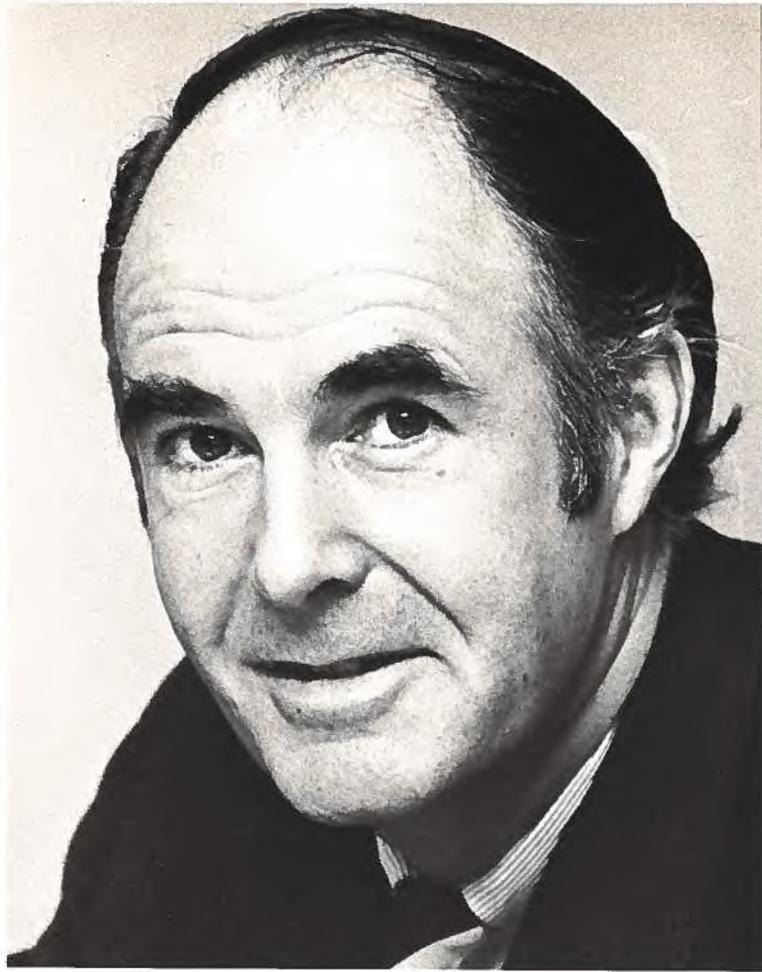


Canada Commerce

Anniversary Issue 1904-1974





Message from the Minister

It is something of an occasion to reach the ripe old age of 70, although it is scarcely middle age in the life of a magazine. *Canada Commerce* has gone through many changes, both in name and in looks, but its message remains the same — the state of foreign markets and the opportunities in those markets for Canadians. In recent years it has also been bringing its readers news of departmental programs and of significant happenings in the world of Canadian business.

This special issue points up the enormous changes that have taken place this century, both in everyday living and in the world of commerce. It also gives some indication as to how this Department is coping with these changes. Compare this issue, for instance, with the first one 70 years ago this month — Volume 1 Number 1 was 10 pages, printed on one side only.

What the future holds is anybody's guess, but if *Canada Commerce* can come through the next 70 years as well as it has come through the last, I am sure that its pages will be as good a source of information to future generations of Canadian businessmen and women as it has been to the past. □



Industry, Trade and Commerce Industrie et Commerce

The Hon. Alastair Gillespie,
Minister
J.F. Grandy, Deputy Minister

E.C. Button, Managing Editor
W.H. Lambton, Editor
David Magee, Assistant Editor
Colin Buckett, Designer

In this supplement

The editorial staff of *Canada Commerce* sat in their Ottawa offices, protected from the hot summer sun by the busy air-conditioning system, discussing their editorial plans for the coming year. One casually remarked that in February 1974 *Canada Commerce* would mark its 70th year of publication.

These words led to more words, a practice editors are prone to, and we decided to do a little research for an article for the February issue to commemorate the event. But after a few brief hours in the library we realized that 1904 was right in the middle of a rather important era for the economic development of Canada. So much so, that it looked more like the subject for a book, not just an article.

We talked again. More time was

spent in the library. We made a trip to our Public Archives. Old records of the department were consulted. The result? This supplement of our February 1974 issue — put together to commemorate our 70th birthday and, of more importance, to give you, our readers, some insight into Canada at the turn of the century.

Our research efforts had become so interesting, so fascinating that we finally agreed the subject deserved more than just one article. The turn of the century — 1904 — the birth of our magazine — was right in the middle of the infancy of the industrial and commercial world *Canada Commerce* serves today. To wax eloquent for a moment — this was when

it all began. And as the country grew, so did *Canada Commerce*.

Like us, most of our readers were not around in 1904. That era was something we might read about — or listen to the radio about — or even see a play or film about. But few today have experienced it. We have tried to put in our birthday supplement some of the atmosphere — the hardships — the good times — the new horizons — that made up the world of the reader of our first simple issue printed 70 years ago.

So take a few moments from your busy day and come back to 1904 with us. It will be an interesting journey.



Ottawa wins Stanley Cup

Ottawa: The Ottawa Silver Seven defeated Brandon, Man. 6-3, 9-3 to win the Stanley Cup.

E.C. BUTTON, Managing Editor, Canada Commerce

The year was 1904. The Stanley Cup was 11 years old and competed for by amateur teams. The provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were still a year away from coming into existence. The Ford Motor Company was to be incorporated that year, and would produce less than 200 cars.

The year 1904 — just after the turn of the century, and in an era that was to become the turning point for Canada. The immigration policies initiated by the Laurier Government of 1896 were to manifest themselves. The decade of 1904 to 1914 witnessed the greatest influx of peoples from other lands that Canada

had ever seen, with more than 2,500,000 immigrants entering Canada. The labour force grew by a staggering 50 per cent. The first 30 years of the 20th century found Canada in the "wheat phase" of its economy, supported by both the tremendous influx of immigrants, the mechanization of farming, and the start of major industry. New sources of wealth were uncovered in that era — the opening to agriculture of the previously untilled prairies, the discovery and development of gold and silver from Ontario, the establishment of Canada's steel industry, production on a large scale of copper, zinc and other minerals — industry as we know it today came into being.

Growing hand in hand with the new agriculture and the new industry were

transportation and communications. While the Silver Dart would not fly for five years, while the first hard-surface road would not be built for 10 years, while the first commercial radio station was still 16 years away, Canada was well on its way to being linked physically as well as politically. The railroads, coast-to-coast for the past 19 years, were to double their mileage between 1903 and 1917. Nearly three million telephone messages were sent over Canada's 20,000 miles of telephone lines in 1904. Nearly six million telegraph messages were sent in the same year.

The turn of the century also saw an upsurge in foreign trade — a reflection of the combined effects of open international markets and Canada's rapidly rising capacity to produce. Into this environment on February 1, 1904, entered the *Weekly Report*, the great-grandfather of *Canada Commerce*. A modest, unillustrated 10 pages,

A road near Tuxford, Saskatchewan (Public Archives photo)



Weekly Report was written in a formal, conservative style and featured articles on markets for Canadian goods, and the services of its sponsor, the Department of Trade and Commerce.

What was life like for the readers of *Weekly Report* in 1904? Today's reader lives in his or her wired world of instant communications, modular this and modular that, coast-to-coast in eight hours, information centres, TV dinners, computers, satellite television and so on. But what about your counterpart of 1904?

No Riva Poor and the four-day work-week then. Most worked close to the 60-hour week. Legislation for minimum wages and working hours was not to come until the 1920's. Women played a minor role in the work force. Anyone earning \$100 a week was into "big money".

A good beef roast cost less than you pay per pound today. Turkey would dip as low as 17 or 18 cents a pound. Gasoline prices troubled few of your ancestors — Trade and Commerce's Annual Report for 1904 indicates 356 automobiles were imported that year. The 1904 *Statistical Year Book* shows no automobile manufacturers, but counts 409 firms involved in carriage-making.

By 1915 automobile registrations rose close to 100,000. Still, Canada was a long way from the automobile age. Twenty-one years later, in 1925, a cross-Canada automobile trip had to use the railroads for 20 per cent of the trip — and took 40 days!

Timothy Eaton's catalogue was 17 years old, but the first mail-order office was 12 years away. Theatre was in its heyday, safe from the movies of the 1920's. Canadian art was simmering, but didn't attain public acclaim until the Group of Seven nearly 10 years later. Stories of nature and wild animals enjoyed the most success at the turn of the century, to be followed by a prolific period of regional novels. Public interest in ballet came 25 years later. But then, leisure time was not much of a problem on a 60-hour week!

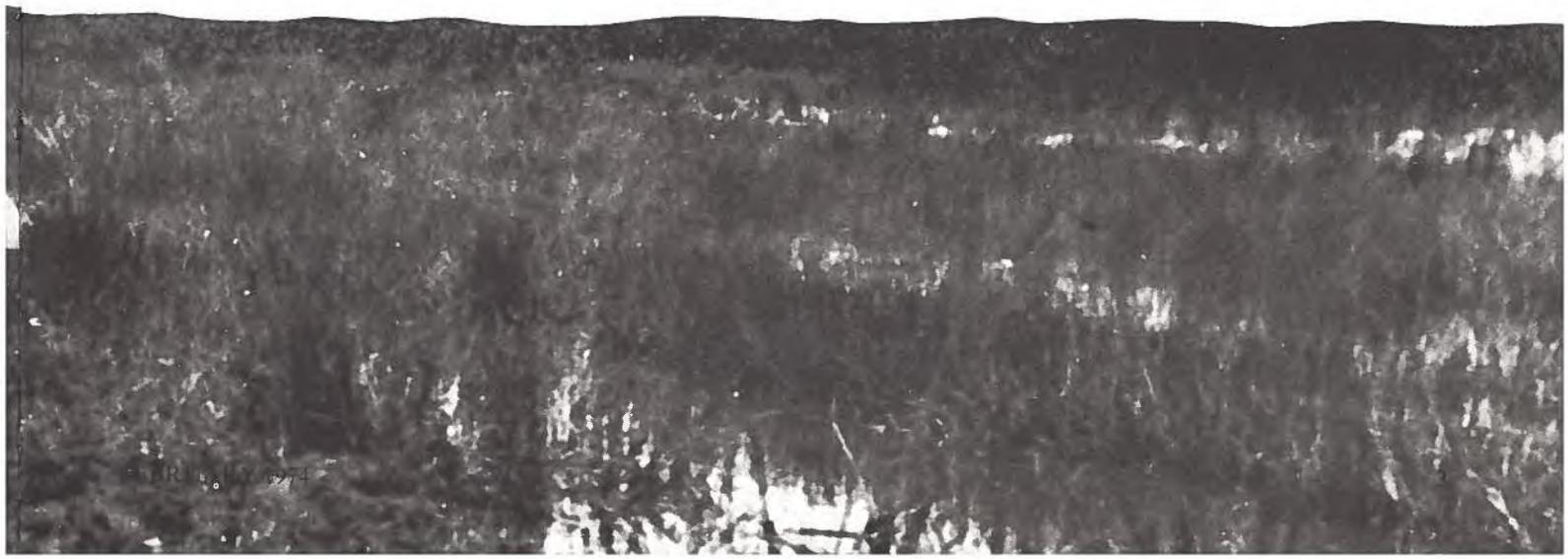
Our cities had their electric railways, electricity, telephones and coast-to-coast railroads. But the crude log shanty and a diet of salt pork, beans, molasses and tea was a way of life for many Canadians. With wagon roads the only link to civilization and the horse a way of life, few used travel, horseback riding, hiking or camping to fill leisure time. Ice hockey was sweeping the nation, and a Sunday afternoon picnic was a nice way to spend one's day off.

Five Fathers of Confederation were still alive in 1904. Lester Bowles Pearson, to be our Prime Minister in Confederation's 100th birthday year, was a seven-year-old lad just starting school.

There was a lot of growing ahead for Canada — and through these exciting years since 1904 *Canada Commerce* and its ancestors have been there — following and reporting on Canada's place in the world. □

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Trade and Commerce Seventy Years Ago

O. MARY HILL, Chief, Historical Section,
Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce

It was a young Department in 1904. Launched in 1892, Trade and Commerce was just entering adolescence. Its modest offices in Parliament Hill's West Block housed a staff of 15 and expenditures for the fiscal year 1903-04 reached \$3.45 million. The Minister of Trade and Commerce was paid \$7,000 a year, the Deputy Minister about \$3,500, Commercial Agents abroad \$3,000 and third class clerks a starting salary of \$600. From its Ottawa headquarters the Department directed the work of a number of people, mainly inspectors, at work throughout Canada, and of nine offices abroad — four in Britain, two in Australia, and one each in Paris, Cape Town, and Yokohama.

The Department itself was young, but the men directing it were not. Sir Richard Cartwright, who became the Minister when the Liberals under Laurier won the 1896 election, was nearing 70 in 1904. Sometimes referred to as the Minister with the "improbable whiskers" (large and flowing sideburns) he accepted the Trade and Commerce portfolio reluctantly, because he wanted desperately to be Minister of Finance. Though he headed Trade and Commerce for 15 years, he continued to regard it as a "second best" assignment. Racked with rheumatism, he spent more time at his home in Kingston or at various health resorts than he did in Ottawa. He had been active in politics even before Confederation and had a reputation as one of the best and most devastating orators in the House of Commons. Because his views on Canada's future verged on the pessimistic, he acquired the nickname of the "Knight of Blue Ruin" or, alternatively, the "Sieur of the Doleful Countenance". In 1904, he left the active political arena and retired to the Senate.

The real burden of running the Department and making decisions fell on his Deputy Minister, W.G. Parmelee,

who was 71 years old in 1904 and as the year began was away on three months' leave of absence because of ill health. To a correspondent Parmelee once complained that because of his chief's frequent absences, he was left to "assume responsibilities that I would much rather the Minister would take on his own shoulders." Originally from Waterloo, Quebec, after early experience in banking and insurance he joined the Department of Customs in 1876, and when Trade and Commerce was established, he moved over with his chief, Mackenzie Bowell, who was appointed to head it.

Left minding the store when the Minister and the Deputy were absent was the Department's "bright young man", Francis Charles Trench O'Hara, then 34 years old. O'Hara was Cartwright's nephew and became his private secretary in 1896. In his letter offering O'Hara the position, Cartwright wrote: "I need not tell you that under our system the private secretary of a leading Minister is one of the most *really influential* places in any Department — and is most emphatically a place of high trust." Before he came to Ottawa, O'Hara had worked at both banking and journalism. He was handsome, energetic, talented and ambitious. He became an excellent administrator of the "clean desk" school, rather irascible in temperament, and not at all disposed to suffer fools gladly. By 1904 he was still the Minister's private secretary, but he was also a chief clerk and from July 1, 1904, the first Superintendent of Commercial Agencies. In 1908, he succeeded Parmelee as Deputy Minister, a post that he held until his retirement in 1931.

As Superintendent of Commercial Agencies, O'Hara gave direction to the work of the Commercial Intelligence Service, which consisted of nine permanent and six part-time Commercial Agents in 1904. (Three years later, the permanent Agents became officially known as Trade Commissioners, though the name Commercial Intelligence Service survived for many years.) The first part-time Commercial Agents had been appointed under the Department of

Finance early in 1892 and were transferred to Trade and Commerce later that year. They were local businessmen, mainly in the West Indies, who for an annual honorarium of \$250 reported on opportunities in their area for Canadian goods, collected information helpful to Canadian exporters, and answered trade inquiries. In 1904, these Agents were at work in Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua, Jamaica, Barbados, and St. Kitts. There was also a Commercial Agent in Norway.

The distinction of being the first full-time, permanent salaried Commercial Agent (and therefore the first Trade Commissioner) goes to John Larke, who was dispatched to open an office in Sydney, Australia, at the end of 1894, and served there until his death in 1910. Larke had been active in the newspaper field in and around Oshawa, Ontario, and later turned to manufacturing, becoming president of the Ottawa Stove Company. Sent out with only the minimum of instructions, he was at first responsible for all of Australia and New Zealand. He was paid a salary of \$3,000 plus "actual and reasonable" office expenses, and promised by the Minister a raise to \$4,000 within a short time. Then the Government changed and poor Larke was still receiving \$3,000 in 1910. He was kept on a short financial rein in other respects and complained to Parmelee that he could not even afford a typist and that his sons took charge of the office, without pay, when he was away. Only once in all that time did he return to Canada, in 1905.

It is important to realize that the Minister made all appointments to the Commercial Intelligence Service in those days and that political patronage played a large part. Not until 1918 did the Civil Service Commission take over the responsibility. When service to the party or one's political connections were vital, some odd choices resulted. J.B. Jackson, for example, who was sent to open an office in Leeds and Hull in 1903, had been Cartwright's political agent in the South Oxford constituency. He became involved in a court action over an

*Electric railway streetcar near Ottawa
(Public Archives Photo)*

election, was accused of bribing witnesses, and was censured by the judge in the case. When he was named a Commercial Agent, many Members of Parliament, including Robert Borden, protested this shameless use of patronage. (Jackson was dismissed from the Service in 1911, after the Department had had constant trouble over his accounts.)

In 1902, the Department decided to open two other offices — in Paris, France, and in Cape Town, South Africa. The man selected for Paris was Anatole Felix Aristide Poindron, a law graduate, who at the time of his appointment was a manufacturers' agent and representative of a French steamship line in Montreal. Earlier he had been employed in France by one of the railway companies and later as managing director of two tramways companies in Paris. Poindron remained in this post until 1911, though there was often controversy about his effectiveness and Parmelee criticized his long-winded reports. To South Africa, where the Department had already done some investigation of trade prospects, went James G. Jardine, of Toronto, a well-known merchant. He stayed in South Africa only one year when ill health forced him to retire.

When Cartwright became the Minister, he vowed that he would "picket England with Trade Commissioners." Not until 1903 did he begin to carry out this intention, with the opening of offices in Birmingham, Manchester, and Leeds and Hull. In 1904, an office was opened in Bristol. The men who manned these offices included J.B. Jackson, mentioned above, Peter Ball, a former salesman and commission merchant who, according to O'Hara (who was always sparing in his praise) was "a good man," who went to Birmingham, and P.B. MacNamara, a dry goods merchant well on in years, who was sent to Manchester. The Bristol office was opened in 1904 by W.A. MacKinnon, who had been Fruit Commissioner with the federal Department of Agriculture.

That even the patronage system of appointment did produce some able Trade Commissioners is proved by the man who in 1903 became the second Commercial Agent in Australia, D.H. Ross. He established an office in Melbourne and divided the Australia-New Zealand territory with John Larke in Sydney. Ross was the son of the Hon. William Ross, a former federal Cabinet Minister and later a Senator. He therefore had the right connections, but he also had a great deal of ability. He had been in business in the South Pacific area for many years and at the time of his appointment was running a large wholesale drug business in Australia. Ross served in Melbourne with distinction until he retired in 1933 and throughout the years the Department entrusted him with a number of special missions.



The only other Trade Commissioner posted in 1904 was Alexander MacLean, who was dispatched to Yokohama, Japan. The choice seems rather odd, because at the time MacLean was over 70 and extremely deaf. With some experience as a newspaperman, for 14 years before his appointment he had been a contractor in Ottawa for parliamentary and department printing. He died in Japan in 1908.

The figures for Canada's export trade in 1904-05 provide a sound reason for stationing a number of Trade Commissioners in England. Out of total domestic exports of \$198.4 million (the 1972 total was close to \$20 billion) Britain took \$117.5 million, or over 55 per cent. Next came the United States with \$73.2 million, or 34.3 per cent, and the remaining 10.6 per cent of exports went to all other markets combined. (For years, the Department resisted any suggestion about placing Trade Commissioners in the United States, saying that this was not necessary.) The leading export that year was cheese (\$24.2 million), followed by gold-bearing quartz and gold dust (\$18.7 million), wheat (\$13.5 million) and bacon (\$12.6). The leading imports, over 60 per cent of which came from the United States and 24 per cent from Britain, were coal, iron and steel in various forms, and sugar, and imports that year totalled \$259.2 million.

One of the methods of promoting trade with other areas, especially with more distant countries, was the subsidizing of steamship services. To get trade flowing to Australia, China and Japan, South Africa, France, and the West Indies, as well as to Britain, efficient steamship services were essential but the transportation companies were reluctant to get into these services until the volume of cargo was large enough to provide assured earnings. In the interim, while the trade was being built up, the Department of Trade and Commerce offered subsidies and these were the biggest element in the departmental budget by far in 1903-04. In that fiscal year, expenditure on subsidies for ocean services reached over \$724,000 out of total departmental expenditures of \$3.45 million. These subsidies covered lines running to Australia and New Zealand, Britain, South Africa, China, Japan, the West Indies, France, Newfoundland and Alaska, plus one service between Victoria and San Francisco.

In the domestic sphere, the Department had a number of specific responsibilities. One of these was the encouragement of industries considered desirable

Strathcona, before amalgamation with Edmonton (Public Archives Photo)

by the payment of bounties on their production — a different form of incentives from those that the Department uses today. In 1904, bounties were paid on iron ore smelted in Canada (\$1.4 million) and on lead refined in Canada (\$195,627). Another assignment given the Department was the administration of parts of the Inspection and Sale Act, which set standards for certain commodities, the most important of which was grain. In 1901, it had been charged with the regulation of the grain trade, under the Manitoba Grain Act. Many of these tasks, including the unusual one of looking after Chinese immigration, were handed on to other Departments or disappeared entirely as the years went by, but the export of wheat has continued to be one of the major departmental pre-occupations.

One of the new assignments that the Department took on in 1904 is particu-

larly relevant to readers of *Canada Commerce*. One morning early in that year, O'Hara was called into Cartwright's office. The Minister, showing some irritation, told his young secretary that the Canadian Manufacturers' Association was pressuring the Department to publish more information on markets abroad and to publish it more quickly. (The Department already had a *Quarterly* and a *Monthly Report*.) What was to be done? O'Hara quickly suggested that a weekly magazine be started and, like many who put forward bright ideas, found himself left with the job of putting it out. The next week, on the first of February 1904, the first slender issue of the *Weekly Report* appeared. In 1915, when the job of editor went to a young sub-Trade Commissioner, L. Dana Wilgress, who later had a distinguished career in both Trade and Commerce and External Affairs, it became the *Weekly Bulletin*. In 1922, the child was renamed the *Commercial Intelligence Journal*, in 1947 *Foreign Trade*, and in 1971, *Canada Commerce*. But despite the changes that the decades have brought, O'Hara's comment of 1923 still holds true:

"During the years that this publication has been before the Canadian public, it is unnecessary to say that it has passed through many trials and been the object of many criticisms, but there is consolation in the fact that owing to the improvements that have from time to time taken place, criticisms have ceased and generous commendations have taken their place."

"The Department has reason to believe that the information now contained in this journal is appreciated by Canadian manufacturers and exporters, and will always endeavour to increase its usefulness, and to that end welcomes constructive criticism from its readers." □



Immigration and Canada's Formative Years

ROBERT FORSEY, Information Service, Department of Manpower and Immigration



Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, 1896-1905, the man responsible for the 'Golden Era of Immigration' in Canada.

Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier expressed the optimism felt by most Canadians when he stated shortly after taking office in 1896 that "the nineteenth century belonged to the United States, but the twentieth century belonged to Canada."

Laurier was fortunate to be coming into office at a time when there was a revival of world prosperity. The early 1890s was a period of world depression, and its effect on the Canadian economy was to reduce trade, stagnate business and induce the Canadian Government to follow cautious policies as far as Canada's national development was concerned.

However, world prosperity returned in the mid-1890s, trade increased, business thrived under the impulse of increased foreign investment, the Canadian economy was revived and the Government was able to put into effect imaginative, constructive and daring policies aimed at promoting Canada's national development and prosperity. One of the most significant of these was his Government's immigration policy, which made the years from 1904 to 1914 the greatest period of immigration in Canada's history.

Sir Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, was the architect of Canada's immigration policy at the turn of the century. Sifton, and his cabinet colleague W.S. Fielding, Minister of Finance, saw increased immigration as one of the key factors in the promotion of the national economy. Immigration would fill Canada's sparsely populated Prairies with industrious farmers, who would, in turn, develop the area's agricultural potential and become consumers for the products of the industrial East.

Sifton's goal, then, was to fill the western plains with immigrant farmers. World conditions were favourable towards a rejuvenated immigration program. Renewed prosperity, and particularly the revival of industry in Europe, coincided with a decline in transatlantic transportation costs, to induce dissatisfied European farmers to look to North America as their future homeland. These farmers did not share in what was basically a return of industrial prosperity and saw improved prospects for farming in North America. Also, the fact that the American West no longer offered attractive free farmlands around the turn of the century caused these immigrants to come to Canada's prairies, the last frontier of North American agriculture.

Sifton took advantage of this favour-

able situation by organizing a massive advertising campaign designed to draw immigrants to Canada. He placed advertisements in thousands of newspapers in the United States and Europe, and established immigration missions in the United States and Britain as part of his campaign to attract settlers. Further, he brought over publicists from the United States, Britain and Europe so they could see what Canada had to offer immigrants and take the news back home with them. In addition, the Canadian Government made arrangements with steamship companies and railroads to give settlers special rates. Finally, the government used fairs, exhibitions and public displays around the world to promote immigration to Canada.

Free and cheap land was the magnet that drew immigrants to the Canadian West. After 1896 homestead entries increased yearly. In 1901 there were 8,157 entries, and by 1911 the annual total had soared to 44,479.

The Canadian Government's immigration program, then, aimed at promoting national prosperity through populating the western prairies. Closely connected to this goal, and necessary for its ultimate success, was the government's railway policy. Additional transcontinental railways were regarded as necessary to open up new areas of the West to settlement, and to provide the transportation and shipping facilities needed by the settlers. After all, they required supplies and equipment, and above all, a reliable means of exporting their produce to Canadian and world markets.

Towards this end, the Canadian Government gave financial support, by way of guaranteed loans, for the construction of two transcontinental railways. Now, besides the Canadian Pacific, there were to be two additional railways linking eastern and western Canada. These railways were the National Transcontinental and the Canadian Northern. Both opened a vast amount of territory to settlement.

The Canadian Government's immigration program proved immediately successful. From a low of 16,835 in 1896, the total number of immigrants to Canada grew yearly, until in 1904 it reached 131,152. Sifton's campaign was having its desired effect, and this was only the beginning. The decade beginning in 1904 was the golden era of settlement and colonization for Canada. More than two and a half million immigrants came during this decade, and the year 1913 saw a record number of immigrants, 400,870,

enter Canada — a total not since approached. Of this latter total, 150,000 came from Britain, 140,000 came from the United States, and the remaining 110,870 came from continental Europe.

Besides the impact of their numbers on the population total of Canada, the immigrants of the years 1904-14 made their presence significant in other important ways. Most striking was the appearance of large numbers of people from central and eastern Europe. Previously, the highest percentage of immigrants had come from Britain. These English-speaking people were quickly integrated into the English segment of Canadian society, swelling its ranks, and the basic English-French duality of Canada remained unchanged, except that the percentage of English slowly increased. However, as a result of Sifton's policy, the numbers of immigrants from eastern and central Europe for a time exceeded those of British origin.

The long-standing significance of this influx of European immigrants was that the basic English-French duality of Canadian society was altered permanently. During the years from 1904 to 1914 the cultural diversity of Canada became clearly defined. The appearance in large numbers of Austrians, Americans, Bulgarians, Croatians, Greeks, Lebanese, Maltese, Romanians, Ukrainians and others, signalled the beginning of the Canadian cultural mosaic. The fact that the bulk of these immigrants were farmers who settled the prairies, and had a tendency to group together in isolated communities in single ethnic enclaves, helped preserve and maintain the different languages and cultural heritage of each.

In addition, the burgeoning population of the prairies brought about the demand for improved local government. In 1905, the Canadian Government responded to this demand by establishing two new Provinces, Saskatchewan and Alberta. During this period the productivity of the prairie farmers showed great gains. In 1901, western farmers exported 55,572,000 bushels of wheat. By 1912, this figure had grown to 231,237,000

bushels. The Prairie Provinces had become, in just over a decade, one of the world's leading exporters of wheat.

It is evident that Canada benefitted greatly from the increased immigration during the years 1904 to 1914. In economic terms, the vastly increased wheat productivity of the Prairie Provinces gave evidence of the abilities of the hard-working immigrant farmer. As both producer and consumer, these immigrants served to stimulate the Canadian economy.

The contributions of the immigrants to all walks of Canadian life is hard to estimate. From their homelands, they brought skills of endless variety. There were not only farmers, but teachers, scientists, skilled craftsmen and masters in the fine arts. They made their effect felt throughout Canada, not just the prairies, as a smaller yet significant proportion chose to settle in the larger industrial centres. In all, Canada became a richer country. By 1914, more than 60 ethnic groups could be identified in Canada — the Canadian cultural mosaic had begun to form and the shape was multicultural, the Canada of the twentieth century. □

New immigrants to Canada (Public Archives Photo)





A. Ferguson, Civil Engineer

DAVID MAGEE, Assistant Editor

Alexander Ferguson was one of thousands of immigrants who came to Canada in the early 1900's. He arrived a newly-minted civil engineer with little money and few prospects. When he retired he was General Manager of the Port of Montreal and could lay claim to being one of the builders of Canada. His is the classic story of the immigrant making good in the new land.

Alexander Ferguson has some definite ideas about how to live as long as he has — he's 91 — and enjoy it. As you might expect, he recommends doing all things in moderation and remaining physically active. He also says it helps to have had strong, healthy parents.

But there is one thing he doesn't mention — and even a casual acquaintance can tell it may be the most important factor in Mr. Ferguson's long, healthy, successful life — a well-developed sense of humour.

Whether he's telling the horrendous story of how he almost chopped his foot off while on a railway survey party in the Quebec bush, or about the time the Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden) was asked to fire him, there's a chuckle in Alex Ferguson's voice and he laughs often as he remembers incidents of more than half a century ago.

Other things Mr. Ferguson doesn't mention in his recipe for longevity would be an oversupply of curiosity and a passion for detail. He says that his voyage to Canada from Scotland was one of the roughest on record at the time. It takes a special sort of person to stand on a heaving, storm-lashed deck and calculate the height of the waves that are threatening to wash him away at any moment — but that's what Mr. Ferguson did.

With his civil engineer's eye he calculated that the waves were running 400 to 600 feet between crests and towered 50 feet, trough to crest. At any rate, Mr. Ferguson remembers that part of the superstructure was swept away and the ship docked at St. John, New Brunswick, 10 days late, on March 23, 1905. He

C.P.R. engine number 206 with engineer Fred Rowe standing: about 1905 (Public Archives Photo)

claims to have enjoyed the experience immensely.

Like most immigrants, Mr. Ferguson came to Canada because prospects at home were not encouraging. And at that time Canada was actively seeking people to help in the enormous job of nation building. The country wasn't even 40 years old and there was a lot of work to be done.

Mr. Ferguson had his first contact with Canada when he talked with one of our Trade Commissioners in Glasgow. He had the kind of skills that were needed in the new country and the Trade Commissioner suggested he look for a job on the Trans-Continental Railway, on which work had just started.

So, with only the encouragement of a Trade Commissioner and a few dollars in a money belt, Alex Ferguson set out for Canada, which must have seemed a bleak place with its covering of snow, especially after the stormy voyage.

In fact, Mr. Ferguson remembers that at the next stop after St. John — Montreal — the snow was piled up in the streets higher than his head. The huge snow banks made the sidewalks and roadway seem like tunnels, he recalls. At that time, of course, municipal snow clearing was not quite as efficient as it is now.

Railway travel was different then too. To find out about the job on the railway, Mr. Ferguson had to go to Ottawa — by rail. The trip only took two or three hours but railways then were a little more thoughtful about their passengers. Mr. Ferguson says travellers were allowed to sleep overnight on the train, after it had arrived in Ottawa, then they could get off in the morning feeling refreshed and ready to face the day.

Hiring was a more casual affair as well. When Mr. Ferguson went to see the Assistant Chief Engineer of the new Trans-Continental Railway, M.J. Butler, he was handed what was called a profile plan and asked if he could draw up a similar sort of thing. Mr. Ferguson said he could and Mr. Butler told him there was nothing going at the moment but he would probably be hired in a month or so — and that was that — no questionnaires to fill out, no red tape at all. Mr.

Ferguson went back to Montreal and a boarding house at \$4 a week (meals included) to wait for word.

While he was waiting, he received a number of job offers, including one he especially remembers — from a paint firm with a president whose name was also Alex Ferguson. But it was the railway or nothing as far as the young Scotsman was concerned, so he sent a telegram to Mr. Butler asking when he could expect to be hired. Two days later a telegram told him to report to a Captain A.E. Doucette at Quebec City.

Shortly after that, Mr. Ferguson found himself on a survey party in the bush, helping as a draftsman to plot the route of the new railway. His salary was \$60 a month. In a few short years he was to become Inspecting Engineer of the Federal Department of Railways and Canals. But that is entirely another story, one that Mr. Ferguson is thinking about writing.

A salary of \$60 a month, even taking into account the vast inflation of the past 70 years, doesn't seem like much of a living but Mr. Ferguson says it wasn't bad when you consider that a labourer then earned only \$1 a day and a dozen eggs cost only 10 cents. And the price of meat? Well, Mr. Ferguson says he once bought an entire side of beef for a survey party for "four or five dollars."

By 1905 there were, of course, a few automobiles; there was electric light and many other modern "necessities" were coming into general use. But for railway survey parties, life was crude by our standards. Camp sites had to be reached by canoe or by long treks with back packs and once in camp the men were more or less stuck until their tour of duty was up — they could be in the bush for up to a year and work went on until the temperature hit 35 or 40 below.

The food was simple — Mr. Ferguson says the pork and beans and the bread were generally good but the tea was usually "execrable." He tells of the time he went to clean the tea pot and found he had to dig out the used tea leaves before he could make a fresh pot.

As for entertainment — well, there was a lot of card playing, sometimes for money and Mr. Ferguson says that's something he "just wouldn't do." His



entertainment was a copy of the *Theory of Railway Location and Construction*. He says it became his Bible and he studied it whenever he had the chance. Anyway, he says, there wasn't that much leisure time. The working day for most of the men in the survey party was 12 hours in the field but the leader of the group usually had to spend another five or six hours in the draughting tent with paper work.

Mr. Ferguson has kept many of the instruments he used in those early days. It seems typical of him that they are all in working order, some of them looking brand-new. He says the only calculating instrument available was a slide rule and a sharp pencil.

To the untrained person used to present-day gadgetry, the surveying instruments of over half a century ago appear somewhat rudimentary but Mr. Ferguson says they were more than adequate for the job. Obviously they were because many of the rail lines and other projects on which he worked are still in use.

When Alex Ferguson came to Canada the idea of flying was still a crazy notion to most people and the thought of a man stepping onto the moon's surface was, well, it was outlandish. It is probably correct to say that Mr. Ferguson has observed the world as it has gone through its greatest changes — from the horse and buggy to the space ship in one life time. Certainly he took part in some of the most exciting times in Canadian history. We can only hope he does take time to write that book. □

Alex Ferguson with drafting instruments used more than half a century ago when he was working on railway survey parties.

Canada's Showcase of Early Technology

KATITA STARK, National Museum of Science and Technology

The beginning of the 20th century triggered an era not only of change, but a rapidity of change unequalled in any previous century. More than two-thirds of the scientists who ever lived are alive today. The vigorous technological progress in this century has surpassed the total of previous years, drastically altering our social and ecological attitudes.

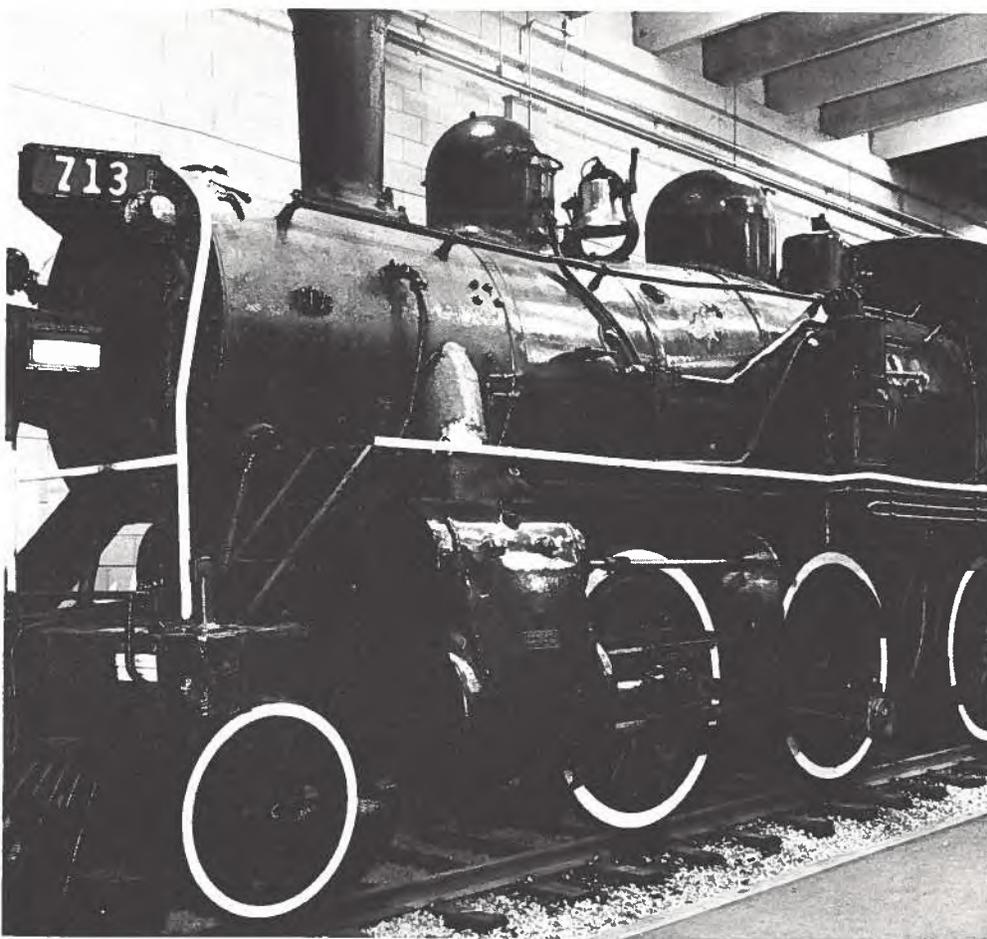
The year 1904 saw such significant developments as the oscillation valve, which detected high frequency oscillation (changing A.C. to D.C.), invented by J.A. Fleming; automobiles were produced in this country as Ford of Canada was founded; the Canadian Pacific Railway ordered its first ten "superheaters", which were freight locomotives with an augmented boiler capacity; the Montcalm, an additional icebreaker for the St. Lawrence River, was built; Esnault-Pelterie, a Frenchman, was the first person to use ailerons on a glider as an alternative to wing-warping; A. Korn developed a method of sending still pictures over telegraph wires; and Alexander Bell improved his tetrahedral kite to a state of longitudinal stability.

This was an exciting time. In 1902, Marconi established the first official transatlantic wireless communication; 1903 saw the Wright Brothers completing their first flight; and by 1906, a Canadian physicist, Reginald Fessenden, had invented "Amplitude Modulation" and made the first voice radio broadcast in the world.

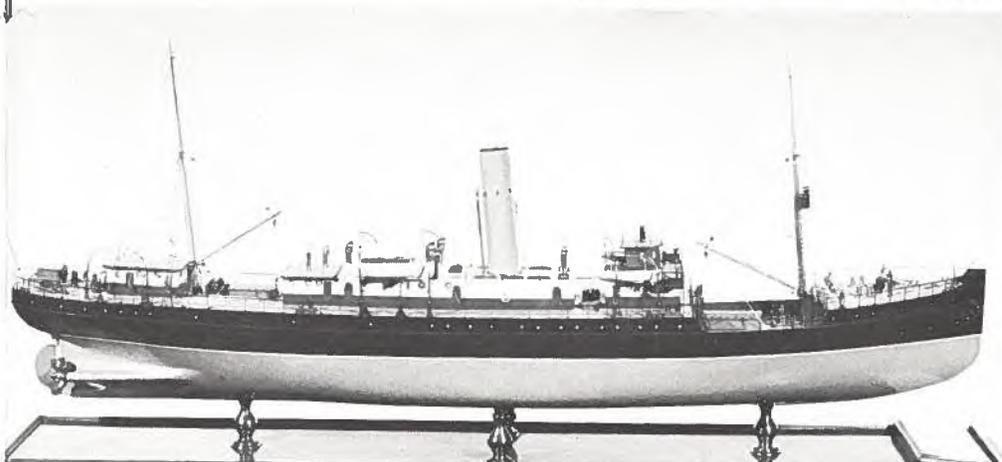
The National Museum of Science and Technology, opened in 1967, has undertaken to bridge this and other periods by encouraging an industrial and

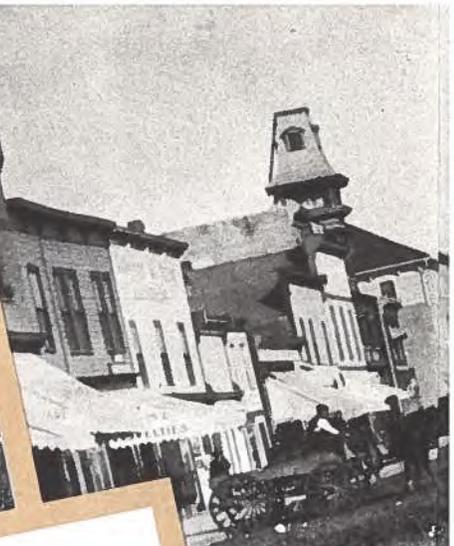
scientific literacy in the visiting public by demonstrating "the products of nature and the works of man, with special, but not exclusive reference to Canada." The newest and most vigorous of Canada's four national museums, the Science and Technology Museum and its National Aeronautical Collection, invites you to celebrate the 70th birthday

year of *Canada Commerce* through a participatory experience in which you may involve yourself in over 20 subject-oriented pavilions from communications to agriculture to ground and air transportation through to astronomy. This Museum is open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (except Mondays) and is located at 1867 St. Laurent Blvd., Ottawa. □



(Photos; Museum of Science and Technology)





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WEEKLY REPORT

Containing Reports of Commercial Agents
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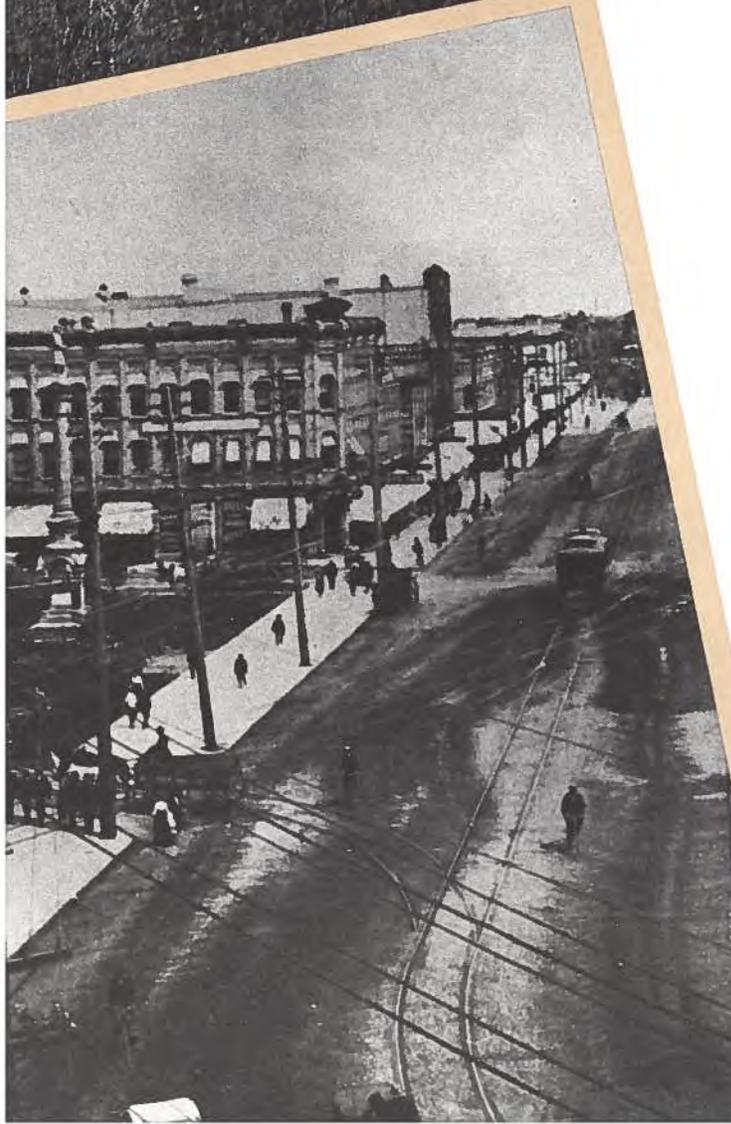
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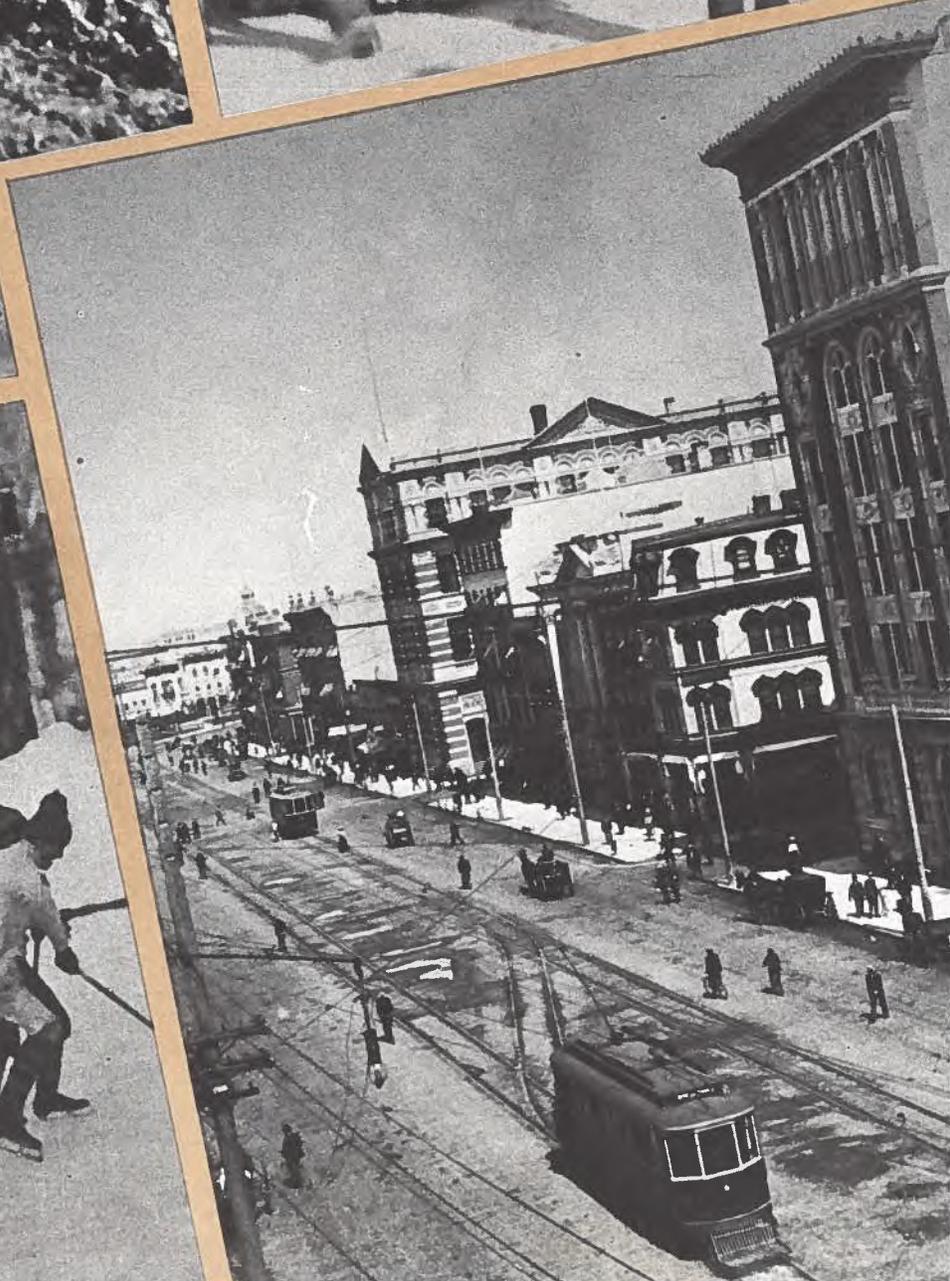
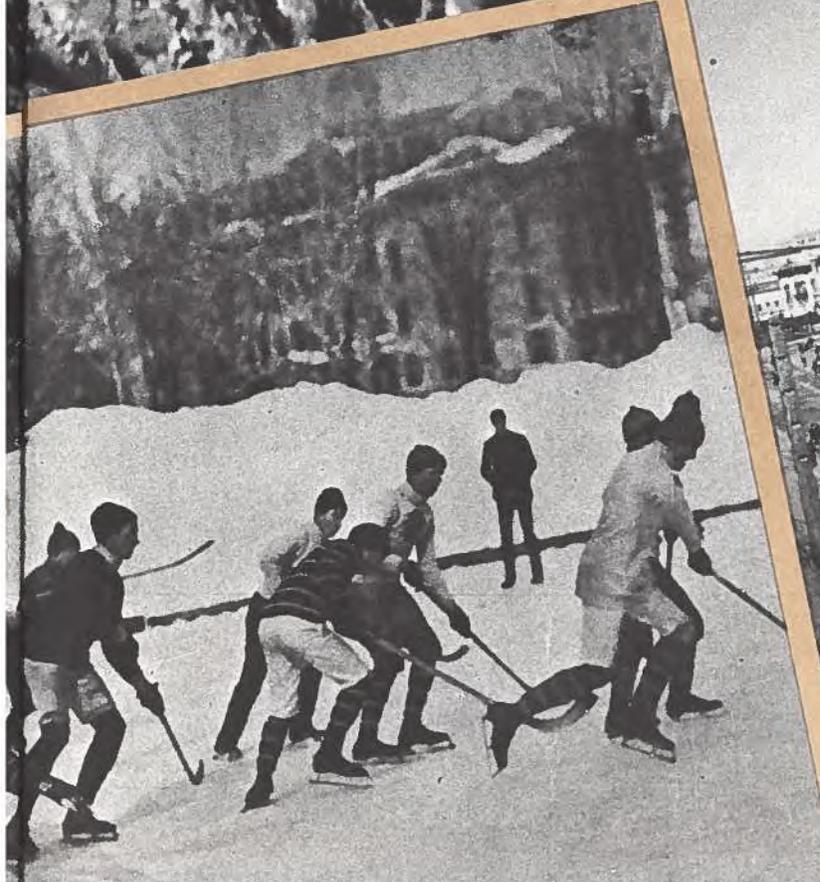
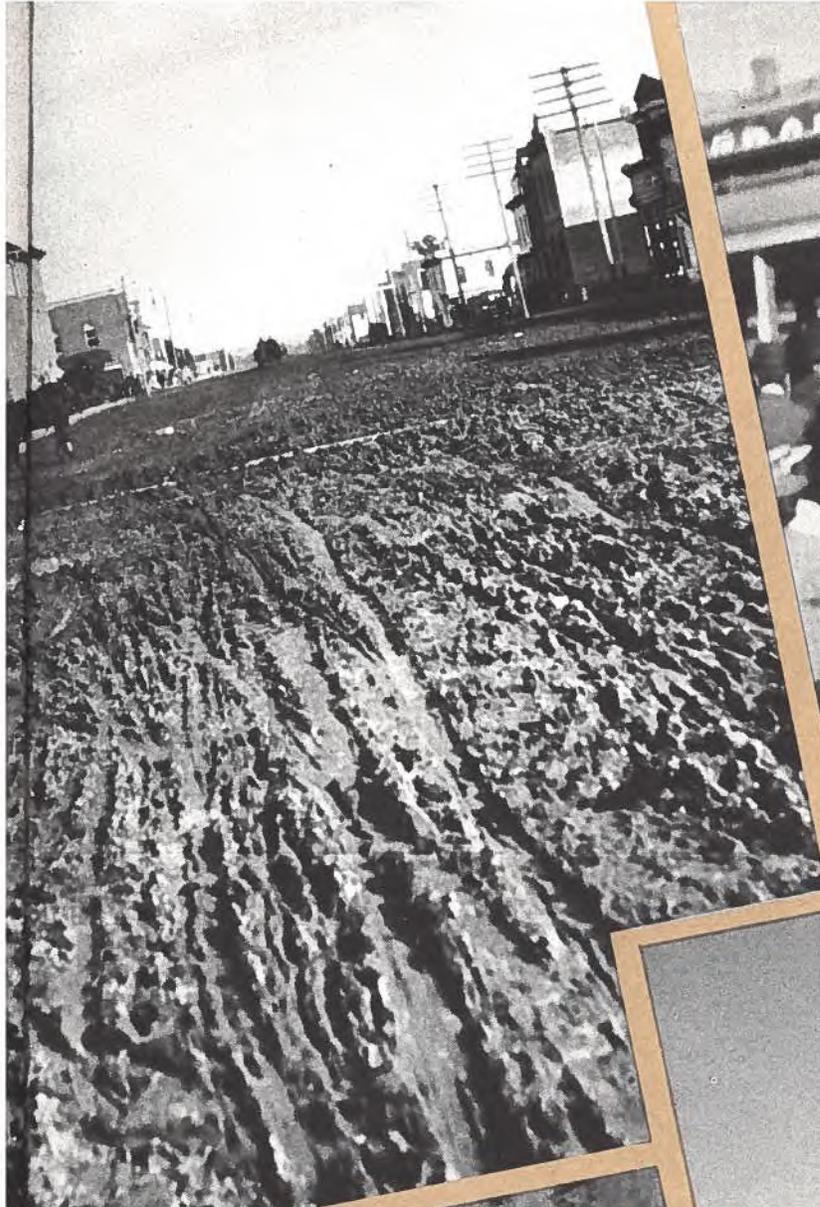
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GOVERNMENT PRINTING BUREAU
1904







A Farmer Remembers

W.H. LAMBTON, Editor

Bert Campbell was born in 1886 and has farmed all his life: until about two years ago, in fact. He doesn't come right out and say that those were the good old days around the turn of the century, but he certainly leaves the impression that lots of things were better then than they are now. Pleasures were simpler and if you wanted something you either waited until you could afford it or you went out and made it.

"Crops were better in those days, too." Mr. Campbell remembers when there used to be 17 or 20 people at the threshing bees, bees that lasted for two or three days, whereas now farmers can finish their threshing in a day. "They're not farming now," he says, "they don't even look after the land as well as they used to. But then, people don't want to work now. The older folks are all getting too old, and the younger ones are going to the cities and towns. The younger generation, they're not going to farm."

Wanting to get away from it all, of course, is not necessarily a new idea. Even Mr. Campbell? "Oh yes, lots of times. I thought it might be a better life in the city."

But he has travelled. Some of his clearer memories are of his trips out West — around Winnipeg and Regina, and further north towards Prince Albert — when he went to help with the harvests. He was about 16 when he went for the first time, and a wild trip it was by train in 1902 for a young man fresh from the comforts of Eastern Ontario. "Heavens, it was rough. Those people from Nova Scotia. Drinking and everything you can think of." And he chuckles with obvious delight in his memories.

But he was never badly treated by the farmers out there. The food was good — there was always plenty of milk to drink — and the sleeping was soft in the hay in the stable.

"The first family I went to," he says, "the fellow wanted me to drive a yoke of oxen. Well, hell, I never drove oxen in my

life. I got them out, got them around the tongue of the wagon, but a step too far. I tried to back them up but they wouldn't. And then the fellow who owned them came up — just a young fellow he was — and said: 'You know, you can't back up an oxen, they never back up! So he took them and hitched them up.'"

Mr. Campbell saw both good farms and poor farms out West. And something he had never seen at home: farmers living in sod houses. Tractors, of course, were being used by the turn of the century, but he says he seldom saw one in the West. Most farmers he met used horses — and those oxen.

The roads he remembers as being generally bad. Although "you could have a good hard road tonight, drawing grain to the elevator, but maybe in the morning it would be full of holes: the badgers, they'd dig even in the hardest places!"

And after the harvest was done out West, there was the trip back home with "a pocketfull of money" and those Nova Scotians. But it was a much quieter trip, "not nearly so rough." Were there anxious moments that the rewards of hard work would be stolen? "Oh no, no. There were never any worries about that." And so back home, to await the threshing machine for the grain that had been put away in the barn before leaving.

Living conditions at home were better than out West, but it is hard for the present generation to imagine what rural life in Eastern Ontario was like around the turn of the century. There were no medical insurance schemes, of course, and even doctors were hard to find. Farm mothers bringing children into the world did so with the help of the community midwife, usually another farmer's wife. There was never any payment for this, it was all part of the community neighbourliness, at least in the area about 40 miles south of Ottawa where Mr. Campbell comes from. A doctor would come out from the nearest town about 10 miles away, by sleigh or cutter in the winter and by pony trap in the summer, if there was a case of real sickness — the first car in Mr. Campbell's area appeared about 1910, just about the same time as the railroad. (It was only about 25 years ago that his local roads were kept open



A school bus in the Muskoka Lakes region of Ontario, 1904 (Public Archives Photo)

all winter.) It was the spirit of neighbourliness that kept the community going. Farm work kept a man busy almost from dawn to dusk, and the women had their hands full making the clothes for the family from the wool from the farm's sheep. A farm in those days was almost self-sufficient, and about the only things that had to be bought were staples such as flour, sugar, prunes by the carton, salt, beans and corn syrup.

Pleasures also were largely com-

munity affairs: corn husking bees, with a dance in the evening, music provided free by the local fiddler; quilting bees, and, of course, the threshing parties if you could call them pleasure. There was also football and baseball.

Rural school hours were much the same then as now, nine in the morning until noon and 1-4 in the afternoon. The difference there was that the only holidays were a month in the summer (July) and a week at Christmas! Pupils also

could expect the strap across the palms of their hands if they misbehaved. And if the teacher's aim was not good and the strap fell on the wrist, where it would leave a mark, the teacher might well expect a blast from the parents.

Have the pleasures and advancements of the twentieth century brought us more happiness? Mr. Campbell doesn't seem to think so. "Everybody was just as happy then, and perhaps even happier. And pleasures were simpler." □

A Hudson's Bay Company train at Fort Smith, Slave River (Public Archives Photo)



A good time to be born

D.A. MacINTOSH, Statistics Canada

The records seem to indicate that the infant *Canada Commerce* made its first appearance during an exciting and prosperous period in Canada's history, a period that has been described in O.D. Skelton's book, *The Canadian Government*, as the "years of fulfillment." For years before the turn of the century, things had been at a standstill. Exports and imports had ceased to expand, railway building had come to a halt, and more people were leaving than were entering the country. Then, in the late 1890's, all that began to change and Canada acquired a new lease on life.

Railway building was stepped up at a greater pace than ever before, and in the 20 years after 1896, the miles in operation grew from 16,000 to nearly 40,000. Tied in with this development was the opening up of the West and the influx of immigrants, mostly from the British Isles and Europe — in the period 1903-04 alone, more than 50,000 Britishers arrived in Canada. Many came to settle on the homesteads that were being made available for the asking. As an added attraction, ocean passage from Liverpool

could be purchased for as little as \$30 and it was possible to travel from Saint John to Winnipeg, via colonist car, for \$6. This migration to the West was not confined to newcomers, of course, but included many from the more settled provinces who were caught up in the excitement and challenges of the wheat fields and beyond. This was the decade that was to record the greatest rate of population increase in Canada's history, adding 1,835,000 to the 1901 Census count of 5,327,000, a gain of more than 34 per cent.

In Canada's 37th year as a nation, 1904, Earl Grey was appointed as Governor-General and, among his contributions to the Canadian way of life, is fondly remembered as the donor of the Grey Cup, emblematic of football supremacy. The same year, Sir Wilfrid Laurier won his third general election as Prime Minister and was to continue in that office until 1911.

Although it was a time of restless human mobility and social confusion, it was also a time of rapid economic expansion and prosperity. In Ontario and

Quebec, especially, a new industrial Canada was developing. Manufacturing, construction, transportation and communication were all showing significant advances. Although this industrial growth was accompanied by a slow decline in the primary activity of farming and a drift from the countryside to the cities and towns, agriculture remained the principal industry, and in 1901 there were almost 700,000 Canadians employed in its various pursuits, out of a total labour force of 1,500,000.

So much for the country as a whole. But what of the people themselves and what was the quality of their life in those challenging days?

In general, the homes of the early 1900's lacked many of the comforts that exist in the homes of the '70's, but they had come a long way from the humble shelters of the early pioneers. Sod shacks that had served the new settlers still dotted the prairies and log cabins had

Homesteading in Saskatchewan near the turn of the century (Public Archives Photo)





not disappeared completely. But frame and brick exteriors were becoming more and more plentiful. Stone had been in use for many years, especially where it was readily available as around Kingston, Ontario, but was losing some of its popularity in favour of brick which was much easier to handle.

Homes in rural areas depended, largely, on coal-oil lamps for lighting and outdoor plumbing had not yet been replaced. In the large urban centres, electricity was competing with gas for both lighting and cooking. Heating depended, for a large part, on coal and wood-burning stoves of a variety of styles, many of which were quite ornamental. Warm-air furnaces had been developed by this time, however, and were gradually replacing the stoves.

In the cities, modern underground sewage disposal units were being substituted for the open sewers, horse-drawn fire-fighting equipment was the rule, and nearly all had modern municipal water systems.

The "horseless carriage" chose the beginning of the twentieth century to make its first appearance, and in 1904 the first automobile plant in Canada went into production in Windsor, Ontario. In that year, 535 motor cars were registered in the country. One offshoot of this new means of transportation was recognition of the need for improved roads. Some macadamized roads did exist but it was in this period that asphalt surfaces were introduced, and with them, the beginning of our present-day system of highways.

While many of the occupations of the day have their counterparts in our more sophisticated and technological age, a number of trades of the early 1900's were geared to the day-to-day existence. Such skilled craftsmen as churn-makers, ax-makers, snow-shoe makers and quilt-makers, where they exist at all today

Steam tractor near Moose Jaw, about 1909 (Public Archives Photo)

outside the medium of mass production would probably be classed as hobbyists. In 1904, their products were essential. Similarly, the slight impact of the automobile did not eliminate the need for blacksmiths, livery-keepers and stage-drivers. These are examples of some of the occupations that, in a way, tell much of the story of life in Canada in the early years of the twentieth century.

The labour force was still pretty much a man's world. Women were employed in some of the professions, in some manufacturing occupations, and in the domestic and personal fields but their numbers were not large. In fact, in 1901, females made up less than one fifth of the wage-earning population. Not only were they fewer in number, but their average yearly earnings were less than half of those reported for males, approximately \$182 as compared with the male average of \$388. The Women's Liberation Movement may have been several decades away but this "discrimination"

did not go unnoticed, at least as far as the census reports were concerned! To quote Bulletin I of that series, "female employees will no doubt feel that the mere disability of sex ought not to prevail against themselves but that if they can do a man's work they should receive a man's wage".

But even though the annual wages looked more like a weekly rate today, they may not have been all that bad when you realize their purchasing power. For example, a mail-order catalogue of the period indicates that a family of three could be outfitted for less than \$10. A woman's suit of "fancy mixed chevriots" was priced at \$4, a man's suit of navy blue English serge at less than \$4 and a child's dress at 75¢. Furnishings for the home were equally interesting. Consider, for example, a bedroom suite of "select quarter-cut oak . . . highly polished and neatly hand-carved", priced at less than \$40.

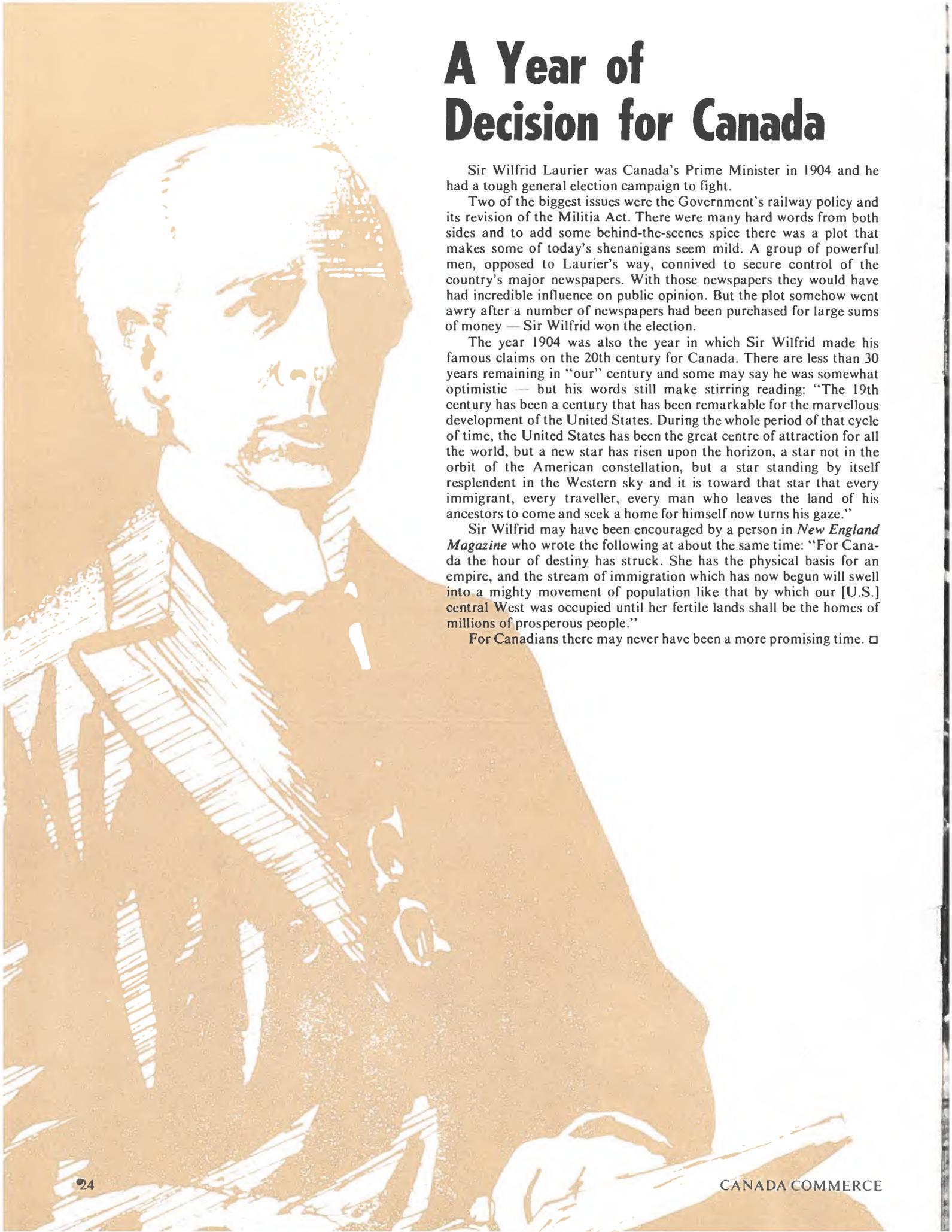
At that time and for some years to

come, much of the food was home-grown and home-preserved. But when it was necessary to buy the extras, a dollar went a long way. In fact, there would be change coming back from a dollar, after one had purchased a pound of smoked ham, a pound of coffee, a tall tin of salmon and a stone (14 pounds) of oat-meal. The best Canadian cheddar cheese could be bought for 15¢ a pound, flour was 3¢ a pound and sugar less than 5¢. These last two items, incidentally, were usually bought in large quantities as hundredweights or barrels.

True, wages and prices were low but so, it seems, was unemployment. Canadians were busy, and business and industry were on the move. It was "a good time to be born", especially for a publication such as *Canada Commerce* which was to continue to record the business trends, the ups and downs, of the next three score and ten years, none of which has been any more exciting or momentous than the year 1904. □

Grand Beach Lake, Winnipeg (Public Archives Photo)





A Year of Decision for Canada

Sir Wilfrid Laurier was Canada's Prime Minister in 1904 and he had a tough general election campaign to fight.

Two of the biggest issues were the Government's railway policy and its revision of the Militia Act. There were many hard words from both sides and to add some behind-the-scenes spice there was a plot that makes some of today's shenanigans seem mild. A group of powerful men, opposed to Laurier's way, connived to secure control of the country's major newspapers. With those newspapers they would have had incredible influence on public opinion. But the plot somehow went awry after a number of newspapers had been purchased for large sums of money — Sir Wilfrid won the election.

The year 1904 was also the year in which Sir Wilfrid made his famous claims on the 20th century for Canada. There are less than 30 years remaining in "our" century and some may say he was somewhat optimistic — but his words still make stirring reading: "The 19th century has been a century that has been remarkable for the marvellous development of the United States. During the whole period of that cycle of time, the United States has been the great centre of attraction for all the world, but a new star has risen upon the horizon, a star not in the orbit of the American constellation, but a star standing by itself resplendent in the Western sky and it is toward that star that every immigrant, every traveller, every man who leaves the land of his ancestors to come and seek a home for himself now turns his gaze."

Sir Wilfrid may have been encouraged by a person in *New England Magazine* who wrote the following at about the same time: "For Canada the hour of destiny has struck. She has the physical basis for an empire, and the stream of immigration which has now begun will swell into a mighty movement of population like that by which our [U.S.] central West was occupied until her fertile lands shall be the homes of millions of prosperous people."

For Canadians there may never have been a more promising time. □



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