000 down, a price which amounts to about $70 per acre, or something near the mean total dollar valuation of farmland and chattels per acre near Red Deer in 1911.

Because of the steady increase in prices of purchased goods and the declining real value of agricultural commodities, the real price of land had in fact fallen since 1900, and there were few farmers, if any, who could have sold out at a reasonable return on their labour over the years. Real estate speculation received a drubbing at the hands of the Alix Free Press in the summer of 1913, the height of the depression.

"Real estate speculation has received a hard jolt by the present financial stringency, and it is to be hoped that it has received a permanent jolt. If all the money that has been spent in the west had been invested in productive enterprises there would be no money stringency now, and everyone would be a whole lot better off. This buying of land and waiting for someone else to make it valuable for you is bad economically. It is no wonder that the farmers and the other producers of the country get sore when they see men who depend upon their tongue for a living rolling around in motor cars, when they themselves find it difficult to make a decent living, let alone own motor cars."

(56)

55 Unfortunately no further identification as to the location was made. RDN March 6, 1912.

56 AFP July 18, 1913, excerpted from the Strathmore Standard; the editorial echoes the warnings of a number of financial experts who felt the tremor of disaster as cont'd ...
The editorial went on to call for the extinction of the real estate speculator, and ventured that the single tax was doing a lot to make the speculation in real estate unprofitable. The Clive News Recorder was of a similar opinion months later:

"The times are not to be deplored. Some people had the mistaken idea that they were doing their duty to themselves and to their country if they made a quick turn in land and made a lot of money by it. They forgot that the country is no better off because they made a lucky deal. They are finding out now that it is possible that they are not so much better off and many of them are now at work. That will be better for all concerned. (57)

The perplexity of financial commentators on the whereabouts of money was repeated in the depression of 1913. But this time there was the added twist of a conspiracy theory. Obviously money had been put away somewhere by sharp dealers; according to the thinking of the time the money supply was amenable to being locked up in a cupboard. Eastern capitalists were to blame for the problem according to an editorial in the News, but the writer allowed the re-

56 cont’d
early as the summer of 1912. See the report in the RDN on the pessimistic address of D.R. Wilkie, President of the Imperial Bank, to the Annual General Meeting of that corporation in 1912 (RDN June 5, 1912). Wilkie detected folly in anything which gave up to 500% return and felt that much was invested in things "... which bring in no immediate revenue".

57 News Recorder May 13, 1914. Henceforth cited as NR.

58 The item seems to have been excerpted: RDN April 23, 1913. The depression was in fact caused mainly by the failure of wheat on the Liverpool market and the withdrawal of British investment capital from the Canadian west. See Paul Sharp, "The American Farmer and the 'Last Best West'", Agricultural History 21:1 (1947), p 73.
mote possibility that cyclical phenomena in business were natural.

Over the winter of 1913-1914 the rural economy loosened somewhat, led by increasing prices for pork and beef; by the spring of 1914 there was an air of optimism in the region that the worst had passed and the future promised a return to the free conditions of previous years. According to the News Recorder the winter of 1913-1914 was 'gay'.

The price of pork continued an upward climb, and around Delburne a large amount of farm machinery was being purchased. Storekeepers had been receiving more ready cash in the Clive area, although in that district generally there were still, apparently, a lot of persons who were ready to throw in the towel.

"A number of Clive people in common with many other small towns are in the dumps. They are gloomy and despondent. They have no bright expectation. They are convinced that business is bad, that it is not getting better, and that altogether the country is in a bad way. One or two talk as if they had lost faith in the town and the district ... It is true that there is a depression in western Canada, and in all Canada as a matter of fact, and we are not coming out of it as rapidly as we hoped. But we are moving that way. Good times or bad times to a certain extent is a matter of confidence. If we sing a doleful song we shall witness doleful times. If we sing a glad song better times will come all the sooner."

59 NR March 25, 1914.
60 DP April 17, 1914.
61 NR March 25, 1914.
62 NR May 13, 1914.
The editor was sure that the future would be better than ever, and that the time involved for the resurgence was only a matter of months. His forecast was of middling accuracy. Times changed and there was improvement of a sort in the market price of a number of farm products, notably pork which reached $9 by autumn and retreated in chaos. There was every reason to assume that the outbreak of the war would benefit farmers, but in the same manner in which real dollar earnings were eaten away by the change in prices of consumer products after 1909, many of the earnings of the war years would be eroded. With remarkable foresight the editor of the Delburne Progress, S.A. Gill, remarked in an editorial only a few days after the declaration of hostilities:

"In all probability this European war will put the price of hogs, cattle, horses and grain up to a high level and those in this country who have the above-mentioned articles to sell will reap the benefit of the high price." (63)

But Gill went on to say that the rise in farm prices would ultimately be matched by the rise in the prices of all things. Gill was writing for an audience of American and Ontario immigrants, most of whom were, as was the Progress, liberal. The older more established area of Clive in which there was a Conservative majority in the election of 1913 (one of only three polling divisions in the provincial riding of Lacombe that went Conservative) was treated to a more benign editorial on the war. Businessmen were exhorted

63 DP Aug. 7, 1914.
to proceed in a cautious manner and to remember the British connection. Because of the vast untouched natural resources of the nation it stood to come out of the war ahead. Canada was a new country and still needed immigrants; the end of the European conflict would see large numbers of the best class of European coming to Canada to escape hundreds of years of repetitious destruction in the homeland.  

The early effects of the War were a few weeks in coming. It was clear that the price of grain would rise. By the harvest season at the end of August labour was difficult to find and it appears that many of the first men to enlist were casual farm labour or town loafers who were employed only for a part of the year. The first man to go from Clive was a bank teller; he had no harvest to gather and was given a festive dinner. As the harvest proceeded the usual number of migratory harvest labourers failed to appear. The legacy of the bust of 1913 left many farms in debt, and in order to clear the decks for war the magistrates of the province combined in a declaration, which could hardly have had any firm constitutional foundation, that for the duration no foreclosures would be ordered on productive land being farmed or

64 NR Aug. 12, 1914. This editorial clearly states one premise on which the new world was considered superior to the old: conflict might be resolved without militarism. The editor supported the Imperial tie and the duty of the subject to the homeland; it was the 'inhuman ghoul', the Kaiser, who was to blame for a conflict which reduced the heads of tender families to mere numbers "... so carelessly estimated in the dispatches".

65 DP Sept. 11, 1914.
or ranched by the mortgagors. 66

After his original burst of cynicism the editor of the Delburne Progress collected his thoughts on the future and on the war in an editorial of stunning flamboyance, an editorial which symbolically ended an era by combining many of the most notable and reprehensible qualities of the period of booming, monopoly, free enterprise and overconfidence built on flimsy information. Delburne's boom which had been so long awaited was at hand.

"GOOD TIMES AHEAD"

"The sudden breaking out of war caused many to run to cover. Like the chicken on whom the rose leaf fell, some of us became afraid of fear, and were ready to declare the sky is falling. Now our vision is clear, our alarm has fled, [and] we have recovered our poise and courage. We also see our opportunity. Swiftly and almost overwhelmingly has come to us the perception of the fact that the competition of Continental Europe has been taken away." (67)

With the outbreak of war conditions were set loose which in a short time entailed the end of the frontier. According to one of our informants 68 the happy subsistence stereotype of homestead life had some validity in the pre-war parklands. The only real outside requirements of the farm were sugar, salt, tobacco, and, for some people, liquor. By 1912 the cheapness and reliability of automobiles made families more mobile. The war changed everything because for the

66 NR Sept. 23, 1914.
67 DP Aug. 28, 1914.
68 Information from JLB.
first time farmers could actually make money and this money changed tastes, ambitions and patterns of household expenditure. It was not used to reduce debt or to optimize intra-farm land use, but was treated as a new boom in the manner which the *Progress* expected; the evils of land acquisition for its own sake, soil exhaustion, excessive debt, and unimaginative land use were prolonged.  

69 For a treatment of these themes see John H. Thompson, "Permanently Wasteful but Immediately Profitable: Prairie Agriculture and the Great War", Historical Papers, Canadian Historical Association (1976) pp 193-206.
TENURE, OCCUPANCY, LAND USE AND TAXATION

Introduction

The spatial patterns of land use in the study area were determined by the complex interaction of a number of influences including the availability of farm credit; accessibility of railway transportation; market prices of farm products; physical terrain; cultural background of the population and the original wealth of immigrants; and the extent to which crucial numbers of them 'made good' during the periods of economic expansion. The later fortunes of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company were also important.

It would be advisable to compare the land use and tenure of various districts among the years 1901, 1906, and 1911, all years of the Census. Unfortunately there is no detailed information available for the Census of 1906.

For the purposes of this study land use has meant economic exploitation of the land by man, including all intensities of use on both owned and non-owned land. Consequently, large vacant areas or unsettled quarters are considered to have been put to some use in respect of hay cutting, pasturage or wood fuel.

The material for 1906 at the Census of Agriculture, Ottawa, is in the form of original nominal enumerations complete with the location of the property and all details of tenancy and land use. This material understandably is not available for public use, but the Census of 1911 has been distilled to a ledger form similar to that of 1901 which is available. The sub-district data is cont'd...
At a time when the western portion of the Dominion was becoming an important part of the national fabric it is interesting to find that only a small portion of the land in the study area, and probably most of the parkland belt, was used intensively.72

The beef production of the province of Alberta as a whole, for one example, was less than it could have been around 1908 because of the failure of both settlers and ranchers to stay on the land. Their departure either under distress after the winter of 1906-1907 or by 'sell out' allowed entry to speculators who held land inactive, and sometimes out of reach of the same ranchers who had at first been forced to curtail extensive operations by the arrival of the immigrants.73 In some districts farming settlers were unable to use idle grazing land, and around Lacombe the countryside was not carrying the number of farmers that in theory it could. A meeting in February 1910 of the Lacombe Board of Trade was concerned with "...settling up of the great amount of vacant land ..."74 A committee was struck to advertise the town in an effort to counteract what appears to have been

71 cont'd
listed in a number of tables preserved on microfilm. The use of this material involves some adjustments to the tables because of some rather curious and disturbing irregularities in the originals.

72 By intensive use we mean the repeated cropping of arable land, or the careful tending of artificial pasture at relatively high levels of animal intensity.

73 ADA 1908-p 152.

74 LG Feb. 2, 1910.
actual depopulation. The total net increase in adult population for the period 1906-1911 in the four townships nearest Lacombe was only 111 according to the Census. This loss of population was not necessarily an evil, according to the Western Globe, if it meant that the land tilled by those left behind was under optimum use; at best it meant in fact that the mean per capita income would rise as a result of being spread among fewer recipients. But this argument to be effective had to assume nearly 100% occupancy of land and high intensities of use. Neither case pertained on the parkland frontier.

The newspapers of the period reported settlers arriving weekly, but it does not seem that large contingents were involved and those arriving seem to have been taking up farms by purchase, and were only just or slightly more than, replenishing those departing, a number of whom were travelling southeast in search of a newer frontier.

75 LG Nov. 19, 1910.
Colonization and Vegetation

The changes in natural vegetation which accompanied the spread of settlement varied, being profound in some districts and slight in others. In the flat vallies around Lacombe, Blackfalds and Red Deer, clumps of willow and spruce survived along stream courses, and the country possessed an open aspect associated with extensive use in ranching and dairying and with the agricultural settlement of portions of these districts for twenty years or more. A large lake which inhibited Lacombe's commerce with the eastern country was drained from the east side of that town by government dredge in 1902-1903. This development was prejudicial to the commerce of Morningside, in which many settlers had traded to avoid the lake. In some places the process of draining through small rises of land to let out slough water into stream courses continued in a fashion which had been started at the turn of the century. The outlet of Buffalo Lake was enlarged in 1909 at the same time at which older drains from Parlby Lake and Spotted Slough were cleared. Smaller drainage projects were undertaken in other wet areas by individual farmers in idle weeks, and by constant ploughing around smaller sloughs and through them in drier years the

76 AFP April 9, 1909.
amount of usable cultivated land in the region was increased. In concert, the clumps of willow and other scrub which surrounded sloughs were reduced. Changes in the landscape were more marked in areas which at the time of colonization were largely under water or subject to flooding. Some willow bottoms were left in the wake of settlement and were taken up later by settlers who were not adverse to putting labour and time into clearing a type of land which in fact was excellent because of the high natural nitrogen content of the soil. Some spruce bogs were cleared after the turn of the century by Scandinavians who were not deterred by heavy timber; a concentration of Scandinavians in the Hickling District cleared much of the spruce in that area. They chose the district because of the wooded aspect and because large tracts of unsettled wooded land allowed related or acquainted settlers to set up in proximity.78

The whole central and much of the eastern section of the region still preserved large numbers of trees in 1910. Tees was said to have a wooded background 79 but there were areas in proximity where ranching was carried on which were 'bleak prairie'. Most of the land around the village of Alix

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77 This information from several informants.

78 Informant Oscar Hickling. Oscar is a member of a large and influential family after whom the district was named. He met success in farming, threshing, sawing wood, and brushing with traction engines.

79 Information for this paragraph comes from LG Feb. 16, 1909; AFP April 30, 1909; AFP April 22, 1910; AFP March 1, 1912; NR March 11, 1914.
was covered to the extent of five to fifteen per cent by what was called 'small brush' and most of the remainder was hayland, of which there were thousands of acres in 1910. Most farmers did nothing to this growth and browsed animals in it. Brush grew noticeably on the north slopes of knolls which characterize the topography of the district. Long Valley and Pleasant Valley were covered by 'grass regions', and there were few trees near Lacombe.

The district of Great Bend was rather densely settled at an early date for such a distant location; some of the land was open enough for grazing and there was less brush to clear than in the townships to the south. Settlement spread south from there to the district of Delburne, where the land was more broken and harboured numerous small ponds. But by 1912 the country surrounding Delburne was "not one tenth settled, for it is one that does not settle fast owing to the expense of the brushing, which every new settler has to undertake to put in a crop. There are patches that are free from brush, but the best land is that densely covered with brush." (80)

This interpretation, of course, has been met before. Presumably in the hummocky moraines around Delburne most of the clear areas were on overly well drained sandy soils, while the vegetated areas would have been less well drained spots in which organic and sedimentary accumulations had mounted up. Many settlers must have been either loathe to undertake homesteading of such broken land as that common around Del-

80 DP Jan. 31, 1913.
burne or had great difficulty in meeting the homestead regu-
lations. The Delburne paper announced with some satisfaction in 1912 that a change in the regulations of the Dominion Lands Branch regarding the 'proving up' of homesteads allowed, at the discretion of the homestead inspector, a reduction in the required amount of clearing if the land were exceptionally stony or hilly, and the house erected on ordinary homesteads, excluding purchased examples, needed no longer to be valued at $300 or more, being required only to be inhabitable.\(^{81}\)

A small amount of rather desultory settlement had occurred between Hillsdown and the future district of Del-
burne in concert with the dispersal of settlers away from the railway, but most of the area was given to ranching. According to information from informants, the area north and north-
east of Pine Lake which is now heavily wooded was lightly wooded or clear in the first decade of the century. The woods which have now been developing for several decades re-
present a growth which sprang up after a series of harsh fires between 1910 and 1912. A few settlers deserted home-
steads after sustaining heavy or total losses; this popula-
tion trend is noticeable on Map XXIII. The trees have hin-
dered ranchers little over ensuing years, but the browse is not of high quality.

\(^{81}\) DP July 5, 1912.
Demography and Colonization on the Late Frontier

The years 1907 and 1908 were ones of economic recession. Apparently few settlers arrived in the parklands if the low incidence of notices in the local papers for the period concerning arrivals is any indication. By 1909 the return of better economic conditions put settlers on the move again, and carloads were seen passing Alix for the country east of Stettler, which region was still in the raw frontier state. Some of the travellers, however, were destined for longer settled districts and purchased farms in the study area according to their means—shabby farms with much raw land for those who were trying their luck on slim savings, and more improved farms for those who were well capitalized and capable of buying out the product of many years' toil by some veteran of the land rush.

According to Agnes Laut the capital with which most American settlers arrived in 1909 was about $2000, and few came with less than $1000. Most parkland migrants were from

82 AFP March 26, 1909; AFP April 23, 1909.
83 If this were true it means that settlers were relatively worse off than in the years of the land rush when the mean capitalization seems to have been about $1000; the dollar was now worth less. See "Movement of [United States] Settlers to the Canadian West", AFP June 4, 1909.
the United States, and a rough count of the arrivals passing through Alix on one day in April 1909 revealed that seven families were from the United States and two from Ontario. This was said to have been "... about the average proportion this spring". 84 Despite net depopulation of the area around Lacombe, some settlers were arriving at that place to take up improved farms, and they were said to have been of the best class and progressive farmers. 85 The Delburne area developed slowly and lost population after 1911; the arrival of settlers there was routinely reported in the papers, but few of the newcomers seem to have been possessed of anything out of the ordinary in money or goods. Many Delburne arrivals were purchasing land, and families continued to arrive at least to the outbreak of war. 86 There was said to have been plenty of land left to settle in the district. Settlers continued to arrive at Clive at least until the outbreak of war but the number must not have been spectacular; 87 the district lost population from 1906 to 1911 and was essentially moribund from 1911 to 1916.

Map XVIII demonstrates the trend of population in the study area over the decade 1906-1916. The latter date is not

84 AFP April 9, 1909.
85 IG June 22, 1910.
86 For a sample of arrival notices see the reports of several families purchasing in April of 1914 in DP April 10, 1914.
87 NR March 8, 1914; fifteen settlers arrived in February of 1914.
strictly within the study period, being included for whatever it might indicate from 1911 to the outbreak of war. The symbols, or lack of them, on the maps indicate whether a given township a) gained population at a rate greater than 10 per cent over each five year span, b) remained stable in population or gained at a rate less than 10 per cent, or c) lost population. Townships without symbols, then, gained more than 10 per cent per five year period. The setting of the threshold at ten per cent for the visual presentation of the data is arbitrary. The level represents not only an insignificant number of persons when the mean population of townships is taken into account, but also, since the interval of the data is five years, a meaningless annual increment. The change, of course, is on a net basis, and there must still have been settlers arriving in townships which nevertheless show a net decrease of population. The redistribution of farms in such districts may have meant more intensive use of land, or more land under cultivation, but there is no data from which this may be derived with certainty. There are strong circumstantial indications that such a trend was underway east of Penhold, which district was settled in the eighties.

There are few townships on the map with no symbols, that is, few in which there was constant population increase in the decade 1906-1916. Thirteen were stagnant in the period 1906-1911, and eight lost population. Most interesting
is that ten townships were stagnant from 1911-1916 and a total of fourteen lost population. The loss of population in the latter period is nearly confined to the districts of poorer soils and adverse topography to the south of the Red Deer River, and to three townships running north and south of Red Deer. Equally noteworthy, and of essential importance to the arguments for the model of frontier land use presented in Chapter V, is that five townships along the line of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, including those in which Lacombe, Red Deer and Penhold were located gained population at a rate between one and ten per cent for both five year periods. Nowhere else did this happen, and this phenomenon will later be used in the argument that there was a dynamic balance of population, the maintenance of which was dependent upon property values. Towns served by rail naturally enjoyed an advance of land value in the vicinity, but only to a threshold which represented the premium the potential settler was willing to pay in an era in which there was much cheaper land still available away from easy access to rail and from the amenities of town.

The stagnation or decline of population did not necessarily imply stagnation in the local economy, as the Lacombe Globe pointed out in an item cited above. Relatively wealthy arrivals often bought out not only one, but sometimes a number of veteran settlers who then, as the habit of the time was, went to the coast or passed on to some new frontier,
usually to the east. A number of well-known and prosperous farms were assembled around Red Deer in this fashion, and in the tract of the SLHC there was much land for sale after the affairs of the company were resolved by Ontario litigation after 1909. Some of the land involved in the litigation was still advertised for sale in 1914 under aegis of the Cunningham Land Company, a real estate firm named after the shareholder who had successfully, and very expensively, sued the Leadlys and John T. Moore over the assignment of the lands of the company for $1. The SLHC appeared as late as 1918 on the tax rolls of the Municipal District (M.D.) of Crown, which district occupied a large square of country east of Lacombe. At that time the company was owner of the remainder of the section in which the hamlet of Joffre on the Canadian Northern Railway line was located. Joffre remained ephemeral, but the land policies of the SLHC in holding land around railway points and potential town sites was similar to that of 35 years before.

A few homesteaders were a type we call the perpetual frontiersman. From some complex of character or the expectation of a financial coup they were never far from the leading edge of white civilization. In effect men who opened farms time after time, selling them shortly after they had become usable economic units, were land breaking contractors who moved from job to job. Whether any of them made much money is a moot point. There was something in the frontier experience which was magnetic, and it drew men like Levi Whitesell,
father of the William Whitesell who is one of the informants for this study, to frontier after frontier. Some perpetual frontiersmen happily were caught in the act by newspapers. A settlement called Willowbrook was located in sec. 34 34 6 w4 and was populated by persons from Lacombe and North Dakota. About 145 miles east of Lacombe another settlement of expatriates from the Tail Creek area was set up. Their land was said to have been 'choice' and a number of families were leaving for it in the spring of 1909, including W.N. Jaeck who owned a full breaking outfit. The departure of Morningside people to the east, related by an informant, is confirmed by an entry in the Lacombe Globe of June 22, 1909 at which time a number of families were moving to the east. The names of five were supplied, and there may have been others, since the Census data show that 32 fewer persons were resident in T 42 26 in 1911 than in 1906.

The reasons for which families moved from the parkland frontier were as diverse as the reasons for which persons immigrated. Some were perverse, some economic and others tragic. W.S. Carter arrived from Iowa sometime before 1905 with a wife and three lovely daughters. Carter stayed long enough to be remembered as a good farmer, but left for Iowa again after two of the girls died in the same week in the summer of 1905. Nearly similar stories accounted for numerous

88 LG Dec. 10, 1910.
89 AFP May 21, 1909.
90 Wagon Trails, p 168.
departures from the region. Some families plainly just did not like Alberta. Perhaps it was too cold, or the expected relief from a severe asthmatic condition failed to appear. Charles H. Pridham prospected in Spring Valley in 1909, bought a farm and moved his family from Olympia, Washington in April 1910. They were gone by November. This story as well might be found in scores of variations. Local histories of the southern parklands list many properties as being sold three times before the war, and sometimes more. Migration within the region was considerable, and many families seem to have regarded farm homes as little more than hotels in which they stopped over while cultivating land. Often the objective involved in local migration was improving the soil base of the farming operation, and many families apparently moved from some lightly endowed area to a 'black soil' farm when they could afford it. It would be mere speculation to suggest that this trend led to low standards of care for the soil, little involvement in the improvement of houses or outbuildings for comfort, efficiency, or aesthetics, and social instability and superficiality in the most-affected districts, but the depopulation of townships scoring low values on the capability map strongly suggests such a conclusion.

Ibid, p 162.

This section is a synthesis of impressions gained from reading newspapers and local histories. The available data have survived only fortuitously in a small sample and is unsuited to systematic treatment.
If farmers were prone to moving at the drop of a hat, merchants also regarded the opening of new towns as a chance for commercial musical chairs. The number of merchants who moved from established businesses, or who set up branch outlets in new towns just a few miles down rail lines was not insignificant, and is an indication that the profits from the first years of a frontier, when the savings of arriving settlers were spent on essentials, were probably greater than the steady business of established towns. Russell B. Wilkinson, hardware merchant of Content, opened a branch store in Clive; ironically the former settlement was disbanded in 1912. A wholesale-price 'removal' sale was held by the Morris and Taylor store of Lacombe when they moved to Castor in 1910. The Bailey store at Forster, now known as Bashaw after the contractor of that name who not only supplied the building materials for much of the town of Alix but also designed many of the buildings, was moved to Lignite and became one of the few buildings ever to locate there. Hop Chung, restauranteur of Lacombe and butt of racist gibes in the Globe, opened a restaurant in Alix, and later some Red Deer Chinese, who were called 'celestial gentlemen' by the Progress, located a restaurant and laundry in Delburne.

93 LG March 16, 1910.
94 Idem.
95 AFP Dec. 22, 1910.
97 DP Feb. 14, 1913.
lonel Hogg, auctioneer, of Alix moved his business to the newer town of Delburne. Most of these changes involved removal to a place which was less developed than the town of origin, and which presumably was in line for rapid economic development. It was apparently inconceivable that places like Lignite and Delburne would either never get on their feet or wobble when they did; if such a possibility were realized then many men used their savings and credit in ventures which gave pitiable returns or ruined them.
Rate of Occupancy

The percentage of land occupied and the percentage of land improved on occupied farms is shown in Map XX. This map reveals that the land along the corridor of the C&E line was occupied to an extent of something over 50%, with the land in T 40 26 east of Lacombe reaching the high figure of 79%. The high figure of 91% in Sub-District 18 to the southwest of Alix concerns only one township, and the major activity there was ranching. Although there is a slight tendency for the land farther from the C&E corridor to be less settled, variations are not sufficient to establish any meaningful trend. Notably the area of St. Patricks School District and the area south across the river, Hillsdown, was more lightly settled than the rest of the region. These areas are geologically of moderately or very hummocky moraine; they were settled late, were not amenable to cultivation or to the easy arrangement of fields, and possessed limited supplies of well water. Otherwise the map is notable

99 The percentages in this section and in ensuing ones, unless noted otherwise, are rounded to the nearest whole per cent; the use of fractional percentages in a set of data which is laced with discrepancies would be frivolous. The sub-districts are outlined in Map XIX.

100 See A. MacS. Stalker, The Surficial Geology of the Red Deer-Stettler Map Area, op.cit., Chapter II.
See Appendix II for location of sub-district 84
for uniformity. Most sub-districts were just over one half settled, although it must be realized that there might have been individual townships or neighbourhoods smaller than a township which were much more densely occupied. The rate of occupancy of the land does not seem to be a meaningful indicator in itself, and the important dynamic component in frontier land use was apparently an interaction between length of time that a given tract of land had been settled to a threshold level of occupancy and the concomitant rise of property values within the tract, apparently also to a threshold.

The information on the map agrees with comments in newspapers of the time claiming that settlement was neither complete, nor in many places very dense. Until 1921 the population of the area remained nominally stable, some townships gaining a few persons and others losing; if later the cultivation or other economic use of the land reached a higher figure than the mean of 50% recorded in this data, the increase must have come from the expansion of the mean acreage of farm units rather than from an increase in the number of farm units. It is possible that the depopulation of the rural areas of the west in the twenties and thirties, as much as it may have been occasioned by very adverse conditions in those decades, should be regarded as the prolongation of a trend dependent upon adjustments in land use which commenced even before the frontier period was over. In fact, some townships in the study area seem to have commenced the adjustment to more 'modern' conditions of rural land occupancy
just after the land rush, popularly regarded at the time merely as the start of rural economic expansion. The demise of the Methodist Ontario model of rural colonization dates from just after the turn of the century—the time of the grand influx of settlers which was supposed to be the vindication of the vision.

**Rate of Improvement**

Regardless of the gross amount of land improved in any sub-district, the amount of land improved expressed as a percentage of the farm land occupied in 1911 shows a remarkable uniformity. This fact argues for the proposition that farm units were generally similar in the ratio of improved to unimproved land except, of course, for inevitable deviations caused by the few farms which were operated at high levels of capitalization and more intensely cultivated, and by those which were underutilized. Only in the south-eastern quarter of the map does the percentage fall below 20%, and these sub-districts were covered by difficult ground moraine or by the hummocky moraine mentioned before. As well, Sub-District 87 (Delburne) was still undergoing settlement by homesteaders and purchasers. The longest settled areas, Blackfalds, Lacombe, Balmoral and Red Deer exhibit the highest percentages of improved land, in addition to being the districts of highest occupancy.

The hypothesis that the ratio of improved to unim-
proved land represents land use decisions typical to the
time is supported by conversation with old-timers, by our
survey of auction notices and real estate offerings, and by
miscellaneous data. By 1910 and 1911 some 'ranchers' were
growing grains or tame pasture for winter feed, and although
ranchers would have preferred, for reasons of social pres-
tige and because they marketed beef to retain the title 'ran-
cher', many beef operations of the second decade of the cen-
tury had passed from ranging to an intermediate form of
feeding operation closer to the modern type, that is, to
stock farming. Consequently, many ranching districts in the
study area were composed of farms in which there was in fact
a diversity of land uses, as well as a number of farms that
were more heavily devoted to arable cropping.

The maintenance of the level of improved land at be-
tween 20 and 30% of occupied acreage deserves reiteration.
In the era of horse farming there was much time used on the
farm for the maintenance of draft power, and if the horse
were grazed on land within the farm, a percentage of the
land so used was often left unimproved. Arable acreage had
to be gauged to the number of teams and men available for
ploughing. Even with cash on hand it was sometimes diffi-
cult to hire teams and ploughmen, and boys were usually put
to such labour by the age of 12. A mixed dairy/cropping or
dairy/swine/cropping operation required in addition an amount
of pasture for milch cows, which according to auction notices
rarely numbered more than twelve and frequently less than six. Threshing required time which might have been used for fall ploughing, but notes were due in the fall and threshers sometimes arrived at a time which might have been used for increasing arable acreage. 101

Probably the most important force keeping improved acreage at a low percentage was a conservative approach to risk; the overextension of arable acreage could be highly compromising if crop prices fell and there were no uses on the farm for excess grain or hay. Labour supplies were uncertain and the durability of machines less than it should have been; there was little point in putting in a large crop that might not come off, could not be consumed on the farm, or be sold in the market. On-farm grain storage was primitive and scanty and the road system and the technology of horse-drawn transport was essentially inadequate for the handling of large quantities of one product. Fields which had been seeded and failed to return the investment still required cultivation for weed control or for laying of pasture. Fields run to weeds 102 were economically inferior even to

101 A complaint in the Delburne Progress mentioned that it was difficult to get ploughing done 'early and often' when it was necessary to be shuttling to the rail siding with grain. DP Sept. 8, 1909.

102 Weeds were not common until after the turn of the century. Some old-timers claim that the fields of the frontier, although they may have been of rougher tilth than modern ones, were essentially free of weeds. Unclean seed grain imported by those in the land rush was responsible for the introduction of weeds, which by 1911 had become pestilential in some districts. Early far- cont'd...
PLATE VII-A
ARRANGEMENT OF BUILDINGS ON A TYPICAL PARKLAND FARM

With the exception of the steel granary this complex of farm buildings shows the common features of parkland farms after the first decade of the century. The house on the left is that shown in Plate VI-B, and the view is toward the west.

PLATE VII-B
A FURTHER EXAMPLE OF THE TYPICAL ARRANGEMENT OF FARM BUILDINGS.

This quarter, nw of 36-38-26 w4, was homesteaded in 1894 Marshall and Dolly Boomer, former Nova Scotians who had lived for a time in Walla Walla, Washington. The first house, presumably not this one, was the halfway house on the 'Old Trail' to the Jones Creek crossing of the Red Deer River. The Boomers and their seven children were among the prairie schooner contingent of the early nineties, and unlike many families of the time they made a satisfactory living. Ultimately there were nine children and most resided locally.
unbroken prairie. Most operators were both unwilling and unable to sustain an expenditure of capital after a heavy loss and avoided the first gamble. Because of this conspiracy of factors the amount of improved land in the region remained quite constant throughout the era when a man and a team, or two teams operated by a pair of men or a man and a boy were the only draft power on the farm.

There is little information concerning the shifts which could have been expected in land utilization in farms larger than a quarter section. The few auction and sales records which survive for larger farms usually represent the more successful highly capitalized stock venture. Some sales notices for quarter section farms may have represented a part of a larger holding. A tract of 6000 acres complete with 60 head of horses was offered for sale near Lacombe in the dark days of October 1913, and on this land, which was offered for the enormous sum of $200,000, 2000 acres were cultivated and 1400 of these were in grain. A farm of 297 acres was offered near Delburne in which 80 acres was in crop. The proportions of land use on both of these examples, as scanty as they are in number, approximate the figures typical for

102 cont'd
mers routinely inserted an extra harrowing into the seeding routine two days after seeding. This had the effect of breaking up weed seedlings which had started before the grain seed, but merely tumbled the germinating grain. This practice went into limbo for several decades but has received recent comment in the agricultural press.

103 LG Oct. 1, 1913.
the region. The large farm advertised for sale in Red Deer, cited earlier in this chapter from 1912, was, on the other hand, not typical of the regional mean of farm size or percentage of improved land having 350 of 453 acres cultivated.

Farm Size

In the period of the study reliance upon horses for draft power, the lingering effects of the Dominion Lands system, and the tradition of the 160-acre homestead and family farm combined to ensure that most farms were of the quarter section size. Unfortunately, categorical listings of data for farm size lacked imagination in the Census of 1911. Farms fell into one of four sizes under one hundred acres, but only into two categories above that, one of these being a catchall for all entries over 201 acres. Clearly only the most grossly approximate impression of the distribution of farm sizes may be found from such data.

Assuming that the figures for farms between 101 and 200 acres represent almost exclusively quarter section farms, and that the figures for farms over 201 acres are representative of farms that are in the majority 320 acres, any entry on Map XXI which represents a ratio of 2:1 will indicate a sub-district in which owned land is approximately equally divided between quarter section units and larger ones, probably of 320 acres. Any entry on the map in which the ratio is 1:1 will represent an area in which the land occupied was
MAP XXI
APPROXIMATE MEAN FARM SIZE AND RATIO OF NUMBER OF FARMS OVER 200 ACRES TO THOSE UNDER 200
1911
See Appendix II
operated in farms larger than a quarter section. In consulting the map lower ratio values are found on the western side of the study area along the corridor of the C&E, the values in the more recently settled districts to the east tending to be higher. There is a weak tendency for the ratio to be lower in districts in which a higher percentage of the land is settled; that is, larger farm units are more common as a proportion of the total land area settled in districts in which more land is occupied, but this conclusion and the reasoning in the following part of this section are valid only if there were not a substantial number of grossly large farm units present.

Since this data has been compiled on the basis only of the number of farm units and not on their actual size, and since the assumption that a 'large' farm unit amounts to 320 acres may be unrealistically low in many of the districts in which there were some very large units, it seems appropriate to assume that in the more densely settled areas some set of forces was at work by the first decade of the century to encourage the upward movement of the mean size of a farm. Such an upward movement could be accomplished at the same time as new settlers arrived if there were sufficient land at a desirable price to accommodate both farm expansion and the opening of new, probably smaller, farm units. But it is not likely that the potential operators of new farms would have been eager to choose a small farm in an older district in
which farm amalgamation was taking place if one of the effects of the amalgamation were a rise in the bid price for land. Purchasers of large farms were probably outsiders with considerable funds. They may have been numerous enough to sustain the price of land, but did not sustain the population. Pioneer arrivals were more prone to choosing a piece of land, whether by homestead or purchase, in a more recent frontier area such as the Delburne, Erskine, or Stettler districts, or farther east. Furthermore every pioneer had in his mind the vision that he would be one of those to expand in years to come and it would have been potentially foolish to enter an area in which the land available for potential expansion was already being taken up by persons who had a lead economically of several years on the newcomer.

Elderly informants for this study were very clear that farmers took on extra land 'whenever they could get it', and there was an almost universal objective to move up from the quarter section farm. In concert with the inclination to take on additional land is the clear indication that very little of the land surface was intensively used, and one can only speculate that the marginal productivity of capital invested in more land was greater than that used for intensification of land use on a single quarter. This speculation implies that extensive production was more profitable than intensive, or that it was less risky. Perhaps it was simply easier, or lightly improved farms may have sold more readily.

The eastward railway development from Lacombe which
everyone thought would give the growing town a
great jump on the town of Red Deer proved to have exactly
the opposite effect--the so-called backwash--in which the
life and promise of the town was literally sucked away down
the rails. The removal of some merchants, as mentioned
above, was symptomatic. The classic theory of decreasing
population and settlement density at distance from a railway
is not supported by our data. Railway development, if it
raised land prices, made selling out to neighbours a favour-
able prospect to some whom we call perpetual frontiersmen.
The resulting depopulation near the rail and the movement of
settlers to unserved areas farther away reverses the map ex-
pected in theory. The depopulation of rural western Cana-
da might be said to be a frontier process, and a long one,
rather than a post-frontier phenomenon occurring in a more
mature setting. Red Deer, secluded in a pocket of good soil
between the River on the west and the morainic ridges behind
Hillsdown on the east was probably lucky not to have had
railway branch line development. The population of the town
grew steadily over the years under cautious but progressive
municipal governments while Lacombe languished.

104 A similar finding was published in connection with
Iowa 'wooded belt' settlement. See Leslie Hewes, "Some
Features of Early Woodland and Prairie Settlement in a
Taxation

Throughout the pioneer period taxes on land had been minimal, and in most instances landowners had been able to work off taxes by labour on road gangs. The mill rate in most Local Improvement Districts had been set at a level which implicated the farmer into paying something between $10 and $20 per year in taxes, and school taxes were about the same. Many persons were perpetually in arrears, but there were apparently few tax sales of rural properties, and the bulk of these originated from abandonment. As the frontier developed it became clear that a more concerted effort was needed in providing adequate roads, in replacing and enlarging school buildings and in hiring more teaching staff to handle the needs of the larger number of children the system was forced to serve. The educational needs of children being raised in an increasingly sophisticated and more open society could not be served by the one-room school house, and the consolidated school district was thought to be the coming wave. In road maintenance the old Local Improvement Districts\textsuperscript{105} had outlived their usefulness as an 'ad hoc'

method of dealing with only the worst of the mud holes and with those streams which most urgently needed bridging.

In the early summer of 1912 the Department of Municipal Affairs ordered all the Local Improvement Districts to wind up, and instructed the citizens of the province to hold discussions, and ultimately referenda, on the form of government which would be chosen by each—rural municipality or municipal district.106 If the discussions which were held in the vicinity of Delburne are any indication, the occasion was treated as a field day by politically-minded people.

The province planned that the countryside be divided into blocks of nine townships, or where this was not realistic "... as near nine townships as the nature of the country would allow." One of the objectives of the system was to confer borrowing power for road improvement. School taxes were to be collected by the M.D. or R.M.107 and remitted to the various school districts according to budgets filed by them. One of the weaknesses in this system was that it was possible for a school district to run a deficit without legally being responsible for it; if the arrears of taxes were any substantial percentage then it was possible

106 Noted from the DP June 28, 1912, but apparently not attracting much interest elsewhere. The whole issue was passed by in Red Deer. Possibly the relative newness of the frontier at Delburne engendered an impression that the debate was important.

107 In constitution the two forms of district were much similar, the difference being that the Rural Municipality was not centred upon, and presumably did not enjoy the tutelage of, an urban centre.
that the payroll of the spendthrift school district could not be met because the expenditures of districts within their budgets were looked after first. Furthermore, the autonomy of the municipality suffered in practice by the interposition of the Department of Municipal Affairs in disputes between municipal councils and school boards.

There was discussion in the Delburne district on the formation of the new political unit. Some persons believed that it was to function in the manner of a county and in frontier tradition they cast around for examples of places in which the county system had worked. Immigrants from eastern Canada were expected to know about the working of the county system, and "... if counties are run successfully in the east there is no reason why the same cannot be accomplished in the west."108 Delburne considered that it was in line to become a county seat because it was among the larger centres of the district and was centrally located, but a misconception had crept in that R.M.'s and M.D.'s encompassed governing functions generating some traffic of economic importance to the town. In fact, the new municipal forms were true successors to the earlier L.I.D.'s and involved only minimal functions of a routine sort--school administration, weed control, property taxation, stray animal control and a few others.

Borrowing was permitted at levels up to 5% of asses-

108 DP June 28, 1912.
Land was taxed on the Single Tax system for which there was enthusiasm among farmers. Most felt that any tax on improvements was a tax on industry and on progress itself. Effectively the revenue needs of the municipality were to be distributed fairly among all landowners so that the speculator would pay a share in proportion to the amount of land held. A tax on improvements was, in the view of most farmers, a subsidy for the speculator. The limit of taxation was 10 mills and the criterion of assessment was the value assignable to the property in the payment of a just debt. For some time there had been a rebate of 25% on taxes paid for land under cultivation, and it was proposed to raise this allowance, which was another device to impede the activi-

109 DP July 12 and Aug. 9, 1912.

110 The matter of the Single Tax was touched upon in Chapter III; an avid debate built up in Red Deer over the issue when the town was converting to the plan. The depression of 1913 knocked the wind out of the town. The debate makes an interesting excursion into the social thought of the time as it related to property speculation and profits, but there was little said there that was not covered in Delburne. The most representative published material on the Red Deer experience is an enormous letter written by the former mayor and champion of the Single Tax, Halley Gaetz. Halley has been remembered locally as something of an eclectic purveyor of strange and possibly threatening theories. In fact he was one of the early proponents of reform liberal theory and his efforts were not appreciated in the stuffy environment of Red Deer where the majority of the population would have been quite happy with an imitation of the conditions of the 1850's. Gaetz' ideas seem to have prevailed through a combination of his own personality and dedication, and essential apathy from the bulk of the population. See the RDN for Jan. 28, 1914.
ties of the speculator, to 50%. 111

The referenda for the new municipalities were taken in the summer of 1912. The Delburne vote, representing the commencement of the Municipal District of Hays #338, was passed by a majority of 27, but the proposal was turned down in the Alix district. That vote, which concerned the amalgamation of the Alix, Mirror, Clive, Tees, Hopedale and Cairns Districts was said to have been an overwhelming 'no'. 112 There was considerable concern that the new form of administration would mean a rise in taxes, but the Delburne paper was quick to point out that a rise of four or five dollars was hardly consequential if funds were put into better roads leading to market. 113 The 'no' vote in Alix was of only token importance. The province made good its threat and ordered the incorporation of M.D. Lamerton #398 effective for 1913. The incorporation of the M.D. of Hays, effective in January of 1913, was accompanied by the incorporation of the Village of Delburne. That spring the village had a population of 125 and an assessment of $135,000. There was consi-

111 DP Aug. 9, 1912; the rebate was kept at 25% (DP March 21, 1913).

112 It is possible that the hodge-podge of immigrant origins in the planned unit was responsible for the outcome; AFP Oct. 18, 1912. Municipal rivalry was also a possible issue since there were four struggling towns within the unit. It was absurd that in an essentially rural age rural residents were held to ransom on such ludicrously inept planning models as this one.

113 DP July 5, 1912.
derable discussion at the time on setting up a Consolidated School District but since the number of children in the town was only 16 and many of the persons on the school board were of advanced age with grown children it may be assumed that the movement was both premature (the Consolidated School Act had not been passed) and merely a form of municipal badge collecting. The Delburne Consolidated School District was started in 1917.

Economic conditions in the winter of 1912-1913 were grim and the list of tax sales compiled for the spring of 1913 was large in Alix. More than 140 parcels of town land in the 'Davis addition' were knocked down in March for a little more than the taxes, or approximately $4 per lot. We are not aware of the publication of a tax sale list for the town of Delburne, but the conditions of the spring of

114 DP Feb. 12, 1913.

115 For example Dr. V. Trottier was from Ontario and had at least one grown child. In the frontier joining tradition he was a member of every group in town.

116 Whatever the advantages of the Consolidated School District of 1917 were to the children of the district, the tax rate which accompanied it was like an albatross around the neck of the municipality in a time when very few other towns bothered to modernize the education of the country school. Land examination files from the 1920's reveal that forfeited lands returned to the CPR were regarded as unsaleable partially because of the high taxes of the District. See various appropriate Land Examination Files of the CPR, Glenbow Alberta Institute.

117 Information for this section comes from the following: AFP Feb. 21, March 21, 1913; DP April 11, 1913.
1913 are reflected in the fact that the lots offered for sale in the town ranged from $50 to $250, a far cry from the giddy days of $400 to $700 sales common in other towns of the region. The year of 1913 was one of the worst times for starting an enterprise, and the fortunes of the new Municipal District of Hays, #338, followed the general trend. The fiscal and calendar years of the districts, by order of the Province, were in coincidence, the budget of Hays for the period from January to the end of October being $26,425.11. It was announced that receipts and expenditures balanced, but uncollected taxes were listed in the 'receipts' column. Property taxes amounted to $19,720.86 of 'receipts' of which only 11% had been paid on demand. The total school tax levy which was not a part of the municipality funds is not known but the uncollected taxes in this category were $15,169.13. Taxes were collectible in the fall of the year on the assumption that the rural residents were then in funds, but few cared to erase their tax indebtedness until the last possible opportunity. By April of 1914 the receipt of taxes was still dragging and it was found necessary to use the borrowing power of the District to meet the needs of the school districts. This crisis precipitated an attack by Amos Wilton, one of the members of the first Council of the Municipality, on A.T. Rowell, the Assessor and Secretary Treasurer.

118 DP Dec. 5, 1913.
119 DP April 3, 1914.
PLATE VIII

DELBURNE

Delburne was a Grand Trunk Pacific townsite, and was one of those hamlets which was proud during lacklustre economic periods not to have had a boom. At the outbreak of the Great War the editor of the Progress exulted that the future was clearly in the hands of western Canadian producers because European competition had been removed.
Both Wilton and Rowell had firm views as to the correct running of a political body. Rowell, in addition to his official duties in the municipality, was later the organizer and 'public relations' officer for Local 40 of the Socialist Party of Canada. Interestingly he was also a Justice of the Peace and a dealer in land. Rowell omitted to make out the required Tax Enforcement Return for unpaid school taxes as required by the Department of Municipal Affairs. Wilton, realizing that he was presented with an opportunity of removing a socialist menace from a position of influence made motion in the District Council, which was defeated, that Rowell be cited for negligence in office. Rowell and everyone else ignored the dig, but Wilton pulled him in front of an Alix magistrate in July for a contravention of the Municipal Act. There was no question of Rowell's guilt, but the case had to be heard in Alix because no Justice of the Peace south of the river would serve Wilton the summons. The small fine of $1 was overshadowed by the costs of $4.45—indicative that the justice in Alix was himself

120 No biographical material is available on Rowell; one suspects from the tone of his remarks and circumstantial evidence that he was an Ontario or British immigrant who settled in Hillsdown around the turn of the century and moved east around 1910. Wilton similarly is lost to history, but he seems to have been an American.

121 Wilton's abortive attempt to introduce what were in essence primary elections in the municipality is recorded in the DP of Nov. 8, 1912. Other matters in this debate appeared in the Progress of May 15, July 3 and Sept. 11, 1914.
Treasurer of the Village of Alix and had not made out his Enforcement Return. At that point Rowell made out the return.

As amusing as this train of events may be it illustrates a number of features of farm income, rural society, land tenure and taxation which worked against the growth of strong local government and regional economic health. There was not a surplus of cash in the average family budget and the expenditure of money on taxes was not apparently given any priority by farmers over other debts. In fact tax arrears were so common that they hardly evoked comment, and few persons felt that taxes were advisable in any form. But it was a serious matter when the Municipal councils were forced to borrow to meet current demands, in the case of Hays Municipality the payroll of the school districts in the spring of 1914. The town of Red Deer went in 1914 to a system of expenditure only from current funds and for that was unique in the west, but other municipal bodies did not possess the conservatism or the firm roots of Red Deer, which itself had come very close to the line.

Arrears of taxes in Red Deer in the spring of 1914 were $101,019 and only $55,321 had been collected. The town needed some money rather quickly and consideration was given to imposing a business tax—a novel proposal which the businessmen had sufficient candor to consider. Less desirable was a rise in the mill rate, which at that time was second
lowest in the province. Lacombe had a rate of 40, against 15 for Red Deer. Innisfail's was 50. The town of Alix was permitted to write off its indebtedness to its old L.I.D. on the dissolution of the latter at a percentage of the value of the taxes owing.

The province had saddled the rural dweller with an administrative system that was conceptually dull, clumsy to operate and unequal to the needs of time. Hatred of speculators was allowed to flourish and was watered by grandiose plans such as a complicated system of capital gains taxation proposed by Arthur Sifton at the height of the 1913 depression while the province fobbed off governmental forms already 20 years past usefulness onto the rural population. Farmers were to be exempt until the value of land rose to $50 per acre; there was a size minimum of 640 acres, and a few other technical conditions. The tax gathering system, which was no more than a polishing of the old, was ineffective in collecting taxes from lands under CPR mortgage, Dominion Lands on time sales, and leased lands. The Enforcement Return was difficult and expensive to compile. It was

122 RDN Dec. 2, 1913; RDN Jan. 21, 1914.

123 Malin found a similar condition on the frontier of Kansas, in which the 'progressive adaptation of local political institutions' was retarded by bare coffers and political instability. James C. Malin, "The Turnover of Farm Population in Kansas", op. cit., p 355. Unlike their Alberta counterparts Kansas towns could tax railway property. (Ibid, p 354.)

124 AFP Oct. 13, 1913. An 'incremental tax' was imposed but amounted to a paltry 5% of the increased value. RDN Dec. 3, 1913.
also apparently impotent. About three quarters of the municipalities in the province, it was said, did not bother with them, and the one which A.T. Rowell had been forced to make for Hays succeeded in intimidating a grand total of four delinquents into payment.\textsuperscript{125} Rowell was not surprised. In addressing a reply to his critic, whom he styled 'Kaiser Wilton', he allowed that the rate of delinquency on taxes was a reflection of the economic conditions for the last two years and was not extraordinary.

\textsuperscript{125} DP Sept. 11, 1914; \textit{idem} for Rowell's response.
LAND SPECULATION AND THE FRONTIER COMMUNITY

Absentee Ownership

With the tax system crippled, the Municipalities falling further in debt to meet current expenditures, and with the average farm family being close to insolvency, speculators and corporations were logical scapegoats. Some comments of the time on the role of the speculator have been given above, and it is not necessary to enumerate other instances of the sort of outbreak so common throughout the west. It is interesting to contemplate who the speculators were, what they might have gained from holding land, how numerous they were and how much land was involved, and the role of unsold land in regional land use dynamics.

Map XXII shows the percentage of land owned in Canada outside the Enumeration District. This percentage is a proportion of the category 'lands owned', which is in turn a part of the category of 'land occupied'. Since lands that were not patented or alienated from railways or the Hudson's Bay Company were not included in the category of occupied lands, the figures on absentee ownership do not include the category of unsold railway lands. Nor are lands held by persons in the United States apparently included, which oversight was a serious one in view of the fact that a large number of the non-resident owners were American--persons who had
come to homestead and who had returned 'home', mail order
speculators, American creditors of former residents, and
so on.\textsuperscript{126} In addition it would be possible for a farm to
have been included in the category of absent ownership ac-
cording to the criteria of this Census if the owner were
simply to have lived in a nearby town or in an adjacent town-
ship outside the district in which the farm was listed. In
view of these impediments in the data, the figures presented
on Map XXII may be taken only to indicate the acreage of
land in some economic use which was owned by some person or
corporation in Canada resident, depending on the size of the
enumeration district, more than an arbitrary average of ten
miles from the property. This will be called 'non-resident
Canadian ownership'.

The highest rates of non-resident Canadian ownership
occurred in the corridor of the Calgary and Edmonton railway
and to the east of Alix; they were highest, well over 50%,
around Red Deer and Innisfail was almost up to that level.
No figure was listed separately for Lacombe in the data, but
the level at Ponoka was between 23% and 35%. There are no

\textsuperscript{126} A visual examination of the tax roll of the Municipal
District of Crown, which was the square of land from
Morningside south to the Red Deer River and east to a
line running north-south through Clive, indicates that
there were a large number of American owners in 1913.
The rolls for various years from 1913 onwards are avail-
able in the Alberta Provincial Archives. Lamerton,
east of Crown, is represented but not by as many annual
examples. There seem to be no survivals from the dis-
tricts south of the Red Deer River.
notably high figures elsewhere. American ownership to the east of the railway line and north of the Red Deer River in areas that were heavily settled by Americans may have caused an illusory reduction in the figures for those districts. The high figures for Red Deer and Innisfail are a reflection of the retention of some lands by the Cunningham Land Company, the successor and agent of the old SLHC, and possibly of the retention of lands by Canadian rather than American ex-residents since the districts had been first settled by Canadians. Tenancy, however, was rarely a prominent feature of landholding in the parklands and did not on average account for more than 10% of properties.

The ratio of the percentage of occupied land owned in Canada outside the enumeration district to the declared value of this land and the associated improvements should show whether land held by owners resident outside the enumeration district somewhere in Canada was used typically for the region. Although this measure is only grossly approximate, a wide range in the ratios would support the contentions of farm protestors that land owned by non-residents was left idle. 127 No such conclusion can be drawn from these data. A ratio of approximately one is evident on the western, and longer settled, side of the study area while the measure expands somewhat toward the eastern, and newer, districts.

There was apparently little difference in usage, and 63% of

127 On Map XXII the percentages are entered as a fractional code; the reader is easily able to see what ratios are implied.
lands around Red Deer account for 56% of declared value; the ratio at Innisfail is 50/46. From Blackfalds Lake eastward to Haynes 9% of the land accounted for 12% of investment, but to the east of range 23 in the northeastern portion of the study area the ratio widened to ten or twelve to one.

Further research would be necessary to establish in detail how this relationship worked, but it appears that the spatial differences were somehow related to a higher rate of tenancy near Red Deer, although tenancy was not what necessarily could be called significant.

Notwithstanding faults in the data, these figures reinforce the observation that a surprisingly small acreage of land, if unsold lands, leased and rented lands, and unused acreage within owner-occupied farms be counted out, was actually intensively used by resident farm owners. It was easy to blame speculators for the failure of the country to 'fill up', but corporate speculators such as the SLNC, the CPR and the Hudson's Bay Company were at times trapped for a period of years by low land prices in some regions of the west and in some districts at the micro-regional scale in the study area. The idea of an inundating wave, whatever its applicability as a metaphor for occupancy in the west, was hollow when applied to the cultivation of the land. In addition it was not always the case, as the usual stereotype would have it, that settlers were in competition with land
companies. A small number of sales by settlers at prices lower than land companies asked turned the tables quite the other way.

It is interesting that the highest rates of absentee ownership, if these figures involve speculators at all, occurred in the most densely populated districts where land prices were highest and not on the raw frontier where the percentage rates of return were greater. The percentage of absentee owners was perhaps a result of the differentiation over time of the land tenure system due to a number of exogenous factors and was a somewhat 'natural' and expected frontier process. Or, perhaps, the money of speculators was sent preferentially to longer-developed higher-priced areas. Probably the truth was somewhere between; older areas in the west of the region had been settled in times of easy money and most of the Dominion Lands homestead quarters had been patented by approximately 1905 or 1906. What happened after that can only be conjecture without further research, but it would not seem idle to propose that given that a larger percentage of the land area in the western part of the study area was patented when money was easily available, a higher percentage of landholders in that area took mortgages or sold out to a high bidder. Neither of these activities would by comparison have been as common in the eastern districts homesteaded after 1904, because money stringency arrived before patents were issued. Only the years 1910, 1911 and the first
half of 1912 were what could be called ordinary or boom years financially, so it was possible for a farmer settling east of Alix, say, or in the area of Great Bend in 1904 or 1905 to have limped along nearly on hope alone until the Great War and perhaps for some time after. The economic rent of land in the vicinity of the C&E railway line to the west was no doubt affected by the proximity to transportation, but at the same time the regional pattern of land tenure in the whole study area from 1911 to 1913 was a reflection of economic conditions and the colonization history of the whole decade 1903-1913. Because land tenure arrangements are slow to change, the conditions of colonization and tenure which prevailed for the first few years of the century maintained an influence in the regional pattern for at least a decade, and were part of a long cycle trend accompanied by population stagnation.

The interesting low figures for occupied and exploited acreages may be linked with the low population figures in many townships, with constant migration to and from the region, with perpetual complaints in the farm protest tradition and with information available from respondents and local histories to indicate that farm income was low and irregular. It has been intimated by Alan Green that national

economic redistribution between 1890 and 1929 did not involve rising income in the prairie provinces and the prairies' economic growth was 'disappointing'. His statement that

"... the failure for such an upward shift in average income to manifest itself indicates that a reappraisal of the relationship between economic growth in such a region, and the incentives which attract factors to it may be warranted"

implies that there was much habitual, aimless wandering on the prairie frontier. The returns from cultivation of under-capitalized and labour-deficient farms were meagre, and rising land prices were left as the main incentive attracting investment and human effort. The next section of this chapter carries the discussion of land values into the sphere of progressive social philosophy.
Land Speculation and the Progressive Tradition

As Lurie 129 has pointed out the difference between speculation at the grain exchange and speculation in farm property values by farmers was the difference between speculation and speculation. Demands for the differential taxation of idle land were indicative of a failure of the rural lobby of Alberta to develop a consistent system of thought, for there were a number of features implicit in the plan which deserved profound consideration. Such taxes would have been difficult to collect and might have prompted the abandonment of numerous properties for arrears. It was possible that higher absolute dollar amounts might have been collected from municipalities in which rates of absentee ownership were highest. Speculators might have leased properties for a pittance as grazing land and avoided the differential tax under the claim that their land was in fact in production. Communities with large arrears of taxes or with large amounts of abandoned land would not have been enticing for further investment, and the devolution of such land to the community would have had the effect of depressing the

value of all land in the region—exactly the opposite effect to that which the champions of the differential tax proposed. Altogether the effect of taxing the speculator, a prospect which had enticed frontiersmen for decades, was not a sensible path whatever the rhetorical appeal of the issue.

Some non-resident owners were, as mentioned in a previous section, neither corporations nor rapacious individuals. Some were ex-homesteaders and perfectly ordinary men who had neither managed to sell the old homestead nor to find a suitable tenant. Surely some of the apparently abandoned properties were held by absentee owners who obtained them in execution of perfectly legal debts and mortgages. A handful of references to such procedures on the part of professional men in the towns of Lacombe and Alix make it clear that land sometimes changed hands in this manner; it can be surmised that such transfers were resented within the rural neighbourhoods affected.

The rural westerner was able to invoke various powers of myth and symbolism for whatever purpose was at hand at the moment. Powerful ideas of community, of the inviolability of home and church, and of the purity of manual labour were used against the evil of land speculation as it was practiced by outsiders. But the invective in effect was directed to the fact that the speculators were outsiders rather than against speculation itself, whatever the content of the speeches and editorials of the time seemed to be.
saying. People were attracted to the frontier by and large for profit and could afford to be as expansive about the opportunity of their chosen region while their fortunes were improving. Only with enforced charity could one see a neighbour make good while fortune failed to smile on the home farm. But it was intolerable that outsiders were able to make money from the same source from which every farmer expected it, that is, from an increase in land values which the farmer thought had accrued to the neighbourhood through his own presence. The importance of land values to the security of the individual farmer was reinforced by weaknesses in the credit system which encouraged loosely-conceived borrowing in good years and grim sturdiness in the more numerous off years. Farmers' credit usually ran over a period too short to make profound changes in farm operation. Farmers who complained of speculators had no qualms about selling to the high bidder when their own turn came to leave, and it was not unknown for executive members of organizations like the UFA to sell to speculators and to move to the coast. Admittedly there were combinations of local merchants which kept prices in the small stores of the frontier at high levels, but it does not seem that farmers often attempted to negotiate with them; commonly they simply sent off to mail-order houses.

Some of these comments may seem to cover material which is transparently obvious, but it is necessary to rei-
erate these matters to place in the forefront the failure of farmers to act with real class comprehension and cohesion. Only a flimsy web of progressive rhetoric covered what was essentially the liberalism of the small producer grappling with a world in which his ideas could no longer find fertile soil. The farmer's quest for more land seemed to be compromised by the activities of speculators; only in boom years did farmers feel that they were moving to a position which put them beyond the reach of outside influences. The boom of 1915\textsuperscript{130} set loose a mad scramble for more land, more credit, and more farm machinery under the conviction that by increasing the size of farms the insecurity which beat down men with nominal amounts of land could be nullified. Speculators were hated for holding land in theory beyond the reach of local people, but only in a minority of districts did absentee landowners control enough land to affect the market profoundly. It was in fact farmers who set the price of land, both by buying and by selling, and their failure to realize this fact through simple intellectual processes surely weakened the force of protests over land administration. Only by cohesive class action could farmers have expected to affect the matters about which they complained. This course, however, was barred to them by a rabid insistence on the sovereignty of the individual and by the sort

\textsuperscript{130} See John H. Thompson, "Permanently Wasteful ...", op. cit.
of sniggering ignorance with which they greeted socialist and communal ideas. What was required in fact was land management on a model close to that of the Hutterites, but involving a financial return according to individual levels of subscription. The chequered history of devices as simple as marketing organizations indicates, however, that farmers have not been able to face the inevitable loss of economic autonomy which modern changes in the agricultural sector demand. The loss of producer autonomy implicit in such alternatives as cooperative marketing schemes was the major force which worked against the fortunes of groups like the Red Deer Cooperative Society \(^\text{131}\) in the years before the Great War. Resort was made to cooperation in times of hardship, but in ordinary years the directors sometimes were hard-pressed to scrounge enough goods to fill shipments they had contracted. Many farmers were sceptical of the honesty of bookeepers, and just as in the days of the Dominion creamery system, it was easy for merchants to break the cooperative by offering temporarily slightly higher prices. Some advances were made in farmer-owned elevators before the war, but important developments in cooperation dated from after the conflict.

\(^{131}\) This Society was intensively reported in the columns of the News from 1909 onwards. The minutes of meetings and commodity reports appeared in detail, but interest in reporting seems to have waned after 1913.
Land speculation was a feature of nineteenth century commercialization in the western rural economy—a process of which the farmer had little real comprehension but much criticism. Land issues attained a centrality in farm protest because they had come to represent the wage return from farm labour and because farmers believed, probably mistakenly, that full occupancy of the land would lead to rural prosperity. The bitterness of farm protest was directed to a return to the heady conditions of laissez faire trading which had been common in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, and not until later decades of the twentieth century did farm groups tackle the erection of marketing and wholesale supply structures which could moderate the growing power of corporations. The farmers' efforts were successful to the extent to which they imitated the vertical integration of their oppressors.

The paradoxical association in farm protest of innate conservatism and radical or reform liberalism has often been remarked upon and deserves comment here. The bi-

132 Anne Mayhew has appraised midwestern discontent as a response to the increasing commercialization of agriculture; she used secondary sources and the theme does not seem to have attracted further research. See "A Reappraisal of the Causes of Farm Protest . . .", op. cit.

133 The most recent commentary on the matter, and a useful bibliographic survey, is Gene Clanton, "Populism, Progressivism and Equality: the Kansas Paradigm", Agricultural History 51:3 (1977), pp 559-581. Clanton maintains a pessimistic view of the 'revisionist' school represented by Hofstadter, Bicha and others because it is ineffectual in recognizing the sources of biformity in rural psychology. Our conclusions here are similar to those of Clanton at pp 579-581. Kansas Republican cont'd . . .
formity, as Clanton calls it, of the rural western mentality --the seeming contradictions between radicalism and conservatism--is exacerbated by the lack of a paradigm which accurately describes the experiences of rural folk in the nineteenth-century continental west. Attitudes to land speculation and individual profit offer some insight into a course by which a suitable paradigm may be constructed.

Farmers wanted room for the expansion of their own farms and freedom from what they thought were the enormous profits of land companies and banks. They wanted free and upward markets in good years and protected and cooperative markets in poor ones. Suspicion of the motives even of one's neighbours was fomented by a competitive production and marketing system. At a time when the myths of the golden age and of the farmer as conservator and guardian of the land were still strong, rural migration, nevertheless, was constant and family roots, for all that nostalgic tales preserve memories of country dances, June weddings, and neighbourly help, must have been shallow for the majority of people. It was the most obvious quality of frontier populations that they were highly mobile and some individuals were perpetually so. It would be absurd to maintain, despite cont'd

progressivism was a conservative and elitist venture into reform which hoaxed opponents into dealing with it under the threat of radical gestures. But it was, as were the solutions in Alberta, "... especially vulnerable to the appeal of symbolic and, in certain instances, ultimately perverse solutions."
country nostalgia, that social contentment underlay the frontier experience. Frontier populations were driven by an economic compulsion made civilized by helpful ideas of class, race, and the historicity of the frontier.

The idea of progress offers a paradigm by which the land economics of the frontier may be approached, the process of change over one lifetime being the core of the issue. Progress in the early liberal tradition was expected to operate through society as a by-product of individual prosperity. Progress at the family level and at the level of the small business was therefore chronologically prior to social benefit and was sought without reticence. The transfer between classical liberalism and reform liberalism involved a conscious change in this ordering without abrogation, which socialists were suspected of making, of the importance of individuals. Social change was then sought on purpose to smooth the tortuous path to individual reward. This transfer was not always accomplished intellectually by participants, not were its implications always obvious. Sometimes, as in the practice of the social gospel, the vehicle was what would now be called a 'media phenomenon'. Understandably the change did not occur with geographic uniformity and Alberta frontier farmers among other regional groups preserved much of the old commercial tradition with a veneer of newer and apparently more urgent rhetoric. They expected change during their own lives, and societal change actually was not crucial. It might have been
even threatening—a step into an unknown order which took affected people farther from the conditions to which they were attempting to return.

This paradigmatic statement allows us to make sense of the seemingly contradictory tenets of protest movements, at least insofar as our conclusions on land economics lead in such a direction. The liberalism of the farmer was the liberalism of the small producer transferred to a field in which it could not have effect because farmers could not achieve effective monopoly, at least under the kind of social and economic ideas which had brought them to the frontier in the first place. They were part of a traditional society which, rhetoric notwithstanding, maintained a confined role for change, a role which effectively, if not consciously, forestalled societal change, but which sadly kept the farmer from comprehending and participating in processes of economic and regional integration at a time at which such comprehension was essential. This paradigm, which is a compression of the ideas of Sklair, Miner, Lurie, Mayhew, Clanton, and this author, clearly allows that protest rhetoric could amount to mere posturing, and helps to reconcile the apparently antagonistic radical and conservative components in the genesis of the western protest tradition.
STOCK MANAGEMENT:

HORSES, CATTLE, DAIRYING AND SWINE
Horses

The economic cycle described earlier in this chapter exerted a profound influence upon the availability of good horses. At the beginning of the period there were few horses of quality to be seen in the countryside, although there were small numbers held either by horse fanciers or by well-to-do farmers who appreciated the value of a fine animal or a team. The year 1907 was the first in which the Department of Agricultural showed any enthusiasm for the lagging stallion registration program it had started at the turn of the century. Registration in 1907 amounted to about 25% more purebred stallions than in 1906, while the registration of grade animals remained virtually static.¹³⁴

The overwhelming favourite was the Clyde; Percherons and Standard Bred were second and third in numbers registered, but the numbers of these failed to make any appreciable increase in the years to 1912. The Standard Bred in fact fell behind. It was hoped by officials that the year 1907 was "... the first awakening of our farmers to the need of improvement along the lines of breeding horses."¹³⁵

¹³⁴ ADA 1907-p 9; a consolidated table for the period 1904-1912 is available in ADA 1912-p 7.
¹³⁵ ADA 1907-p 9.
Despite the numerical preponderance of Clydes and Percherons, there were breeders and fanciers from place to place who promoted some of the lesser known breeds. The Jaques brothers' farm at Lamerton raised Suffolk Punch horses and over the period covered by this chapter A. Jaques, or one of his agents, made a number of trips to the United Kingdom to import new blood. The Jaques had 12 Punch mares in 1910 which were allowed to "rustle their living among the native grasses . . ."; which piece of information was probably intended to dispel the doubts that many frontier farmers entertained concerning the hardiness of purebred animals.

There were a number of horse breeders in the Morning-side area, J. Reddick and Sons being in the Clyde line (and Durham cattle), and the Penningtons in Percherons. Henry Reinholt of Red Deer, the man who ploughed the river in the winter of 1906-1907, raised Clydes and was the owner of prizewinners from the stock of Alex Galbraith of Brandon. Reinholt valued one of his stallions at more than $2000. George Root, one-time Conservative candidate and the epitome of the prosperous gentleman farmer, imported purebred horses to stock Spruce Bluff Farm on the outskirts of Red Deer before he disappeared from the town in 1910.

136 This section is from AFP July 30, 1909; AFP March 18, 1910; AFP Aug. 30, 1912.
137 The name of the man probably was Riddoch; see Ponoka Panorama, Ponoka and District Historical Society, 1973, pp 736-737.
139 RDN June 5, 1907.
Few references to mules are found in the study area. A mere trio of references were found in the newspaper files: an advertisement in November 1910 for a span at $175 and a reference without price to some mules being in a bunch of stock to be sold in 1911 by W.E. Tees. Barring the animals having been in decrepit condition, the low price in the advertisement is likely an indication of the lack of favour for mules, even at a time of good conditions in the horse market. One W.H. Waddell advertised the standing of a Spanish jack at sw sec. 22 40 27 in the spring of 1907. It was said to have been imported in 1906 and to have become acclimatised; it had a 'good build' and Waddell's terms were $30 to ensure a living colt. Scattered references appear in the local histories concerning settlers keeping mules. Johnny Jacobsen of the se of sec. 16 38 25 had six for many years and allowed that he kept them for their toughness.

The winter of 1906-1907 and the economic conditions of the ensuing 18 months ruled against a rapid expansion of the cattle business in central Alberta, but demand for horses was brisk through 1907. No stock shipment figures were published by the Department for 1908; the creed of progress and economic expansion dictated, it seems, that only statistics involving an annual increment be published. But the

140 These references are respectively LG Nov. 9, 1910; LG Nov. 1, 1911; LG April 30, 1907. Imported jacks were not popular in the United States and the animal must have been something of a novelty.

141 Wagon Trails, p 51.
shaping figures from the CPR for horses reveal the following:

**TABLE III**

**SHIPMENTS OF HORSES FROM TWO ALBERTA POINTS 1907-1910**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shipments From</th>
<th>1907</th>
<th>1908</th>
<th>1909</th>
<th>1910</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red Deer</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>1014</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacombe</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>1126</td>
<td>2545</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ADA 1910-p 246.

Total shipments for 1908 were less than for 1907, and the greatest decrease was in the shipments from Lacombe. The CPR figures do not agree with Departmental figures. Because they are always lower it might be presumed that the subdivisional figures of the CPR represent shipments that were billed to destinations outside the region, and that the difference lay in horses consigned to local points. These local points need not have coincided with the Department's idea of a local shipment however, so it is still not possible to reconcile figures animal for animal.

According to the Department the shipments of horses to all destinations from the points in the study area and from Innisfail and Ponoka in 1909 were 1,911 of which 1,484 were destined for Alberta points; in 1910 the figures were 2,582 and 1,712; for 1911, 2,503 and 2,174; and for 1912, 1,959 and 1,547.
While the years 1907 and 1908 were economically dull the mild recovery of the period 1909-1910 and the influx of settlers to the unsettled east central parts of the province put a demand into the horse market resulting in a stiff upward trend in prices. The price of work horses was driven up, and heavy horses were said never to have been in higher demand. With the rise in the market, prices in the park-lands responded logically. J.W. Fortune, who had started the Lacombe Livery and Feed Stables in 1895 entered horse dealing in 1909 with a bunch of imported Clydes--the first large sale, it was said, of this breed in the area. Many men attended and the prices were healthy; James Riddoch of Morningside paid a total of over $1000 for three animals, one stallion going to him for $510. P.A. Switzer of Lacombe bid $400 for one animal and there were many other transactions in the $300 range. The trend in prices was upwards from there and the following spring saw a grey Percheron mare team bring $1775 at the dispersion sale of George Root's Spruce Bluff Farm. A mare and foal went for $1000. Later some less spectacular but hefty prices were recorded at a farm auction when three Clydes brought together over $1000. Common horses were selling for $100 to $200 each.

142 RDN March 24, 1909; LG Oct. 25, 1911.
143 LG Oct. 25, 1911; LG Nov. 24, 1909.
144 LG May 4, 1910.
145 LG May 25, 1910. This was the year for farmers to make a killing. The sale pulled in a total of $5000 and suckling pigs went for $5.75 each.
146 RDN June 22, 1910.
Shipments from the study area to points in Alberta reached a peak in 1910 and 1911 when prices reached their highest level, and then sloped off gradually; the increase was about 25% from 1910 to 1911. In 1912 sales in Alberta decreased almost 30% to a figure lower than 1910, and the decrease in shipments to all destinations indicates that either demand had been met, or that the supply of horses was on the decrease.

The Census shows that the number of horses sold by farmers and ranchers in the study area was 4,171 in 1910. The Census also shows that in the country from Ponoka to Innisfail (inclusive of those two districts) and eastwards to a line running north and south through Erskine there were in 1911 a total of 20,618 horses, 6,572 of them being under three years of age. In the smaller area of Red Deer-Morningside-Alix-Pine Lake there were, in the same year, 10,165 older and 4,675 younger horses for a total of 14,840, or a mean of approximately 353 per township. From this area the Departmental shipping figures indicate a sale of 1,960 horses in 1910. Some horses would have appeared on the Census schedule as sales without having passed stock inspectors, and it is not difficult to see how the difference of 1,589 could have been disposed of on foot.

Whatever the chances of calculating sales to a high degree of accuracy it is clear that selling horses must have
been an important source of income in central Alberta. The sale of, say 3,500 horses at $100 each would have generated an income of $350,000 for the region, and at a higher valuation, say $200, the sale of 4,000 horses would have brought $800,000. Almost 20% of sales (18.98%) were associated with one township to the southwest of Alix, but several hundred were sent from sub-districts 5, 17, 96, and 97. Many of the areas which possessed higher densities of horse population in 1911 did not rank highly in sales in 1910, probably an indication that the sellers of 1910 cleared out their stock.

The figures imply that the good times of 1910 were an enticement to farmers and horse raisers to throw all the extra horses they could find onto the market. It is possible that the lower sales of later years in the period were a reflection of the selling of an amount of brood stock, the departure of which from the region probably meant that breeders were hopeful that the market would weaken so that they could buy in more young or brood mares cheaply.

Map XXIII shows the number of horses per Standard Township Area for 1911. There is a concentration along the corridor of the C&E, especially around Red Deer, and in the vicinity of Alix from which such large sales were made in 1910. Because sub-district 18 represents only one township (T 39 23), it is interesting to see what occurred there. Nominally, more horses were sold from that township in 1910.
than were left resident there in 1911: 792 and 638. Only
56 young horses were left in 1911, a number almost similar
to the number of households in the township. It seems that
the corrals in the area were sold bare of young animals, al-
though the earlier figure of 601 for the Standard Township
Area was far in excess of the draft needs of a population of
49 households. It seems that either T39 23 was one of in-
tense horse ranching or that the sales figure for 1910 re-
presents animals brought in and held for sale for long enough
to qualify as an entry representing the sale of an owned
animal in the Census.

The map indicates that the horse population was high-
est in the older settled areas, which places also had higher
percentage rates of land improvement and occupancy. It does
not appear, consequently, that ranching operations in the
settled areas to the east of the Red Deer-Lacombe-Ponoka
corridor were important in horse raising, although it is pos-
sible that the profits were greater in horse raising in this
district because of the low expense in managing wild hayland.
Most of the animals which turned up in the statistics were
raised on 'ranches' of a more modern form, or were kept in
bunches by the operators of larger farms. The typical small
farmer counted on selling a colt or three-year-old from time
to time, such sales being a welcome addition to farm income.

After the mad spurt in the market in 1910 matters
returned to a low average in the horse business until 1914.
By that time the foals of 1911 and 1912 were approaching a useful age and horse breeders in central Alberta regarded the onset of war with delight. Horse prices again rose in anticipation of scarcity but the hopes of the breeders were dashed with the imposition of an embargo on export sales. In retrospect the embargo was an intelligent move, if a brutal one, which probably preserved low but still fair prices for horses needed in the production of wartime food; however, it seemed that "... Canadians [were] paying a high price for their loyalty."\textsuperscript{147} Foreign buyers were allowed entry in 1916.

\textsuperscript{147} ADA 1914-p 11.
Cattle

The year 1907 contained two events important to the cattle trade. The effects of the harsh winter of 1906-1907 severely upset markets, and the report of a Beef Commission laid out the problems in the industry and proposed some solutions. The conditions of the winter have been treated elsewhere in this chapter and need no repeating.

The Beef Commission was intended to be a comprehensive review of cattle production in the four western provinces, but after Saskatchewan and British Columbia withdrew the Commission proceeded in 1907 with the Alberta and Manitoba components. Although the Commission was named 'Beef' it was in fact empowered to look into the raising of all meat animals except poultry, and into the processing and marketing of meats. Among the hearings of the Commission were those at Red Deer on the 4th and 5th of July 1907, and at Lacombe on the 8th and 9th of July.

The Lacombe hearing brought out complaints against the archaic system of itinerant buying. Producers alleged that buyers were in the habit of concealing true prices from them, or quoted an actual price from some distant market...

148 ADA 1907-p 300.
which was different in reality from what could have been expected in Alberta. The Pat Burns Co. and Gordon Ironsides & Co. were specifically mentioned in the allegations. The shrinkage system was also considered an injustice. W.F. Puffer, returning Canadian immigrant and Lacombe butcher, was an influential member of the Liberal Party and the member of the Legislature for Lacombe after 1905. In 1907 he was the local agent for the hated Burns Co. One of his claims in winning a later election was that he was a man of the land, and that his activities as a travelling cattle buyer would bring him into contact with the country people.

Not surprisingly the Commission, in its conclusions, found that

"... there is a universal complaint that [the industry] is not on a paying basis. There is a general feeling of dissatisfaction, partially due to the fact that there has been such a heavy mortality on large ranges during the past winter, also because the free range is being curtailed and primarily because the rancher and producer are not receiving sufficient remuneration for their labour and investment."

The Commission did not find evidence of combinations in cattle buying. The immediate effect of the Commission was the appointment of W.F. Stevens as Livestock Commissioner. The winter of 1907 was a lesson to the cattle industry that the days of open ranging without supplementary feed were over. After 1908 there was a steady trend toward winter feeding.

149 LG July 16, 1907; RDN May 15 and July 10, 1907.
not only to save animals from the ravages of winter and to fatten, but also to encourage a faster turnover of herds on the diminishing percentage of land available for ranging. This change was gradual and was led by the urgings of the Department of Agriculture and the example of a few progressive men in cattle exporting districts, such as the Red Deer and Lacombe region. There was a call for marketing cattle at three years instead of four, as had been the custom in the days of the open range. Range cattle were tough beasts, and the four years they spent on range had added the endurance necessary for live transportation. Ranged three-year-olds were too small to travel without considerable shrinkage and arrived at stockyards with an appearance which evoked a low price. One alternative to this loss was feeding heavily in the winter starting the fourth year, and to market in spring. Because spring offerings had always been low, some gratifying prices were received through this innovation. 150

But the definitive answer perhaps was one proposed by Pearce in the nineties—the chilled meat trade. The size of animals was irrelevant if they were to be slaughtered and chilled for transport. 151 Furthermore they could be marketed

150 ADA 1908-p 151; the price of 5¢ was considered good.
151 ADA 1908-p 153. The matter of the chilled meat trade came up constantly both in newspapers and at the meetings of the Central Alberta Stock Growers Association (CASGA). The meetings of the CASGA covered every aspect of the business. On one occasion it was treated to a harangue from George Root of Red Deer, Conservative candidate in the 1908 election, on the inadvisability of admitting orientals to British Columbia because they cont'd...
practically at any time the price was suitable, and the annual price decline associated with the September drive could in theory be eliminated. The Department was under some pressure from producers in the more settled parts of the province to push for chilling facilities because the amount of cattle pasture which farmers felt they could hold away from competing land uses was decreasing.

Winter feeding, as mentioned in Chapter III, had been tried before 1907 and had worked out well. Wheat did not grow well in the parklands and timothy, while adequate for horses, was not a good fattening or dairy feed. By 1908 the dictum from both the provincial and Dominion departments was that cattle producers should feed coarse grains. Great Britain was still the most important single market and "... the meat must go where the money is." But

151 cont'd
were rice eaters and would depress the beef business. Root was the founder of the CASSA and a prosperous farmer whose assets were valued at several hundred thousand dollars when he sold out in 1910. See RDN Jan. 8, 1908 for the meeting of Dec. 10, 1907. For a detailed letter from one Thornton Bolt to an earlier correspondence from a 'Makepeace', see LG Nov. 24, 1909, in which Bolt assail the evils of the shrinkage system; he said that producers would have difficulty recognizing their own cattle at Liverpool or Newcastle, and a chilled trade was the answer. Animals could be sold younger.

152 According to the *Cyclopedia of Agriculture*, prairie hay was on occasion better than timothy (pp 335, 337); but in Maine, timothy was as good as corn silage.

153 ADA 1908-p 235, and for the ensuing quotation.
"The days of the old-time rancher with his thousands of acres of leased grazing lands, are going, never, never to return. They were the most hospitable class of men on the face of the earth. It was always a pleasure to visit them, but for all, their day is gone; new conditions must be faced. The grazing lands are being cut up and the rancher must now have a home ranch, provide feed for winter and some manner of shelter for his stock. The cattle business is passing from the rancher to the farmer and feeder."

But the question for producers was whether they could feed oats, the pre-eminent grain of the parklands, at something over 22¢ per bushel and still make money. Figures from the Brandon Experimental Farm indicated that a profit of seven dollars a head could be realized on fed animals, and a number of beef producers from the parklands gave the system a try. By the spring of 1909 winter feeding in the Lacombe-Alix area was becoming what an 'important' Calgary buyer, R.A. Begg, called 'more common', and, in the opinion of Begg the industry had to shift in this direction to remain on a paying basis. The improvement of meat quality had become an important issue in the market. In mid-1909 two cars of fed cattle were shipped from Pleasant Valley by a local raiser M. Morrical. These animals had been fed 100 days and interestingly were of different ages and types.

154 Idem.
155 AFP May 14, 1909.
156 LG May 4, 1909; AFP July 2, 1909. Shipments to Chicago were not common. The earliest was by four Red Deer ranchers including George Root. They sent 400 head in 21 cars in September of 1907. One heavy lot brought over $80, but the trade was cut off by a combination of American railway and producing interests. RDN Sept. 4 and Sept. 25, 1907.
The destination was Chicago. By the end of 1909 the Lacombe Experimental Station had started feeding steers.\textsuperscript{157}

Over the years feeding cattle became more and more common, and the returns to some feeders were ample reward for the expense of feed or fodder. In the spring of 1913 a delivery of fat steers to the Puffer agency in Alix brought the enormous sum of $104 each, and the comment that "... this only illustrates that it is a good deal better to sell grain on foot than in the sack."\textsuperscript{158} The increase in grain feeding through 1913 and 1914 was said to have been constant, but high prices for grain in the fall of 1914 meant that few cattle were put on grain for the spring market of 1915.

If there were advances in the technology of animal feeding there were not necessarily improvements in the technology of marketing. The treatment of animals by railway employees and the poor loading facilities, lack of adequate cars, and infrequent watering stops were constant sources of annoyance to shippers. Profits were literally sweated away in stalled trains. By 1910 new loading yards had been installed by the CPR at Erskine, Stettler, Clive and Tees, and watering facilities had been added at Red Deer, Innisfail and Penhold, and at Strathcona.\textsuperscript{159} Many station agents were

\textsuperscript{157} LG Dec. 29, 1909.
\textsuperscript{158} DP May 23, 1913.
\textsuperscript{159} ADA 1910-pp 185-186.
said to care little for the welfare of animals, and because of a lack of stock cars one third of the animals came off the Wetaskiwin Branch in box cars, and a little less than that proportion from the Lacombe branch which, in that period, terminated at Stettler. In one glaring instance a shipment of 450 came along the Lacombe branch in box cars. There were records of cattle being forced through forty hours without water, a length of time which seriously affected the farm-bred stock but was not so serious for the range type.\textsuperscript{160}

One attempt to alleviate shipping conditions was the inauguration of a weekly stock train along the C&E line. The Commissioner of Livestock and the UFA were in favour of such an arrangement, feeling that a regular train would be expected by railway employees and would be less susceptible to delays at divisional points. Shippers would know of its arrival and could time their drives to Red Deer and Lacombe accordingly. But this arrangement fell afoul of both station agents and cream shippers when the train was scheduled on the same day as cream pickup, and packing houses resisted the plan because they did not appreciate a glut on one day of the week. As an alternative the Livestock Commissioner tried a biweekly market at Calgary and the experiment was such a success that it was recommended to become a permanent fixture with another to be added at Edmonton.\textsuperscript{161}  

\textsuperscript{160} \textit{Ibid, p 187.} \textsuperscript{161} \textit{Idem.}
similar to the later emergence of dairy factories, Calgary was reinforced as the pre-eminent marketing centre of southern Alberta.

The development of better strains of cattle in the Lacombe area continued into the period covered by this chapter. Twenty-one of the 67 members of the Alberta Cattle Breeders’ Association (ACBA) were from the Red Deer-Lacombe-Lamerton area in 1908, and six were from Innisfail. The development of superior stock had been started near Lacombe in 1902 and by 1910 it was said that the eight years of development had ensured that "... in the Lacombe district there is a larger number of purebred cattle breeders than in any other district of the province."162

The executive of the ABCA contained over the years a respectable representation from the study area: J.L. Walters of Clive was President in 1909 and 1910; J.T. Parker of Lacombe was Breed Director for Herefords in 1909, and A.H. Trimble of Red Deer was the representative for Ayrshire. C.A.J. Sharman was the Director of the Jersey section.163 In 1910 the organization obtained James Sharp of Lacombe as First Vice President, A.F. McGill of Lacombe as Director of the

162 ADA 1910-p 249.
163 These examples represent two years only of a constant trend over the years. Sharman was the owner of Rosalind of Basing, the British Empire Champion and second in the world. See ADA 1909-p 228 and ADA 1910-p 248. Tees' Galloway cattle were recalcitrant animals. On occasion they would sally from the woods and attack passing horsemen. Tees later got rid of them and kept Shorthorns. Later still, he had Angus. Pioneers and Progress, p 368.
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In the list of sales at the annual auctions of the ACBA about 75% of the highest prices for the year went to breeders from the country between Innisfail and Lacombe. On some occasions the highest prices at both the Calgary sale and the Lacombe were taken by persons from the Lacombe area. The list of receipts and number of cattle of various breeds sold indicates that Shorthorns and Herefords sold by far in the largest numbers, with Aberdeen Angus a distant third. The average price for sale animals at the auctions ranged downwards from a high of over $200.

The population of horned and neat cattle for 1911 and the sales for 1910 are presented in Map XXIV. These figures are expressed on the basis of the number of units per Standard Township Area of 23,000 acres. The map shows a concentration of cattle between Innisfail and Red Deer and in the Spring Valley and Eclipse Districts (actually near modern Joffre which, however, did not come into existence until 1914 with the CNR branch line). When it is realized that the mean number of occupiers per township was only about 40, with the exception of townships along the C&E railway, the mean number of cattle per farming operation was about twelve. Naturally enough, the sales for the year 1910 were lower than the population of cattle in 1911 for most areas, but not sufficiently

164 ADA 1913-p 241.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Horned Cattle</th>
<th>Neat Cattle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>347/189</td>
<td>500/1178</td>
<td>395/226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>521/207</td>
<td>790/285</td>
<td>554/184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>213/332</td>
<td>975/678</td>
<td>659/352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>466/182</td>
<td>518/460</td>
<td>660/546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>931/310</td>
<td>944/867</td>
<td>518/460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>842/313</td>
<td>865/270</td>
<td>512/178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>865/270</td>
<td>773/368</td>
<td>511/449</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MAP XXIV**

NUMBER OF HORNED AND NEAT CATTLE PER STANDARD TOWNSHIP AREA

1911

SALES OF SUCH CATTLE

1910
smaller to avoid speculation that something interesting had happened in the market in some districts in 1910. The cattle breeders enjoyed the good times of 1910-1911 under similar conditions to those which stimulated horse sales. If cattle had been sold in rotation at three or four years of age and if it were assumed that one quarter to one third of the stock had to be held off the market for breeding, then the rate of sale of 1910, if continued into 1911, would result in the sale of some breeding stock. This observation assumes that all calves of 1911 had arrived by the time of the Census. If the cattle market had risen in a manner similar to the horse market, one would expect that the sale of animals, if breeding stock had in fact been sent off, would decrease in 1911 over 1910, and in 1912 over 1911, and that the decrease would be most marked in the districts in which the sales in 1910 were more than 70% of the population of cattle in 1911, 70% being a compromise of the population minus an allowance for the breeding stock.

Such seems to be the case at the Alix shipping point, although Alix handled many cattle that had been driven from the northeast, and at a number of other points to the south of Red Deer, to the west of Blackfalds, and especially on the eastern boundary of the study area. In Census sub-districts 17, 18, 20, 21, 25, 85, 87, 97, and 124 the annual sales rate of 1910, continued into 1911 and after, adversely affected the replacement rate of beef cattle unless ranchers and farmers decided not to breed. But the latter choice was
### TABLE IV

**CATTLE SHIPMENTS TO ALL DESTINATIONS**

**FROM SOME SELECTED POINTS IN CENTRAL ALBERTA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shipped from</th>
<th>1909</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1912</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lacombe</td>
<td>3328</td>
<td>3477</td>
<td>1652</td>
<td>1700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alix</td>
<td>1534</td>
<td>1425</td>
<td>1368</td>
<td>1045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Deer</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>3224</td>
<td>2718</td>
<td>1242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6814</td>
<td>8126</td>
<td>5738</td>
<td>3987</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ADA Annual Reports

not one easily made by ranchers in the days of more open grazing when an important and recurrent complaint was the number of scrub bulls running at large.

By late August of 1911 everything cow-like was being thrown onto the market; heifers were spayed and some men had sold their last animal. By 1912 the effect of this binge, evident in the accompanying table, was fewer sales. The number of stock was lower, farmers were coasting on their gains and could only be drawn into the market in mid-1912 with higher prices than buyers were authorized to pay. Profits apparently were taken more readily by sellers in the eastern portion of the region. Some ten townships around Lacombe retained a replacement rate until 1911. Several ran-

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165 RDN Aug. 30, 1911; DP Aug. 16, 1912.
ches around Lacombe and Clive had, in some measure, passed to a combined feeding and grazing pattern and might have been less likely to take immediate profit, or might have had a smaller percentage of cattle ready for sale.

To find reasons for this heavy selling, aside from good prices, we have to reach back to 1907 and 1908 and to imagine what sort of pressures had arisen in the cattle industry. Conditions of land tenure had changed, the industry was becoming more demanding in labour intensity and in capital requirements, and the consumer was no longer content with range meat. Only men with a professional streak would stay in the business in a large way, while others, many of them in the developing areas about thirty miles from the C&E line, apparently sold out or reduced their holdings at a profit while yielding to changes in land use demands.

Presumably by 1914 the cattle stock of the region had been replenished. The poor grain market of 1912-1913 occasioned some feeding instead of selling grain and by the beginning of 1914 euphoria returned to the market. There had been a failure in the strategy of Democratic free trade policy in the United States. The News gloated, probably with some sense, that the chaos to which the American producers were subjected would have been the lot of Canadians if the Liberals had won the 1911 election. Again, everything resembling cattle that the farmers could lay their hands on around the farm was being sent off as prices, which
had hovered on average around 5¢ for the last decade, went up past 8¢.¹⁶⁶ Even calves were sent off through the spring of 1914 and as the first weeks of war passed, the price to producers reached 8.5¢.

Dairy

Few of the activities of farmers were as susceptible to radical economic and technological change as was dairying. In the pioneer period the development of dairying was hindered by poor transportation, few markets, low-quality stock and crude farm technology. The advent of the separator at the turn of the century abolished the transportation of fresh milk, the inauguration of the government-supervised creameries provided an outlet for cream at a stable price, and the provincial marketing system provided markets. But in 1907 the industry was still hampered by an apparent lethargy or ignorance on the need for higher-yielding animals. There were very few persons in the province with good stock, not many culled animals on any systematic basis, and the majority of men were careless in stock handling and shelter, and in sanitation.167 The Department warned that

"It is not enough to bring the cows through the winter alive. They must be brought out in the spring in the best of heart ready to take full advantage of the stimulus to milk production which the fresh grass gives."

Dairy cows, according to the writer of this excerpt, did not receive the common sense care to which draft horses were ac-

167 ADA 1907-p 8, and for the ensuing quotation.
customed, and there seems to have been little attempt to
use tame grasses and roots as winter feed. A percentage of
dairy cows did not even receive shelter; the Departmental
Report of 1908 attributed a 40% drop in cream production
from 1906 to 1907 to the harsh winter in which large numbers
of dairy cattle were forced to shift for themselves.

"Generally speaking our winter climate is not
hard on cattle which are properly fed and
watered but the very strenuous weather condi-
tions of the winter referred to emphasized
the necessity for suitable shelter as well.
This regarding the matter simply from a com-
mercial viewpoint aside from its humanitarian
aspect." (168)

At a time at which there was more awareness among
horse and beef cattle breeders of the importance of improved
stock there developed a 'brisk demand' for special dairy
stock. 169 But dairymen had not received the benefits of the
purebred stock importation program of the swine and cattle
breeders, and the superior herds of the region, most of which
were located to the southeast of Red Deer, belonged to men
with substantial capital and business sense. One of them,
A.H. Trimble, details of whom were given in Chapter II, was
an early settler of the Red Deer area and over the years
raised a renowned herd. Periodically Trimble travelled to
Ontario and Quebec on his own account and purchased quanti-
ties of Ayrshires which he sold around Red Deer. 170 C.A.

168 ADA 1908-p 82.
169 Ibid, p 151.
170 For a reference to such sales see ADA 1908-p 154 and
RDN June 2, 1909. There was friendly rivalry among
Holstein and Ayrshire fans.
Julian Sharman, who had been an architect in Ireland with little or no experience in farming, operated an exemplary dairy farm near Red Deer based on Jerseys. The buildings on the farm were designed by Sharman, and the whole operation was testimony to the fact that farmers could be trained rather than born, and that men with a good head for business were the best candidates. Sharman imported Jerseys in the same manner as Trimble imported Ayrshires, one carload coming in 1908, and importers vied throughout the neighbourhood for sales of their fancied breeds.

A demand upon the Department in 1909 elicited a pit- tance of $1000 for assistance in transportation charges on superior cattle from the east. It was at this time that the last was heard officially of the 'dairy Shorthorn', sometimes called the 'milking strain'. Despite the patience of one correspondent to the Delburne Progress, who was still waiting for the dairy Shorthorn in 1913, the 'breed' never made an appearance because the Department did not want to foster the introduction of a type which did not qualify for

171 See the RDN of Aug. 18, 1909 for details of the productive Rosalind, the champion of the British Empire. For his importations see ADA 1908-p 154. A testimonial banquet was given for Rosalind.

172 The Shorthorn produced a low rate of butterfat but was high in conversion efficiency, high in gross milk output and scored the highest rating of all in efficacy for cheese production. Cyclopedia of Agriculture, pp 357-358. For the Delburne correspondence see the DP of Jan. 17, 1913. Joseph Smith of 'Bantyre Ranch', wrote to the RDN in 1909 complaining that the Shorthorn had originally been an English milking breed but had lately been bred to meat. RDN April 14, 1909.
entry in the Dominion Herd Book. The rumoured qualities of this animal, hardiness and thrift, were just what were required on the frontier, but the decision of the Department to foster the more common dairy strains meant that a revolution in the husbandry habits of farmers was necessary.

There were warnings that the dairy strains were 'refined and sensitive', and that they needed good food and shelter. Protection was needed not only from annoyances such as flies, mosquitoes and dogs, the last of which was said not properly to belong on a dairy farm, but also from "... high tempered excitable milkmaids and stable men."174

"If ... you entertain so high an opinion of yourself that you think it beneath your dignity to submit to the conditions laid down by a cow, don't invest in one of dairy breeding. While she may be unable to protect herself against such cruelties as you may inflict upon her, she always has the power of getting revenge and she does this by losing money for you."

During the period covered by this chapter the creameries which had been so important in the development of markets for the fledgling industry in the early pioneer period gradually disappeared. Government involvement had been, in the tradition of the time, an effort to fill a critical need that was not about to be met from the private sec-

173 ADA 1909-p 83.
174 Ibid, p 84. On the other hand it was a fantasy of western men that the animals of the east had become effeminate and that they needed an infusion of tough western blood to perk them up. RDN May 7, 1913.
tor, and it was terminated when it was no longer needed.

The Deputy Minister said at Red Deer in April of 1909 that

"In earlier years when business was somewhat of an experiment, the markets limited and uncertain, ... there was ample justification for the government embarking in such work. Now, however, these conditions have changed. We have in the west a ready cash market and an excellent demand for all the butter the creameries can turn out." (175)

Up to 1909 success had not been so certain. A large number of closely spaced creameries were necessary under frontier conditions of transportation. The Red Deer creamery dated from 1897, Blackfalds and Lacombe from 1903, and Content, Earlville and Lamerton from 1906. Spasmodically commercial or commercially oriented cooperative creameries opened in the larger towns of Innisfail, Red Deer and Lacombe. The loans on the buildings of Dominion creameries had been underwritten by local leaders in the cooperative movement, and when the economy softened in 1907 these men were threatened with personal loss by the lending banks. Apparently the Lacombe creamery was one in such a position because J.J. Gregory and W.F. Puffer of Lacombe were on the committee which went to the provincial government to petition, successfully, what became the "Loan to Creameries", an amount of $21,411.06 voted in the 1908 provincial budget.176

This loan amounted to a first mortgage at 5%.

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175 ADA 1909-p 84.
176 ADA 1908-p 84.
market changed substantially. The Dairyman's Act [sic] of 1907 was the guide to the operation of cooperative creameries; it bound suppliers to the provision of a minimum quota of producing cows, beyond which they could move onto the free market. The agreement ran for three years, and also bound producers to new and unseen regulations which the Department in its wisdom might make 'from time to time'.

Cream deliveries were two or three times per week, cash being advanced against the butter sales and a year-end dividend being paid.

The system was destined not to work. Farmers were eager to sign up in hard times for what seemed like easy markets, but they had a suspicion of promising production to cooperatives if there were a chance that the price on the open market would rise. Consequently, pledges were hard to collect and the enforcement regulations of the Dairyman's Act were rarely invoked among producers who were neighbours. The close geographical spacing of the creameries was reflective of an earlier frontier era in transportation, and a number of them suffered from competition arising from overlapping subscription regions. The Lacombe creamery closed in the summer of 1909 under competitive strain because the

177 ADA 1907-p 88.
178 ADA 1908-p 84. And for a bitter correspondence on the whole realm of the creamery system, including unfounded accusations by A.H. Trimble that the government agents were raking off some money, see various issues of the RDN in 1908: Jan. 29; April 22; May 6; May 20; June 3; June 10; and June 17.
growing demand for fresh milk in the town cut off a proportion of its cream supply. The Western Globe thought, however, that the outfit had been poorly managed by ‘JJC’ whom it blamed for abetting the destructive competition in the first place.

The Blackfalds creamery was in healthy shape, however, and was climbing out of debt; it was among those which the Department wanted to see assume responsibility for their own business. The Department claimed that its resources for dairy administration would be better spent in the direction of herd improvement, and against the wishes of some associations decided to throw off creamery management at the end of 1909 for those on their own feet, and a year later for those which would have their affairs in order by then. Finally the associations asked that an arbitration panel be set up to rule on the location of new cooperative creameries as a solution to competition in subscriptions.

Blackfalds Creamery did offer to take over its own affairs and proposed a hybrid system in which the creamery, instead of looking for its own markets as it would in a purely free economy, would send its butter to a government warehouse for an advance of 80% against the expected value, the remainder to be paid at year’s end. Various forms of

179 ADA 1909-p 80.
180 LG May 4, 1909.
181 ADA 1909-pp 84-85; the Red Deer Creamery was out of debt by early 1909. RDN Jan. 13, 1909.
agreement were drawn up in response to this proposal and were put into effect for the creameries wanting them.

An attempt to start a cheese factory in Alix in 1909 seems to have come to nothing. The attempt was another example of the potential and perennial alliance of business and farmers, the sort which came to nothing with the Red Deer Mill and Elevator Company. The Alix Board of Trade was nominally the instigator of the proposal and a number of the better-known local businessmen listed themselves as backers.

Profound changes occurred in the marketing of cream in the two years before the outbreak of war. Much of the competition in the market was originating from Calgary and Edmonton, and the laying of new railway branch lines up to the depression of 1913 made it possible for city creameries to 'rob' the market areas of smaller centres. By 1913 the output of the province, although it was increasing, was coming from fewer creameries, nine having closed in the year 1912-1913. Some well managed ones in small centres survived and there were dairies supplying local demand for fresh milk in the towns. But the day of country buttermaking had passed. In the spring of 1912, at the time of the laying of the Mirror-Trochu line of the GTP, the cream suppliers of Delburne were treated to a full page advertisement inviting them to send cream to the Edmonton City Dairy. The offering

182 AFP Aug. 6, 1909.
183 ADA 1913-p 49.
of all cash instead of the old year-end dividend was presumably an important inducement to sellers. The advertisement did not seemingly have much effect because the shipment of cream from the town amounted to only ten cans per week by July of that year. By 1914 the Edmonton City Dairy had taken a small building on the main street of Delburne and planned to erect larger permanent quarters.

The fortunes of the Laurentia Milk Company of Red Deer closely followed the economic cycles of 1912-1913. The erection of a number of dairy factories along the line of rail in central Alberta was undertaken by the McLaren Company in 1912. Factories were located at Olds, Bowden and Red Deer and the objective was to produce a double sterilized homogenized milk. The stock for the Red Deer plant was floated at the beginning of 1912 and $50,000 was subscribed from local sources within a few hours. In April the name of the company was changed to the Laurentia Milk Company and in May the firm bought out the Trimble business which had been operating as a commercial dairy. For a year or so the fortunes of the outfit prospered but it went out of business—a casualty of the economic cycles which had plagued farmers and

184 DP May 31, 1912.
186 The information on the Laurentia Company is available from the following issues of the RDN of 1912: Feb. 28, April 17, and May 22.
merchants all over the west, and which had worked against
the erection of thriving regional industries in the smaller
centres.

The income of the farmer from dairying may only be
guessed at. The great majority of farms possessed only a
few milch cows, typically between four and ten. Milk sold
for something over $2 per hundredweight during this period;
cream sold in winter for 38 to 40¢ per pound bf, and dropped
to 28 to 32¢ in spring and summer. It was not a widespread
custom to keep cows milking in winter, but the premium was
worth the extra effort. As the Delburne Progress said:
"It always pays to have a few cows milking during the win-
ter." Map XXV shows that the mean milk output per cow
was between 3000 and 4000 pounds annually for 1910, which
level would have brought an income of $70 per animal more or
less. A calf could be sold for $15 and the skim milk
from each cow, which cost the farmer only a few cents per
hundredweight to retain, in theory could support two pigs.
If a man and wife could keep 12 cows on a quarter section,
as many did, then the income from the year would have been
in theory just over $1000.  

187 DP April 4, 1913.
188 For the period an output of 6500 lbs milk at 4.6% bf
per annum was considered average. *Cyclopedia of Agri-
culture*, p 355. The Alberta level was apparently sub-
marginal.
189 The calculation derives from farm operation practices
outlined in a letter in the AFP of Sept. 12, 1912, ex-
cept for the yields, which are computed by the author
cont'd...
Dairying was an important part of mixed farming and was an influence in land use decisions, most of which aimed for low average markets. The winter feeding of a lactating cow implied some land in grain or roots, or purchase or cultivation of tame hay. Because there was a solid market throughout the period for pork except at the end of 1914, and because markets in cream and beef were relatively more stable than the market in grain, the mixed farming complexion of the landscape was reinforced. Other influences on land use were the available or affordable level of farm technology and the apportionment of work throughout the year. One dairyman in the vicinity of Delburne complained that even the changes concerned in the elementary advice he saw printed in newspapers were out of the reach of the homesteader "... and will be for some time to come." Farmers should have made the best use of animals they had, said the correspondent, if they could not purchase better as papers advised. Sanitary stabling and silage were in the far distant future for most people, who he said were still by necessity running the sort of prairie scrub which should have been left to the rancher.

Just as the lack of capital and the hindrances of horse-drawn ploughing kept down arable acreages, the expansion of dairy herds was confined by a lack of money and of

189 cont'd
from figures in the Historical Tabulations of the Census of Agriculture, 1911.
190 DP Jan. 17, 1913.
time. Except for a few highly specialized farms, the average dairy herd was of 5 to 10 animals of mediocre quality housed in sometimes primitive shelters. On average, herds returned a few hundred to one thousand dollars gross cash income per year. Without strong markets and government assistance in breeding stock the prospects for immediate improvement were not bright.
Hay and Forage Crops

Hay and forage crops attracted little editorial attention during the period under study, probably because there was little glamour in them and not much to say about them. Timothy was for decades after its introduction in the nineties the standard pasture grass of the region. In nutrition it was not an excellent fodder, but it possessed two important advantages on the frontier. Its climatic resistance was known and it travelled well when baled. Clover was tried from time to time, but never met with widespread favour until the late thirties. Some clover and alfalfa put in by C.E. Stone of Bullocksville in 1910 was regarded with enough novelty to warrant comment in the Alix Free Press. Stone was pleased with the crop, which he cut three times in 1910, and said that he would have planted it as an annual; the wintering qualities, which were the crucial unknown factor in adaptation to the parklands, were unimportant in view of the yield that he obtained.\textsuperscript{192}

The old custom of July haying on common land or on unused land over which the legal owner was unable to offer resistance fell into disuse as an important method of making

\textsuperscript{191} Information from JLB.
\textsuperscript{192} AFP Sept. 16, 1910.
hay for most settlers and farmers. Farmers needed guaranteed supplies, and the old way was too risky. Because of increasing intensity in land use it was more important than before for the cutter to have legal title to the hay. The halcyon days of wild hay cutting

"... have passed and the settler who now cuts hay on any other than his own land, or land leased by him, is liable to lose it before he gets it off the field." (193)

Wild hay had ceased to be a desirable form of fodder in any case, and the efforts, as pointed out in other sections of this chapter, of the Department were directed to upgrading the type of feeding which stock received. If, for example, alfalfa were valued at just over $9 per ton, it was estimated that the feeding value of upland hay was merely $3 per ton.194 At this ratio there were obviously better things farmers could do than chase around after wild grass, especially given the conditions of markets for beef and dairy products after 1908.

Map XXVI demonstrates that the areas in which the highest percentages of land were put down to hay, clover, and other forage crops were also those not surprisingly with the highest concentrations of stock. But it is not possible to make detailed observations on the use of forage crops, however, without knowing what percentage of grain was fed to

193 AFP Aug. 6, 1909.
194 Address by H.G. Hutton, Director of the Lacombe Experimental Farm, Lacombe Advertiser, Jan. 29, 1909.
animals. Even if there were a relationship between the number of animal units per Standard Township Area and the decrease in the ratio between the percentage of improved land used for grain crops and for hay, one might maintain only, for example, that more animals ate more grass and probably, less grain.

The highest rates of sowing to forage crops and hay were in areas which shared a high rate of human occupancy, a lengthy settlement history and a high rate of land improvement. Consequently, forage plantings may be taken to be an indication of increasing diversification in land use. The rate of sowing hay and forage increased with both the number of animal units per Standard Township Area and with the human population, and probably represents partially that percentage of improved land on older farms which was in excess of the annual ploughing capacity under the restraints of horse draft power.

Although the improved acreage of farms increased over the years, the role of forage and hay in this expansion does not seem to have been of permanent status. In 1911 about 10% of improved land in the area of the future Municipal District of Lamerton was in tame hay or forage crops. (About 28% of the land occupied was improved.) By 1916, with an increase of about 4% in the amount of improved land as a proportion of the total occupied, the amount in hay and forage had decreased to 8%. In the Municipal District
of Crown the corresponding figures show that the percentage of improved land in forage and hay decreased by about 6% between 1911 and 1916. The figures for the Municipal District of Hays remained constant, there being only an insignificant upward shift in the percentage of land improved. Pine Lake, which included the country from Red Deer southeastwards, showed no important change in the amount devoted to forage crops. Overall, then, the planting of grass and forage crops decreased as a percentage of the improved land, and it seems that such plantings performed some intermediate function in the frontier process. What this might have been may only be surmised, but it appears to have had some association with the amount of land each farm could manage to plough annually. With the more common use of tractors after 1918 a further cycle of disequilibrium was probably set in motion.
Swine

Few farmers raised hogs exclusively before approximately 1913. Hogs were almost a by-product, and a few were found on almost every farm in the region. At the start of the period under review the condition of the pork market was dismal. Prices were low and farmers were leaving the business.

"Such a policy [withdrawing from the market] must produce high prices in a year or two when every one will be tumbling over the other to get into hogs again only to find another period of low value ... The most money is always made by staying steadily with the raising of hogs." (195)

By 1908 the number which had left the business was placed as high as one half 'because of no markets at all'. 196 Constantly the pork cycle returned to haunt farmers but unfortunately as we shall see, it would not repeat for seven years until the rise in the price of grain at the outbreak of war disastrously forced most of the hogs in the west onto the market in a period of weeks.

There was little wrong with the Alberta hog for the northern market which demanded a 'heavy fat article strongly cured', but, as ever, improvement was necessary in bacon

195 ADA 1907-p 7.
sent overseas.\textsuperscript{197} Alberta producers could expect on average about $7 per cwt. in supplying the foreign market in which they were in competition with a good quality of Danish bacon, but this rate was paid only for export quality. Lower prices, not much above those of the turn of the century, were paid for domestic quality hogs.

The Beef Commission of 1907 which, as was pointed out above was not confined to the cattle field, reported that the pork packing plant which had preoccupied many hog producers in central Alberta for years was a necessity. The proposal got as far as the 1908 appointment of a second commission, including James Bower of Red Deer, to look into the financing and the technology of the plant.\textsuperscript{198} The commission found that farmers would have been satisfied with 5\$ per lb, but that they had not been getting it. American immigrants were bitter because they had been able to make money in the United States in hogs and could not in Canada, "... and it is at this point that Alberta has fallen down the hardest."

The importation of cured meat to Alberta was still running at 75\% of demand and some of this hypothetically was Alberta pork cured in the east and returned to Alberta tables.\textsuperscript{199}

While the packing plant was important, warnings

\textsuperscript{197} ADA 1908-p 34.

\textsuperscript{198} ADA 1908-pp 30, 31; a set of specimen plans were drawn up by a Toronto engineering firm and appear in the same source at pp 39-40.

\textsuperscript{199} ADA 1908-p 31.
were offered concerning the cooperative method. The Commissioners found that the Ontario cooperative plants had failed because subscribers were willing to forfeit membership shares in favour of a rise in price sufficient to wipe out the loss on the share and to give them a profit. This was the issue which had been under debate in Red Deer in 1906 when the erection of a plant was previously discussed. A plant might have been successful if the penalties for selling other than to the plant were sufficient.  

As in cattle shipping there were problems in moving hogs. The Commission recommended that they be shipped on regular days and that some care be taken to make sure that they hit the market at the correct weight for packers, the habit being to send them too heavy.  

No statistics of hog production were kept by the Department of Agriculture, and because hogs were not branded and were usually destined for Alberta slaughter houses, no inspection system existed from which shipping statistics could be gleaned. Surprisingly, the first effort at gaining some systematic view of hog production seems to have been a circular letter sent to producers in 1910 requesting information on farrowing rates.  

In response to the changing requirements of the mar-

200 Idem.  
201 ADA 1908-p 33.  
202 ADA 1910-p 190.
ket there was an attempt in Lacombe to discourage the keeping of the American lard breeds. The lard hog was not suited to Canada because the metabolism of the animal was best matched to corn, a feed which was not available in the northwest. Furthermore, the government had been trying for fifteen years to discourage the production of such hogs and "... it was not thought in the interests of the country to encourage the raising of these breeds." In keeping with this policy the Poland China and Duroc Jersey breeds were removed from the class lists at the 1907 Lacombe Agricultural Society Fair. Of course the types did not disappear overnight; some Poland Chinas were advertised for sale in Delburne in 1912 and thousands of lard type hogs were retained well past the end of the study period by American settlers who could not be convinced to try the smaller hogs common to Canadian farms.

One American immigrant was incensed by the action of the board of the LAS, and reported to the Western Globe that, after studying the hog question 'probably as seriously as anyone', he found that he could raise lard hogs in Alberta as easily as anywhere else. The correspondent, John

203 This is the opinion of a Mr. Craig of the Lacombe Agricultural Society. IG June 11 and July 9, 1907.
204 Chester Whites were not common in the study area.
205 DP Nov. 7, 1912.
206 IG July 9, 1907 for the correspondence. Maurer was referred to in Chapter II in connection with immigration.
Maurer, noted that local merchants were selling inferior American meat because the much-touted bacon pork was 'too high-priced ... to handle', but Maurer wondered why this should be the case when the American price and the Alberta price to producers was so close. He then offered a secret of the hog raiser, among the ranks of which he apparently placed himself highly: the American show hog, as opposed to the common market hog, was finished on oats, the supreme grain crop of the parklands. The Agricultural Society was run by incompetents, according to Maurer. His talents at raising hogs were at least equal to the taking of a few prizes at the fair of 1906, but he scorned the directors for going broke before they could pay his prize money.207

Maurer said as a parting shot that he was going to exhibit hogs anyway, regardless of whether there was a class for his lard breed, and would show them in the streets if he had to, or in the country if they were going to keep him out of town. As a last resort he could take the hogs all the way to Edmonton where a friend of his had used influence to have a class set up for lard hogs. But despite anything that Maurer and others among the American contingent could do the day of the fat hog had passed, and hog production,

207 It was at this time that the books of the LAS were 'burnt' under mysterious circumstances. The Society was insolvent; Maurer blustered, "Think of it--busted." There were numerous mysterious fires in Lacombe over the years and the town had a poor fire rating.
like the finishing of cattle, was forced along lines which made the product more what the modern market required.

There was a slight resurgence in the pork market in 1908 and the year was even prosperous for some breeders.\textsuperscript{208} Shipments reported by the CPR in Alberta numbered 48,618, an increase of approximately 100\% over the rate of 1905. The CNR handled 16,600 and there was no way to estimate the number which were herded to market. By 1909 W.F. Puffer was shipping large numbers of hogs from Alix;\textsuperscript{209} a high demand arose in the fall of that year.

The economic conditions of 1910 were enough to make almost anyone forget about protest according to the Alix Free Press, and an editorial clearly and accurately linked commodity and land prices.

"These are prosperous times for the farmers--hogs at $8.75, steers at $5 ... and all raised on land which was bought for $3 per acre not more than half a dozen years ago." (210)

The time had come, as the Department had warned two years before, for 'everyone to be tumbling over the other to get into hogs again.' The price rose further to $9 in May of 1910 and it was high enough for many farmers to send off their breeding stock.\textsuperscript{211}

\textsuperscript{208} ADA 1908-p 154.
\textsuperscript{209} AFP May 21, 1909; AFP May 18, 1910. When hogs were at 7\$ in Red Deer in 1909 the RDN pessimistically remarked that the price always went down once men got into the field. RDN Sept. 22, 1909.
\textsuperscript{210} AFP April 8, 1910.
\textsuperscript{211} LG May 18, 1910. Many men sold off all bovine, equine, and swine stock about this time.
Map XXVII shows the population of swine in the study area in 1911. The corridor of the C&E railway contained higher numbers of hogs per Standard Township Area than districts to the east, but there were not insignificant numbers on a line between Blackfalds and Alix. Except for the increased quantities in areas of human concentrations, and concomitantly of concentrations of dairy cattle, there does not appear to be anything remarkable on the map. There is no reason to expect that hog populations on the frontier showed any spatial trend except that associated with increasing human population. Some farmers with milch cows kept hogs to consume skimmed milk, but others did not. Some farmers on the sections of the frontier which were newer and less densely settled than older districts along the line of rail kept hogs and others did not. Some men kept hogs on purchased grain and others grew their own. Many farms kept only a few brood sows and sold shoats, but near the end of the period concerned in this chapter there was a trend, but only among a minority, to the keeping of large herds. In addition to these considerations working against neat spatial regularities in hog population was the heady market of 1910, the effects of which can be expected to have had an influence on the figures of 1911 used to construct the map.

An attempt at erecting a pork packing plant was made in Alix in 1909-1910. Sponsored by the UFA, the effort never got beyond the planning phase and was a stimulus for
the Free Press to criticise local farmers for crawling back into the shell which had 'kept them back for all time'.

In 1910 a provincially-sponsored series of meetings revived the old idea of a cooperative regional packing plant and with Henry Jamieson of Red Deer, D.W. Warner of Edmonton and E.J. Fream of Innisfail set up as an organizing committee, a promise of over 12,000 hogs was run through. The plan was destined to come to nothing. Again it was defeated by farmers entering a high market after years of low ones in which their position had been growing. Whatever the optimism of the government for the plant there was no headway around Red Deer in the giddy days of 1910 when pork prices went as high as $9 in getting farmers to pledge their output to the plant. With pathetic regularity farmers scuttled the only chance they possessed to control what they could of the market from the only possible direction of attack—combination. Inevitably low markets returned in 1913 and just as inevitably talk of a pork plant, a topic which had been threading through frontier conversations on hogs at least since 1884. By the end of 1913 the UFA had come to the conclusion that it was finally about time for the issue to be solved, but again an incredible change in the market in-

212 AFP May 20, 1910.
213 ADA 1910-p 84.
214 RDN May 4, 1910.
215 RDN Dec. 17, 1913.
tervened to ruin any chance the plan might have had.

The details of market trends which accompanied the stagnation of the slaughterhouse plans are as follows. Little market activity of note seems to have occurred in 1911; 1912 was a year of acceptable prices and there are numerous references to the shipments of stock dealers from the small towns with local papers. The opening of the rail line through Delburne in 1912 relieved breeders of the work of driving to Nevis or even, as a number did, to Innisfail or Red Deer. On occasion Delburne farmers carted carcasses to Red Deer.

The recession of the autumn of 1912 hit the grain trade very hard, but shipments of hogs do not seem to have decreased on a ratio. Local news indicated shipments of a car per week from Delburne in the middle of 1912. By October the shipments were one or two cars every two weeks, sometimes five cars per month. One Delburne farmer bought up a lot of hogs in the winter of 1912-1913 and it was reported that he was going to use them "... as one way of getting more than 13½ for oats." The hog market recovered more quickly than other sectors and by the beginning of April 1913 everyone was satisfied with local prices of $8.

216 Delburne receives comment here because the local newspaper, the Progress, regularly reported hog shipments. Red Deer and Lacombe papers did not. Some appear from Alix and Clive but the latter paper was not started until late in the period.

217 For instance see various entries in the issues of the Progress for July, 1912.

218 For example see the issue of Oct. 11, 1912.

softened to $6 by December when the largest single shipment, 250, was sent from Delburne, 221 but recovered to $7.50 by March. The carload shipments per month in early 1914 were about eight to ten at a minimum.

Still the farm supply was not exhausted and shipments in July 1914 followed another heady upward rise in prices. 222 With the outbreak of hostilities the demand for pork continued its amazing upward rise and the producers were looking forward to a great coup. But, unlike the two years previously when cheap grain underwrote expensive pork, the price of grain moved upward. A major American buyer, Frye and Co. of Seattle withdrew from the hog market on the possibly fabricated excuse that the CPR was in effect charging them a premium by not supplying double-decked cars. 223 In the fall of the year everything hog-like around the farm was thrown onto the market, first of all to reap high prices, then afterwards to rid the farm of some hungry mouths which might eat grain which could be the farmers' next killing in the market. Some of the stuff sent off the farm was so poor and ill finished that it could do nothing but harm for the reputation of Alberta. 224 But that consideration was of no moment; by the end of the year the market had collapsed in chaos. 225

221 DP Dec. 21, 1913, and for the remainder of this paragraph: Jan. 23, March 14, 22, 27, 1914.
222 DP July 31, 1914.
223 ADA 1914- p 76.
224 DP Sept. 25, 1914.
225 DP Nov. 6, 1914; ADA 1914- p 76.
Conclusions on Animal Husbandry
and Associated Issues in Land Use on the Late Frontier

Map XXVIII portrays the number of animal units per Standard Township Area in 1911. The method of calculating animal units is not standardized even for present day farms, and because the quality of farm animals differed from an average type much more in the frontier period than it now does, and because there are insufficient categories in the Census to calculate the figures very finely, a set of values for animal unit conversion was imposed upon the data. Milch cows were assumed to be one unit and all other cattle .9 units; horses were assessed at .9 units to smooth the differences in age and the disparity in feed requirements between work horses and ranch stock held for sale. Boars usually are assessed one unit and sows one half; taking into account the apparently large number of immature swine and the fact that many of them were supported partially as a by-product of the dairy pursuit, a figure of .33 units seems adequate for each hog. Sheep were assessed .16 units.

The map of distribution shows that the highest intensity occurred from Innisfail to Red Deer, with secondary nodes at Lacombe and to the southwest of Alix. Lower figures occurred
in the northeast of the study area and in the central uplands. Not surprisingly the values were highest in heavily-settled and longer-settled areas and in districts in which the percentage of improved land used for hay and forage was higher.

Income from animals and dairy products was an important part of the income of mixed farms in the parklands. Hogs consumed skim milk and coarse grains which did not enjoy ready access to market. Hogs and cattle could, in effect, store grain for farmers over a short period of time, such as the depression of 1913, during which the market for slaughter animals was weak. The farmer was sometimes lucky, as he was in the spring and summer of 1914 when a market rebound brought receipts to exaggerated levels and he was able to sell animals raised on 'cheap' grain at a killing. Dairy technology, transportation and rural dairy organization all underwent profound changes in the years 1907-1914 and the end of frontier conditions in the dairy industry came with the invasion of the country supply of cream by large creameries in Calgary and Edmonton. Horse sales, although the majority of farmers probably sold very few, were an important source of income for a number of breeders, notably around Red Deer, to the north of Lacombe, and around Alix. The blood of horses was gradually improved over the years by importation of heavy, and expensive, stallions which were bred into a local stock of grade mares. As the frontier became tamer and farmers were able to erect better stabling the size
of horses increased away from the grade combination of cayuse and stallion which had been necessary at the turn of the century. Cattle sales were important but the industry was plagued with unresolved problems, some of which dated back to the nineties or earlier. These affected market receipts, stability, and the quality of animal which the stock farmer was able to put on the market. The decade before the war witnessed substantial changes in the technology of beef finishing as the free range of the frontier and the reliance upon wild hay disappeared. Grain finishing, apparently started about 1904 by some raisers with an experimental streak, became more and more common, and despite the fact that the British market never did re-open for the importation of live animals for fattening, the period was one of improvement in the quality of animals sent off to market. Improvement of bloodlines in both dairy and beef cattle was the preserve of a few men of advanced thinking and financial resources who imported good stock from the east and sold them locally to those who could afford them. Such dealers were well-to-do and gained a proportion of their income from sales to other farmers rather than on the market. Sheep production, not covered in this chapter, remained of minor importance in the mixed farming of the parklands. The depredations of coyotes were never effectively countered in the frontier period, possibly because the profit on fleece was minimal and would not support the erection of fencing. Poultry production, also
not covered in this chapter, remained women's work on most farms of the parklands although there were some nominally successful attempts by the Department to encourage standardization in poultry sent for slaughter, the improvement of bloodlines by the lending of superior cocks, and the submission of fresh eggs to market in place of the dirty and ripe variety which had been all too common in frontier times. Two women raised choice poultry near Alix for the city trade and dining car consumption.

In all, the period 1907 to 1914 marked the maturation, at least among a number of farmers and stock raisers, of the frontier. Animal quality improved, the technology of raising and husbanding animals changed toward greater complexity and the provision of products that were of better and more uniform quality, and in general the foundations were laid for what might be called 'meeting the needs of the twentieth century'. With these changes the use of land inside the farm became more intense, and the occasional good year forced up the price of land.

But the lot of the farmer as an income earner did not improve greatly on balance during the period. Opportunities were lost in cooperative pork marketing which might have led to stability, if only in the Alberta market, and the life of the rural resident continued into the war years to be regulated by cycles of economic flamboyance and strangulation. The successes which farmers involved in the protest movement
enjoyed in such fields as elevator construction and the selling of retail goods and binder twine at reduced prices were not repeated in the field of stock management. Better shipping yards were desperately needed as was effective control of the actions of railway employees in charge of stock. Stock management required dedication over a long term and the amelioration of conditions which worked against the farmer required an organization which seemed to elude the average producer. Only after the war, when the duration of adverse conditions was longer than the endurance farmers typically possessed for bad times, would the protest movement gain an effective following in the parklands. Until then cooperation was a catchword; the real meaning was cooperation in desperation, every man for himself the rest of the time.
GRAIN CROPS AND ARABLE FARMING PRACTICES

Introduction

Grain crops increased in sown acreage as the years passed and became more important to farmers as a source of income and as feed. Oats remained a versatile crop, some being marketed if the price were right, and some being fed to stock. The planting of wheat was risky because of early frost damage or burnout and there were at that time no varieties proven for use in the climate of the parklands. Some Americans who came to the central Alberta frontier were grain farmers by tradition, but the region was not suited to giving perpetually good returns solely from grains. Indeed, the first crops to be taken from new breaking were often sensational, but the enormous growth of straw was a reflection of the nitrogenous accumulation from centuries of grassland or slough, and often the grain sitting at the top of the six-foot stalks was of the most ordinary quality. Such thick stands were nearly impossible to swath and became a tragedy if wetted or snowed upon. After a few years the yield of oats on new breaking without fallow decreased to between 30 and 40 bushels per acre and according to the figures published by the Department this stabilized as the regional
mean. Some wheat was grown in the vicinity of Alix on sandy soils and some of the crops were magnificent. Soil depletion after the Great War caused the discontinuation of such plantings and much of the soil suffered erosion in the dry years of the thirties. This is not known to have happened around Red Deer.

226 RDN Aug. 21, 1907. At the time of this item oats were unsaleable; wheat paid well but there were not many plantings. Hogs were said to have given the best return over the year 1906-1907; the yields of oats ranged from a low of 28.3 bu. per acre in 1909 to the enormous high of 49.7 in 1915. Red Deer was consistently about three bushels per acre lower than Lacombe except in 1913 when it was five bushels per acre higher.

227 Informant Morris Schnepf of Alix. Morris used to derive aesthetic pleasure from the deepening of the golden colour of the wheat, and remembers certain years which were remarkable for the intensity of this feature. This event does not happen any more according to him because the varieties are different.
Oats

The preponderance of oats in the grain sector of the economy of the parklands was preserved well into this century. As was pointed out in Chapter III, oats are a crop that is well suited to short growing seasons, and which is usable for green feed should the crop be damaged by frost or by a failure to ripen. Generally it is more tolerant of wet conditions than wheat and this fact was of some importance in a countryside in which there were numerous sloughs and wet spots, many of which drain away only slowly during the growing season. The crop was in high demand during the horse farming and draying era, and was of some use in the feeding of swine. Oats were sown on fields of wheat to catch a crop when the wheat showed signs of failure.

The severity of the winter of 1906-1907 is a commonplace in the history of Alberta and the 1907 grain crop did not escape its effects. Seeding was almost a month late and a cool summer and early frosts affected the yield and quality of grain. In the area of the study the crop was expected to be of poor seed quality, 1906 holdovers were low, and a seed grain assistance project was started without delay. In this sphere the government seems to have learned that it would
not be treading on disputable ground; the speed with which the program was set up and the lack of discussion surrounding it would indicate that, unlike the program of the nineties, seed grain assistance had become part of the government's less unusual functions. The Edmonton area was damaged to the greatest extent. There were 2,316 applications for aid there and only 554 at Red Deer. Calgary had 484. In the Red Deer area 216 of the applications were secured by lien, and 314 by mortgage. There were 24 cash sales of seed.228

Between Alix and Lacombe the 1907 oat crop was not expected to come out well, but farmers took off more than they thought they would with much one-way cutting due to the lodging of the grain by snow in August.229

Because of the habits of the Department in redistributing the districts over which the crop returns were published it is not possible to obtain a perfect indication of the amount of acreage or the yield of grains over the study area for a long sequence of years. Until the end of 1904 a district virtually blanketing the study area was used—'North-Central Alberta'—and in 1905 the study area was part of two districts numbered 9 and 10. But in 1906 the use of Electoral Districts was started; there were two involved—Red

228 ADA 1908-p 55. Probably a number of farmers regarded the plan as a cheap method of getting seed and came forward without need. Consequently the number of applicants may not be a true indication of distress.

229 LG Sept. 3, 1907.
Deer and Lacombe—but their eastern boundaries in the days of sparse settlement were eastwards far past the boundaries of the study area. In 1909 the old Electoral District listing was discontinued and the boundaries of the Districts as they evolved in the Redistribution of 1909 were used with the result that the crop reports covered an area only to range 21. If this were not complicating enough, the Consolidated Tables published after 1909, which were in keeping with the expansionist creed of the time and were designed to show increases in cropped acreages, were based apparently upon recompirations with 1909 boundaries of the original township reports. The township reports were not kept and the published tables are the only record existing of acreages except for sporadically published Cereal Maps.

In fact, few farmers, officials or merchants were aware how much grain was involved in the harvest of any one season. One sidewalk gossip in Delburne was proud in 1912 of having calculated the amount of grain in stook in that district for the first time. This he accomplished by collecting figures on the total amount of binder twine which had arrived in the district and converting by a factor he invented to the number of stooks. From that he decided that there were 400,000 bushels harvested.230

For the purposes of this study it was decided to use the recompilation tables which appear to backdate the 1909

230 DP Oct. 4, 1912.
FIG. IV
SOWN ACREAGE AND YIELD OF OATS, LACOMBE AND RED DEER ELECTORAL DISTRICTS, 1907-1915

- Acreage, in 000
- Yield per ac. (bu.)

LACOMBE

Acres  1907  1908  1909  1910  1911  1912  1913  1914  1915  Yield

Source: Province of Alberta Department of Agriculture, Annual Reports
boundaries to 1905 or 1906. All the Departmental figures for grain acreages and yields concern only those portions of farms that were threshed; there can be no allowance for fields that were planted and used for soiling or pasture except for the years 1910 and 1911 in which this quantity should have been equal to the reported Census figures for acreages less the Departmental figures for threshed acreage. Figure I demonstrates the enormous percentage increase in oat planting over the period 1907-1915. In the Lacombe Electoral District there was an upward curve in plantings in 1910, but that level was not reached again until 1913. No such peak occurred in the Red Deer District.

There was nothing gratifying in the market price per bushel for oats during the period. Prices between 20¢ and 30¢ were not uncommon in good years, but early 1913 saw an enormous drop to about 13¢. At this time the pork market moved upwards and acreage yields fell slightly. The holding of oats from the market for hog feeding added to demand in the middle of 1914 and by the fall of that year farmers were looking forward to growing much more of the crop and hopefully selling it at elevated prices in 1915. The second year of the war was the one which all farmers of the time re-

The figures do not agree well and one can only hope that the variations in any one set of data are somehow systematic and do not upset intra-regional relationships, and that the variations were constant over the years.
member. The weather for grains was splendid. Prices stayed high for the marketing of a record crop taken off the field at enormous yields.232

The regional spatial distribution of acreage used for the production of grain crops in 1910 is shown in Map XXIX. Ratios are provided on this map to show the relationship between planting of grain crops and hay and forage crops, and it will be noticed that the percentage of all improved land in grain was lower in the longer-settled districts than in the townships on the eastern side of the study area. However the percentage of the total land occupied was less in the newer areas; conversely, the gross production of grain in the older areas on a tonnage basis would have been much higher because more land was in production. This observation contributes further to the earlier postulation that the planting of forage crops represented an intermediate stage in frontier evolution. The planting of grains in the newer frontier areas on the east of the study area indicates that farmers' first clearing was put into grain—an observation which seems perhaps too commonplace to merit comment. But the further differentiation of intra-farm land use must be followed from this point of origin. Grain plantings increased only to a threshold level on the average mixed farm, a level which presumably was controlled by the amount of time that farmers could devote to ploughing, harvesting, and hauling.

232 ADA 1915-p 10.
and by the amount of money they could put into draft power and the associated implements. After that threshold was reached clearing did not cease, but was accomplished in the portions of the year that were not needed for haying, planting, harvesting, and carting. The excess of cleared land above the requirements for arable crops was put into forage which required ploughing only every third to fifth year. This trend was not without reversal, however, and by 1916 the Census indicates that an increase of grain acreage was underway, probably in response to needs for stock feed and to good markets in the war years. The expansion of grain acreage in the war years does not properly belong in this study, but it is worth comment that it represented an important change in land use. Increased bankers' credit and optimism broke the conservative mould of frontier land use and set loose a cycle of speculation and spending without parallel.
Wheat, Barley and Miscellaneous Crops

Spring wheat planting had been a small part of the mixed farming system of the parklands at the turn of the century. Fall wheat was tried by a few men who were curious or daring, but substantial acreages were not laid down until 1910 when the acreage of fall wheat harvested was 2,878 in the Red Deer Electoral District and 3,905 in Lacombe. Spring wheat acreage harvested in 1910 also showed a large increase over 1909 the figures being roughly 9,200 acres against 2,300 for the whole study area. Because of a drought in 1910 the yields were well down but recovered in even larger plantings in 1911. The relative importance of fall wheat fell off after 1910 however, and by the time of the war, when the harvested acreage of wheat had risen to an average of 17,000 acres, the level of fall wheat production had declined to a few hundreds of acres. The difficulty with fall wheat, specifically with Red Fife which was commonly planted at the time, was that it was a few days too long in ripening. 233 The appeal of wheat for those who could get a crop off was the price. In 1912 wheat was sel-

233 This was remarked in the Lacombe Globe at the time at which acreages reached their peak. LG Jan. 19, 1910.
ling around 69¢ and oats at 23¢. Turkey Red yielded better than Red Fife but the latter was preferred by millers. The yield of oats per acre was usually something over twice as much as the yield of wheat and returns per acre consequently were about the same once an allowance were removed for the extra threshing charges for the oats.

There were insignificant plantings of rye in the study area.

Between 1903 and 1906 barley acreage hovered around 6000 in the study region, but the severe winter of 1906-07 thrust plantings back through a wet spring, there was early frost in the harvest season and only 2300 acres were threshed. Acreages increased steadily through the remainder of the years under discussion in this chapter, reaching 7000 in 1909, 12,000 in 1912 and 21,000 in 1914. In the latter year the threshed acreage of oats was more than double that of barley, and those of barley and wheat were essentially identical. The upswing in grain production was in response not only to opportunities in the grain market but also to the increasing amount being fed to stock. Prices for barley were not high, but the Alberta Pacific Elevator Company shipped large tonnages of chopped barley to Mexico in 1909 for consumption by horses on railway construction. The call of the elevator company for more barley from local sources was not apparently met by farmers through increased planting the next season.  

AFP April 2, 1909; LG April 13, 1909.
THE END OF THE FRONTIER: CONCLUSIONS TO
CHAPTER IV

The frontier in the Red Deer-Lacombe region lasted, according to the definition we have devised, approximately thirty years. Within this period there appear to have been a number of phases marked variously by changes in demography, the density of settlement, the arrangement and disposition of colonization company lands, changes in agricultural and transportation technology and by motions of the economic cycle leading to advances and retreats in the availability of credit and in the level of annual farm income. There was great variation across the region in the density of settlement at the end of the period, some older districts being more than half settled, but many districts, especially to the eastern side of the study area being lightly settled. As the frontier unrolled eastwards, and to a lesser extent westwards, the percentage rate of occupancy rose in settled districts, but interestingly the density of occupancy measured by households increased only to a regional mean of about 45 farms per township. There seems to have been some limiting factor which enforced a dynamic balance among land prices, intensity of land use and population. This factor seems to have been associated with settlement chronology and the rate at which
land prices were bid up once the frontier had closed. The withdrawal of free range on unused land adjacent to occupied farms seems to have been part of this process.

In the period 1907-1914 a number of trends in land use and in agricultural and stock technology were continued which had been started in previous years. There was a consistent trend to the breeding of better draft horses and the market of 1910-1912 was memorable in that sector. Cattle prices remained firm but at a low level not much above that of the turn of the century. Central Alberta producers, convinced that a conspiracy among processors robbed them of just returns, started the Central Alberta Cattle Growers' Association under the tutelage of George Root of Red Deer. Most of the adherents of this organization were among the more successful beef producers, that is, men who treated stock raising as a business and were in the forefront of changes in the industry. Insofar as a major objective of beef producers was the reopening of the British feeding market their association was not effective, but the expertise gained in criticism of market patterns and procedures provided a sound basis for later protest. Unrest from the arable cropping and mixed farming sectors was funneled through the AFA, which formed in Red Deer and Edwell in 1906, and later through the United Farmers of Alberta which organized many districts north of the River by 1910. In this case again the instigators of protest were well-to-do farmers who had gained business experience in
large farm operations which were out of the ordinary. Except for 1914 the markets for grain and hay before the war were ordinary and most men maintained a mixed farming operation to spread their chances as much as possible in a physical environment which still held surprises and which was not suitable for the cultivation of wheat.

Changes during the period were noted in the fields of dairying, hog raising, forage production and cattle finishing. More advanced dairy technology and sanitation came to the average farm and cream processing was centralized first of all in local creameries supervised by the Dominion government and later in dairy factories in Calgary and Edmonton. These latter processors were made accessible to the countryside by the installation of the railway branch line network which was complete by the end of 1912. In consequence, a number of the local creameries were forced out of business. An effort to start a factory in Red Deer was crushed by the depression of 1913, and in keeping with the experience of most western communities there was little real opportunity for the installation of regional manufacturing and processing industries. Hog raising became widespread throughout the region although there was no evident spatial pattern in the distribution of the hog population. Hog prices were steady through the years concerned in this chapter, rising sharply to giddy levels in 1914 but falling dramatically again when it became clear that there would be a high demand for wartime grain. The slow
process of eliminating the blood of American lard hogs from the frontier swine population was continued through the period with some apparent success, but hog producers as a group were sometimes capable of very unprofessional conduct in sending very poorly finished animals of an incorrect weight to market. Forage production moved to the use of tame grasses, usually timothy, but this shift seems to have been an interlude in parklands agricultural development. By 1916 a lower percentage than previously of improved acreage was seeded to forage crops and tame grasses, a development which no doubt reflected farmers' concentration on grains during the war and which possibly was reversed in later years outside the scope of this study. In the continuation of a trend which had started about 1903 in the study area more and more cattle were put on finishing rations as the years passed, and the age at which they were marketed was reduced generally to three years from four. Only a limited number of purebred cattle were sent to market, most stock during the whole frontier period being nondescript grade combinations. Nevertheless the general standard of conformation in cattle was increased during the period with the infusion of purebred blood, usually of the Shorthorn type.

Land use during the frontier period was determined by restraints which enforced a conservative underutilization on the farmer. These restraints are covered in detail in the sections concerned and in the model of land use concluding
the study in Chapter V; they included a lack of capital; lack of steady markets returning more than a 'subsistence' income; lack of firm bloodlines in stock; rural residential transience; the pace of horse draft power and the need to set aside pasture to nourish draft horses; the inability to pay for more than absolutely essential levels of assistance from hired labour; the credit cycle; and certain weak links in the farmers' social and economic philosophy which forestalled the sort of effective cooperative action which conceivably could have enhanced regional economic health.

With the outbreak of war the frontier was over. The money which came with wartime crops, especially with the enormous oat crop of 1915, changed the consumer and social tastes of farm families and patterns of domestic expenditure. It was ironic that a conservative system of land use such as that of mixed farming in the parklands could ever have nurtured such a swing. The change is rendered more comprehensible by realizing that enormously high yields per acre were the hallmark of 1915, yields which are remembered to this day among old-timers. With the war social patterns changed. Women and boys took on men's work, some districts were relatively depopulated by departures for service, and more families broke from the mold of the old rural neighbourhoods through the use of the automobile. Imperial loyalty was strong in the parklands and enrollment for the forces was high in some districts. One-fifth of the 75 men who went from the vicinity
of Alix were killed in action and others among the contingent were so shattered by the experience that they could not remain at farming afterwards. Enlistments were heavy in districts which were heavily British and native Canadian such as Red Deer, Pine Lake and Alix, but there were many volunteers from the more American districts to the north of the River.

Through the years immediately before the war military games had been treated by parkland men just as the term implied; it was not thought among those who went to summer military camps that there was anything in their exercises except the playful exuberance of young Christian men demonstrating the riding and shooting abilities of frontiersmen. Some of the British immigrants regarded the outbreak of war as a free ticket home and few persons thought that the war would last more than a few months.

The news of the month of July 1914 was not given much importance in the parkland press, the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand being run in the Clive News Recorder on an in-

235 See AFP May 31, 1912: "Too many people take a matter [the militia] of this nature too seriously, and imagine that if their boys go on parade today we must go to war the day after; this idea is very erroneous." A comparison was then offered with the Boy Scout movement. From an address by Lt. J.C. Moore in recruiting militia members for the '15th Light Horse of Red Deer' at the Grand Hotel in Alix. The raising of a militia troop was alleged on another occasion to be a good advertisement for Alix, and sixteen men joined. (AFP June 7, 1912) The next February, 28 signed up at a meeting in Sell's Pool Hall. (AFP Feb. 14, 1913)

236 Informant JLB.
side page between the news of Jack Johnson retaining his heavyweight title and a notice of a local derailment. By the end of the month the Austrian declaration of war merited a small notice on the front page of the Red Deer News. On August 3rd the 'A' Squadron of the Central Alberta Light Horse, stationed at Red Deer, was under orders to exercise on foot every evening at the armouries. Even after the British declaration of war there was little in the papers to indicate that local editors were reaching for an interpretation of European events, and two weeks of August passed languidly with the troop exercising regularly. By the middle of the month, a call went out for further volunteers, and only those who were medically fit and could ride and shoot well were encouraged to turn up. In the week after this recruitment notice was posted the troop was confined to the Red Deer fairgrounds and it seems that there was something of an expectant party atmosphere. This was broken on the 21st with the arrival of the mobilization order which came at 10:15 as the morning train was already enroute from Edmonton. The railway yard crew hurried to assemble enough cars for the unexpected contingent as the streets of the town filled with a crowd.

237 NR July 1, 1914.
238 RDN July 29, 1914.
239 RDN Aug. 5, 1914.
The troop marched from the fairgrounds to the armoury, and then

"... to the train at the beat of a drum, and the cheers of the crowd who were assembling in hundreds. The troops made a picturesque sight as they marched down the main street, some in old uniforms, some in overalls, and others carrying grips, parcels, etc. Mothers, sisters, sweethearts, friends were allowed to mingle freely with their loved ones while extra cars were being attached to the train to accommodate the men. The band had arrived and were playing patriotic airs while the crowd which had swelled to enormous size were cheering again and again. Many tear-stained faces were noticed among the women-folk, and the eyes of some of the troopers were full almost to overflowing, for among them were many young fellows, who, although full of the spirit which has made the British Empire what it is today were leaving their homes and parents for the first time in their lives. Others looked with straining eyes for a last glance of loved ones who had not arrived, having no news of the sudden departure. Some of the citizens had busied themselves in collecting cigars, tobacco, etc. with all the Hotels, drug stores and everyone else appealed to coming through in the most generous manner so that the men could have a cheering smoke on their journey." (241)

It might be maudlin to proclaim that the flower of the frontier youth was led away to war on that August morning; but in a factual twist which would be tolerable only in the most banal fiction the officer leading the Central Alberta Light Horse was a son, J. Carlyle Moore, of the man who had first attempted to bring eastern colonization to the Red Deer parklands. John T. Moore himself had survived the frontier period and lived into the war years in a Toronto mansion with his second wife, the first having died in 1911. There has been no opportunity to investigate Moore's financial dealings...
after the sale of the Alberta Central Railway, but he apparently failed to make a lasting fortune from his Alberta investments. By early 1917 he was bankrupt and on June 5th of that year he died at the age of 73. In 1918 the old Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company, which he had erected in 1882, was listed still as the owner of some lands adjacent to an isolated Canadian Northern Railway loading point east of Lacombe. The hamlet of Joffre and the remains of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company were waiting among picturesque rolling hills spotted with clumps of poplar for a boom which never came.

242 RDCS biography and personal communication from E.H. Meeres, Red Deer.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUDING INTERPRETIVE AND THEORETICAL COMMENTS

ON THE AGRARIAN FRONTIER OF CENTRAL ALBERTA
This chapter constitutes the conclusions on the topics of land values and farm capitalization, and offers a conceptual model synthesis of the evolution of land use on the frontier of central Alberta. The study culminates by considering the percentage return on investment gained by frontier migrants over the two decades in which land came under increasingly intensive use and was subjected to progressively higher dollar valuations per acre. It is important to remember that the influence of historical events, and especially of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company, was of crucial importance in the parklands. Consequently, the presentation of the model of demography, land values and land use in this section should be taken as an interesting general approximation rather than as a post hoc erection of a seamless theoretical justification for the study. If it is of any utility as a generalization of frontier processes the model might function as a reference for the investigation of other small regions in the west, each of which will inevitably differ in some major respects from the Red Deer parklands because of uniqueness in history, chronology, physical environment and other important factors. One feature, or perhaps a complex of features, might be found to be much similar to our findings, however, and that is the attitude to investment and
the percentage rates of increase over time in land values and farm capitalization in differing regimes of distance from rail and market points and of population density. Initial farm capitalization from migrants' savings may also be found to have been important.

The Maps XXXI through XXXV in this section concern data for 1911 on density of households per township (1911); value of land in farms per acre (1911); total value of land and all goods, chattels and improvements on the farm (1911); and the capitalization of farms per acre excluding land (1911); the percentage of total farm valuation accounted for by land value alone (1911); and the percentage increases in farm land values and in total farm valuation from 1901 to 1911. The two years involved in this comparison are fortunate. The first, 1901, was a land rush year and the latter, 1911, fell during the period of consolidation. Except for the wetness of the earlier year which caused distress to many immigrants and horsedealers and to some arable farmers, both years followed a period of about three years' prosperity, and in 1911 the rural economy was in as stable a condition as it was at any time during the frontier period. Because of the spread of the frontier away from the rail line in the years 1899-1903, the Census of 1901 may be considered a lens through which the frontier of the land rush was frozen in that year. A comparison of the major features of tenancy and investment over the decade allows commentary on the fortunes of the aver-
age farm family after the land rush.

There was some upward change in farm size during the period. Data on this matter were not framed in the original Census material in a form exactly usable for the study, there being imprecision in the categories of size; we have assumed that rural households amounted to farms. It does seem that there was a trend during the period for mean farm size to increase from something just over 100 acres to a figure nearer 300, with the exception of districts such as Pine Lake in which ranching was the rule, Pine Lake being marked by few farm units of a mean size of approximately 500 acres. The failure of mean farm size to shift to some value over 300 acres during a decade in which consolidation of quarter sections is known to have been taking place might be explained by the arrival of sufficient settlers taking up farms of 160 acres in sparsely settled districts to retard the upward trend of mean farm size, and the tendency near towns, especially around Red Deer, to develop farms in small lots of five to ten acres--properties which then appeared on the Census schedule in their own right as small farms, and which exerted a disproportionate influence on the regional or sub-district means.

A comparison of Maps X, XIV, XX and XXXI showing for 1901 and 1911 the number of households per Standard Township Area, and for the same years the percentage of the total land surface under occupancy as farms, reveals that few districts were not similar and the comparison is of necessity based upon nearest pairs.
were more than approximately half occupied in 1911, the mean number of households increasing only to about 50 per township from 26 a decade earlier. Farm consolidation, or the purchase of large farms at the outset by immigrants, seems to have been more common around Red Deer than near Lacombe over the decade, however, because an increase between 20% and 50% in the amount of land occupied as farms in the subdistricts around Red Deer was accomplished without a concomitant rise above the regional mean in the number of households per township. In fact, according to Map XXXI, the land around Red Deer was covered by the same density of households as land in the vicinity of Alix, an area which had been settled some ten to fifteen years after Red Deer. It is possible that Red Deer underwent some intermediary process of consolidation and population deflation before Census data was kept, but the existence of archival data and the pronouncements of local men on the development of Red Deer makes this hypothesis untenable. The alternative and sensible explanation is that Red Deer developed slowly from investment by men of more substance than the average migrant. This selective immigration process was responsible for the social identity of the town and the surrounding country, and it made the districts to the south of the Red Deer River markedly different politically from those to the north.

It has been remarked before in this study that early immigrants to Red Deer on average were more in the mold of the Upper Canada Loyalist than those who went to Lacombe and to
the districts adjacent to that town. Some later arrivals from the United States were of the so-called 'southern gentleman' sort. It is noteworthy that farm protest first made substantial progress among the conservative and wealthier farmers, dairymen and ranchers to the south of the River. This protest was designed to protect advanced levels of capitalization and maintain high levels of current receipts in farm operations which were increasingly dependent upon mechanization and especially upon hired labour.

It seems that immigration to the area of Lacombe, on the other hand, did imply an increase in the number of households in conjunction with the rise in the percentage of the land held as farms to over 60% for the sub-districts near Lacombe and to almost 80% for Lacombe itself. More of the land near Lacombe than elsewhere in the study area was sown to grain crops, approximately 40% of the total land surface immediately around Lacombe being so used by 1911, the figure near Red Deer being about 18%. In the days of horse farming, higher population densities than in later decades were the rule in arable farming districts, and the country between Lacombe and Clive followed this pattern. The relative importance of grain culture was partly due to the physiography and the soils, and to the arrival of hundreds of Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, and Dakota farmers between 1898 and 1904. That such farmers went to Lacombe and not to Red Deer was mainly the result of an important historical factor—the operation of the SLHC around Red Deer and its influence on land prices.
and, indirectly, on land use.

The number of households per Standard Township Area reached a mean of about 50 by 1911, a level which in most areas was not changed for the next decade. Map XXVIII (Chapter IV) demonstrated that the frontier period, perhaps out of keeping with expectations, was one of population stagnation and even decline in most townships once the heady days of the land rush had passed. It might be profitable to regard the depopulation of decades subsequent to this study as a prolongation of this trend rather than as a phenomenon in its own right having its own immediate causes. There is some reason to believe that the frontier was almost instantly overpopulated in the beginning, a larger number of migrants having arrived than could have been supported under the prevailing complex of agricultural production factors—affordable and available levels of machine and crop technology, the limitations of soils and climate, existing levels of professional expertise among the farm population, the balance between credit financing and current receipts, and certain ingrained attitudes to land speculation.

The dejection felt at subsequent population decline reflects the sort of thinking which was part of the Ontario model of settlement and which was based on mid-nineteenth century rural conditions and ideals. The densities anticipated by the 'planners' of this dream were never realized and there is some evidence to see why not. It must be questioned,
then, whether it is sensible to make any pronouncement concerning optimal population density in the modern rural west without considering massive realignment of North American customs of land tenure and credit policy. That some banks recently have moved toward long term chattel financing is a sign that this process may have started spontaneously.

Map XXXI shows that, with the exception of the notable concentration of household units (assumed to represent farms) around Lacombe, the distribution of households across the entire study area in 1911 was close to the regional mean, about 50 per township. In theory, fully settled townships might have had 144 quarter-section farms but such a figure was never, of course, attained. The greatest part of the land area in the study region was remarkably close to the mean value, and the portions which deviate downwards from it did so to an unimportant extent of approximately ten households. These deviations did not mean larger farms, since they occurred in areas ranked low on percentage of land occupied. It seems, then, that 50 farms per township was some sort of upward threshold, a figure which implied, with between 50% and 60% of the land surface settled (Map XX), that some local stability in land use had been attained through dynamic balance after ten to twenty years. This assumption gives a mean farm size of 253 acres, a figure which neatly corresponds to

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2 School lands were not sold until late in the frontier period and some company land failed to sell or was returned for default of payments. Water areas much reduced the potential number of inhabitable quarter sections in the study region.
the available, but inadequate, data on farm size for 1911. Of course there were variations to this happy correspondence; some districts had not attracted settlers to any extent and others had been appropriated by ranchers who ran stock in an extensive fashion on large holdings composed of poor land.

The value per acre of land occupied as farms (Map XXXII) shows a dual nodality around Red Deer and Lacombe. Although Lacombe possessed a higher population, land values there were about $15 less per acre than in Red Deer. Presumably, raw land might have sold at some figure lower than the dollar amount shown on the map since the mapped values came from occupied acreage which in some districts was up to one half improved. Newspaper documentation, however, has established the values appearing on Map XXXII as eminently reasonable. It is interesting that the decay of land values to the east of Lacombe and Red Deer towards the eastern margin of the study area appears to have been constant without reference to the Lacombe Branch. It is possible that the railway, installed in 1905, exerted some local effect which is not noticed in the data, but it is more likely that frontier land values were in some manner time-dependent and that the unfolding of the homestead frontier to the east of the C&E line over the span of a decade left a legacy of a spatial decay in land values, independent of branch line development. (The high value to the northeast of Alix is of little importance. The sub-district concerned was comprised partly of very good land
to the north of Buffalo Lake, and there was short-lived speculative fever in that area in 1911 in anticipation of the arrival of the Grand Trunk Pacific rail line.) The spatial pattern of the mean of the number of households is repeated in land values. A remarkably constant average of about $22 per acre blanketed the study area except for the rough country to the east of Hillsdown and to the west of Ponoka, a part of the country which had remained wet for years after the turn of the century and was only settled in some density after 1912. Comparison between Maps XVI and XXXIII shows that Red Deer and Lacombe reversed their relative positions in land values, Lacombe advancing from about $12 per acre in 1901 to approximately $30 in 1911, and Red Deer from only $5 to about $40. It can be assumed that the price of raw land on the frontier of 1901 was about $3 per acre in districts which were opening to homesteading, although the asking price was obviously higher, probably $5 to $7, nearer Red Deer and Lacombe where there was a premium for access to rail and town amenity.

In 1901 a migrant would have needed to spend approximately $1600 for a quarter section near Lacombe and something less near Red Deer; in 1911 the same quarter section might have sold for between $4000 and $5000, and it is not difficult to see why there were complaints in Lacombe around 1910 that the rural districts tributary to the town were settling slowly. Some townships were losing population on a net basis
while a few highly capitalized farmers, who must have had investment capital in the order of $10,000 to $12,000, were settling on two or more quarter sections. The migrant of the turn of the century had been capitalized, according to documentation we have reviewed above, to the extent of approximately $1000, and a few had more than that. The average man settling east of Lacombe in 1900 or 1901 probably put approximately $1300 into railway land in addition to taking free homestead. A few hundred dollars cash would have provided food and warmth for the family through the first year, no further expense being necessary if the farmer had brought the usual car of settlers' effects—a couple of horses, a mower, plough, hand tools, and household effects.

By 1911 the theoretical value of the land on which the family was situated might have been as much as $10,000, a seemingly enormous increase but one which required a market involving many buyers and few sellers to be realized. Only in boom years did such a market exist and these were in the minority in the study period—1904, 1906, 1910, 1912, and 1914-15. In order for farmers to realize a coup it was necessary for the farm to be solvent at the start of an upswing and for the farm family to be ready to move, the process of selling out being a favourite and time-honoured method of recapitalizing for a new start. Usually movement was from a closed frontier to an open one, in the case of the Red Deer-Lacombe region most of the departures being to the east near the Sas-
katchewan border. Families not able or unwilling to move might, however, have recapitalized by mortgage and the purchase of more land, a process which would have abetted depopulation of their neighbourhoods as they bought out departing neighbours. The necessity of solvency at the beginning of a boom seems to have been more than met for the boom of 1912, the firm horse, pork and cattle sales of 1910-11 being major factors in fueling that boom to giddy heights. Two or three good years threw plenty of purchasers into the property market, a development which distinguished vintage real estate years like 1912 from merely good ones, such as 1904 and 1906.

The capitalization inserted into farm operations must be considered in association with land valuation. Map XXXIII indicates that capitalization per occupied acre varied across the study area to only a small extent, capitalization meaning all investment in everything except land and including stock on hand. This lack of variation is the more remarkable when the varying lengths of time districts had been settled is taken into account and because the capitalization component has been made up from diverse sources including animal stock, buildings and machinery. These components themselves do not always demonstrate spatial regularity and it appears there

3 This method probably was not favoured since there was an element of uncertainty in the ability to repay mortgages in the future. Mortgage registrations on property deeds might be investigated to ascertain such trends.
was some influence which ensured minimal variation among the sub-district sums for investment regardless of the kind of farming pursued, the mix of stock and possessions on farms, the relative location of the sub-district, the sizes of farms and the district population density.

Investment and stock on hand was approximately $12 per acre in 1911, or just over $3000 for the average farm. There was a mild tendency for farms occurring on land of high valuation to have more money tied up in buildings, machinery and stock, and this trend is clear from a comparison of Maps XXXIII and XXXIV, the latter one of which shows the percentage of total farm value accounted for by land value in 1911. But despite this trend there was some uniformity over the region in the proportion of total farm valuation accounted for by land alone. Some value near 60% of total farm valuation was reported by most districts for the land component. While there are a few sub-districts deviating from this level, such departures seem to have been caused by lower land valuation. West of morningside the level is 50% and a nearly similar figure is found near Hillsdown. This regularity is all the more interesting because it occurs through data which exhibits wide spatial variation in the components making up farm valuation. It cannot be argued from these data that the regularity originated from the typicality of individual farms, but unless there were some mechanism ensuring compensation at the sub-district level such a conclusion has appeal.
There is no conceivable combination of biases in the data which could supply an easy explanation. It is only to be expected that some combination of factors was responsible for holding capitalization in farm improvements and stock in the range of 35 to 45% of total farm value. It is interesting that this mean rises through data concerning sub-districts among which there was considerable variation in type of agricultural pursuit and especially in land values. There must be a suspicion that there operated some behavioral regularity among parkland farmers which enforced this regularity in investment. Capitalization seems to have been limited to a certain amount per acre, and it seems reasonable to assume that some threshold process affecting capitalization was instigated by the availability of credit. Because farm receipts were generally low most men could not finance expansion from savings or from income, and given the penchant which the farmers of the region seem to have had for acquiring more land whenever it was in their power to do so the following model explanation is offered. Farm credit, which was generally available in 1909 and 1910 probably encouraged men with unused credit to purchase land, but the servicing of the debt forestalled further investment in farm improvements and stock. Some farmers no doubt were paying off debts from years before and were not in a position to take on more responsibilities. Conceivably they did not invest at the same time in new capitalization either. Few men could afford better stock, the beautification of buildings, the improvement of dairy sanitation, or higher taxes. Together Maps XVI, XVII, and XXXIII show
that between $4 and $10 per acre was added to the farms of the study area over ten years—a rate of about one dollar per acre per year in new investment without allowances for compounding or depreciation. It was not just coincidence that the capitalization of everything on the farm except land in 1911 amounted to just about the amount of money that most immigrants of the land rush had in their pockets when they first came to the frontier. The amount necessary to start a farm remained over the years by custom or necessity the amount necessary to run one, perhaps with a slight upward adjustment which was, at any rate, abolished by the change in the value of the dollar. Years of toil on the frontier were sealed in the land, and the fortunes of the west and of her people devolved to land prices.

The percentage increases in land prices per acre and in total farm value are shown in Map XXXV. Land prices multiplied from four to eight times but capitalization usually only doubled or tripled. Penhold and Lacombe were settled densely before Red Deer and the increase in those places in the second decade of their frontier was 469% and 192% respectively. Total farm value increased over the same period in those places by 277% and 152% demonstrating that there was a slight tendency for Lacombe owners to invest more heavily in farm improvements and stock than elsewhere. Because of the confusing presence of the SLHC it cannot be seen clearly whether land far from the developed corridor of Red
Deer-Lacombe returned a higher percentage rate of investment, while possibly selling at a lower dollar rate per acre, to settlers than land near towns. Red Deer land sold off in volume only after 1901 and the percentage increase in value there and to the west of the town across the Red Deer River was nearly identical--over 800%--to that experienced north of Alix. Most of the other figures in the study area show an increase of about 400% and a rise in total farm valuation of about 300%. It is possible that new frontiers paid more in terms of investment potential than youthful or older ones, but most of the poorer migrants had no choice in the matter. An 800% return on $1500 over ten years could not be balanced against a 400% return on $5000 for persons who were forced to set up farming with the smaller amount of money. But it does appear that some farmers and businessmen, whom we call perpetual frontiersmen in this study, knew very well that constant shifting to new frontiers was profitable, and they took the savings of each place with them down the road in an attempt to multiply it yet again, or if there were after all no savings they went anyway in repetition of a cycle which nearly had become a prison.

By drawing upon the study at large and especially upon the considerations appearing in the previous pages, it is possible to outline in an abstract model form the trend of land values and land use in the historical context of the cen-
It was an axiom of frontier development in the late nineteenth century that increasing population density improved property values; it seems from this research that population density increased only to a threshold level in the average township and sometimes receded after that. A threshold process seems to have been related to the dynamics of the property market which caused potential purchasers and residents to avoid townships which contained more than 50 families or 250 persons, unless there were overriding considerations such as the nearness of a town. This avoidance was evident, incidentally, at the level of 50 families, but in all likelihood commenced to operate when some lower level was attained, perhaps 35 or 40. The failure of some townships with poorer and cheaper land to fill even to this level was probably indicative of canny perceptions by farm purchasers on the future necessity for purchasing more land, there being, contrary to the common expectations of market forces, no inducement whatever which led buyers onto land which did not produce heavily under the technological restraints of horse draft power.

Most townships of at least average land quality did, however, receive population to the level described. Usually two changes followed—the diversification of farm pursuits away from the extensive ranching common in the early years, and the intensification of land use. This process seems to
have occurred as follows. Ranching was an extensive pursuit carried out in many cases in the early frontier period without legal title or leasehold on the range used, although some ranches located on a home section used the surrounding land until the arrival of settlers. Wild pasture was used exclusively and stock was forced to shift for itself during winter, this being little handicap in the parklands because the topography and many groves of trees offered shelter, and there was ample forage and water. The influx of homesteaders in the early nineties along the line of the C&E and a decade later over the whole of the study area caused the curtailment of itinerant ranching and a re-location of some ranches which chose to move eastwards where the frontier remained more open. Until the general settlement of the study area, which can be assumed to have occurred by approximately 1906, there was sufficient wild hay on unsettled colonization company and railway land for the needs of most settlers, and the less settled districts such as Hillsdown and the country to the east of Tail Creek exported tons of the commodity to mining camps in British Columbia. During the early years, fencing was used to keep animals out of small fields and gardens rather than as a method of stock confinement, indiscriminate mating being the rule and the percentage of purebred stock low. The few good dairy and beef herds in the region represented the efforts of well capitalized men who had money or credit for such things as fencing required for scrub bull control. Far-
mers, dairymen, and ranchers in this category were entrepreneurs and good managers, and many of them were at the forefront of the protest, breed associations, and cooperative creamery movements.

Arable farming was undertaken by homesteaders in the first years of occupation in keeping with the requirements of the Dominion Lands Branch, and until after the turn of the century, the output from this sector was confined to sales to incoming settlers. During the whole frontier period, arable acreage did not advance above 40% of the land surface in any district, and the usual amount was 20%. Some further percentage was ploughed intermittently and laid down to tame grass, usually timothy, and the combination of timothy, oats and wild land marked the intra-farm and regional land use complexion of the parklands for several decades of this century. This combination provided, in the absence of wheat varieties which would produce heavily and reliably in the northern environment of central Alberta, for a cash crop of oats, for forage and soiling feed, and for feed grain, and the keeping of a few milch cows, some swine, and a few horses filled out the inventory of parkland mixed farming. Obviously there were some specialized farms and ranches, and some districts balanced more to one kind of activity than others, but, on the whole, intra-farm land use was substantially typical over the whole period.

Land prices in newly opening districts seem to have
started at three to six dollars per acre depending on the accessibility of the land and its quality. Colonization land around Red Deer sold slowly but railway lands within carting distance of the railway were taken by 1903. Land prices rose with time, after one or two decades having increased by about four times in some areas and eight times in others. This rise seems to have occurred, especially in the case of land around Red Deer, because there was a category of purchasers eager to buy into settled districts. But there are indications from demographic data and from other material on property valuation that an upper population threshold was forced upon most townships by 1911 in response to the diminishing availability of contiguous quarter sections for future expansion of holdings of recent purchasers. This process appears to have amounted to a dynamic balance between the advantages of older more accessible areas and newer less expensive ones farther away from rail points and town amenities. Such a phenomenon has been observed elsewhere. 2

Once districts had become generally settled, or as settled as they would be, the intensification of land use

2 John Hudson, "Two Dakota Homestead Frontiers", Annals, Association of American Geographers 63:4 (1973), p 449 found a variance between observed and expected frequencies in the selection of untaken land located in generally settled tracts. Of necessity, the model used the assumption of constant time rate, a limitation of no importance if the resistance of potential purchasers were toward the prospective impossibility of expansion in the future at prices they were willing to pay.
seems to have been achieved as much through forage plantings as through the expansion of arable acreage, but this development was reversed in the war years when grain markets were excellent. A conspiracy of factors enforced conservative land use and investment decisions on parkland farms, but some men avoided the typical restraints by large initial capitalization and strong business sense. A combination of these two features led to a different class of farming altogether from the ordinary and later to the formation of a brand of farm protest more akin to the policies of combinations of manufacturers than to the moralistic progressivism of revolutionaries. By 1911 most farm families earned an annual cash income of approximately $1200, about $250 of which seems to have been returned to the farm in the form of better stock, buildings and machinery. Farm capitalization in all items except land was approximately $2500, or a little more than most families had brought to the frontier, and with the subtraction of building valuations from this figure it seems that except for land the typical farmer may have been able to count several years' progress in a few score head of stock more than he brought in his cars of settlers' effects. If he could not realize profit on land, the frontier was a

3 A similar pattern in land use changes was found in Story County, Iowa, by Hewes. Extensive cattle ranging gave way to hog feeding once grain acreages rose in the 1870's; wild hay was replaced by tame at the end of the century, but, as in Alberta, this was not a permanent development and the acreages of grass later declined. Leslie Hewes, "Some Patterns of Early Woodland and Prairie Settlement in a Central Iowa County", Annals, Association of American Geographers 40:1 (1950), p 51.
failure.

It became a favourite tactic of farm protestors to blame land speculation by absentee owners for the underpopulation and low land values of the years before the war. It does not seem, however, that farmers understood elementary land economics or market theory. In any case, the actions of farmers in defence of old forms of individualism ruled out a class cohesion which alone could have resolved the puzzle of land values. Farmers needed exclusive control of a resource in which there was no actual scarcity; inadvertently they were brothers and accomplices to speculators and non-resident owners. They were engaged in the production of commodities in which there was no real market scarcity, and their technological means were conservative and not prone, or amenable, to rapid competitive change. The physical environment of their region was marginal and largely untested, and stock technology and bloodlines were much inferior to eastern Canadian, American and European standards. Distance to markets saddled producers with yet another expense which depressed the meagre returns from an already marginal complex of production factors.

The war years with good markets and exceptional yields per acre fanned a last flare in the embers of a commercial individualism which could not endure the times, and by their shift to progressive and reform politics with the chaos after the war, the voters of Alberta moved toward solutions which were, notwithstanding some perennial incongruities, logical growths from the conditions of earlier decades.
EPILOGUE

There's a widely held idea in some farm circles that land prices may rise, even remain stable, but never fall. There's nothing hard and fast about that law but it'll stay around as long as people believe it. If enough people stopped believing it, prices could fall quite sharply, to levels more in line with the land's long-term capability.

APPENDIX I
NOTES ON TERMINOLOGY, SYNTAX AND PUNCTUATION

Terminology

Alberta Alberta was a Provisional District of the North West Territories from 1882 to 1905, at which time it became a province. The name is used alone in most places, however.

Alberta, Central, Northern (et cetera).
Various designations for the study area were used during the study period by separate agencies. The CPR referred to the territory to the north of the Red Deer River as Northern Alberta, and a major division in the structure of the RNWMP also was marked by the river. Other usages are mentioned in footnote 1 of Chapter II. Because the Provisional District of Alberta was of less extent in latitude than later, these early designations of the Red Deer Region were accurate and are used as the context and the original materials demand.

Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture
These terms are sometimes shortened to 'Department' in the text of the study, the word referring in most instances in Chapter II to the Department of the Interior, and in Chapters III and IV to the Department of Agriculture of the North West Territories or of the Province of Alberta. It is clear from the context which body is implied.

District
This word is used without a capital to refer to an expanse of land about the size of a typical school district. With capitalization it refers to particular school districts. A similar custom is used in the capitalization of the sub-districts of the Census of Agriculture. See footnote 1, Chapter II.

Farm, Ranch
Because most land owners performed a number of activities on their land it is not possible to classify rural properties of the frontier period in the parklands strictly as farms or ranches. In most instances we have used the word 'farm'
unless the context obviously required a term indicating extensive pastoral land use to the neglect of other forms of exploitation.

Settlement, Colonization
The latter term is used to refer to the process of settling the land—the arrival of settlers, the erection of buildings, and the first breaking. 'Settlement' refers to a settled place or to the fulfillment of the colonization process.

Standard Township Area
The Standard Township Area is an inhabitable land area of 23000 acres. The measure was devised for this study in order to render the statistics of the Historical Tabulations meaningful in a spatial sense, and because the usual measures of square units of land, such as acres and miles, sometimes produce ridiculous fractions of animals per square unit in areas of low density. In addition there was a necessity to remove the water areas and the large valley of the Red Deer River from the areal calculations, and this was done by assigning the correct number of Standard Township units to each Census sub-district so that only land usable for agriculture was counted.

Syntax and Punctuation
In direct quotations from oral sources an attempt was made to preserve the regional syntax. Punctuation was inserted in as logical a manner as could be devised, but the process was not aided by the failure of some respondents to speak in actual sentences. Quotations from documentary sources were recorded originally as they appeared, but their presentation here has sometimes involved expurgating obvious errors. The handset type of frontier newspapers was notable for many errors of a most routine sort and their preservation in a text such as this would lead less to the illumination of the reader than to his exasperation. All editorial excisions have been marked.
NOTES ON THE SOURCES OF MAP DATA

Map Number

1 The physiographic divisions are from A. MacS. Stalker: Surficial Geology of the Red Deer-Stettler Map-Area, p 7. Topography and hydrology are from various sheets of the National Topographic Series, Sheet 83A at 1:250,000 and various subsidiary sheets at 1:50,000. Water levels rose after the turn of the century, and this has been allowed for on the shorelines of the major lakes. A large lake east of Lacombe was not drafted. It formed in 1899-1900 and cut Lacombe from the east country. It was drained by government dredge in 1902. Spotted Lake was drained by ditch in 1909, and Cynet Lake shortly after that during the construction of the Alberta Central Railway.

2A PAC RG 15, f 43012; the original is one of the appealing early coloured plans.

2B John Dalton DLS, manuscript survey dated June 18, 1887, in PAC RG 15, f 43012.

3 PAC RG 15, f 43012.

4 Author's compilation from an inventory of settlers' locations in Return of Homestead Entries...to November 18, 1884, submitted by Leonard Gaetz to the Department of the Interior; now in PAC RG 15, f 43012.

5 Reproduction of a portion of the original in PAC RG 15, f 43012.

6 This map provides place names other than those attached to school districts, which names were most commonly used to refer to localities. The names on the map were not all contemporaneous and some were disused after a time.

7 School district names and dates of founding have been compiled from the various local histories noted in the bibliography under "Local Historical Publications."
The number of unsold CPR quarters per block of nine sections, one quarter of a township, is shown. In theory CPR land comprised four or five sections per such block if no quarters had been refused, and any number over 12 on the map indicates negligible sales of CPR land to the end of 1902. The figures are from Sectional Map No. 6, Canadian Pacific Railway Company, Shewing Lands for Sale in Northern Alberta, [sic] Land Department, Winnipeg, January 19th, 1903. This map is in the Alberta Provincial Archives, and another from a later date shows land sales to March 1909.

Data from the Census of Canada; a retrospective compilation of the population data for the four Censuses of 1901 to 1916 is available in the latter Census of the Prairie Provinces. Only adults were listed, a fact which is not clear in the 1916 version, but which is stated in earlier versions along with identical numerical values.

Historical Tabulations of the Census of Agriculture, 1901. See footnote 82, Chapter III for an explanation of the Historical Tabulations [HTCA]. The percentage of land surface occupied is the amount of land listed in the HTCA as 'occupied' land converted to a percentage of the inhabitable land in the Census sub-district as calculated by the author from topographic maps.

HTCA, 1901. See Appendix I for a definition of the Standard Township Area.

HTCA, 1901.

HTCA, 1901 for the number of milch cows. The number of households is available from Table VII, District 202, Census of Canada, 1901.

Idem; the number of households is assumed to have been closely approximate to the number of farms, and no data on the number of farm units is supplied in the HTCA of 1901. In 1911 when both the number of households and farm units are available the two numbers are notably close for most sub-districts. Those which showed wide divergence were usually higher in the number of farm units, but there was no decipherable cause for this. The number of households was used instead in these cases. Perhaps the differences were caused by a complex of factors.
having to do with non-resident farm operation by owners who also did not install resident hired hands, and the faulty enumeration of fragmented holdings as several farms instead of one.

Animal units were summed by the author from the figures concerning the various types of stock in the HTCA, 1901. For the calculation used for the animal unit see footnote 247, Chapter III.

HTCA, 1901; the dollar valuation of land was declared by owners, the HTCA figure being the total for each sub-district.

Various figures from the HTCA of 1901 were added and the sum divided by the number of occupied acres.

Population figures by township are available from Table I of the 1916 Census of the Prairie Provinces. Only adults were enumerated.

HTCA, 1911. The locations of the sub-districts have been reconstructed by the author from legal descriptions of the polling divisions of the time. There is some confusion in the conversion manual for the locations of the sub-districts as to exactly which townships are included in which sub-districts. A notable problem exists with number 84, Red Deer, portions of which are claimed in various configurations by adjacent units. The map entries for this sub-district have been placed over the eastern boundary shown on the map mostly for visual convenience, but also because one version of the shape of number 84 indicates that the location of the data numbers may in fact be within the unit. Without reference to the nominal Census there is no apparent solution to the problem.

HTCA, 1911. 

See the notation for Map 14 supra.

HTCA, 1911; the difficulties in interpreting data on non-resident ownership are covered in the associated text, and see the notation for Map 14 supra.

HTCA, 1911. 

idem. 

idem.
idem.

idem.

idem; and see the notation for Map 15 supra.

HTCA, 1911.

Compiled from various sources including newspapers and local histories. No data was discovered on the development of trunk roads but a map of February, 1922 (APA, Accession Number AA/71.103/MF, "Early Topographic Maps of Alberta", [at the scale of 1:190,080]) shows a trunk and branch road network which does not seem to be much different from that which would have been used in the war years. This map is the first which shows more than rivers, creeks, township outlines, major towns and railways.

Households are assumed to have been equal in number to farms, and see the notation for Map 14 supra.

HTCA, 1911.

HTCA, 1911, figures recompiled by the author.

HTCA, 1911 figures on land value, and recalculation by the author.

Calculation by the author from HTCA figures on land and farm valuation for 1901 and 1911 without correction for constant dollar value. Such a correction would depress the 1911 values and render even more dismal the financial outcome of the frontier experience for the average migrant and farmer.
BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES
AND
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Full citation, with the exception of the name of the publishing house in the case of books, has been given works cited in the body of the study. This section brings together most of those sources, contributes some comments on the primary sources, and lists some additional works to which the writer is indebted for methodological hints. The common stock of frontier scholarship, such as Dick's Sod House Frontier, Shannon's The Farmer's Last Frontier, Agriculture, and the Canadian Frontiers of Settlement series is not included. The debt of the author to well known studies is no less than that of other researchers, but there seems little point in repeating a list which by now has become standard in theses on the western frontier.

Primary Sources

Government Documents, Maps, and Archival Material of Governmental Origin

Department of the Interior

File material from this important government department resides in the Public Archives, Ottawa, but selected items are represented on microfilm at the Glenbow Alberta Institute (GAI), Calgary, and at the Alberta Provincial Archives (APA), Edmonton. Individual homestead files and patent registries were not used. Such research is slow
and the returns sometimes meagre. The files for individual farms (patent applications) may no longer exist, and the 3000 lands files returned to Alberta in 1956 have not been opened to public examination. A few years ago these files were seen in the basement of a public building in Edmonton by an official of the Public Archives. Obviously, files from the Department of the Interior collection were sent to the province in which the lands concerned in the file lay. Apparently because the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company held lands in two provinces that file remained in Ottawa.

Most of the files used in this study come from Record Group 15; we do not provide volume numbers because a temporary conversion list was in effect at the time research was carried out. Files without meaningful titles have been titled by the writer in square brackets; the order of appearance here is the chronological order in which files were used in the study.

1) Record Group 15, Public Archives of Canada

Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company. File 43012, in four parts. (The dealings of the company with the Department from the spring of 1882 to 1888.)

Boyle, George B. Workingmens' National Union of Canada, Application to Colonize. File 43852. (An application to colonize the forks of the Rosebud River was later altered to shift the location of this co-operative scheme to the Red Deer and Blindman Rivers.)

Wade, E.B. [Enquiry re the Settlement of One Hundred Families on the Red Deer River]. File 165035; dated 1887-88. (Concerns a cooperative scheme refused by the Department.)
Davis, D.W., Member of Parliament. [Petition for Relief from Oppression by the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company north of the Red Deer River.] File 152919; c. 1887.


Glass, E.B. Claim for Losses in Rebellion, 1887. File 147297. (Glass was the resident missionary among the Crees at the Battle River Mission Station.)

Calgary and Edmonton Railway. [Land Grants, Rights of Way, Mineral Rights, and Other Matters.] Files 234347, Volumes I through IX; File 241091, Volumes I through IV; File 250702.

Webster, W.A. Agent at Aberdeen, South Dakota, Reports. File 299742; for 1891.


Alexander, R.L. [Reports on Distress at Lacombe, 1896-97.] File 415107


[Department of the Interior.] Papers on Prairie and Forest Fires. File 123293. (Contains some complaints from persons along the C&E Railway on the starting of fires by locomotives.)

2) Record Group 76 (Immigration)

Webster, W.A. Agent at Aberdeen, South Dakota. Reports, 1892-94. Volume 7, file 67.

Bennett, W.V. Agent at Omaha, Nebraska. Reports. Volume 120, file 23605 (in three parts). (Concerns 1895 to 1904


Rogers, W.H. Agent at Watertown, South Dakota, and at Indianapolis, 1897-1908. Volume 157, file 40043.

Land Guide Service. Volumes 77 and 78, file 6382, parts I and II. Concerns 1892-1912.

Customs on Settlers' Effects, 1902-1907. Volume 17, file 147, parts III and IV.

Local Government Units

County of Lacombe. Minute Books, Cash Books, Assessments, [et cetera], various years. Alberta Provincial Archives. (Contain the tax rolls for the Municipal Districts of Crown and Lamerton, the former of which is more complete.)

Maps Produced by Government Units and Soils Surveys

Alberta, Early Topographic Maps, various dates. Microfilm, Alberta Provincial Archives.


Canada, Department of the Interior. Map[s] of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta...Showing Disposition of Lands... Prepared by the Railway Lands Branch of the Department of the Interior. Scale 12.5 miles to 1 inch, various editions.


Contemporary Government Reports

The *Sessional Papers* have been heavily used for descriptions of the frontier and the local economy in the period before newspapers. From 1892 the Dominion Lands Branch maintained a resident Agent at Red Deer and a traveling 'Intelligence Officer' was appointed to the C&E railway line to aid settlers in search of land. Immigration matters impinging upon the parklands have been winnowed from reports of some Agents of the Department in various American cities; some of their reports were published in the *Sessional Papers*. The operation of the Dominion Lands Office at Red Deer may be followed year by year in the appropriate sections of the *Auditor General's Report* having to do with sales of Dominion Lands, receipts from homestead entries, expenditures on salaries and office equipment, and the disbursements for land guides.

The *Annual Reports* of the Department of Agriculture of the North-West Territories, and after 1905 of the Province of Alberta, provide important statistical and interpretive information on agriculture and human population in central Alberta. All material cited from these reports pertained to the study area, or was so closely indicative of conditions as they were known to have existed around Lacombe and Red Deer that it would be unreasonable to assume that the comments did not apply or were intended for some different place.
The Historical Tabulations of the Census of Agriculture provide the data on which the regional interpretations of Chapters III and IV are based. Although the Census of Agriculture provides a printed list of the available Tabulations, the data is not usable in the form provided. Conversion lists are needed even to locate the sub-districts listed and other manipulations are essential to make sense of the tables. Comments on these matters are presented in footnotes in Chapters III and IV.
Newspapers

Newspapers are available from Innisfail, Red Deer, Lacombe, Alix, Clive and Delburne. Some ephemeral papers were started in Red Deer around the turn of the century, but public files of them do not seem to have survived. The Innisfail Free Lance served the whole of the southern parklands in 1898 and 1899 for which years there are a few issues extant, and the bulk of the file of that paper is available from 1902. It was, however, not found to be of value to the study, apparently drawing for clientele from a tract of country exclusive from the tributary area of Red Deer. The Red Deer Echo was disbanded after the turn of the century and a parallel paper, the Alberta Advocate, rose in its place. It was later called the Red Deer Alberta Advocate and later still the Red Deer Advocate. This paper was used for 1904 to 1906 in this study and issues were sampled after that, but the editorial and news quality of the paper was much compromised by the need to sustain the policies of the Red Deer Liberals and the activities of John T. Moore. Consequently we relied upon the Red Deer News, a conservative paper of distinctly nativistic tone operated by one of the early homesteaders of the district, John Carswell. The paper maintained an interest in the agricultural progress of the region and of the conservative adherents who were at the forefront of breed organizations and the Alberta Farmers' Association. After 1912 this interest lapsed, however. The complete file of the News is available on microfilm.
The Lacombe Western Globe was used for information from that town. It opened in 1904, but the file in the Legislative Library, Edmonton, runs only from 1907. A number of years, and miscellaneous issues in others, are missing. A few months of the Lacombe Advertiser are available from a span of three years, 1907-09, during which it supported the minority Conservative point of view in the town. The Lacombe Guardian also ceased publication after a few years (1913-16). It was not consulted.

Alix was served after 1909 by the Free Press, an able paper which reported adequately on farming and social matters. The Clive News Record served that area after early 1914 and went out of business in 1918.

A number of papers were operated in Delburne and the file of the Progress was considered adequate for this study. The Progress habitually reported local meetings and debates on taxation, road development, school board policy, rural colonization and other matters of interest to the study in great detail, and contained the best résumé of all papers on the modifications to the Municipal Act in 1912. The Progress is available on microfilm.

Interestingly, with the exception of the late-starting Progress and News Record, all the papers used in the study seem to have lost their energy after 1912. Little country news was carried after that and other items were not covered
with the exuberance which marked the early years.

Diaries and Other Personal Papers

Little documentation of this sort seems to have made its way into public repositories, and there are very few references in local historical publications to indicate that there is any great reserve yet left in the countryside. What few sources are available are illustrative of daily life and do not extend into reflective or analytical commentary. Edward Barnett's Reminiscences are available at the Glenbow Alberta Institute; in them the founder of the settlement on Strawberry Plain (Lacombe) laments the arrival of the Saskatchewan Land and Homestead Company, but otherwise there is little of value. Edward Parly's Diaries and General Papers show the course of daily life in the development of a ranch in the nineties. These papers, available at the Glenbow Alberta Institute, demonstrate that not all young Englishmen sent to the frontier with an allowance were incompetent layabouts.

The remarkable Diary of A.J. Stewart (Glenbow Alberta Institute) is the sole representative of the genre which merits notice. Between 1909 and 1919 Stewart and his wife 'Clemmie' cleared a farm near Delburne, every step and the expenditure of every cent being recorded in a ledger book. The work contains references to weather and to all the foalings
and calvings on the farm. Stewart maintained a mixed farm of enormous complexity—vegetables, roots, milch cows, hogs, horses and a large poultry operation. Not one day in the year was lost except when Stewart was suffering from some painful, but unspecified, disease. Over the years machinery was purchased and the couple enjoyed the fashionable possessions of rural families of the era, notably the Gramophone. The diary stops abruptly and a number of pages are excised; there is no apparent way of finding more about this interesting couple. They did not have children or near relatives in the vicinity and their names do not appear in the appropriate local history.

Miscellaneous Archival Materials

Baptist Union of Western Canada. Yearbook. Various years after 1907. (Baptists were in a minority in Red Deer and the reports from there and from outlying circuits were candid and sometimes despondent appraisals of the stagnation of the denomination.)


Minutes of Conference, various years.
Archives of the United Church of Canada. (The Red Deer Circuit was part of the Saskatchewan District of the Manitoba and Northwest Conference.)

Missionary Society Annual Reports. Archives of the United Church of Canada.


Red Deer Board of Trade. Minute Book, Glenbow Alberta Institute. (Concerns 1894-1909, but several years between 1896 and 1903 are missing, and the bulk of the remainder are marked by complaints on the paucity of the public works needed to bring the region into the modern era.)
Local Historical Publications


Dawe, Robert Wellington. History of Red Deer, Alberta. (No date or publisher's imprint; sold as publication H12 at the Provincial Museum, Edmonton.)


Because most of the sources listed above contain family histories devoid of interpretation other than that imposed by persons submitting the material to local committees, they are listed here under primary sources. Similarly the 200 articles from the Red Deer Advocate, cited in this work as the 'Early Days' series and the Red Deer Centennial Series ('RDCS') represent material that has been only slightly reworked. Both series are available in folio in the Red Deer Archives, Centennial Library, Red Deer. The material in them is largely accurate, but some of the local lore which has been so often repeated that it has assumed a gloss of truth needs re-examination.
Personal Interviews

A number of elderly persons from Red Deer, Lacombe, Bentley and Alix were interviewed in July of 1975 for material on frontier life which was not available from other sources. Agricultural technology, farmstead morphology, habits of animal husbandry and some phenomenological aspects of the frontier experience were covered by an unstructured interview technique. This form of interview was used because after one or two attempts at more focussed sessions it was clear that the amount of detail and vibrancy in the interview was greater if the conversation were allowed to follow lines determined by those being interviewed, and it seemed that with a less rigid format the informants were able to maintain concentration over a long period. Of course, the interviews were of varying quality depending upon the richness of the memories involved and upon the degree of confidence built up in the course of the conversation. The interviews were perhaps the most rewarding section of the research and happily provided material which matched elegantly with published sources. After approximately a dozen interviews (with two persons being recorded at times) it was found that responses were duplicating those of other informants and that a trend of diminishing returns was in operation. This was regarded as a good sign and the interview series was terminated.
Accessible Primary Materials Not Reviewed

The claim that this study is based on a broad documentary review does not mean that primary materials have been exhausted. The following materials were not included in the study for reasons typical to research of this sort: lack of time; an early decision, sometimes regretted, not to pursue a certain type of data; awareness only near the end of the research that some untouched material might have been of considerable utility; and simple ignorance of the existence of some sources. There is no significance in the order of this list.

Surveyors' notebooks might provide more detailed information than that available in the printed summaries on the vegetation of the parklands at the time of colonization, and a review of the extant first editions of township plans might contribute to the same end. There was no time to review the pages of the Calgary Herald for the early colonization period and the papers of William Pearce should be consulted for comments he may have made on the personalities and the land use issues of central Alberta in the eighties and nineties. The papers and reports of the Royal North-West Mounted Police might provide information on law enforcement, destitution and the general condition of the countryside in the study area. Some effort should be made to locate and reproduce, if possible, the few personal diaries which have
survived; those mentioned in the local histories do not seem to have reached public repositories and they would be a logical starting point. The Township General Registers of the Dominion Lands Branch of the Department of the Interior should be consulted at least on a sampling basis to estimate with more precision what proportion of homesteaders failed to meet requirements, and to find out whether there were any noteworthy spatial differences in the rate of failure in the region.

Later materials which might be looked into include the land files of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the sales records of the individual parcels. Hudson’s Bay land files were undergoing accession at the time of the visit of the author to the archives in 1976 and these may now be available. Hudson’s Bay lands were, however, much in the minority in terms of acreage. Finally, in view of the contribution of the region to the protest movement, the papers of the United Farmers of Alberta should be sifted to determine the platforms advocated by the men from the region and to find out the manner in which this advocacy reflected issues in central Alberta.

Finishing this section on a fantastic note would involve wishing that Statistics Canada find a way to produce the rich material of the Historical Tabulations in a more usable form for the whole of the west, and that some procedure be devised to publish detailed tabulations of the 1906 Census.
Secondary Sources

Books and Monographs *


* The cover titles of anthologies appear in this section; individual contributions to such collections appear in the next section of this bibliography, 'Scholarly Papers'.

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Murchie, Robert A. *Agricultural Progress and the Prairie Frontier*. Toronto, 1936.


Scholarly Papers and Theses


Knight, Oliver. "Toward an Understanding of the Western Town", Western Historical Quarterly, 4:1 (1973), pp 27-42.


Larson, T.A. "Dolls, Vassals and Drudges-Pioneer Women in the West", Western Historical Quarterly, 3:1 (1972), pp 5-16.


Lionberger, Herbert F. and Francis, Joe D. "Views Held of Innovator and Influence Referents as Sources of Farm Information in a Missouri Community", Rural Sociology 34:2 (1969), pp 194-211.


Lowther, G.R. "Idealist History and Historical Geography", Canadian Geographer, 14:3 (1959), pp 31-36.


