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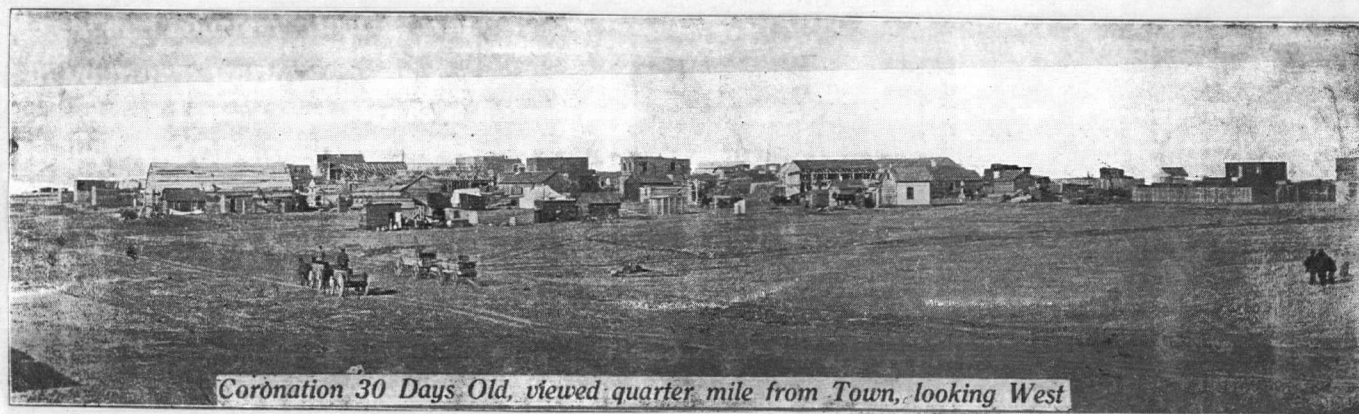
A HISTORY OF THE TOWN AND DISTRICT
OF
CORONATION, ALBERTA

A
THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
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Coronation 30 Days Old, viewed quarter mile from Town, looking West



Coronation in 1949
Viewed quarter mile from Town, looking north



Victoria Ave., looking East, Coronation, 30 Days from Birth



Coronation in 1949
Victoria Avenue, looking east

PREFACE

The history of the town and district of Coronation, Alberta, was written with two objectives in mind. The first was to recreate the beginnings and growth of a prairie town in an attempt to portray the general tone, character, and purpose of country living, as well as the hopes, thoughts, and feelings of rural and small town folk. This was to be achieved by tracing in detail the development of a special prairie community, but, at the same time, it was felt that such a story of one settlement in a semi-dry area would typify the history of dry belt pioneering throughout much of the West. This was my second aim.

Typical of the West was the diversity of language and national origin of Coronation's early settlers. Typical also were the reasons for leaving their homeland and their methods of travel. Like most pioneers of the semi-dry belt they had been led to expect a land of everlasting plenty; instead they found hardships almost impossible to overcome. In common with the rest of the West their fortunes rose or fell according to the crop year, but, typical of the dry areas, their crop failures were far more numerous than in districts more blessed with rain. Typical, too, was the overdependence on wheat and the overinvestment in land - factors leading to ruin in the hungry 'Thirties. And, as depression and frustration took the place of wild expansion and unbridled optimism, the people of Coronation joined their neighbours in the fight for a farmers' government to oppose the suspected dominance of eastern big-business interests. Finally, with the rebounding faith so typical of the West, Coronationites were quick to forget the hardships of the past with the promise of good times to come.

In order to set the stage for my detailed study I have purposely included a fairly extensive introductory chapter. Here I have discussed briefly the main steps in western development, from the time of Confederation up to the early 1900's, when Coronation's story really begins. By first presenting a general picture of what was happening throughout the entire West, I felt that my story of one community could slip more readily into proper perspective.

Victoria, B.C.,
April 11, 1951.

C.F.Goulson.

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A HISTORY OF THE TOWN AND DISTRICT
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The history of the town and district of Coronation, Alberta, was written with two objectives in mind. The first was to recreate the beginnings and growth of a prairie town in an attempt to portray the general tone, character, and purpose of country living, as well as the hopes, thoughts, and feelings of rural and small town folk. This was to be achieved by tracing in detail the development of a special prairie community, but at the same time, it was felt that such a story of one settlement in a semi-dry area would typify the history of dry belt pioneering throughout the entire West. This was the author's second aim.

The introductory chapter has been traced at some length because it was felt that a general review of western developments after 1867 was necessary as a background for the story which follows. For this reason such things as the changeover from Hudson's Bay Company to dominion rule, the make up of the Indian population, the work of the missionaries, the inception of the North West Mounted Police, the dominion land policy, railway expansion, immigration, and the problems confronting the incoming pioneer have been presented very briefly.

The town of Coronation is located some 200 miles southeast of Edmonton and about 60 miles west of the Saskatchewan border. Before the founding of the town, which did not take place until 1911, there was considerable exploratory and pioneering activity. Henry Kelsey, in 1691 was undoubtedly the first white man to approach the area; Anthony Henday (1754) and other fur traders coming much later. Next appeared the selfless, indomitable missionaries, such as Father Lacombe and the Reverend John McDougall, who did so much to reconcile the natives to the encroachment of civilization. Finally, in 1897, came John Nelson, the district's first pioneer.

The incoming settlers, destined to work and live together as neighbours, were of many different tongues and races. To portray this diversity of origin but singleness of purpose, the stories of a few typical pioneers have been told at length. By the fall of 1911 there was a considerable number of homesteaders already settled in the area chosen by the Canadian Pacific Railway as the locale for the townsite of Coronation. These were the hardy pioneers who had outdistanced the oncoming steel.

The founding of the town was accompanied by raucous fanfare,

wild excitement, mushrooming speculation, and optimistic hopes. For a time initial expansion, good crop years, and World War I prosperity, embellished advance expectations. Then in the 'Twenties, over-specialization in one crop - wheat, and over-expansion in land and machinery when prices were high, set the stage for absolute or near ruin in the drought-depression years of the hungry 'Thirties.

Though recovery was at first slow, by the end of the 'Forties, assisted by far-seeing government legislation and World War II markets and prices, the inhabitants of the Coronation area were better off than they had ever been. In addition there was the possibility of oil and irrigation developments sometime in the future. Until such time as these nebulous projects materialized, however, Coronation's economy would be far from secure. Undoubtedly part of the solution lay in a more diversified source of income. Utter dependence on one crop is always a gamble, and in an area where drought is an ever present spectre, it is practically suicidal. For Coronationites, mixed farming could well be the answer.

The periods of boom and depression, of hope and frustration, which characterize the entire history of the district of Coronation are typical of those experienced by all such communities in the semi-dry areas of the prairies. The original hardships, the hoped for miracles to be brought about by railway expansion, the distrust of Eastern big-business, the growth of co-operative movements and new line parties, the depths of depression and the blossoming hopes with the return of good times, the rallying to the Mother Country in two world wars, and the utter dependence on wheat, - these, too, are all typical. Mirrored in the story of Coronation is the story of much of Canada's West.

Victoria, B.C.,
April 11, 1951.

C.F. Goulson.

Chapter I

BACKGROUND FOR SETTLEMENT

Behind the squaw's light birch canoe
The steamer rocks and raves,
And city lots are staked for sale
Above old Indian graves.

I hear the tread of pioneers,
Of cities yet to be -
The first low wash of waves where soon
Shall roll a human sea.

(Whittier)

The year, 1870, marked the end of one era and the beginning of a new in the history of the great Canadian West. For in that year control of the vast, uncharted North West Territories passed out of the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company and into those of the young Canadian government.¹ Thus began the change from trader's trap to pioneer's plough, from fur to wheat.

The Hudson's Bay Company officials, in their own interests, had followed a policy designed to discourage land settlement, and had passed along stories of bleak winters and barren soils,

¹ Statutes of Canada, 35 Victoria, pp. lxxiii - lxxxiii. Contains Orders in Council, Communications and Memoranda, and the deed of Surrender by the Hudson's Bay Co. under the heading "Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory." Assented to on Nov. 19, 1869.

of hardships and of failures.² The Confederation Fathers, committed to the construction of a transcontinental railway and development of the interior, had to devise ways and means of combating such adverse propaganda. They had made rash predictions and promises to constituents (and potential constituents) in all parts of the country, and nearly every such scheme of optimism called for the opening up of the West.³

It was found, however, that settlement was not a process that could be accomplished over night. Many problems had to be overcome, and many waves of development and recession were to take place before any vestige of permanence and security could be credited to the movement. The settler had to be provided with an adequate means of acquiring land; he had to be protected from the lawlessness of the frontier; he had to find a crop which could be grown successfully under new conditions; he had to be assured of a ready and profitable market for his product; and he had to have cheap and easy access to

2 In 1857, Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Company for some 37 years, when giving evidence before a Select Committee of the Imperial Government, stated in answer to a question as to the suitability of the territories for cultivation and colonization, "I do not think that any part of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories is well adapted for settlement; the crops are very uncertain." See Report from the Select Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1857, p.45.

3 For this phase of the confederation story see Hammond, M.O., Confederation and its Leaders, Toronto, McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart; Parliamentary Debates on the Subject of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces, 3rd Session, 8th Provincial Parliament of Canada, Quebec, Hunter, Rose & Co., 1865; and pertinent periodical articles listed in the bibliography. Trotter, R.G., Canadian Federation, Toronto, J.M.Dent & Sons, 1924, gives a very good overall picture.

and from his place of settlement. These were not easy hurdles to overcome, and even half a century later, some were still blocking the progress of the western farmer.

At the time of Confederation but a mere handful of white-men were scattered throughout the vast reaches beyond what was to be the province of Manitoba.⁴ Most of these were in the employ of the Bay Company, and made their homes at the company forts which were located at strategic points along the inland network of arterial waterways.

The great bulk of the region's population was made up of some 50,000 full blooded Indians⁵ - Assiniboine, Sarcee, Crees (of the ^{Athapascan} ~~Algonkian~~ language stock), and the warlike Blackfeet.⁶ Their ranks were continually being swelled by discontented Métis, trying to escape the restrictions of an onsurging civilization; and with the Métis came the missionaries. These brave men, irrespective of denomination, faced the hardships of the wilderness to bring their teachings to Indian and halfbreed alike, and their messages of peace helped materially in making the way more secure for the pioneer soon to follow.

During the 'Seventies the missionaries, in their attempts to bring peace and order to the land, were joined by the forces

4 The first official figures given in Census of Canada: 1880-81, Vol.1, Ottawa, MacLean, Roger & Co., 1882, showed an estimated 56,446 persons in the Territories beyond Manitoba in 1881. Of these, 49,472 were listed as Indians, leaving only 6,974 whites and mixed blood.

5 See preceding footnote.

6 For a brief, comprehensive study of Canada's Indians, see Jenness, Eileen, The Indian Tribes of Canada, Toronto, The Ryerson Press, [c1933].

of the newly formed North West Mounted Police.⁷ This body had been organized to combat the activities of rum-running renegades from across the border, as well as to police the whole of the West. The Mounties not only quickly brought to an end the illegal traffic, but proved invaluable in settling the Indians⁸ onto reservations and in quelling unrest among the Métis. Thus law and a new security were given the country's inhabitants.

Meanwhile the dominion leaders were busy introducing a bungling, near-sighted, land-policy, full of shortcomings and contradictions.⁹ To be sure their hands were partially tied by the costly settlement which the Imperial Government had made with the Hudson's Bay Company, but they further shackled themselves by magnanimously offering some 25,000,000 acres of the country's best land to the Canadian Pacific

7 Statutes of Canada, 36 Victoria, Chap.35, "An Act respecting the Administration of Justice, and for the establishment of a Police Force in the North West Territories," assented to May 23, 1873. Perhaps the most authoritative record of the Royal North West Mounted Police is A.L.Haydon's, The Riders of the Plains, London, Andrew Melrose, 1910.

8 Part of the treaties' story is given in Haydon's Riders of the Plains. For a very full account see Morris, Alexander, The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories, Toronto, Willing & Williamson, 1880. Though old, this book covers the ten year period from 1870 to 1880 (as well as earlier achievements) when practically all of the Indians of the West were given treaties.

9 Two works that give an excellent overall coverage of the dominion land policy are Martin, Chester, "Dominion Lands" Policy, (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement, vol.2), Toronto, MacMillan Co., 1938; and Hedges, J.B., The Federal Railway Land Subsidy Policy of Canada, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1934.

10

Railway Company. Not only did this gift release a huge acreage from governmental control, it also served to tie up the whole process of land settlement while the C.P.R. tried to decide which proposed transcontinental route would be best - best, that is, for the C.P.R..¹¹

The northern route through Battleford, Edmonton, and the Yellowhead Pass had long been extolled as the logical choice because it tapped the fertile lands contiguous to the North Saskatchewan River. With this in mind many of the more resolute and courageous pioneers had gone ahead to choose their land and await the coming of the railway. The sudden switch to the southern route through Calgary and the Kicking Horse Pass left these settlers stranded for over twenty years.¹²

10 Statutes of Canada, 44 Victoria, Chap.1, "An Act respecting the Canadian Pacific Railway," assented to Feb.15, 1881. After several false starts this was substantially the final settlement.

11 Among the best broad studies of the Canadian Pacific Railway's role in the opening up of the Canadian West are Innis, H.A., A History of the Canadian Pacific Railway, Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 1923; Gibbon, J.M., Steel of Empire, Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, [c1935]; and Hedges, J.B., Building the Canadian West: The Land and Colonization Policies of the Canadian Pacific Railway, New York, The MacMillan Co., 1939.

12 The spectacular change which caused the railway to be built through near desert wastes instead of fertile valleyland has been called "one of the unsolved problems of Canadian history." The explanations most often cited are: to keep out a competitive line to the south; to counteract American pressure; because the southern route through the Rockies was less hazardous; and because of pressure from southern ranchers. One interesting theory, recently expounded, is that the Railway Company preferred to pass through a region where it could choose and exploit the townsites rather than to build through centers like Battleford and Edmonton, where, instead of selling land, it would have to buy. See F.G.Roe, "An Unsolved Problem of Canadian History," Annual Report: Canadian Historical Association, 1936, pp.65-77.

The whole question was further complicated by the government turning over large sections of land to colonizing companies in the hopes that settlement would thereby be hastened. Some of these private companies lived up to their contracts. Most, however, failed miserably, and finally the scheme was given up as a bad job.

Even the generous homestead policy, adapted from the American system in 1872, was unable to overcome the difficulties of the situation in general. By the Land Act of that year¹³ any man who was the head of a household or who had reached the age of twenty-one, could apply for a quarter-section and after three years residence could obtain title to his land, providing he had met certain other simple stipulations. The only charge was a \$10 registration fee. Two years later an amendment¹⁴ permitted the pre-empting of an adjoining quarter-section. In subsequent years the requirements were made still easier, but the results were long a disappointment. By the end of 1874 only 1,376 entries had been made and 890 of these were later cancelled. In 1875 there were 499 entries and 153¹⁵ cancellations, and in 1877 the figures were 845 and 463.

The reasons for this slow development were many and

¹³ Statutes of Canada, 35 Victoria, Chap.23, "An Act respecting the Public Lands of the Dominion," assented to April 14, 1872, (Sec.33, "Homestead Rights or Free Grant Lands").

¹⁴ Statutes of Canada, 37 Victoria, Chap.19, "An Act to amend the Dominion Lands Act," assented to May 26, 1874, (Sec.8).

¹⁵ England, Robert, The Colonization of Western Canada, London, P.S.King & Son, 1936, p.55.

varied. The confused land policy, complicating the choice of location, has already been mentioned. Once this choice had been made, the settler, in the days before the transcontinental, then had to face a seemingly endless, backbreaking journey. There was a Canadian lake route from Sarnia or Collingwood to Fort William, and from there by cart and boat over the Dawson Trail to Lake of the Woods and on to Winnipeg. The easier and more popular route, however, was by rail to Chicago and St. Paul, and thence north to Winnipeg by river, trail, and - after 1878 - by rail.

The route through the States was beset by a different kind of hazard. Westward expansion in that country was at its height, and on every train, American agents trumpeted the advantages to be gained by remaining south of the border. "Lots" of good land was still to be had, the country was being interlaced with railways, and the benefits of civilization were becoming available to all. Faced with attractions such as these, it is little wonder that many potential Canadian citizens followed the European avalanche which saw nearly 2,000,000 settlers, in one ten year period, enter the four states of Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.¹⁶

Even after reaching Winnipeg the incoming settler had but begun his journey; the worst hardships lay yet ahead. All of his worldly possessions had to be piled in wagon and buckboard. Enough bulk provisions, such as flour, bacon, and beans had to

¹⁶ Martin, Chester, "Confederation and the West," Annual Report: Canadian Historical Association, 1927, p.22.

be packed to last the winter. Harness, seed, carpenter supplies, and guns and ammunition had to be provided. Cattle and other livestock had to be led or driven. Then began the long slow trek overland. Prince Albert lay some two months to the west, and Edmonton another two months beyond that. Included in instructions, given to settlers proceeding to Battleford in March, 1882, were the following suggestions:

Route: take train from Winnipeg to Brandon or to the end of the C.P.R. Wagons drawn by Canadian horses - the load should not exceed fifteen hundred pounds. Good oxen in carts - from five hundred to eight hundred pounds. The best time to travel is in early spring. A fair average rate per day is for oxen 15 miles, for horses 15 to 25 miles.

With the golden phrases of the Eastern propagandist still ringing in their ears, the hardy pioneers, rumbling ever westward in Red River cart and prairie schooner, soon found all was not milk and honey in the proffered Promised Land. Drought and frost, mosquito and sandfly, dust storm and blizzard, grasshopper and prairie dog added to the miseries of an already burdensome position. But on they came.

17 England, Western Canada, p.58.

18 Invaluable as authoritative background references for the entire westward movement are several of the Canadian Frontier of Settlement series: Vol.2 - Morton, A.S., History of Prairie Settlement, Toronto, MacMillan Co., 1938; Vol.4 - Mackintosh, W.A., Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces, Toronto, MacMillan Co., 1935; Vol.5 - Murchie, R.W., Agricultural Progress on the Prairie Frontier, Toronto, MacMillan Co., 1936; and Vol.8 - Dawson, C.A., & Younge, Ewa R., Pioneering in the Prairie Provinces, Toronto, MacMillan Co., 1940. The atmosphere and feeling of pioneer days is well portrayed in Dawson & Younge's book, and in Burt, A.L., The Romance of the Prairie Provinces, Toronto, W.J.Gage & Co., 1945; and England, Robert, The Colonization of Western Canada, London, P.S.King & Son, 1936. Periodical articles and other helpful works are listed in the bibliography.

Most of the first summer was spent building a house and barn - out of logs if they were available, sod if they were not. Perhaps a little land was ploughed, but there could be no hope of a substantial crop until the second or third year, and until such time the heads of households had to maintain their families as best they could. These first settlers came mostly from Ontario and knew little of the ways of the West. They found the seed wheat they had brought with them was unable to stand the drought and did not ripen early enough to escape the autumn frosts. And when they did reap a harvest it was to find they had no market - for their steel life-lines lay far to the rear. A series of crop failures in the early 'Eighties burst the bubble of pseudo-prosperity. The first settlement period had ended in failure, and the words of the Winnipeg Times, though used at a later date, were even more applicable here. "The trails from Manitoba to the States... were worn bare and barren by the footprints of departing
19
settlers."

Not all of the settlers were forced out by the overwhelming pressure of ruinous weather and circumstances. Those who remained formed the nucleus of the permanent population of the West. Determined to make their new life a success they set about adapting themselves as best they could to conditions as they found them, and in this work they were ably assisted by the Ministry of Agriculture. Farmers were urged to summer-fallow their land, to sow seed at the earliest possible time,

and to adopt mixed-farming methods so that they would not be utterly dependent on any one crop. And meanwhile government experts under the able guidance of William Saunders were busy at the Ottawa, Brandon, and Indian Head experimental farms searching for a new variety of wheat.

Even more important was the railway expansion taking place in this period. In 1883 Winnipeg was connected to the Atlantic seaboard, and two years later the line was completed to the Pacific Coast. Then came the process of filling in branch lines to provide shipping points for all the main centers of settlement. The railway building boom helped the frontier in several ways. Most obvious was the transportation it provided in and out of the country, but there were other important aspects. Work, and consequently a cash income, were provided the newly arrived homesteader who desperately needed some ready money to tide him over. The large construction gangs served as temporary markets for the local communities, and the regular salary rolls kept money circulating freely. Times were "picking up".

With the end of good, available, American land almost in sight, the eyes of more and more European immigrants were turning, rather reluctantly, to view the huge and relatively unknown quantity to the north - Canada. A contemporary Britisher remarked that, "In the minds of nine out of ten persons in the Old Country Canada stands for the Siberia of the British Empire, a country in which residents suffer the most terrible hardships owing to the extreme cold which is supposed to wrap the country around for seven or eight months together, bringing all industrial

and social life to a standstill."²⁰ It is true that an increasing number of immigrants from Britain and the Continent were reaching the Canadian West, but as yet this movement was a mere trickle. Clearly drastic action was required and, with the appointment of Clifford Sifton as Minister of the Interior in 1896, a man was found who was both able and willing to put such a policy into effect. Thus began the next period of western development - the age of great influx.

Sifton believed that only by filling her vast empty spaces with people, and by "gearing" her economy to that of the modern world, could Canada achieve her rightful position as one of the great nations of the world. And only in this way could her own educated sons be kept at home. To achieve his objective he set in motion one of the most ambitious and most successful publicity campaigns ever devised. Immigration agencies were established in the United States, in Great Britain, and on the Continent. Enticing advertisements filled the pages of foreign newspapers; atlases and maps of Canada were placed in their schools; pamphlets and letters were widely circulated; lantern slides were shown; and in America, tours and excursions were arranged for influential newspapermen and farmer delegations. Immigration agents, hired on a commission basis, were taught the values of persistence and ingenuity, and it was not long before the high-pressured salesmanship of Sifton and his men began to produce amazing results.

²⁰ Hurd, Archibald S., "The Foreign Invasion of Canada," The Fortnightly Review, vol.72 (Dec.,1902),p.1055.

In 1896, a total 16,835 immigrants arrived in Canada. In 1906 the figure reached 189,064. The homestead entries for these years are even more revealing. Only 1,857 entries were filed in 1896; ten years later the figure had risen to 41,869. No longer did Britain contribute the bulk of the immigrants. In 1903 Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Scandinavia each sent over 12,000 persons to Western Canada, and during a four year period from 1899 to 1903 continental entries were about double those from the United Kingdom. Even more spectacular was the increased migration from across the border. In 1897 only 712²¹ Americans settled in Canada; in 1907 the total was 57,919. Britishers viewed with alarm their loss of leadership in the drive to settle Canada.

'Must we sit by,' wrote one correspondent, 'and watch one of the most promising daughterlands of the Mother-country being peopled by settlers of alien blood, witness the development of a policy which if not anti-British is seemingly not pro-British, and risk the political complications which may occur, in spite of all the sanguine hopes of the Dominion immigration officials?'²²

While there proved to be great difficulty in assimilating certain Continental immigrant groups, in the case of American settlers "the sanguine hopes" of Dominion officials were more than realized. The last of the good homesteads in the United States had been claimed by 1890, and as a result the price of

²¹ Mackintosh, W.A., Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement, vol.4), Toronto, Macmillan Co., 1935, Appendix A, pp.281-2; England, Western Canada, p.68; Wallace, "Canadian Immigration Policy," p.359.

²² Hurd, "Foreign Invasion," p.1064.

land in the older settled districts had been rising steadily. Farmers suddenly discovered that they could sell their land at a good price, move to Canada and acquire a larger farm at next to nothing, and still have a considerable stake with which to improve and develop their new home. Sifton estimated that, in the five year period 1898 to 1903, some 123,000 American immigrants had brought with them \$19,000,000 in settlers' effects and \$25,000,000 in cash at a total cost to the Department of only \$701,000.²³ Besides these material assets, settlers from across the line brought a knowledge of, and an experience in, dry-belt farming which was to prove extremely valuable in the years to come. Also of importance was their ability to mix with and become a part of every community wherein they settled.

The opening decades of the twentieth century saw the appearance of a new Canadian West. Settlers were pouring in, branch-lines were being built, towns were "mushrooming" into existence, and everywhere the tiny real-estate offices proclaimed the progress, prosperity, excitement, and speculation of a frontier boom.

Such were conditions when, on September 27, 1911, a townsite sale some 180 miles southeast of Edmonton heralded the birth of a new community - Coronation, Alberta. Chosen as divisional point on the Canadian Pacific branch line from Lacombe to Kerrobert, and with the prospects of other railway spokes connecting it with Edmonton, Sedgewick, Swift Current, and perhaps Calgary, Coronation was being touted as the railway

²³ Wallace, "Canadian Immigration Policy," p.359.

hub, the distributing center of a vast and fertile prairie hinterland. Here would be the newest and fastest growing city in the Canadian West.²⁴ Enthusiastically - and optimistically - contemporaries called Coronation "the Wonder Town of the West."

24 Coronation's position in relation to the main cities and railway lines of the West may be seen on the map on page xxvi of the appendix.

Chapter II

EARLY EXPLORERS OF THE CORONATION REGION

Though the buffalo had been gone for some twenty years, the earliest settlers arriving in the Coronation district saw on every side evidences of the once mighty herds that had roamed the vast central plains. Deep trails led down to coulees water holes, slough bottoms were potted with old hoof prints, and over the prairies were scattered countless heaps of bleaching bones. For the rich grazing land extending from the big bend of the Battle River south to Sullivan Lake and East to the Nose and Neutral Hills was one of the last retreats of the vanishing herds.¹ And as a result here also was one of the last great hunting grounds of the western Indian.²

Probably the first white man to penetrate through to the western Canadian plains was Henry Kelsey, employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1691 he pushed inland from York Factory on Hudson's Bay and eventually reached the regions between the branches of the Saskatchewan River. Kelsey's description of rivers, lakes, and other physical features of the countryside, through which he passed, is extremely vague, making it difficult to chart his exact course, but it is very doubtful that he travelled as far as the present border of

1 See map of the district in appendix, p. xxvii.

2 It is said that so plentiful were the buffalo in this area that Cree and Blackfoot alike used to journey here from great distances to hunt - and what was very rare for these two warlike tribes - to hunt in peace; thus the name Neutral Hills.

Alberta. He did reach buffalo country, however, and his accounts of this strange new animal are among the first on record. On August 20, 1691, he wrote in his journal:

Today we pitcht to y^e outtermost Edge of y^e woods this plain affords Nothing but short Round sticky grass & Buffillo & a great ^{sort} s^aor of a Bear w^{ch} is Bigger then any white Bear & is Neither White nor Black but silver hair'd like our English Rabbit y^e Buffillo Likewise is not like those to y^e Northward their Horns growing like an English Ox but Black....³

It was more than half a century after Kelsey had made his journey before another whiteman penetrated inland through the northern plains. ⁴ Anthony Henday, ⁵ also an employee of the Bay Company, was sent out from York Factory on the 26th of June, 1754, to try to recover some of the trade that was beginning to flow in ever increasing quantities to the French in the south. Henday's travels, carefully notated, are fairly easy to follow. By September he had reached the Battle River which he called the Countenack. This he followed for several days before cutting south-west to the Red Deer River (the Waskesew), reaching it at a point near the present town of Nevis.

That winter Henday spent south of the Battle River learning what he could of the country and its native inhabitants. Among the experiences which he recorded were the buffalo hunts he took part in. On one occasion he wrote:

³ Doughty, Arthur G. & Martin, Chester, introd., The Kelsey Papers, Ottawa, The Public Archives of Canada, 1929, pp.12-13.

⁴ The routes of the LaVérendryes in the 1730's and '40s were much further south.

⁵ Other variations in spelling found are Hendey and Hendry.

I went with the young men a-buffalo hunting, all armed with bows and arrows; killed several; fine sport. We beat them about, lodging twenty arrows in one beast. So expert are the natives that they will take the arrows out of them when they are foaming with pain, and tearing the ground up with their feet and horns until they fall down.⁶

The next few decades saw a rapid increase in white activity in the West for these were the years of bitter rivalry between the two great fur companies - the Hudson's Bay and the North West Company. Trading forts sprang up at strategic spots along the mighty inland waterways, and more and more agents were sent into the interior to champion their company's cause. In 1787 the Hudson's Bay Company built Manchester House a few miles east of the present Alberta border on the North Saskatchewan River. In 1795 they built Edmonton House some twenty miles east of the present city, and a year later the North West Company constructed Fort Augustus alongside the other's post. The union of the two companies in 1821 ended the old rivalry, but the opening up of the West for purposes of tapping the fur reserves continued.

The following half century saw the beginnings of change in the life of the western Indian. He lived and fought and hunted much as he had always done, but his contacts with the whiteman were becoming more numerous. Rifles, blankets, and "firewater" had practically become necessities. The demands

⁶ Burt, A.L., The Romance of the Prairie Provinces, Toronto, W.J.Gage & Co., 1945, p.67; Morton, Arthur S., A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71, Toronto, Thomas Nelson & Sons, pp.244-250; Blue, John, Alberta: Past and Present, Chicago, Pioneer Historical Publishing Co., 1924, vol.1, pp.18-20.

of civilization were beginning to cut into the heretofore inexhaustable supply of ready meat, and far to the east were the faint rumblings of Métis dissension.

Living with and travelling between the native tribes were the indomitable missionaries, risking their lives and enduring terrific hardships in order to teach the Indians the ways of peace and a purposeful life. One of those, best loved by Indian and whiteman alike, was Father Lacombe.⁷

It was to hold a Christmas service for the scattered bands of plain Crees that Father Lacombe and his faithful native servant Alexis set out from St. Paul des Métis for the Nose Hills on December 4, 1867. The large house-tent he had designed from fifty buffalo skins formed the biggest part of the load drawn by their two horses. Provisions had been scarce in the north so they had only a two or three days supply of frozen fish and pemmican, and this they shared with a starving band of Indians whose trail they crossed. For fourteen days thereafter they wandered over the frozen wilderness in a state of near starvation, hunting for the camps of the Indians they had come to visit. At times they subsisted only on a bouillon made of the skins of old sacks, cords of sinews, and old pieces of moccasin. Finally, when there seemed nothing left but to kill and eat their badly needed horses, they stumbled onto the campfires of those they sought.

Soon their strength had been restored and Father Lacombe

⁷ Father Lacombe arrived at Fort Edmonton in 1852, founded the settlement of St. Albert in 1862, and was active in his chosen work until his death in 1916 at the age of 89.

was able to go ahead with his plans for the Christmas service. Three masses he held in the early hours of Christmas morning and of the first he wrote:

As I robed myself for that Mass...this is what passed in my heart....The Holy Gospel tells us that the shepherds of the valley of Bethlehem came to the stable to adore the divine Child. And here to-night in this wild country in North America another kind of shepherds - the shepherds of the great flocks of buffalo - are kneeling down to adore the same Child Jesus, the Son of God, that lay on the straw in Bethlehem in the far east.

In a buffalo-skin tent, pitched near the peak of the Nose Hills, this Christmas service was held on that winter night⁸ over eighty years ago.

Another early missionary , who knew the Battle River and Nose Hill region intimately, was the Reverend John McDougall.⁹ Travelling back and forth across the central plains he learned to know and love this land of blazing blue skies and endless empty spaces, and with the eye of the true romanticist he foresaw the day when the empty prairies would be teeming with people. Recalling the view from a vantage point on the Battle River one fine day in 1869, he wrote:

The sweep of the valley, the windings of the stream, the autumn tints, the unoccupied fields and farms and lawns and terraces of the future, the natural placing of the clumps

⁸ Hughes, Katherine, Father Lacombe: The Black-Robe Voyageur, New York, Moffat, Yard & Co., 1911, pp.141-157; LePère Lacombe, Mémoires et Souvenirs, Montreal, Imprimé au Devoir, 1916.

⁹ John McDougall (1842-1917), son of the Reverend George Millward McDougall, worked among the western Indians until he was superannuated in 1906. He is the author of several books on his travels and experiences in the far West.

of timber, the smell of the land both wholesome and rich, the wild cattle to be seen here and there feeding or moving lazily down to the creek for water, the long beards of the bulls swaying rhythmically to their ponderous tread; yonder a wolf or coyote, slinking from clump to clump of bush, or indifferently seated on his haunches surveying the scene, even as we were - all this was before our vision, nor yet sign of any man with it. To our ears there came no articulate sound; a hush was upon all things. This was the time of day for quiet in nature, but in fancy we caught the rumble of waggons on well-travelled roads, the shriek of the locomotive, the hum of machinery, the lowing and bleating of herds and flocks, the tinkle of the cowbell, the ringing of the church and school bells. I could hear all these in anticipation, for verily the land before me was worthy and in good time it would come to its inheritance.¹⁰

These were indeed prophetic words, for less than thirty years later, in 1897, John Nelson, the first man to settle in the Coronation district, forded the Battle River with a herd of cattle he and his partner had driven down from Sedgewick, and made his permanent home in the sheltered rolling country directly south of the river. These two men were the vanguard of the stream of settlers who took up homesteads in the district during the next two decades.

In 1905 the C.P.R. started building its branch line east from Lacombe - a line that was eventually to link up with Kerrobert some 200 miles to the east.¹¹ As always is the case in the opening up of new territory, the twin ribbons of steel were far outdistanced by the more hardy of the pioneers who

¹⁰ McDougall, John, In the Days of the Red River Rebellion, Toronto, William Briggs, 1903, pp.98-99.

¹¹ Coronation's position in relation to the main cities and railway lines of the West may be seen on the map on page xxvi of the appendix.

rushed ahead in the hopes of locating the best land and the most suitable building sites.

By the fall of 1911 when the railroad reached the future site of Coronation there was already a fairly large group of settlers in the district, some of whom had been living there for five or more years. These years before the town was built were years of isolation and hardship. Bulk supplies had to be purchased, and any marketable produce sold, at the nearest town. Sedgewick was some 60 miles away, Hardisty was 50 miles, Lacombe 110 miles, Stettler 60 miles, and later Castor was 25 miles to the west. Advancing railway lines gradually lessened the distances that had to be travelled before contact was made with the outside world. Later many of the homesteaders' wants were provided at Haneyville (6 miles west) and Caseleyville (12 miles to the northeast of where Coronation now stands) in the general stores built by two of the earliest pioneers. This service necessitated frequent freighting trips over the long prairie trails.

During the summer the homesteader was busy from sun-up¹² to sun-down building or improving his house and barn, breaking what land he could, harvesting his tiny crops, cutting and stacking the wild hay, and tending his precious livestock. The sod was tough, but the soil was rich and black, and fairly easy to turn over with hand plough and teams of oxen, mules, horses, or any combination of the three. Although there was

¹² The early buildings were usually constructed of logs, or sod, or both. Very often the walls were of logs and the roof and floor of sod.

much bushland in the northern districts, most of the area was relatively free from brush, and required little clearing.

These days were hard for women as well as men. Most took their places alongside their husbands in the work outside and yet somehow found time to raise and feed and clothe large families. They grew their own vegetables, baked their own bread, churned their own butter, made their own clothing, cut the family's hair, and tried to teach the children a little "book-learning." Then, when their husbands made the long trips out for supplies, they did their work as well.

There was fun as well as work in the lives of the early settlers, however. Quilting, building, and threshing bees not only got needed work finished, but also served as occasions on which to get together with one's neighbours. Hunting and horseback riding were popular pasttimes, and in the winters there were sleighing parties, dances, and card parties alternating from home to home. Large Sunday picnics and gatherings were frequent. Distances meant little to the early settlers. A twenty mile trip by horseback, buggy, or cutter to an all night dance was not uncommon. Difficult and trying times these were, but those who experienced **them** look back upon them as good times too, for these were still the days when the entire family lived and worked and played together. Life was simple, but it was good.

Chapter III

PIONEER TRAILS

Like most settlements in the West the Coronation district drew its pioneers from many lands. Earliest available statistics showed British settlers (from Ontario and the Old Country) making up the bulk of the population, but, with the arrival of more and more immigrants from the Continent, together with the departure of many of the original pioneers, this majority gradually decreased. In 1921, out of a total population of 2,687 (2,042 in the country and 645 in town), 76% were British, 8% Scandinavian, 6% German, 3% Russian, 2½% French, and 2% Dutch. Twenty years later, in 1941, Britishers made up only 61%, Germans 12%, Scandinavians 11%,¹ Russians 5%, French 5%, and Dutch 2% of the 2,421 total. This change in racial ratio was typical of the trend throughout the West.

Though the early pioneers spoke different tongues, and had different national heritages and cultures, they had many things in common too. They had the desire to make a fresh start in a new world. They had the wish to build and own their own home, and to call no man their master. To do all this, they had to fight the farmer's greatest foe - nature and the elements. These common bonds, as well as the need for companionship between men thousands of miles from home and

¹ From statistics enclosed in a letter to the author from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ottawa, dated June 28, 1949. Reasons for the drop in population will be discussed in a later chapter.

country, helped overcome racial and national barriers and make most small localities, as indeed the whole Canadian West, a melting pot of diverse peoples. Coronation was no exception.

The journey from homeland to frontier, the conditions which were left behind and those which lay ahead, the reasons for picking Canada, Alberta, and finally Coronation - these perhaps can best be depicted by describing in some detail the experiences of a few of the early pioneers. These stories have been chosen, almost at random, from men who were among the first to settle at Coronation and make this district their permanent home.

No history of Coronation would be complete without the memoirs of her first pioneer - a man who, for over half a century, made his home on the site he chose just south of the Battle River. John Nelson was born near Trondheim, Norway, in the year, 1860. By the time he was twelve, John was working on the fishing boats and freighters up and down the Norwegian coast. Three years later he joined the crew of a British merchant ship, and for several years sailed from England all over the world. On his second trip to Australia, in 1882, he decided to stay, and for ten years he worked on the great sheep ranches of Victoria and New South Wales.

In 1892 Nelson was back in Norway, but, after a ten month visit, he headed for the United States and the American West. After three weeks in Idaho he moved on up to Wetaskiwin, Alberta, - arriving there in the spring of '93. Here he took up homestead, but, in his own words, "there were too many people around." He wanted room, and "lots" of it, to raise

cattle - almost an impossibility in settled areas criss-crossed with barbed wire.

Finally, in 1897, Nelson started down from Sedgewick, driving 200 head of cattle. Just across the Battle River he found the land he sought. Here was plenty of grass and water, and a few miles to the south were large hay meadows which could carry the stock through even the hardest of winters. Deep coulees and large bluffs of trees provided excellent shelter. Here John also found the "room" for which he was seeking. For miles and miles south, east, and west there was neither settler nor fence. Roving bands of Indians and scattered heaps of buffalo bones reflected the newness of the land.

These few Indians, reluctant to leave their old haunts, proved a real aid to the cattleman in tracking down strays and wandering herds. Much of his time Nelson spent in the saddle, rounding up cattle and driving them to market - first to Wetaskiwin, then to Lacombe - pocketing for his prime steers, three to four cents a pound.

At first, two trips a year were made to Wetaskiwin for supplies, but gradually incoming settlers brought civilization nearer. They also brought an end to open pastures and unlimited ranching. Finally John Nelson was forced to add farming to cattle raising as the best means of livelihood in the new and
2
"crowded" west.

2 From an interview with Mr. Nelson at his Battle River home on June 12, 1949. After a brief illness John Nelson passed away on December 24, 1949, at the age of 89.

In 1904, seven years after John Nelson had settled in the district, Albert Caseley drove a large herd of cattle and horses across country from Calgary, and built his home a few miles west of the peak of the Nose Hills and some twenty miles southeast of the Nelson place. He had driven up from Calgary the year before looking for good ranching land, and, like Nelson, had decided that the grasslands south of the river were ideal for raising choice cattle. He, too, chose a site with good hay reserves near at hand.

Caseley was born and raised on a farm in Somerset, England. In 1885, when he was 14 years old, he shipped out to Canada on a cattle boat, seeking adventure and opportunity. For the next three years he worked on a farm near Woodstock, Ontario, and then, still searching for something new, he headed across the country to British Columbia, where he spent some time on a farm in the Okanagan Valley. Then, with the stake he had built up, he rented land on the Bow River, southeast of Calgary, and began farming and ranching for himself. It was already difficult to acquire one's own land in that part of the country, however, and thus it was that Caseley, in 1903, headed northeast into the limitless prairies to pick out a new spot to settle. Later that year he filed his homestead at the land office in Red Deer.

In June, 1903, Albert Caseley married Jane Nicholson. Jane was born in Cumberland, England, in 1882. Six years later the family had moved to Canada and the West where Mr. Nicholson worked in the C.P.R. shops in Medicine Hat and Calgary.

The following spring after they were married Caseley set out from Calgary for their new home, in a hay rack loaded with household effects and settler supplies. Mrs. Caseley followed in the fall; travelling by train as far as Alix (then the end of the line) and by team and wagon the final 80 odd miles.

It wasn't long before the log and sod house on the Caseley homestead became a familiar landmark in the district, for it was here that neighbours came for their mail and supplies, as well as to many a card party and dance. Here, too, travellers stopped to eat and rest before journeying on their way. Only after the railway had pushed through, six miles to the south, did Caseleyville play a less important part in the life of the new community.³

Like the two ranchers who preceded him, Dick Goodall, when he arrived in the Coronation area in 1906, was primarily interested in raising cattle. Dick was born in Northamptonshire, England, in 1886, with the love of horses and the outdoors in his blood. For generations his family had been huntsmen at Althorpe House, home of the Pytchley and Belvoir Hounds. Though both his father and his grandfather had been killed on the hunts, Dick was in the saddle when he was three years old and was brought up to ride.

By the time he was sixteen Dick had quit school, and was looking for a job where he could get his fill of horses and adventure. Thrilling stories of the Wild West, and the name Calgary on a map, made up his mind for him, and in 1902, he

³ From an interview with Mrs. Caseley on June 5, 1949. Albert Caseley died April 14, 1948.

sailed from Liverpool, bound for Canada and the far West. Before Dick left England, his godfather, Lord Spencer, had introduced him to Lord Strathcona. The latter gave him letters of introduction to influential men in the Canadian West, but these Dick never used, for in this new country he wanted to make his own way.

For the next four years Goodall was in the saddle from morning till night, "punching" cattle near Calgary. By 1906 he had his own small herd and was looking for land. His final choice was a quarter section five miles northeast of the later site of Coronation, and with a four horse team and prairie schooner he headed overland from Calgary to start proving up his new homestead.

That first summer he broke about 15 acres and put up a 12 by 12 frame shack just in time for the terrible winter of 1906 and '07 - a winter which oldtimers still recall as one of the worst on record. Huge drifts made it almost impossible to use horses, so that Dick had to travel the fifteen miles to Brownfield on snowshoes to get his food and mail. So late did freeze-up last that hay had to be burned as fuel in order to get through the final few weeks of winter. The bad weather had been general over the West, and, after riding a month, Dick was only able to find 22 head of skin and bones - all that remained of the 70 cattle he had left to winter in the south.

In 1907, Dick Goodall married Irene Shaw, a real daughter of the Old West. Irene's father and mother had come from England in 1883 and settled on Fish Creek, ten miles south of

Calgary; Mrs. Shaw being one on the very earliest white women to arrive in the territory. Here Irene was born in 1886 and was brought up in the frontier atmosphere of Indians, half-breeds, cowboys, and pioneers. A nearby friend and neighbour was Father Lacombe who knew so well the district in which the Goodalls were to make their future home.⁴

During those first years, Goodall grew some oats for feed and to sell to settlers, but his main interest was raising cattle. Gradually, however, as land was taken up, ranching became more difficult, and more stress had to be placed on farming.

Over the years Dick Goodall has made a hobby of gathering old Indian relics, and he has amassed a fine collection of tomahawks, spear and arrowheads, fleshers, moccasin lasts, Indian rifles,⁵ and the like. Truly a worthy hobby in a country whose past will soon be gone!⁶

Andrew Landvik was born near Oslo, Norway, in 1879. When he was seven years old, the family moved to Minnesota where they had relatives. Andy grew up on the homestead, going to school, working on the farm, and learning the barbering trade on the side. At the age of 19 he started his own barber shop

4 When Mrs. Goodall was back home on a visit a few months after her marriage, Father Lacombe asked her where they lived - not in miles, but according to section, township, and range. After a moments thought he said, "You're straight west of Nosehills."

5 In June, 1949, Mr. Goodall acquired an old flint lock that had been picked up in the Nose Hills 41 years ago and bore the inscription "Parker Field & Co., 1864".

6 From interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Goodall on June 8 and 15, 1949. Mrs. Goodall passed away in January, 1950.

in South Dakota where he remained for nine years. Then, while on a trip to Minneapolis, he and some friends visited the Canadian immigration office there and were subjected to the Sifton salesmanship.⁷ The result was a trip by Andy, his brother Ed, Bill Adams, and Otto Kortgaard to the Coronation district in 1906 to look for homesteads. Used to the prairie land of Minnesota and the Dakotas, they had chosen a region with very little bush.

That winter was spent back in the States, and the following spring Andy headed for Hardisty where he barbered part of the summer and then moved down to his homestead for the winter. Three years he did this before starting his own barbershop at Haneyville⁸ in 1910. Meanwhile he had built a house of frame and sod, as well as a log barn, on his homestead five miles northeast of the future town, and was sowing his acreage to wheat, oats, and flax. When Coronation was started in 1911, Andrew Landvik was the town's first barber, having moved his building in from Haneyville a week before the sale of lots.⁹

Typical of those settlers who moved to the prairies from Ontario were George High and his two sons, Herb and Norm. They

7 In the window of the office was a display showing a man cutting a huge loaf of bread, and alongside the caption, "Sunny Southern Alberta! Will you have a slice?"

8 A busy little frontier settlement named after Ed Haney, Haneyville had sprung up as a supply centre six miles west of the future site of Coronation. The first haircut Andy Landvik gave at Haneyville was to George Fair, still a resident of Coronation.

9 In 1914 Andy Landvik married Jergina Olsen of Milan, Minnesota. When their house burned in 1915, the Landviks moved to their present home two miles northeast of town. From an interview with Andrew Landvik on June 19, 1949.

had "mixed-farmed" for years near Maple in York County, but the stories, from friends in the West, of free farms, forty bushel crops, and supposed independence from milk cows made them restless. In 1908 Herb made a trip out to see the country. The railway, then being built east of Lacombe, was opening up new territory, and here it was that he decided the greatest opportunity lay.

In 1909 Herb and his father took out homesteads two miles east of the future town of Coronation, and spent the summer putting up buildings and breaking land. The following spring they shipped from the east their horses, machinery, and household effects.¹⁰ Herb, travelling with the stock, took 17 days to make the trip out, and, when he arrived at Gadsby, then the end of the steel, he was met by Norm who had gone on ahead. They drove on to Castor in one day and reached their homestead a day later.

In June of 1910 Norm took out his homestead - filing by proxy with his father since he was not yet 18. The first years were spent in building, breaking, and getting as much land as possible into crop. Very little was sown in 1910, frost made the wheat not worth threshing in 1911, and so it was 1912 before the Highs got a paying crop. Gradually, however, higher prices and better yields eased the "pinch" of the first few¹¹ seasons.

10 Their box car, classified as used settler effects, received the usual reduction from the standard freight rate.

11 George High died in 1918. Herb, in the hungry 'Thirties, moved on to the newly developing Cold Lake regions of Northern Alberta. Norm, in 1917, married Mary Andrews, whose family had moved into the district from the Lacombe area. From an interview with Norm High on May 24, 1949.

John Osetsky was born on a farm in the province of Karoson in Russia in the year 1888. Times were hard around the turn of the century. There was a shortage of land; labour was cheap; crops were poor; and taxes were high. In addition all young men faced a three to four year period of compulsory military service with only a few cents a month as pay. The nine acres of land on the Osetsky farm had to support the father, his three sons, and the families of the latter as they married. Thus it was that when an immigration agent, in 1909, gave a local talk on the freedom and fortunes to be had for the asking in the New World, John and his wife, Polly, joined with a group of neighbours and signed up to go.

Once the 170 rubles (about \$85) had been paid by each adult, all the details of transit were taken care of by immigration and transport company officials. There were 47 men, women, and children in the immigrant group from John Osetsky's village, and they travelled as one party all the way from their native Russia, through Poland, by boat to Hull, across England to Liverpool, from Liverpool to Portland, Maine, and finally by rail to Stettler, Alberta. It was the fourteenth of December, 1909, when the new settlers arrived at the end of the line, and, as it was far too late in the season to take out homesteads, they had to make do through the winter as best they could. Through the long cold months, all 47 of them lived in "Immigration House", a 14 by 20 two story building with two rooms upstairs and two on the ground floor. Finally winter ended, and, with the coming of spring, the party that had lived together for so long split up, the different families scattering throughout the

vast new lands to the east.

Osetsky picked as his homestead, a site 35 miles southeast of Castor (then the nearest town) and 17 miles southwest of where Coronation was to stand. Here, he and his growing family lived until 1925 when they moved closer to Coronation. In that first summer of 1910 John, with the help of neighbours, put up a sod house and barn, and broke about ten acres. Following the advice of the district agriculturalist, he sowed his new soil to flax - the only crop, supposedly, that could be grown successfully on spring breaking - but it froze. In 1912 the flax again froze, and it was not until 1914 that a real ¹² paying crop (of wheat and oats) was raised.

During those first years John, as so many of the new settlers did, worked out when able in order to get a bit of ready cash. Also helping to buy coal and groceries was the \$8 a ton which he got for hauling hay to Coronation. By 1913 John was able to buy his first team of oxen, and the good crops and and high prices of the war years helped set him firmly on his ¹³ feet.

It is impossible, here, to tell the individual story of ¹⁴ every settler who made his home in the Coronation district. All such tales are interesting, all are different, yet all are

¹² With the nearest threshing machine some 25 miles away, the first crops had to be threshed by trampling the grain with team and wagon, and then laboriously cleaning it by hand.

¹³ From an interview with John Osetsky on May 24, 1949.

¹⁴ See appendix for complete list of surviving pioneers who registered on the 30th. Anniversary of the founding of the town of Coronation, September 27, 1941.

fundamentally the same. From great distances and far away places the pioneers came, and, whether they chose to make their home in town or country, each man and woman, who settled in the district, had a part to play in the life and history of the land.

Chapter IV

THE FOUNDING OF A TOWN

September, 1911, was a month of great excitement in the district lying beyond Castor, then the easternmost link on the Lacombe branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway. A new townsite was to be established which, besides being in the heart of a fine wheat growing area,¹ was to be the divisional point on the Lacombe-Kerrobert railway, then being rushed to completion.² This town was to be called Coronation in honour of the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary, which had taken place the previous June,³ and, as was usual in such forthcoming events, the occasion was well publicized in newspaper and pamphlet throughout the West.

The railway company picked as the town's location a

1 The land around Coronation is rolling prairie, mostly free from bush, with a general elevation of about 2,500 feet. The soil, a dark clay loam, is admirably suited to growing the finest hard wheat - when there is enough rain. However, precipitation is scanty, and the district is included in the Dominion Department of Agriculture's "Moderate-Drought Area" listings. Wide extremes of temperature, ranging from 40 below zero in winter to the high 90's in summer, are common. The months of June, July, and August are usually free from severe frosts, but there have been exceptions. There is much sunshine, both summer and winter, and the climate is a healthful one. See statistics of local weather station (organized in 1944) in appendix, p.vii.

2 See map in appendix, p.xxvi.

3 Other towns along the line continued this patriotic vein as witness Throne, Veteran, Loyalist and Consort. Even the streets and avenues of Coronation had a decidedly imperialistic flavour. Names like Victoria, Windsor, Mary, Queen, Royal, King, George, and Edward set the tone.

stretch of high ground alongside the railroad in Section 13 of Township 36, Range 11, West of the 4th. Meridian. As happened so often in choosing townsites, the company bypassed the settlers' own little community, and the inhabitants of Haneyville had to move their business establishments the six miles on to Coronation or be left in the backwash of progress. Already that tiny centre boasted two or three general stores, a boarding house, pool hall, post office, and a branch of the Merchants' Bank of Canada, and the transporting of these buildings by teams of horses over prairie trails was no easy task. One of the big events of the day of sale was the arrival at Coronation of a large double-fronted hardware store pulled⁴ by ten teams of horses.

Once the site of the new town had been chosen, and the land surveyed and staked out, many enterprising businessmen hurried to erect tents and temporary buildings in order to get as much head start as possible in their particular line of business. Among the first to arrive were Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Robinson, Mr. and Mrs. A.A.Towns, Mrs.A.C.Bury, Mrs.McNeice, A.J.Stewart, A.D.McEwen, D.Craig, J.Odell, C.Wilson, D.Craig, J.Cahoun, J.Mayhew, E.Bartlett, E.R.Haney, A.Bernhardt, Dr.⁵ Hurlburt, and Lee Ping.

4 Later written reports placed the number of teams at anywhere from six to sixteen. Ten is accepted as most reliable. That winter 28 horses were used to move the Star Theatre building across the snow on runners.

5 In an article in The Coronation Review, Dec. 14, 1916, J.H.Robinson listed the above persons as being among the very first of the townspeople to arrive at the new townsite.

For the homesteaders of the district the appearance of a new town was an occasion of great importance. No longer would they have to travel great distances to sell their produce and buy supplies. A thriving community near at hand would provide an increasing local demand for the output of the farm. And in addition a town would become the social centre of the district - a place where hardworking farmers could meet once or twice a week to exchange gossip and discuss the possibilities of rain.

September 27 was the day set for the sale, and by the night of the 26th. the area near the railway bore the appearances of a bustling tent city. Tents and shacks were scattered across the landscape. Piles of lumber, and the unceasing din of hammer and saw, gave evidence of the hurried construction work taking place. Every few minutes the arrival of horses, buggies, wagons, and automobiles brought new groups of buyers and sight-seers anxious to be on hand for the following morning. Shortly after 6:00 that evening the track laying gang reached town, and only two hours behind came the first train - baggage car, observation car, and four passenger coaches loaded with some 300 railway officials, settlers, townspeople and speculators.

The day of the sale dawned clear and bright, but, even before daybreak, men were up, walking among the survey stakes trying to choose the lots on which to bid. People continued to arrive, until, by mid-morning, over 500 persons⁶ stood

⁶ Pamphlet entitled Coronation published by the Land Department, Canadian Pacific Railway Co., Winnipeg, 1911, p.9.

around the platform on which was mounted a large scale plan of the town to be. From all four corners of the continent they had come - drawn by the lure of the West and a booming frontier.

About 9:30, T.C.Norris⁷ mounted the platform and, after first saying a few words on the golden opportunities then at hand, officially opened the townsite sale. Bidding was brisk. By noon 121 of the 828 lots put up for auction had been sold, and the day closed with over \$130,000 worth of property sold. Prices varied all the way from \$50 and \$75 for single lots to a high of \$2900 for a 50 foot business corner.⁸ The average price for a business lot with a 25 foot frontage ran from \$1200 to \$1500. These were near record prices for a new and untried community - evidence of the unbridled enthusiasm and optimism of the times.⁹

One of the highlights of the day was the appearance of The News Review, claiming to be "the first newspaper ever printed in Canada on its own press,¹⁰ issued from its own offices and distributed to the public free of charge on the very day on which the the [sic] townsite itself was offered for sale to the public."¹¹ The editor, G.C.Duncan, like

7 Mr.Norris later became premier of Manitoba.

8 These were Lots 1 and 2 of Block 12. See townsite plan in appendix, p.xxix.

9 C.P.R.Pamphlets; The News Review, Sept. 27, 1911. The News Review later became The Coronation Review, and will be referred to in succeeding footnotes as Review. It is a weekly newspaper, being published every Thursday.

10 The press was set up on a horse drawn dray.

11 Review, Sept. 27, 1911.

everyone else, believed in the future of the district - "September 27 will go down in the history of Coronation as the alpha of her existence. From this date will be reckoned the building, not only of business establishments, but of character and it may be of fortunes also." He went on, however, to give a sober warning against the "wolves" at the auction who hoped "to draw sustenance from them by preying upon them in the garb of speculators, having no intention of improving their purchases, but rather expecting by the industry of others to share in the general prosperity which accompanies industry."

These speculators and investors were a part of every townsite sale during this period of land fever; their practices often making the cost of locating, forbiddingly high for the budding merchant. Nor was such investment and real-estate turnover discouraged by the railway companies. In C.P.R. propaganda pamphlets publicizing the birth of Coronation such statements as the following appear:

Selected by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company to be a Divisional town and the scene of extensive railway operations, occupying a commanding site, situated in the centre of exceptionally fine farming districts, and located on what will eventually be a great through route from Chicago to Edmonton, Coronation has before it a prosperous future which - whatever else it may mean - certainly means profit on property investments.

Also:

While the price paid for lots may appear somewhat high to the outsider they were

12 Review, Sept. 27, 1911.

13 From pamphlets published by the Land Dept., C.P.R.Co., Winnipeg, 1911.

undoubtedly on a solid business basis since farming operations in the vicinity of Coronation, together with the railway pay-roll and commercial activity, will yield to the future City a purchasing revenue more than ample to justify their investments. Many of the merchants will turn over a car-load of goods per week and the annual value of their trade will run well into the thousands.

Or:

Be convinced by the progress of thirty days. Coronation is still growing and affords splendid inducements for investors and those in search of profitable business locations.

Or again:

It is almost safe to prophesy, however, that within a year from date the new town of Coronation will have a population of at least one thousand.

Such publicity was undoubtedly necessary to entice people and money into new districts, but it also helped push prices beyond their real value and give an air of pseudo-prosperity to areas basically unable to live up to such great expectations. Coronation did not have a population of one thousand a year later - nor does it have that number today, almost forty years later.

The activities of unscrupulous speculators were partially neutralized on sale day by the co-operative action of the original businessmen of the town. They, and others intending to locate permanently, had held a meeting the night before the sale to try to devise a procedure which would guard as far as possible the location of those lots that they, themselves, wanted. The plan was fairly successful - one result being to make the main street of business Victoria Avenue instead of Windsor as the surveyors and company agents had expected.¹⁴

¹⁴ See townsite plan in appendix, p.xxix .

The fanfare that accompanied the birth of Coronation was heard round the world. Publicity pamphlets were circulated widely, and motion pictures taken of sales-day proceedings were shown as far away as London, England. According to one publication "...it needed but an airship to complete a scene of twentieth century progress as typified in western Canada."¹⁵ It had been quite a day.

During that first fall and winter the town's rapid growth seemed to bear out even the wildest predictions. Building continued right into freeze-up. By the first week of November 107 car loads of lumber and 330 kegs of nails had been used, and these figures did not include the building programme of the C.P.R.. A telegram, dated November 16, 1911, from H.S. Northwood, the railway company land agent at Coronation, to his head office stated that "Coronation contains One hundred and forty-one buildings - - accurate count,"¹⁶ and another telegram¹⁶ five days later gave the census as 524 people.

A list of the town's first business establishments well illustrates the amazing expansion that was taking place. By the first week in November there were six real estate and loan offices, six restaurants and boarding houses, five coal and fuel dealers, four draying concerns, four pool halls, four lumber yards, three general stores, three hardware stores, three livery barns, three implement dealers, three barber

¹⁵ C.P.R. Pamphlet, 1911.

¹⁶ Telegrams, dated Nov. 16 and 21, 1911, from H.S. Northwood to J.L. Doupe, Ass't. Land Commissioner, Winnipeg, Manitoba. These were reprinted in a C.P.R. pamphlet of that year.

shops, three well-drilling outfits, two banks, two drug stores, two meat markets, two blacksmith shops, two bakeries, one doctor's office, one printing office, one harness shop, one painting and decorating concern, one dairy, and one laundry - all of this within a month and a half of the town's beginning. In addition two hotels were being built; one of them a \$40,000 structure.¹⁷

The demand for lots continued to be brisk, and within six weeks of the townsite sale, an additional \$50,000 worth of property had been sold.¹⁸ The railway company let it be known that choice locations were still to be had from \$50 up, and that these could be handled with a down payment of one third, and the remainder in six to twelve months. To meet the hoped for expansion two more surveys were made, and new streets, blocks, and lots were laid out, not only in the original area of Section 13, but in two neighbouring quarter sections as well.¹⁹ Land was reserved for municipal buildings, schools, and a public park, and roomy station grounds and railway yards were put aside to handle heavy divisional traffic. The surveyors, draughtsmen, and original planners were making sure that the "Wonder Town of the West" had room in which to grow into the Wonder City.

During these first few feverish weeks of expansion the guidance of public affairs was largely by unofficial co-opera-

¹⁷ Review, Nov. 7, 1911.

¹⁸ C.P.R. Pamphlet, 1911.

¹⁹ See townsite plan in appendix, p. xxix .

tion. On the evening of September 28, the day after the townsite sale, the businessmen of the town gathered in the Bank of Toronto ²⁰ to organize a Board of Trade. The first slate of officers included D.A.Thomson, president; C.W.Hurlburt, vice-president; J.D.Corbet, secretary-treasurer; and a provisional executive committee consisting of A.D.McEwen, A.J. Stewart, and C.G.Dunning. ²¹ Interest and enthusiasm were high, and the original membership of 30 rose steadily.

"Working for the betterment of our town" was the avowed aim of the newly formed Board of Trade, and many were the problems this group faced at their regular Thursday meetings. Arrangements had to be made for an adequate water supply, for the construction of sidewalks, for fire-fighting equipment, for school facilities. Letters were continually being received from interested parties asking about business potentialities in the new town. Perhaps most important of all was the question of official organization. Should a village be formed, and if so, when? Or should the status of a town be sought at once?

Not all these problems could be cleared up immediately, but as the weeks stretched into months, temporary or permanent solutions were found, and progress continued with few serious set-backs. Different wells were dug giving a goodly supply of water at depths varying from 15 to 200 feet. The building of wooden sidewalks was begun at once, and within two months

²⁰ The Bank of Toronto was the first building on the new townsite and was long the rendezvous for much of the town's activities. During the first weeks it was post office and meeting place as well as bank.

²¹ Review, Nov. 7, 1911.

some \$1500 worth had been laid. School began December 1 on the second floor of a downtown building,²² with C.F.Stein as the first teacher. It was not until January of 1913, however, that a proper volunteer fire brigade was organized.²³

Early in November of 1911, President Thomson reported to the Board of Trade on interviews he had had in Edmonton regarding the formation of a village. At that time it was decided to postpone the election of officers until the new year so that a second election would be unnecessary for 1912. Therefore, though Coronation was erected a village on December 16, 1911,²⁴ it was January 6, 1912, before the three man council consisting of H.S.Northwood, D.A.Thomson, and A.Munn was chosen. This group had not long to serve, for within four months - on April 29²⁴ - Coronation was proclaimed a town, and a few weeks later a new election was held to choose a mayor and councillors. The community's infant days were over.

22 This building later became Anderson's Funeral Home

23 Two weeks earlier the Review, after noting the arrival of new chemical fire fighting equipment, had cryptically remarked, "The next step will no doubt be to organize a fire brigade." Review, Jan. 2, 1913.

24 Sources vary as to these dates. I am accepting as official, information contained in a letter to the author dated July 18, 1949, from the Department of Municipal Affairs, Edmonton.

Chapter V

EARLY EXPANSION AND WORLD WAR I

Coronation Slogan

Oh, we took you from the prairie and the plough,
And we laid you out so very trim and neat,
We built you up so quick that even now
Larger towns are jealous of your Royal Street;
It doesn't matter what you were before,
Or What the outside fancied for your name,
Once the railway started selling, and to boost
you were so willing
We called you Coronation just the same.

Oh, Cora, Coronation, you're a town of good renoun,
You're a credit to the province and to all the
farmers round;
May your luck be never failing, may your men be
ever true;
God bless you Coronation, that's Alberta's wish
for you.

These words for "Coronation Slogan", penned by an early
¹
resident of the town, while perhaps falling short of poetic
excellence, do catch the pride and optimism, so characteristic
of Coronation's first inhabitants. Adverse weather conditions,
poor crops, slow railway developments, and other disappoint-
ments in those first years failed to shatter the faith in a
golden heritiage. These first minor setbacks were only
temporary. The future would see the fruition of all their
dreams. So they believed.

The first civic election on June 1, 1912, was entered
into with unbridled enthusiasm. Coronation was now a full

¹ The poem was signed with the initials W.D.G., standing in
all probability for W.D.Guthrie, the town's first secretary.
There were three other verses, all to be sung to the tune of
"Tommy Atkins." A copy is on file in the Coronation Review
office.

fledged town, complete with official charter, and the guidance of public affairs deserved the best leadership possible. There was no shortage of nominees - for mayor the names of A. Bernhardt, E. R. Haney, and H. S. Northwood were put forward, and there was an impressive list of candidates for councillors. When the day's votes had been counted, H. S. Northwood emerged as first mayor of the new town. Rounding out his council were J. E. Bonsall, L. Burgess, A. C. Bury, A. Keith, A. Munn, and W. J. McNeil, with W. D. Guthrie as secretary.

The choosing of the first town fathers was an occasion which deserved celebration, and that night "everybody in town, both men and women, joined in and made a night of it." After a torch light parade through the streets, an impromptu dance was held in the hall over the drug store. The rest of the night's festivities can best be described in the words of one of the participants.

About 2:30 A.M. some one suggested eating and we adjourned to the old Club Cafe. The two rather startled Chinamen there, with the unmovable calmness of their race, met the situation and provided the crowd with just what they had on hand, fried eggs between slices of unbuttered bread and coffee.

When the somewhat tired gang left the restaurant it was to find the sun risen high above the Nose Hill.... The first community gathering in Coronation was at an end.

Many were the problems which faced Mayor Northwood and his councillors as they began their term of office, but the

2 These are the recollections of H. S. Northwood, the first mayor, upon the occasion in February, 1936, of J. E. Bonsall's retirement from office after twelve years as mayor. Review, Feb. 13, 1936. Unfortunately for reference purposes, the back numbers of the Review for the year, 1912, are unavailable.

two which required the most immediate attention and would involve the largest outlay of funds were the providing of water and electric light to the townspeople. Early in July, 1912, investigations were begun to find out the best means by which these services could be made available, with the result that in the following February, two by-laws were presented calling for a whopping \$55,000 loan.³

The total amount of the loan was to be divided into two parts. By-Law 27 provided for the borrowing of \$40,000 for constructing and laying a municipal waterworks system. This project was to be financed by the sale of 30 year debentures at 6%. By-Law 28 covered the \$15,000 necessary for the installing and erecting of an electric light plant and system, and provided for 20 year debentures, also at 6%. Taxpayers were practically unanimous in accepting the proposals. The waterworks by-law passed with 61 votes for and none against, while the electric light bill had 60 affirmative and only one negative vote.⁴

Coronationites found it so easy to finance their affairs, and were so ready to invest in their own future, that they received rather a rude jolt when their debenture bonds met with a cool reception on the outside market. Early hopes of

3 Years later Mr. Northwood remarked that financing "was the easiest thing in the world in those days, money was no object." In addition to financing town affairs, money was available for donations and gifts. In 1912 the Agricultural Society was given \$1000, and the Board of Trade an additional \$300. Review, Feb. 13, 1936.

4 Review, Feb. 6 and Feb. 27, 1913.

securing the waterworks system and electric light plant before winter gradually faded, and indeed it was not until March of 1914 that the sale of debenture issues was completed with the financial house of McKinnon and Company of Toronto.

Once the financing had been arranged, work on the two projects moved ahead quickly. An ample supply of water was found at a depth of 280 feet, and in a 16 hour test, excellent water at the rate of 3000 gallons per hour, was produced. Early in June, 1914, employees of the Des Moines Bridge Company arrived to erect an elevated storage tank on a 100 foot steel girder tower. The tank, itself, was capable of holding 60,000 gallons, and, in addition, a reservoir holding 200,000 gallons was built underground. In September the Town Council met to decide on water and electricity rates,⁵ and in the second week of October the two services were made available to the public.

Meanwhile other important construction work was in progress. A fine \$40,000 brick school was built in 1913, and the following year saw the completion of a modern 15 to 20 bed hospital. The hospital by-law (Number 41) had called for a \$12,000 debenture issue (15 years at 6%) and had been financed in the same transaction with the water and light. In May of 1913 the railway company had been approached with the hope of

5 Water rates were to be as follows: Livery Barns, \$10.00 per month; Restaurants and Laundries, \$1.00 per week; Dwellings and Stores, \$1.50 per month (a bath was 50¢ extra per month); Restaurants without installations were to be charged 50¢ a barrel or 5¢ per pail for their water. The electric light rate was to be 20¢ per K.W. with a discount of 10% for prompt payments. Review, Sept. 17, 1914.

securing a free site, but at that time the best they saw fit to offer was a block of land for \$1500. Almost a year later - in the following March - Mayor Northwood and Dr.C.W.Hurlburt journeyed to Calgary, and secured from C.P.R. officials there a reduction, from \$1500 to \$500, in the price of the hospital site.

The completed hospital was a three story building with two public, one semi-private, and five private wards, as well as an up to date operating room.⁶ Its location on a high slope of ground west of the town gave it natural drainage and the necessary seclusion, and also served to make it one of the first landmarks (after the water tower) discernible to anyone approaching town from the west.

Private enterprise was also very active in this period. The 60 room Royal Crown Hotel had been completed by the end of 1911, and in October of 1913 the proprietors of the hotel had pointed the way for the town fathers by installing their own electric light plant.⁷ The new Coronation telephone exchange began operation in January, 1913, and work on the line east to Monitor continued at the rate of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles a day. In June of that year the new Bank of Toronto building was completed on the corner of Royal Street and Victoria Avenue.

⁶ Fees were set as follows: Public ward, \$2.00; semi-private, \$2.50; and private, \$3.00 per day. Review, Jan. 28, 1915.

⁷ A contemporary remark by the Review sheds light on the times: It electricity is proving itself a much more satisfactory method of supplying the wherewithal to see, than the old gasoline system and coal oil lamps, while the danger from fire is considerably lessened. Review, Oct. 23, 1913.

In July roomy stockyards were built beside the tracks at the east end of town, and in the period from 1912 to 1916 four⁸ large grain elevators were erected.

Plans by a group of Edmonton businessmen to invest \$24,000 in a flour mill to service the fine grain growing hinterland came to naught when they were unable to come to terms with the C.P.R. However, one of the districts more important needs was met, with the completion of the Kofoed Brothers' modern creamery in the summer of 1917. This up to date plant, complete with pasteurizer and mechanical refrigerator, had a butter output of over 1000 pounds daily. The local creamery at once assumed a position of prime importance for neighbouring farmers - and especially so for their wives. For them the sale of butter and eggs provided much of the cash to purchase necessary groceries, and in the lean years of the 1930's - still far in the future - the weekly creamery cheque was very often the only source of farm income.

However, these were still the years of optimism when men of the district hoped to make their fortunes by sharing the heritage of the land in which they lived. Share the country's heritage they would, but not in the way they had expected.

In the C.P.R. propaganda pamphlets publicizing the birth of Coronation, the town had been shown on maps as the potential

⁸ The Alberta Pacific elevator was built in 1912; the United Grain Growers and the North Star in 1915; and the Midland-Pacific in 1916. In 1927 the Alberta Wheat Pool elevator was constructed, making five. However, after the depression years of the 'Thirties, one, the North Star, was demolished.

hub of a mighty network of farreaching steel. There was much said and written about the strategic position of the "future city of the wheatlands." Railway lines would connect her with all the other great cities of the West. There would be through routes to Edmonton and Calgary, to Regina and Winnipeg, to Minneapolis and St. Paul. In those first few years Coronationites were extremely impatient to have these big plans begun.

In its survey of the town's potentialities the first edition of the local newspaper had, with hopeful expectancy, examined the future schemes of the railway company. It was noted that one-third of the last lap to Kerrobert⁹ was already graded, and it was forecast that within twelve months, through trains would cut off the Calgary-Lacombe triangle to Winnipeg, and Coronation "would come into its own," the commercial distributing point for Central Alberta.¹⁰ As usual, however, actual progress fell far short of conjecture. By May of 1913 the steel was still only one mile east of Monitor, and it was not until June, 1914, that the Coronation-Kerrobert line was completed.

Immediate results from this long-awaited achievement were disappointing. In November of 1913 a daily mixed train, comprised of freight, baggage, mail, and passengers had begun operating from Coronation east to Veteran and Consort. With the completion of the longer line, daily service was found impractical, and

⁹ Kerrobert, a Saskatchewan division point, was already connected by means of secondary lines to the larger centres of the east. For this and subsequent discussions of railway development, see the maps in the appendix, pp. xxvi & xxvii.

¹⁰ Review, Sept. 27, 1911.

people of the district had to be content with tri-weekly runs to the east as a promise of better things to come. Service to the west was better. Stopovers at Castor had been done away with so that Coronation had daily connections with Lacombe on the main Calgary-Edmonton line.

11

This was a period of tremendous railway expansion in Alberta, and at different times all three of the main companies - the Canadian Pacific, the Canadian Northern, and the Grand Trunk Pacific¹² - contemplated new lines into the wheatlands between the Battle and Red Deer Rivers. However, the connecting chains to Coronation never quite seemed to materialize. Certain sections were completed, but there remained several missing links which were never filled in.

In the summer of 1913 the C.P.R. and the C.N.R. became involved in a dispute over the right of way to an eighteen mile stretch in the Battle River valley, north of Coronation. In April, the C.P.R. had begun construction work north as the first step on a railway line to Sedgewick, while at the same time the C.N.R. was working south from Edmonton. The plans of the C.N.R. showed their proposed Camrose-Alsask line passing $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of Coronation, and the townspeople joined the C.P.R. in bucking this arrangement - fearing that it would injure the present townsite. They even went so far as

11 Figures in the Coronation Review for Jan. 30, 1913, show that in a three year period from 1909 to 1912 the total mileage of the province had risen from 1391 miles to 3020 miles. This latter figure was broken down as follows: C.P.R., 1470 miles; C.N.R., 912 miles; G.T.P., 638 miles.

12 The Canadian Northern, the Grand Trunk Pacific, and certain other lines were taken over by the dominion government in the period from 1918 to 1921, and became the Canadian National Railway Company.

to send a delegation, composed of Mayor Northwood, A.A.Towns, W.J.McNeil, and D.A.Thomson to Premier Sifton with the request that the C.N.R. either run their line into the town or keep it "a sufficient distance" away.

Meanwhile both companies went ahead with their building plans. By the spring of 1915 the C.P.R. had completed their line as far as the Battle River, and were busy putting a bridge across the river. Two new towns had sprung up along the route - Bulwark, 13 miles north of Coronation, and Lorraine, just south of the river - and service was soon expected to begin along the new spur line. Such service never materialized, however. The C.N.R.'s town of Alliance, a few miles north of the river, with connecting steel to Edmonton, became the valley's terminal, and within two years the town of Lorraine had all but died. Thus matters remained, and Coronationites instead of having two rival direct lines to the provincial capital were left with none. Just how such an impasse was reached, and why nothing was done about it, were questions not explained to the people who had staked their fortunes along the proposed routes and around the new townsites.

One other railway development of this period should be mentioned. The Municipal District of Coronation,¹³ made up of twelve full townships and parts of four others,¹⁴ was one of the

¹³ M.D.No.334 was originally called Whiteside after Frank Whiteside, early member of parliament, and one of the district's most prominent citizens. In November, 1916, its name was changed to Coronation.

¹⁴ See diagram in appendix, p.xxviii.

largest in the province. Those people living north of Coronation expected to be serviced by the railway lines then being built. Those living south were still awaiting developments. Then in March, 1915, these southern settlers heard the good news that the Bassano and Bow River Valley Railway Company had received permission from the government¹⁵ to construct a line from Bassano to Coronation. The route was to pass through Hanna, Fertility, and Lake Thelma, and the first lap from Bassano to the Red Deer River was to be completed that year. That was the last heard of the new line. Probably, as in the case of the larger companies, wartime restrictions caused the Bow River Company to forego its plans.

Surprisingly enough, during these years of disappointments in the field of railway expansion, optimism still ran high. Each new development brought hopes that at last the district's real future was about to begin. The editorials of the Review mirrored these ever-present hopes. As previously mentioned, the completion of the Lacombe-Kerrobert line had been heralded as the step necessary for Coronation to "come into its own."¹⁶ The beginning of the line north towards Edmonton was expected to lay "the foundations of the distributing centre which our town is surely destined to become."¹⁷ The proposal of the route between Bassano and Coronation was greeted thus. "A dream is coming true and the railroad connecting these two towns of promise on the prairie, opening up to the world's

15 This railway bill was successfully presented to the House by F.H. Whiteside, mentioned above as the man after whom the municipal district had originally been named.

16 Review, Sept. 27, 1911.

17 Ibid., Oct. 1, 1914.

markets tens of thousands of producing acres is to be built without delay." ¹⁸ And the news in March, 1917, that the C.P.R. had decided to double the capacity of the town's round house to hold twelve locomotives, was "...a step nearer a mark some farsighted gentlemen set for Coronation, when they pictured railroads running north, south, east, and west." ¹⁹ Dear dreams die hard.

Life, for Coronationites, had been rather hectic in those first few frantic months after the town's inception but with the passing of time things settled down to a saner routine. Fewer new faces were in evidence, and the ties between the older residents were becoming ever more closely knit. From the start they had worked together - now they were finding more time to play.

Dances continued to be a popular source of entertainment. These began early and lasted until a late hour, and always there was the 12:00 o'clock break so that dancers could fortify themselves with fried chicken, salads, jellies, pie, cakes, coffee, and the like. Once fed they were ready for more schottisches, polkas, reels, and good old-fashioned square dances. Not infrequently sleighloads of merry-makers journeyed to Veteran and other distant points to take in special affairs when there was a dearth of social life at home.

Card parties, too, provided many an evening of fun. Whist

¹⁸ Review, March 25, 1915.

¹⁹ Ibid., March 29, 1917.

drives and five-hundred sessions drew enthusiastic crowds, and in most homes, decks of cards were as much in evidence on the tables throughout the week as Bibles were on Sundays. Children learned the intricacies of Norwegian and Trump Whist almost as soon as they were able to hold the cards.

During this period, also, more and more people were becoming interested in sports of all kinds. Curling, begun in the winter of 1912-13, was to prove one of the town's most popular winter pasttimes. Even that first season the rink echoed to such names as Short, Clark, Thomas, Campbell, Bonsall, Mitchell, Northwood, Bernhardt, and Mayhew. These same names would be seen on many a tournament draw in the years to come. February, 1914, marked the first annual Coronation bonspiel - won that year by E.B.Neff's rink. Year after year, at bonspiel time, the rink was packed with enthusiastic curlers and excited onlookers. Behind the large glass windows they munched sandwiches, drank coffee, and "pulled" for their favourites competing on the three sheets of ice before them. Proud were the people of Coronation when, in February, 1917, G.A.Short's rink brought back the Visitor's Cup and Silver from the highly-touted Edmonton Bonspiel.

Vieing in popularity with curling during the winter months were skating and hockey. The skating rink, built in 1913, proved a favourite haunt for young and old alike. The cost of a family season's ticket was negligible in view of the hours of healthy fun it provided. Senior, junior, and juvenile hockey teams were formed, and enthusiasm ran high when a hockey league, made up of towns along the line, was organized in the fall of

20

1913.

In the summer months baseball bats replaced the curling rocks and hockey sticks, and from the first, Coronation turned out fine ballplayers. In May, 1913, the Beaver Baseball League, made up of Stettler, Botha, Gadsby, Halkirk, Castor, and Coronation was formed, and in that first season of play, ²¹ Coronation won the pennant. During the summer practically everyone played ball, and no picnic or sports-day was complete without its softball or baseball games.

Other sports as well had their followers. Goose and duck hunters had their own happy hunting ground right at home, for each fall these birds passed over in endless formations, and countless flocks used the neighbouring harvest fields as regular stop-overs. A local gun club was organized in 1913, ²² and for a number of years trapshooting was popular. Also in 1913 some proponents of lacrosse tried to introduce the game, but it was one of the few sports which, once attempted, failed to gain a foothold in the district.

Beginning in 1912 yearly fall fairs were put on by the Coronation Agricultural Society. These annual exhibitions were held at the Fair Grounds, one mile north of town, where

²⁰ The line up of Coronation's first hockey team was as follows: goal, W.J.McNeil; point, Morse; cover point, Watchorn; rover, G.A.Short; forwards, Cassleman, Hayward, and Thomas. Review, Jan.8, 1914.

²¹ On August 7, 1913, Coronation's entry in the Beaver Baseball League lined up as follows: C.Wallace,lb; F.Binggelia,2b; L.Otkin,3b; J.Lawson,ss; R.Kortgaard,rf; R.Gilbert,cf; E.Blecha,lf; P.Eden,p; and J.Waltham,c. Bob Kortgaard was the first of the family of ballplaying brothers who were to make such a name for themselves on local diamonds in the years to come. Review, Aug.7, 1913.

²² For the second time that year G.A.Short, in July, 1917,

roomy grounds were available, and a half-mile race track had been constructed. For most people of the district the fair was the big event of the season. Farmers and townspeople alike gathered to watch the judging of all manner of exhibits, ranging from cooking and handicrafts to prize grain and livestock. Competition was keen, and in those first years the entry lists were always large. Adding variety to the day were the novelty and foot races as well as the ever popular ball games and horse races.

Often, too, there was some special attraction billed. In 1914 everyone was disappointed when the much heralded flight of a real airplane had to be cancelled because of a strong wind. However, at the fall fair in 1918, some 2,500 people were thrilled with the daring of Lucielle Belmont, "the World's Champion Aeronaut," who jumped by parachute from a balloon 5,000 feet above the ground.

An annual event to which many Coronationites looked forward was the two day Ranchers' Round Up held in the Neutral Hills some 30 miles northeast of town. People came from all over the province to attend these colourful rodeo extravaganzas, which, besides the usual bucking and racing events, presented fast moving pageantry of the hard-hitting West. In 1917 over 5,000 spectators witnessed a running gun-fight between cowboys and Mexicans, and later, Billy the Kid's "bold dash for liberty." The following year 1200 cars, 500 teams, and 200 saddle horses brought some 7,000 people to see the spectacle of Chief Sitting

brought special laurels to Coronation by winning the Alberta Championship in the Doubles at the Edmonton Trapshoot.

Bull on the Warpath.

Growing in popularity as a place of entertainment for Coronationites was the Star Theatre where, for 10 and 15 cents, nightly moving pictures could be seen. A list of some of the contemporary attractions serves as an excellent mirror of the times. In May, 1913, the "Pendleton Round Up" drew a packed house, and was adjudged one of the best films yet seen. On May 13, 1914, Mary Pickford "the renowned Photo Play star" was seen in "The Bishop's Carriage," a four reel Famous Players production. Two years later "Tillie's Punctured Romance," starring Charlie Chaplin, was well received. The theatre also held an appreciative audience, whenever a traveling group of actors, vaudeville entertainers, or Chautauqua played the town. A particularly good year was 1916, for that season brought "Peg O' My Heart," "Charlie's Aunt," and "Uncle Tom's Cabin" to the Coronation stage.²⁴

In their enthusiasm for sport and recreation, Coronationites were not neglecting their devotional life. The town's first church services had been held in the Star Theatre, but in 1912 the construction of three churches, a Methodist, an Anglican, and a Presbyterian, was begun, and three years later²⁵ a Catholic church was erected. In the outlying districts the

23 Review, July 12, 1917 and July 4, 1918.

24 From the files of the Review

25 In 1915 the Methodist and Presbyterian congregations joined together to form the United Church, continuing to use the Methodist building. The Presbyterian structure was made over into a private home. No new church was built until 1943 when a Gospel Mission was erected. Meanwhile Jehovah Witness services were being held in a downtown building. In the fall

one room country school house served as place of worship, and the regular Sunday meetings fulfilled not only the religious, but the social needs as well, of many town and country folk.

Meanwhile another source of sociability, the fraternal order, had made its appearance. In 1912 the Free Masons were organized and remained active throughout the years. The Odd-fellows, after an auspicious beginning in 1913, were forced to disband two years later because of poor attendance. Years later the Elks, Foresters, and Legion were to make their appearance.²⁶

Times were changing in these early years of the Twentieth Century. New inventions of this, the Machine Age, were crowding out the old ways of life. Indicative of this change was the increased space taken up by the automobile advertising. In March, 1914, the Review noted that Bonsall's Garage had on exhibition the fine, new, 1914 model, McLaughlin-Buick complete with all the latest improvements. What these cars were capable of could be ascertained "by a perusal of the account of their

of 1937 the old Calgary Brewery warehouse was moved the eighteen miles to the Nosehills to be remodelled into a Lutheran church for the Scandinavian folk settled there. For statistics on the religious denominations of the town and municipality of Coronation for the census years, 1921, 1931, and 1941, see appendix, p. vi .

26 The Elks' Club was organized in 1927 and for many years took a very active part in the life of the community, organizing sports days, dances, and the like. The Elks built the local hall in 1927 and operated it until 1945 when it was taken over by the Coronation branch of the Canadian Legion. One other group, the Canadian Order of Foresters, was organized in 1948.

performance in the big desert road race from Los Angeles to Phoenix...." ²⁷ Fords, also, were in the limelight. In September, 1916, new local prices were released listing the Chassis model at \$450, the Runabout at \$475, and the Touring Car at \$495. ²⁸

Speed was becoming a vital factor. In August, 1913, J.E.Bonsall and D.Thomson made "a splendid run" back from Edmonton in a new car - covering the 200 miles in about 13 ²⁹ hours. To keep up with the times the town fathers passed a new by-law limiting the speed of automobiles in town to 15 miles per hour - 6 miles per hour on corners. Not all of the district's residents had taken to the horseless carriage, however. On August 7, 1913, a Review headline proclaimed that "Runaway teams are becoming a matter of almost daily occurrence on Coronation streets."

Even in the country the time honoured position of the horse was being questioned, for on the farms were appearing more and more steam-engines and tractors. The former were to prove too heavy and ponderous for field work, but the lighter and more practical gas-engines were eventually to drive the "Old Gray Mare" into retirement. The delivery, in June, 1917, of a Rumely Oil Pull Tractor to the Andrews brothers east of town, and the demonstration the same month of an \$890 light Ford tractor on the Kortgaard farm to the north, brought this comment

²⁷ Review, March 19, 1914.

²⁸ Ibid., Sept.7, 1916.

²⁹ In 1951 the same trip takes about four hours.

in the local newspaper. "That tractor farming has proved a success is quite evident and especially so in the Coronation District."³⁰ This was perhaps an overstatement since it was another twenty years before tractors were really regarded as necessities. However, even at that time interest in them was spreading rapidly.

In town during this period there was a growing feeling of apathy and disinterest regarding civil affairs. This was a far cry from the flamboyant enthusiasm of the first public election and the eager vitality of the early Board of Trade.³¹ In December, 1913, Mayor Northwood was returned by acclamation. The following year, in a listless election, all of the councilors also were returned without a fight. At the same time the annual meeting of the town for discussing municipal matters was poorly attended. The sorry state of affairs in 1914 brought a call for new "vim and vigor" from the local editor³² but with little effect. March, 1915, brought another cry for improvement - "Why Not A Booster Club?"³³

There seems to be a feeling among the live business men of our town that Coronation needs some kind of an organization that will look after the general progress of the town and surrounding country. The board of

30 Review, June, 21, 1917.

31 The Board of Trade's part in guiding the town's destiny in its earliest days has already been mentioned. It had been active along other lines as well. One of its ventures had been to send an exhibit of farm and garden products to the 1912 Dry Farming Congress at Lethbridge, with Mrs. A.A. Towns in charge. Booklets and pamphlets were distributed and for further advertising "Coronation - Wonder Town of the West" was displayed in prominent letters.

32 Review, Nov. 26, 1914.

33 Ibid., March 11, 1915.

trade which usually provides such duties has fallen upon evil times and it does not seem possible that it can be revived to an extent where it would become a real factor in the life of the community.

For the time being the Review seemed to be fighting a lost cause. An editorial of November 11, 1915, showed a definite note of bitterness. "The period of municipal - well, we were almost going to say strife but really municipal politics are invariably so peaceful in Coronation that it seems better to use the word nominations - is once again at hand."³⁴ Apparently somewhere along the line the enthusiastic exuberance of youth had begun to wane.

In the intervening years the uninhibited lustiness of the frontier town had begun to disappear, too. The bars were no longer as full of regular customers as they had been, and the four pool-halls had found it impossible to operate profitably. Fights, acts of violence, and other breaches of the peace³⁵ were becoming fewer in number. So law-abiding did the citizens appear, that the Town Council in April, 1915, passed a resolution to dispense with a Chief of Police after June 1. The plan was not altogether successful, however, and in the June 24 issue of the Review the editor, after commending the town fathers on their attempted economy, noted that there was still some law-breaking in evidence, and a town policeman was an

³⁴ In the December election that year, J.E. Bonsall became the second man to hold the office of mayor of Coronation.

³⁵ In Coronation, as well as in most towns of the Old West, scarlet women had played their part. A news item in March, 1913, noted the conviction of a keeper and two inmates of a disorderly house. Magistrate Bury fined the former \$100 and the latter \$25 each. Review, March 13, 1913.

obvious necessity.

Ranchers of the district were having their troubles, too. Because of continuous "mysterious losses" of cattle they found it necessary in May, 1918, to form the "Farmers' Protective Association." All members were given registered brands for their stock and these were published in local papers. The efforts of this group were most satisfactory. In less than three months it had become a financially and politically sound body, and within a short time, rustling in the area had all but disappeared.

The first few years after Coronation's inception saw little change in the harmonious relationship between town and country dwellers. Their fortunes were too closely tied up in the future of the district as a whole, and they had come too recently from the same stock for there to be much dissension at this time. The shopping centres and recreational facilities of the town provided the rural folk a much appreciated social outlet, while at the same time the prosperity of local businessmen was in large part dependent upon the amount of money the farmers had to spend.

One development that caused the merchants of the town considerable concern was the increased flow of business being sent to the nation's large mail-order companies. They felt that Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson were getting trade that should rightfully be kept in the district. Editorials in the town paper helped support this viewpoint. A headline in the Review for January 7, 1915, read, "Support Your Home Town Or It Can't Support You." This article went on to state that

they must "[k]eep the money at home so that it can buy groceries to-day and farm produce tomorrow." Five months later it was observed that, "Farmers in the progressive communities of the west are beginning to realize that their true interests are best served when they support their own country town."³⁶ Again in September appeared the headline, "Remember Your Local Merchant," and the question, "How much money do the mail order houses spend in the district for schools, roads and other improvements?"³⁷

There was much to be said for this line of reasoning, but there was another side to the question as well. Mail-order goods were often cheaper, and some people, not so well off as others, found it necessary to buy "sight unseen" in order to make their pennies stretch further. Then, too, it was obvious that a large department chain could carry a wider stock than could small local stores.

On larger national issues farmer and townsman alike fell in with western sentiment in opposing the "city-slicker" and big-businessman of the East. The dominion election of 1911³⁸ (held less than a week before Coronation's townsite sale) had seen one of the stormiest and most heavily beclouded campaigns

³⁶ Review, May 20, 1915.

³⁷ Ibid., Sept. 9, 1915.

³⁸ In the 1911 landslide, Borden and the Conservatives won a sweeping victory from Laurier's Liberals. Election results showed the Conservatives with 133 seats, the Liberals with 86, and Independents with 2. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1937, p.354.

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in Canada's history yet for Coronationites only one issue had been at stake - reciprocity - and that had been defeated.

They, as did most of their fellow Albertans, felt that agrarian interests had been sold down the river. More bitter than ever were they over their dependence upon eastern capital to provide them with elevator storage, railway transportation, and banking facilities. They were convinced that western toil and sweat were making eastern millionaires.

During the months leading up to August, 1914, few citizens of the New World - especially people of the West - were aware of the tense drama and frantic diplomatic manoeuvring taking place behind the scenes in Europe. One day they were carrying on their normal peacetime pursuits; the next they were engaged in a worldwide struggle for existence. Even then it was some time before the westerner realized just what all-out war would mean. At first it meant only a rapid rise in prices for his farm produce; the fighting was still far away. Then his sons began to go, and he and his wife were left to do the work of many. They could feel the old secure way of life breaking up around them. Next came the casualty lists of the maimed and wounded, the missing and the dead. With these the full horror

39 Isolated as they were from the rest of the country, and with different interests and occupations, citizens of the smaller communities of the West were either unaware or not interested in the diverse issues of the 1911 election. Free trade was more vital to them than the threat of American annexation, and questions of imperial loyalty and coastal defense seemed rather remote to people living some 1,000 miles from either sea.

40 After the 1911 election returns were in, two local merchants, E.R.Haney and Alex Bernhardt, defiantly displayed in their shop the sign, "Reciprocity Not Defeated In Our Store." Review, Sept. 27, 1911.

of war at last struck home.

Coronationites, in the summer of 1914, were brought face to face with the world situation by a large black-face headline in the July 30 issue of the Review: "War Threatens in Europe - Austria Declares War on Servia." A week later they read "War Rages Throughout The Continent of Europe," followed by the declaration,⁴¹"CANADA IS READY." In order to keep the local residents up to date with world news, the Review arranged to get daily bulletins from the Calgary News-Telegrams, and in the days before radio these weekly summaries were anxiously awaited.

The district's immediate response to Britain's need for aid was disappointing to many. Neighbouring towns quickly organized patriotic societies and started drives for funds while Coronation seemingly did nothing. An editorial of September 10, entitled "What is Coronation Doing?" circulated a call for action.

In all parts of Alberta the newspapers give evidence that the people of the province are very much alive to the need of aiding the British cause in every conceivable way. What is Coronation going to do to show that we owe something to the Mother country for the protection we have enjoyed all these years.

Coronation is one of the few towns in Alberta that has not started some movement calculated to show a spirit of patriotism and of thankfulness for the privilege of living under the protection of the Union Jack.

Later that month Mayor Northwood was sent to Calgary as a delegate to the re-organizing meeting of the Alberta branch of

⁴¹ Review, Aug. 6, 1914.

the Canadian Red Cross Society, and early in October he was instrumental in forming a local Red Cross branch in Coronation. For this purpose a patriotic mass meeting was held in the Star Theatre where plans were drawn up for the new society, and a slate of officers elected. F.H. Whiteside was chosen Honorary President while A.A. Towns was made acting president. The meeting closed with the hopes that their actions would help remove "the slur" of doing nothing "from the name of our town."⁴²

The newly formed Red Cross Society made good progress. Within two weeks it had raised over \$500, and by the middle of November the sum had reached \$1000. Meanwhile another form of contribution had begun in the district. On August 20 the first Coronationite left for the wars. He was W.H. McMurray of the construction department of the C.P.R. and a member of a Winnipeg Signal corps which had been selected for duty at the front. In November, four more home town boys - F.H. Glover, R.T. Beckinsale, N.G. Witherby, and M.J. McLean - were accepted for duty. These were the first of a growing stream of volunteers who made the journey to Red Deer to enlist.⁴³

In spite of the flow of voluntary enlistees into the large induction centres it was soon found necessary to send recruiting officers on tours of the province. Coronation, like all the

⁴² Review, Oct. 8, 1914.

⁴³ The country wide trend is vividly shown by the following two telegrams which were exchanged on May 7, 1916. From Brussels, Ont., to Robt. Forrest, Coronation: "Enlisted last night, come home once.- Charlie." From Coronation, Alta., to Charles Forrest, Brussels, Ont.: "Enlisted twenty-eighth February, cannot go home.- Bob." Review, May, 11, 1916.

other towns along the line, received periodic visits. One of the few notes of humour in these grim days was supplied by an item of news which appeared in the London, England, Daily Sketch. It was contributed by a "Mr. Gossip" and read as

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follows:

Coronation (Canada) is a small place but it is doing marvels in the way of recruiting. From an old friend settled out there I learn although only 1200 men were asked for, within a very short time over 5000 enthusiasts sent in their names. A large number of them are real cowboys and they are just dying to get square with those Germans.

By the spring of 1915 the departure of local boys to the front had begun to show effects at home. Farms were undermanned, schools were understaffed, and the streets showed a ^{scarcity} ~~disparity~~ of young men. These conditions were bad in themselves, but they became a thousandfold worse when the casualty lists began to appear. In May the town learned that Colour-Sergeant Hugh Creed of the Princess Patricia's had been wounded, and that December, Sergeant G.O. Hammond was listed as killed. Thenceforward the casualty figures rose rapidly. Coronation's Honour Roll on January 6, 1916, showed 67 enlistees, including 1 killed and 3 wounded. A year later there were 2 killed, 2 dead, 2 missing, and 16 wounded out of 141 enlistees. January, 1918, showed 14 killed, 4 dead, 3 missing, and 31 wounded from a total

44 In 1916 local enlistees formed a special platoon in the 151st Infantry Battalion. Later Coronation's platoon was transferred to the 187th. Bn.

45 This passage is quoted from the Review, Feb. 25, 1915. Who "Mr. Gossip" was or how this ridiculous statement made its way into print the author was unable to find out.

of 181 enlistments. And still the figures rose.

Then as suddenly as it began the war was over. Jubilantly Coronationites scanned Review headlines of November 7, 1918, which trumpeted:

HURRAH! HURRAH!

The War is Ended

A public holiday was declared, flags were unfurled, a spontaneous parade was organized, and wild celebrating continued far into the night. In the evening a monster bonfire was built near the water tower and a life sized, gunpowder filled, effigy of the Kaiser was strung up from the girders. Highlight of the proceedings came when His Worship the Mayor lit a match to the fuse.

Unbridled joy at the return of peace was for a time marred by the very serious epidemic of flu which swept the country in the fall of 1918. Nor did the Coronation area escape. By the first week in November 125 cases of influenza had been reported in the district. Of these, many developed pneumonia, and the number of fatalities rose steadily. Drastic quarantine regulations were issued, and Dr. Brookman and his health inspectors worked long hard hours in a hopeless effort to keep up with the needs, and still several weeks were to pass before the seriousness of the epidemic had eased.

The war years had brought suffering and hardships to

46 Throughout the war years the Review periodically listed the Honour Roll figures.

most. They also brought benefits to many. Farmers, especially, were much better off - materially at least - in 1918 than they had been in 1914. Up to 1913 Coronation had not had a really good crop, and this, together with low prices, had kept the homesteader in dire straits. He was quickly put on his feet, however, by the good years which followed. The bumper crop of 1913 was followed by a better than average yield in 1914, and by the end of that year the local market price for No.1 Northern Wheat had reached \$1.03 per bushel.⁴⁷

The year, 1915, saw a continued rise in prices⁴⁸ and another bumper crop. The local paper was full of accounts⁴⁹ of record stands of grain. Some fields were so heavy that it was almost impossible to cut them, and one farmer bragged that he had to use a neighbouring quarter to find room for his stooks. Some idea of the general prosperity of the district can be ascertained from the fact that one implement dealer, J.E.Bonsall, sold some 40 Deering binders in a matter of a few weeks.

Fairly good crops were harvested in 1916 and 1917, and by the end of the latter year the local price for No.1 wheat⁵⁰ had risen to a whopping \$2.01. The 1918 crop was definitely

⁴⁷ Review, Dec.24, 1914. On Jan.2, 1913, Coronation's market price for No.1 Northern Wheat had been only 57¢ and for first grade oats 16¢. Review, Jan.2,1913. See listing of Winnipeg wheat prices in appendix, pp.ii+iii.

⁴⁸ By February 4, the local price for wheat had reached \$1.35 per bushel. Review, Feb.4, 1915.

⁴⁹ Otto Kortgaard's wheat, which ran 41 bushels to the acre, was no exception.

⁵⁰ Review, Oct.25, 1917.

a lean one, but in the general enthusiasm of the times, this was easily overlooked as was the drought, and frost, and poor prices of those first hard years.

Thus it was that settlers of the Coronation district looked ahead to the 'Twenties with nothing but optimism. The war had ended in victory, and their sons were returning home. The good times which they had long expected were here at last. The hungry people of Europe would provide a bottomless market for years to come, and because of the great demand there would be for good Canadian wheat, prices would remain high. The bumper crops of the last few years showed that there was no finer land in the world for raising top quality wheat, and there were still a few uncultivated quarters to be had in the district. "Mushrooming" production and an increasing population would bring the long awaited railway expansion. Obviously a new era was about to begin, and in the next decade Coronation would really come into its own.

Chapter VI

THE TURBULENT 'TWENTIES

The enthusiastic optimism with which the inhabitants of the Coronation district entered the 1920's, was to be sorely tried time and time again during the next decade. The tenuous band of faith and hope, stretched to the breaking point yet somehow holding together, was to snap completely as the trying 'Twenties merged into the heartbreaking 'Thirties. It was only then that many began to doubt the proud destiny that had so long been promised their land.

The history of these years was a record of ups and downs. Though the crop year of 1918 had been almost a total loss, the next two years brought progressively better yields. Prices were at an all-time high,¹ with the result that farmers had unprecedented amounts of hard cash to spend. Instead of consolidating present holdings or putting the money away towards a less prosperous time, all too many sank their profits into more and more land. Real-estate prices were high, and finance companies seized the opportunity to saddle buyers with long term contracts based on the current inflation.

Wheat was responsible for the farmer's present prosperity. Wheat was sorely needed by hungry people throughout the world. Wheat could be cultivated economically in large acreages.

¹ The 1918 Winnipeg price for No.1 Northern was \$2.22; 1919 - \$2.21; and 1920 - \$2.63. Mackintosh, Economic Problems, App.A, p.283. See listing of Winnipeg wheat prices in appendix, pp.ii+iii.

More and more wheat was therefore the farmer's answer. Land previously uncultivated was torn up. New expanses of prairie sod were turned over, and everywhere, standing clumps of trees were cleared to make way for the long straight furrows.

Accompanying this wild expansion in wheat raising was a moderate slump in the production of coarse grains. In the ten years from 1921 to 1931 the wheat acreage in the Coronation district jumped from 41,728 acres to 73,208 - an increase of over 75 percent. During the same period the acreage of barley rose only 1,193 (1,289 to 2,482), while oats showed a decrease of 2,652 acres (24,117 to 21,465), and rye a decrease of 167 acres (565 to 398).²

This loss in coarse grain production meant less feed for livestock, while at the same time natural pasture land was fast disappearing under the plow.³ As a result the number of cattle in the district dropped from 10,428 in 1921 to 6,617⁴ ten years later, and with them went a less spectacular but more certain form of farm income.

The trend was quite apparent. Coronationites were doing the same as most westerners - tossing aside the security of mixed farming for the get-rich-quick stakes of single crop cultivation. By throwing all their eggs into one basket they were placing themselves completely at the mercy of providence

² From statistics enclosed in a letter to the author from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ottawa; dated June 28, 1949.

³ In the five years from 1921 to 1926 the area of natural pasture in the district fell from 112,418 to 80,865 acres. Ibid...

⁴ Ibid...

and the elements. Most of them gambled and lost.

For a time it looked as though wheat really was the golden elixir. The crops of 1921, 1922, and 1924 were poor, but those of 1923 and the four years, 1925 through 1928, were excellent. Especially favourable was the season of 1927 when crops averaging up to 50 bushels to the acre were fairly common.⁵ Far more grain was harvested than ever before, and though the mid-'Tenties brought a big drop in prices,⁶ times were good.

As had happened half a decade before, most of the profits were sunk into new machinery and more land - this in spite of the note of warning sounded by the mortgage and tax sales of the early 'Twenties. The government, too, did its part to make sure there was no potentially productive land lying idle. Publications were issued by the Department of the Interior giving particulars regarding unoccupied, privately owned farm lands for sale in the locality. Such details as area fit for cultivation, nature of soil, distance from railway, and price and terms of payment were given. A sale of school lands at Coronation in June, 1928, brought this ebullient comment in the Review.⁸

⁵ W.H.Bartells of the Brownfield district north of town took a 57 bushel per acre crop off of 90 acres of summerfallow. Review, Oct.20, 1927.

⁶ See table of prices in appendix, p. iv .

⁷ In the fall of 1920, thirteen separators were sold within a period of a few days, and all through the 'Twenties new binders, combines, and threshing machines found ready markets.

⁸ Review, June 28, 1928.

Hundreds of cars line the streets, the alleys, and every available parking space in Coronation to-day. Fords, Chevrolets, Chryslers, Hupmobiles and others, all from the year 1 to 1928 models, brought their loads of passengers from all parts of the country to attend the biggest sale of lands put on by the Department of the Interior this summer.

During the two day sale 300 quarter sections were auctioned off at an average price of \$12 per acre (highest was \$31.50⁹ and lowest \$7). In all \$500,000 worth of new land was sold. Half a million dollars was thus invested in land which, half a dozen years later, was practically worthless.

At the same time the western farmer was "going overboard" for wheat, occasional words of caution in the form of government pamphlets and newspaper editorials did try to point out the dangers of single crop cultivation, and government sponsored short courses on mixed farming were given throughout the area. At one such course at Coronation in 1923 the merits of diversified interests - beef and dairy cattle, hogs and poultry as well as grain - were expounded. Though the annual turnover from these products was considerable,¹⁰ it was hard to stand back and watch while one's neighbours reaped golden fortunes from wheat alone.

During the 1920's something new in farmer cooperatives

⁹ Review, July 5, 1928.

¹⁰ In 1925, for example, 117 carloads (2604 head) of cattle, 41 cars (3839 head) of hogs, and 27 cars (432 head) of horses were shipped, while cream, eggs, and poultry to the value of \$136,000 were delivered to the local creamery. From an article on Coronation in the Edmonton Journal, June 12, 1926.

appeared in the West. The years 1921 to 1924 had brought the farmer's fortunes to a very low ebb. Poor yields and dropping¹¹ prices combined with inflationary expenses in shipping and farm purchasing. Everywhere were cries for lower freight rates, more equitable marketing, and legislation geared to the rural producer rather than to the manufacturer or the pampered middleman. Thus were times ripe for the United Farmers of Alberta to sweep the countryside and gather in the reins of provincial government. Close behind the U.F.A. came the Wheat Pool, a non-profit organization originally designed to supervise grain sales and see that members received the¹² highest price possible for their wheat.

Coronationites were quick to join their neighbours in the trend toward cooperative action. They, too, were fed-up with high shipping rates and knockdown grading of their grain. In September, 1919 a Review editorial pointed out that the Canadian Wheat Board had set the Fort William price for No.1 Northern wheat as \$2.15, and yet Coronation farmers got only \$1.97. "Who got the other 18¢ per bushel?"¹³

More heated were the complaints of local producers that fall that their grain was being graded tough irrespective of quality. They even claimed that the managers of some of the

¹¹ The 1920 Winnipeg price for No.1 wheat was \$2.63; 1921 - \$1.65; 1922 - \$1.21; 1923 - \$1.10; and 1924 - \$1.07. Mackintosh, Economic Problems, App.A, p.283.

¹² For a concise, comprehensive discussion of farm movements in the 'Twenties, see chapter IV of Mackintosh, Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces.

¹³ Review, Sept. 18, 1919.

elevators had admitted receiving such instructions from their head offices. At this point Mayor Thomas sent the following telegram to the company head offices: "Why have you instructed your buyer here to grade all wheat tough. Please wire reply."¹⁴ The denials which followed did little to dispel the growing clouds of resentment and dissatisfaction.

So it was that when H.W.Wood, President of the U.F.A., arranged a meeting at the Star Theatre in Coronation on April 12, 1920, he spoke before a packed house. Already meetings had been held at Castor, Fleet, Federal, Lake Thelma, Bulwark, and other surrounding points, and the countryside was astir with enthusiasm at the thoughts of at last having a representative organization with some vestige of power. A local U.F.A. group was soon formed,¹⁵ and delegates were sent to attend a central convention in Edmonton, from whence they returned "endorsing the movement whole heartedly" and "thoroughly convinced that it was the greatest movement in the country today."¹⁶

Early in April of 1921 the Coronation local group held a U.F.A. convention to complete its organization as a political body. The entire constituency was well represented with approximately 200 accredited delegates in attendance. A constitution and platform were adopted, and H.Wilson of Federal

¹⁴ Review, Oct.30, 1919.

¹⁵ Officers chosen for 1921 included L.H.Woody, President; W.Merchant, Vice President; R.Merchant, Secretary-Treasurer; and F.Hennighan, A.Crower, E.Payne, E.Stokes, and G.Sweet as Directors. Ibid., Jan.13, 1921.

¹⁶ Ibid., Jan.27, 1921.

was elected as permanent chairman. A few weeks later George N. Johnston was chosen U.F.A. candidate for the Coronation constituency and in the provincial election held in July he won an easy victory.¹⁷

All eyes turned towards Edmonton as Herbert Greenfield formed his ministry, and pride and hope were in every farmer's heart for, at long last, here before him was a farmers' government - a government he was a real part of. As the years passed, however, and many of the looked for improvements failed to appear, his initial faith and confidence began to waver. Then, as usual with the coming of better times, he tended to overlook his government's efforts. With the arrival of the depression he found it easy to condemn.

Meanwhile the newly organized Wheat Pool was experiencing the same early success and popularity as had greeted the appearance of the parent U.F.A.. The president of the latter body had claimed that "a successful wheat pool would give more direct economic relief to the farmers than ten years' legisla-¹⁸tion," and the farmers were eager to attach their signatures. In August, 1923, the Coronation constituency was notified it was to have one of the first pools in operation in the province, and the local Board of Trade at once offered its assistance in the drive for membership. Black face headlines in the Review

¹⁷ In the Acadia Constituency, G.M. Johnson polled 3,736 votes to 960 for Dr. A.M. Day, his Liberal opponent. The standing of parties in the Alberta legislature on March 15, 1922, was U.F.A. - 39, Liberals - 13, Labour - 4, Independents - 2, and Conservatives - 1. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1923, pp. 521-522.

¹⁸ From an address by Mr. Wood at Vegreville on June 15, 1921. Review, June 16, 1921.

shouted, "Farmers, remember what you have to choose between:
A long term contract with your fellow growers or a life sentence
with the speculators."¹⁹

During the first three or four years the number of signed
up members mushroomed until, by the end of 1926, seventy
percent of all the wheat acreage in the three prairie provinces
was under pool contract.²⁰ In keeping with its new policy²¹ to
establish a far flung network of local storage bins, the Pool,
in the summer of 1927, put up a large 40,000 bushel elevator
in Coronation - the fifth that the prairie town's skyline
boasted. For a time things went very well. Then came the
depression and the glut of wheat on the world market. At once
the Wheat Pool was in serious trouble, and Coronationites
along with the rest of the West read appeals from its directors
calling for whole-hearted support, for it was hoped that this,
"the darkest hour in the pool's brief history would be
followed by the dawn of renewed prosperity and co-operative
stabilization."²²

The night was too long, however, and when a new day finally
dawned the Wheat Pool had ceased to exist in its original form.
No one could say that the Pool had failed completely. It had
had considerable success indeed in many of the operations it

¹⁹ Review, March 6, 1924.

²⁰ Mackintosh, Economic Problems, p.51.

²¹ While the Wheat Pool had at first been envisioned simply
as a farmers' selling agency, in order to gain a wider coverage
and greater control of the wheat it handled, it soon branched
out into the elevator business.

²² Review, August 21, 1930.

had undertaken, and when it faltered, it had as company practically every other business in the land.

There were one or two other cooperative ventures made by the people of the Coronation district in this period. In 1923 two groups, the Castor-Coronation Co-operative Livestock Shipping Association and the Coronation Poultry Shipping Association, began operating. While the latter was not particularly effective, the Livestock Association was a success from the start. Within three months it was doing 80 percent²³ of the district's livestock business, and through the years it continually strove to place on the central market the stock²⁴ of its members absolutely at cost.

As in previous decades the 'Twenties were filled with extravagant plans for expanding Coronation's transportation and communication networks, and, as usual, most of the projects failed to get beyond the pencil and paper stage. In keeping with the modern automobile age, however, a very creditable graded road was constructed in 1925, connecting Coronation with Lacombe and thence with Edmonton, Calgary, and points beyond. Later, with the addition of a good top of gravel, this route became a much travelled main highway.

During this period many districts had their "Auto Clubs" - groups formed to talk over mutual motoring problems and to aid in the building of better roads. For every dollar raised

²³ Review, June 28, 1923.

²⁴ In the year, 1931, even after the depression had got well started, the Association paid its members over \$160,000. In June of that year patronage dividends of 16¹/₂¢ per hundred pounds in cattle were paid out. Edmonton Journal, Oct. 29, 1932.

by such an organization the government would put up two; such money to be expended on road building and maintenance. In May, 1919, local car owners formed the Coronation District Automobile Club under the chairmanship of H.S. Northwood, but the news that the government had already made its road estimates and could offer no funds, quickly dampened the group's enthusiasm.

March of the following year brought the news that a representative of the Dominion Trail Association was to officially blaze a trail in and out of Coronation, thus placing the town on the automobile guide map of Alberta. By 1927 Coronation had a roomy Auto Camp with a stove and running water available for tourists. Two years later a shower was added to the other conveniences.

The opening years of the decade had revived the same old talk of converging railway spokes with Coronation at their hub. Rival companies vied with one another in the hopes of tapping the area's richest wheatlands. Spring of 1919 brought reports that the C.N.R. would soon start construction on the Alliance-Alsask branch line passing through or near Coronation; that the C.P.R. was contemplating a line south from Coronation to the projected Acme-Drumheller-Empress route; and that work on the Bassano-Coronation line, stopped by the war, would be continued as soon as practicable.

Developments were slow. The following March (1920) the C.P.R. announced that work on the Coronation-Empress line would start that summer if labour could be secured, and three years later, work on the C.N.R.'s Alliance-Alsask line seemed

25

imminent when its appropriation appeared before the Federal House. By this time , however, the depression of the early 'Twenties was running its course, and this together with right of way troubles brought all work to a standstill.

Six years were to pass before branch line activities again reached the spotlight. Then in March, 1929, Coronationites heard the news that C.N.R. and C.P.R. were to run jointly through the town. A compromise had finally been reached ending the right of way impasse which had crippled construction work through the Battle River Valley and regions to the south. The C.N.R. was to build on from Alliance to the river where they would meet the C.P.R. from Bulwark, and at the same time both companies would undertake the completion of the line south to Empress.

Once the stalemate had been settled, work went ahead rapidly. Within a month surveyors had begun staking out the route from Coronation south to Young^gstown. By the end of August,²⁶ 70 percent of the grading had been completed, and some eight miles of steel had been laid from the northern end. On June 12, 1930, the last spike was driven home, and the new branch was connected with the east-west, Alsask-Hanna line.

At last Coronation had a direct route to the province's capital city, and residents of the district sat back to enjoy the bountiful benefits they had so long been told would accrue.

25 The estimate for the Alliance-Alsask Branch was set at \$1,034,000. Review, June 21, 1923.

26 Local men with their own horses did much of the roadbed work.

Disappointment, and disillusionment came instead. The new route did not become a main line from Regina and Moose Jaw through to the Coast. The completion of the railway did not open up vast, rich, new areas. No regular service was started to Edmonton - in fact outside of a few trial runs no trains at all passed over the newly laid tracks. Weeds quickly grew up, and the shining steel was left to rust.

Various factors probably contributed to the unhappy end of the Youngstown line. The 'Thirties brought the drought and dust storms which turned the area southeast of Coronation into wind swept semi-desert. Grain production could not even support the old rail lines - much less the new. Then, too, both the C.P.R. and the C.N.R. already had their main through lines running smoothly, with accommodation and operating facilities geared accordingly. To affect a major change would entail far more expense than was practicable. Perhaps, also, the rival companies had not found joint running rights a particularly satisfactory arrangement. At any rate the elusive bubble of railway expansion had been punctured, and Coronationites could view the country's destiny with a saner eye than they had heretofore possessed.

At the same time that the Alliance-Coronation-Youngstown rail line was being completed, businessmen along the way were proposing the construction of an angling Empress to Edmonton highway alongside the newly built rail route. Coronation's Board of Trade heartily endorsed the suggestion, pointing out that such a road would cut 48 miles off the present distance to Edmonton. Figures were also advanced to show the mileage

savings for other towns along the way. The distance from Youngstown to Edmonton would be cut by 60 miles, and that from Empress by 70. Meetings were held, petitions were circulated, and delegations were sent, but still the proposals came to naught when, in August, 1930, the government advised that it could give "no immediate promise" regarding the angling highway.²⁷

The changing times of the 'Twenties brought forward several other construction schemes, some large and some small; many of which would be advanced again and again in the years to come. In the spring of 1919 the dominion government was toying with the idea of draining Sullivan Lake, a sprawling, shallow lake covering some 72 square miles to the southwest of Coronation.²⁸ Most residents of the area agreed that it was "probably the most worthless body of water in Western Canada,"²⁹ but few could see any concrete results that would be achieved except perhaps the straightening of a few road allowances. They felt that any land so reclaimed would be alkali or gumbo flats for years to come, and besides, one of the district's best stopping off spots for migrating ducks and geese would be lost.

Another proposal by the Department of the Interior some three years later seemed far more practical. This time, instead of draining away natural reservoirs, it was suggested

²⁷ Review, August 7, 1930.

²⁸ See map of area in appendix, p. xxvii.

²⁹ So described in a Review editorial of May 1, 1919.

that a monster canal be built across the prairies from Sullivan Lake to Saskatoon for the purpose of storing huge quantities of water for irrigation purposes. To obtain the enormous amounts of water necessary, engineers would raise the level of the Red Deer River some 150 feet and that of Sullivan Lake some 20 feet. A survey of the main canal was actually carried out, but that was as far as the work went at that time. The idea was not dropped entirely, however, and to many far seeing men, it seemed evident that some sort of irrigation scheme was the only possible way that the vast production potential of the country's fine soil would ever be realized. Then, and only then, would the losing gamble with the elements be won.

Towards the end of 1929 another investigation was being carried out. That winter an American company conducted an oil survey of the Battle River area from Coronation to Hardisty. Though conditions were promising, no important finds were made, and two decades were to pass before the search for oil in the district again began in earnest.

During the 'Twenties Coronationites for the first time met at close range several of the products of the new, fast moving, easy living age of scientific luxury. Among these were the radio, the talkie, and of course the airplane.

On May 13, 1922, residents of Coronation heard their first radio concert. The programme originated from the Edmonton Journal's new broadcasting station - the first in Alberta. - and was picked up by a receiver set up in the Star Theatre. The Review noted that, "The transmission on Saturday was very good

in regard to the orchestral selection, but the messages and other spoken items were somewhat indistinct due to adverse influences." However the Edmonton Sunday concert and sermon received the following day was "much more distinct, every word being clearly heard by the audience." The editorial ended with the assertion that "The radio has a much larger field than we realize as yet and will affect social and business conditions beyond our ken."³⁰

Interest in the new medium of entertainment spread rapidly. By January of the following year Coronationites were "listening in" on more than twenty privately owned radios. Most of these were homemade, one tube affairs - the factory made sets still retailing at appallingly high prices. It wasn't long, however, until the twin-dialled Stromberg Carlson with its black horn-like amplifier became a familiar sight in many homes.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, moving pictures had quickly become a favourite pasttime in the district, and a review of the Star Theatre's top billings over the years evokes nostalgic memories. The year, 1919, showed Douglas Fairbanks in "The Man from Painted Post," and Mary Pickford in "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm;" 1923 brought Rudolph Valentino in "The Four Horsemen;" and 1927, Douglas Fairbanks again in "The Thief of Bagdad." The year, 1928, was one of the most memorable of all. John Barrymore in "When a Man Lives," Clara Bow in "It," Rin Tin Tin in "Rinty of the Desert," and the rousing "Ben Hur" were among the main attractions. Also that year appeared "Wings" - one of the greatest air epics ever

³⁰ Review, May 18, 1922.

filmed. It was in this picture that Coronationites heard their first sound effects ("Don't Miss the Whir of Wings"), and the way was pointed to full length talkies. "Rio Rita," shown two years later, brought still another innovation, for in this film many of the scenes were shown in technicolour.

Coronation had had its first visit from a "real flying machine" in June, 1920, when two Hanna fliers landed their Curtiss aeroplane east of the school and commenced taking up passengers. As early as 1928 a Review editorial noted that all that was required for an airport was a fairly smooth piece of ground 400 by 400 yards, that in the very near future every town would have one, and that Coronation could and should be among the first.³¹ The idea was slow to take hold, however, and barnstorming pilots continued to use as their landing strips conveniently situated stubble fields near the fairgrounds and town.

Sports of all kinds were extremely popular in the years that followed World War I. To the old stand-bys were added tennis and golf. The latter game was first played in the fall of 1919 when a few enthusiasts³² laid out a course of six holes on C.P.R. land directly north of town; tomato cans taking the place of regulation cups.³³ Very few of the first members had

³¹ Review, Nov.1, 1928.

³² Among those early devotees to the game were such men as F.Dillon, H.B.Doughty, H.S.Northwood, J.E.Bonsall, R.Ellis, and the Short brothers.

³³ Certain rules had to be adopted to meet local conditions. For instance it was stipulated that, "A ball lying in a gopher hole may be lifted and dropped without penalty. A ball played into a gopher hole must be recovered or treated as a lost ball." From a list of rules published in the Review, April 28, 1921.

ever played before, but the golfing germ spread rapidly and the club's enrollment quickly grew. The following year three more holes were added, and then in 1922 the whole lay out was revised and improved. Some four hundred yards were added, sand greens were constructed, and a small building was erected to house equipment. Best of all, the facilities were made available at a very low fee - just enough to pay for the upkeep.

Meanwhile curling, baseball, and hockey continued to draw enthusiastic support year after year. The annual curling bonspiel had grown steadily until in 1921, when \$800 in prizes were given, it was adjudged the third largest in the province.³⁴ Baseball reached the height of its popularity in 1924 and 1925 when the local team carried all before it in both tournament³⁵ and league play.

Coronationites were also very proud of their home town band during this period. It had been organized in March, 1919, as an outlet for youthful energy. Expenses were paid by private and public donations, and tuition was free to anyone who wanted to join. Membership soon reached half a hundred, and by playing at regular Saturday night concerts as well as on holidays and special occasions, the group in time attained

34 That year Frank Mitchell's rink took top honours.

35 At a tournament in August, 1925, Coronation took first prize money from such formidable opponents as Sedgewick, Alliance, Lakesend, Castor, and Youngstown. Players such as Baker, Ryan, Seth Wallac, Jack and Joe Martin, and Jack, Hank Tommy, Andy, and Pete Kortgaard were outstanding competitors.

quite a high degree of proficiency. The band's big day came in July, 1928, when it took part in activities at the colourful Edmonton Exhibition.

Horse racing was another top attraction at the fairs and sports days. In July, 1927, a local Horse Racing Association was formed with such men as E.R.Haney, E.J.Gibson, G.Fair, J.Marsh, and J.Rovenski as ardent supporters. One of their most successful race meets was held on June 21 of the following year when 21 well matched horses vied for honours. Harness racing was also popular during this period, and in 1929, there was even an attempt at Roman racing - prompted no doubt by the "Ben Hur" film of the previous year.

Through the years the fall fair had slowly lost ground until in 1923 it was stopped altogether. It depended, for success, on wholehearted support from all members of the community, especially rural, and yet the fall was the busiest time of the year for farmers; a season when they could ill afford to prepare and send exhibits, or even take time out from their harvesting to attend. As the fair dwindled in importance, so the annual sports day became the top attraction of the year, especially after 1923 when it was decided to hold the celebration on Dominion Day. The weather on July 1 could almost always be counted on to turn out fair and warm, and the date was a perfect one for rural folk, falling as it did between spring work and haying. As a result, each year the sports day broke new records. In 1924, 2000 people attended in some 500 automobiles, and paid \$1000 in gate receipts. In 1926, 2500 people came, and in 1928 and 1929 over 3000 were in

attendance.

Meanwhile the Neutral Hills Stampede, after one wild final fling in 1919, dropped out of the picture as the top annual attraction of the area. In June of that year, 150 of the stampede riders were invited to parade through the streets of Edmonton with the mayor of that city riding in the lead. The cowboys, having obtained permission to fire their six-shooters in the air, were in their element, and even staged a mock bank holdup, with one desperado riding his horse right into the bank and onto the marble floor. These antics in the capital city proved fine advance publicity for the stampede two weeks later, for 15,000 people flocked to the Round Up that year. The passing of the Neutral Hills Stampede served further notice that the rough, exuberant, pioneering period was more and more a thing of the past.

Though local trade was relatively good in the post war years, few new business establishments appeared. Those active in the mid-'Twenties were listed as follows: three general stores, three hardware stores, two butcher shops, one grocery store, one clothing store, one drug store, one jewelry store, one bakery, one large hotel, two rooming houses, three restaurants, two barber shops, one pool room, three implement dealers, three lumber yards, two garages, two blacksmith shops, one tinshop, one harness shop, one shoe repair shop, four elevators, one creamery, two banks, three real estate offices, one law office, two doctors' offices, one dentist's office, one

photograph studio, one theatre, and one newspaper office.

Actually the total was slightly less than it had been six weeks after the town's inception, but of course, much of that first expansion had been false growth. For example, the district could not possibly support the six real estate offices and four pool halls which were included in the original list.

New public projects were fewer during this period, too. In 1919 work was started on a town office and fire hall on the municipal site near the water tower, and ten years later a fine brick municipal office was constructed across from the telephone exchange. For several years many residents of outlying homes had been calling for an extension of the waterworks system so that they would be relieved of the necessity of buying their water from the outmoded water-wagon. The time seemed ripe in 1929, for in that year the last of the hospital debentures were paid off, and the previous year had seen the sale of the electric light plant. Accordingly the necessary

36 Compiled from lists appearing in the Review, Feb. 14, 1924, and the Edmonton Journal, June 12, 1926. The town's surviving livery barns were not listed; however spectacular fires had taken their toll of these from time to time through the years. A small mill had been built in the spring of 1924 but it, too, had been destroyed by fire two years later.

37 In 1922 water from the water-wagon cost 3 ¢ per bucket. Citizens had to buy their tickets from the waterman in advance, and a card of 12 tickets sold for 40¢. Review, Nov. 16, 1922.

38 The light and power debentures were taken off the town's hands in 1928 when a by-law was passed turning over the power rights and facilities to Canadian Utilities Limited. This company had offered \$15,000 for the local power system plus a ten year franchise. Once the bid was accepted, power and light were supplied over a line from Drumheller.

39

by-law was drawn up and put before the public in July. It was carried by a large majority - 58 for and 10 against - and work on the project was begun immediately.

Though the hospital debt had been cleared up on schedule, the institution itself had at times failed to pay its running expenses. The lean years of the early 'Twenties had forced the hospital to operate temporarily on a cash basis. During the two year period from May 1, 1920, to April 30, 1922, unpaid accounts amounted to \$6,199.45, more than one-third of the total receipts.⁴⁰ Any deficit had to be met largely by the town, although private donators and organized bodies such as the Ladies Aid, Women's Institute, Hospital Aid, and Sunshine Club helped considerably. Towards the end of the decade, badly overcrowded facilities and the great preponderance of rural patients brought up the possibility of a municipal hospital district being formed in the area. There was much talk on the subject in the months that followed, but no definite action was taken until many years later.

The growing apathy and general disinterest towards public affairs which Coronationites had shown with the passing years continued almost undisturbed through the 'Twenties. Occasionally a leading article or pointed editorial in the Review stirred up some interest, but after a short time enthusiasm again faded. In May, 1920, a Civic Improvement League was formed with its

39 By-Law No.140 called for the raising of \$37,000 to extend the waterworks system and purchase the necessary materials. Debentures at 6% over a 20 year period were provided for.

40 Further figures for the above period show that of the 573 patients, 82 were from the town of Coronation and 491 from the surrounding district; or 14.3% from the town and 85.7% from the country. Review, May18, 1922.

first objective the construction of a boulevard on the south end of Royal Street. A year later it was noted that the condition of the treeless streets and avenues was "exactly the same as it was ten year ago." Sporadic campaigns for a memorial park and a public swimming pool suffered the same fate.

August, 1922, brought another editorial calling for a
⁴¹
 local Board of Trade. It proclaimed in part:

The country town is the result of the agricultural development of the surrounding country; the interest of the store and the farm are one. What have our retail merchants done, let us say during the four years since the end of the war, to induce settlement, initiate industries, and speed up the wheels of progress? The answer is "practically nothing."

A Board of Trade, efficiently officered, is the only means by which we can lift ourselves out of the rut we've been in for several years....

Goaded into action the town's businessmen met within a week and formed a local Board of Trade with Mayor Thomson acting as temporary chairman and T.N.Cuthbert as Secretary. For a time the group did good work in organizing, publicizing, and leading public affairs. Early in February, 1923, the Board met with ratepayers in a joint rally and succeeded in arousing considerable interest and enthusiasm over the forthcoming elections. As a result nine candidates were nominated for the three vacant council seats, and electors, for the first time in several years, exercised their right to vote. Public interest was difficult to sustain, however, and soon the old lethargic unconcern returned.

41 Review, Aug. 10, 1922.

As the 'Twenties merged into the 'Thirties the sudden breakdown of markets, prices, and finances the world over, brought the threat of depression to the land. Though times were as yet fairly good the general outlook was quite different from that which had prevailed in the district ten years before. There was still hope and optimism in most men's hearts, but the ups and downs of the past decade had shattered the unbridled faith, which so many had held, in the glorious destiny predicted for their land.

There had been so many bad years they could no longer be regarded as exceptions; and in addition to drought, gophers and grasshoppers were becoming a real menace to the farmer. The Wheat Pool had not been able to guarantee high prices and a steady market; nor had the farmers' government been able to smooth out all the bumps. The fact that further railway expansion had been proved impractical seemed to destroy any possibility that the town might someday become a great prairie distributing centre. Falling prices were swelling the already ruinous debts and mortgages into impossible figures. And yet, with all his multiplying troubles, the farmer, ever the gambler and the optimist, turned his eyes to the horizon and murmured, "Next year!"

Chapter VII

THE HUNGRY 'THIRTIES

No period in the history of western agriculture has been so disastrous for the producer as that of "the hungry 'Thirties." Drought and depression combined to threaten the very existence of farmers throughout the stricken area. For almost a decade families fought to keep food on their tables and a roof over their heads. And on the border of some of the hardest hit territory lay the town of Coronation.

Much of the story is shown in the district's crop averages for the ten years from 1929 to 1938. The average yields per¹ acre were as follows:

1929 - 4.9	1934 - 11.5
1930 - 20.2	1935 - 8.7
1931 - 16.1	1936 - 4.8
1932 - 16.5	1937 - 2.7
1933 - 9.0	1938 - 15.3

Making matters worse was the fact that grain prices seemed to vary conversely according to the yield.² In 1930 the local price of wheat plummeted from above \$1.00 in January to 32¢ in

¹ Acreage and Production of Principal Grain Crops by Census Divisions, 1921-1947 Inclusive, Alberta Department of Agriculture, Sept., 1948. Coronation is included in Crop Census Division No. 7, "a Moderate Drought Area," which stretches from beyond Sedgewick in the northwest to Consort and the border in the southeast. The average yield for the ten year period was only 10.97 bushels per acre - some 4 bushels less than the Alberta average as a whole. A complete list of the division's average yields from 1921 on, is given in the appendix, p. iv.

² The stock market crash, increased production abroad, and newly erected tariff barriers left Canadian bins bulging and burst the bottom out of prices.

the month of December. For two years the downward trend continued until in December, 1932, the abysmal figure of 22¢ was reached. Then, at a time when the worst crop years were yet to come, prices slowly began to rise, until, in 1936, "dollar wheat" was again an actuality. By that time it didn't really matter to Coronationites, for from two and four bushel crops they found little left to market.

While prices on their own produce were shrinking to nothingness, farmers discovered that the commodities which they had to buy remained high. Those who had kept a goodly number of milk cows and chickens now found the weekly creamery cheque - small as it was - a god-send in providing a little ready cash with which to purchase such staples as flour, sugar, tea, and coffee, as well as emergency items like medicine. Those, however, who had depended solely on wheat found themselves with no income at all.

With not even enough money to secure the necessities of life farmers could not hope to pay their taxes or keep up their mortgage payments - mortgages that had been drawn up in times of plenty when prices were inflated. Although defaulters were usually carried for a time, it wasn't long until many faced the necessity of giving up their lands, and when this represented one's home and labour over a period of years it was a terrible blow indeed. Others, by letting some of their outlying quarters

3 Dairy prices followed the trend of other agricultural produce. Cream and egg prices at Coronation in September, 1934, were 15¢ and 14¢ respectively, as compared to 35¢ and 28¢ in August, 1929, and 57¢ and 58¢ in November, 1950.

go, were able to consolidate their holdings and so keep the home-place.

Machinery prices remained high, but even had they been cut in half, few could have afforded new equipment. During the years that followed, farmers had to make do the best way they were able, and harness, hay racks, binders, and the like saw regular service long after they should have been junked.

Falling into disrepair along with machinery were the farm buildings. The scorching sun and high winds of July and August caused paint to crack and peel, and endless days of unbearable heat left houses, once weath^{er}proof, full of cracks and open to the fury of the frequent dust storms.

Every year it was the same. The spring thaw and rains in May and early June would bring the promise of a real crop. Then would come the dry spell, and for weeks on end, sun and wind would wreak their havoc on young and tender plants. Showers always seemed to just miss materializing, and general rains were a thing of the past. Almost every evening a dark and menacing cloud bank would pile up on the western horizon only to bring disillusionment as the setting sun shone through.

Worst of all were the terrible "black blizzards" - dust storms which tore up and scattered the precious loam, leaving seed and seedlings naked and withering on the ground. Approaching with almost cyclonic speed these storms swept across the land, blotting out the afternoon sun so completely that lamps and lanterns had oftentimes to be lit. Behind them they left dust and grit over everything. Under doors, through

cracks and window sashes the dirt sifted, and in even the best built houses, designs could be drawn in the dust layers that covered walls and furnishings.

This soil drifting was a natural result of prairie weather and prairie farming techniques. In the all out drive for wheat, large field cultivation was practised in order to permit the use of full scale ploughing, seeding, and harvesting methods. This was the quick and easy way, as well as the most short sighted, for when these same large fields were in summer-fallow it meant vast unbroken expanses of finely disced and harrowed soil lay open to the fury of high winds. And gone was nature's preventative for soil drifting - the root fibers of tough prairie sod.

The results of wind erosion were particularly disastrous southeast of Coronation where the soil was light and sandy. Here the drifting was so bad that ditches were filled, fence posts were buried, and rolling sand dunes turned the countryside into a veritable desert.

With conditions growing worse every year and with no prospects of better times to come, more and more families pulled up stakes and set out to look for greener fields elsewhere. Some, with government help, used box cars; others piled all of their belongings onto wagon and hay rack, and, with their livestock tied on behind, started overland. Many headed north into the Cold Lake region where homesteads were still available, and where drought had not yet penetrated. Here, however, they faced once more the hardships of the

frontier, and for the older ones in particular, this meant giving up the comforts and conveniences they had struggled so hard to obtain.

Meanwhile the actual town of Coronation, closely dependent upon the surrounding countryside for its prosperity, was suffering the same pangs of depression. Stores were forced to close because there was not enough business to go around. Taxes went unpaid, and for the first time in twenty years the town fathers had budget problems. Construction work came to a standstill, and instead of expansion, recession now set in, with many business establishments and homes gaping vacantly to the weather - their owners gone. Many of those who remained, with no money coming in and no work to turn to, required special help and attention, and so it was that relief measures became of vital importance in the period that followed, both to townsman and country dweller alike.

All three governments - federal, provincial, and municipal - joined together in providing relief assistance, but it was the municipality which bore the heaviest responsibility. Relief was both direct and indirect, with the latter taking such forms as the providing of inexpensive seed and feed, government purchasing of worthless stock, the opportunity to work off taxes on road projects, and later, wheat pegging, drought bonuses, and help under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act or P.F.R.A. as it was called. Direct relief, on the other hand, had to do with material aid - food, clothing, fuel, and shelter, in cash or in kind.

Application for relief was made to the local council whereupon recommendations were passed which endeavoured to provide for the special wants of each needy individual. The following are typical examples taken from the minutes of Coronation Municipal District Council meetings for the year 1936.⁴

Moved by Councillor _____ that a Monthly Relief Allowance of \$12.00 plus necessary fuel and clothing favor of _____ be recommended.

Moved by Councillor _____ that a Monthly Relief Allowance of \$7.50 plus 7 tons of coal favor of _____ be recommended.

That such aid provided no more than a bare subsistence is shown by the following breakdown of figures noted by the Coronation Council on April 9, 1934. At that time there were 37 people on relief spending \$106.00 per month on food, and allowing three meals a day, each meal for each person averaged only about three cents in cost.⁵ This of course does not take into account garden produce which was the main food supply during the summer months, but, even at that, there was no place on the table for anything but the barest of necessities.

Month by month the number receiving direct assistance rose. By April, 1935, there were 75 people on relief in town - 32 adults and 43 children, and three years later the

⁴ In 1944 Coronation M.D.No.334 was amalgamated with other neighbouring municipalities to form the large municipal district of Paintearth (M.D.No.53). See map in appendix, p.xxviii. The municipal office is now at Castor, and very few of the earlier records seem to be on file. Some minutes of council meetings from 1934 on were available, and from these a certain amount of information of the depression years was obtained.

⁵ From files on record in the Town Office in Coronation.

municipality listed 135. Thus it was that through the 'Thirties both town and country alike had to budget for the new and heavy expense item - relief, and with a drastically reduced income to draw from, this meant rigid retrenchment and close to the belt economy.

Coronationites would remember the decade of the 'Thirties as the longest and the leanest they had ever put in. The end of each successive bad season brought the fervent hope that they had at last reached the bottom, and that the way ahead lead up, but week after week, month after month, and year after year conditions grew worse instead of better, until even the most optimistic hearts were filled with despair. The disillusionment and shattered hopes of these grim years can best be shown by a rapid survey of the path of depression.

As early as 1930 there were some signs of the rough road that lay ahead. By far the most obvious was the disastrous plunge which the price of wheat had taken that year. Already the dominion and provincial governments were talking of plans for mutual emergency relief works, and in Coronation it was noted that the Soldier Settlement Board was finding it difficult to get rid of unoccupied land.

In January of 1931 the C.P.R. let it be known that service on the Coronation-Kerrobert line might have to be reduced because receipts had been "very light for the past season,"⁶ and it had been continued at a loss. Accordingly, in March, trains started making the run every second day. So many complaints

⁶ Review, Jan. 8, 1931.

were voiced along the line, however, that the Board of Railway Commissioners in Ottawa announced that daily service would be reinstituted at once. This was only a reprieve. With the continuation of hard times, first one train and then two were dropped, with the result that the line which had once been predicted as a vital strand in Canada's network of steel now was left with two mixed trains a week making the return run.

The year, 1931, also saw the end of the hometown band - an organization that had proven so popular, and had been so much a part of the life and spirit of the 'Twenties. The break-up was necessitated by lack of funds. The Board of Trade was in dire straits,⁷ and the Town Council felt that "under present conditions it was decidedly unfair to ask taxpayer to share the burden of musical education for a few."⁸

In April of that year a Review headline proclaimed that "Purchasers of School Lands May Petition Government."⁹ These were the farmers who had purchased lands at the large auction sales held at Camrose, Stettler, and Coronation a few years before (cf. previous chapter), and now they were requesting the provincial government to waive interest or make some concessions in view of the impossibility of meeting payments. Nor were they the only land holders being buried under ruinous debts, for notices of mortgage and tax recovery sales were

⁷ Many of the local merchants in the first months of the depression had given credit to town and rural friends only to find, when the hard times continued, that many customers had no way of paying back their debts.

⁸ Review, Feb. 5, 1931.

⁹ Ibid., April 9, 1931.

mounting steadily.

September brought word that work on the Coronation-Castor highway, (part of provincial Highway Number 12), due to commence that fall, would use 60 percent local labour - a welcome relief measure for many neighbouring farmers. The new highway was to follow the railway line directly in from the west and would cut off the big angle north of town. The Board of Trade, hoping for an influx of business, fought a losing battle to have the highway pass along Victoria Avenue. Instead, the main route was laid half a mile south of town. The gravelling did not keep up with the grading, and it was 1934 before the road from Coronation to Lacombe could be considered an all weather highway.

Early in 1932 it was announced that automobile licenses for that year would cost \$5.00 more than heretofore. This proved the final straw for many car owners who had been finding it increasingly difficult to pay the expense of keeping their vehicles on the road. Farmers, who in recent years had been enjoying the comforts and conveniences of modern transportation, found it necessary to put their car on blocks and to turn once again to the horse, the buggy, and the democrat. On the road, also, appeared innumerable rubber tired, horse drawn

10 See map of town in appendix, p.xxix.

11 Earlier in the year a group, including G.N.Johnston, local M.L.A., and Mayor J.E.Bonsall had made the trip to Edmonton to petition the Minister of Public Works to finish grading and gravelling the road east from Stettler. They were told, however, that all provincial funds had already been allocated.

vehicles - the depression "bennett-buggy."

In keeping with the overall policy of retrenchment, the Municipal District of Coronation, in April, decided to decrease the reeve's allowance to \$5.00, and that of each councillor to \$4.00 per meeting. At the same time the rates for municipal workmen were cut as well. A labourer was now to receive 25¢ an hour, a foreman 40¢, a man with a two horse team 45¢, and a man with four horses 65¢. Farm help, too, was drawing greatly reduced pay. General farm labourers received around \$20.00 a month (with board); stookers were paid \$1.50; and threshers \$2.00 per day.¹²

The problems of local districts were further complicated by the large number of out of work drifters following the roads and rails. A Review article of September 1, entitled "Don't Feed Transients," read in part: "Some transients are demanding \$2.00 for stooking, in spite of the fact that the farmer has little chance for making a profit on his grain, and also of the fact that these very same men will be expecting relief during the coming winter."¹³

In March of 1933 Coronation's Town Council, in an attempt to increase the source of its funds, followed the lead of many other towns and made arrangements for a business tax. Up

¹² In contrast to the above prices, farm workers in 1928 had been paid approximately as follows: general farm labourer, \$45.00 per month; stoker \$4.50 per day; and thresher, \$5.00 per day. By 1950, fifteen years after the depression lows, prices had climbed again to even higher levels. Figures for that year showed general farm labourers receiving about \$90.00 a month; stokers, \$10 a day; and threshers, \$11 per day.

¹³ Review, Sept. 1, 1932.

to that time residential property had borne an equal share of the cost with revenue producing property, and it was now felt that the latter should carry an additional proportion of the burden. Meanwhile, each year, more and more municipal taxes remained uncollected. In 1929 the figure was \$3,679.32. Two years later it had reached \$15,045.22. In 1933 it was \$23,559.71;¹⁴ in 1935, \$36,927.18; and by 1937 it had risen to \$50,971.79. Thus at a time of greatly increased responsibility the town's sources of revenue were drying up.

A Board of Trade meeting in February, 1934, gloomily noted that there were now seven families on relief as compared to none the year before; that the town's indebtedness at the bank was \$1,000 greater than it had been the previous year; that taxes from ratepayers were dropping, and that citizens were gradually losing their homes. They further noted that though these homes went to the town, they were no longer even theoretically revenue producing, and the load was subsequently heavier on those who continued to pay.

As the number requiring direct relief assistance rapidly grew, it became increasingly evident that local municipalities would require very substantial governmental assistance if they were to carry on. So it was that Coronation councillors breathed more easily when, in September, 1934, they were notified that their municipal district was to receive \$12,600 from the government - the grant to be used solely for the purpose of relieving distress among the needy.

¹⁴ From records on file in the Town Office at Coronation.

Towards the end of 1935 steadier grain prices and a better feed situation brought hopes that the worst was over. In October the Review remarked that "One can notice a more optimistic feeling these days about town, among farmers and business men alike. There seems to be a definite swing set in¹⁵ toward less arduous times." In keeping with the new tone a few business establishments began to carry out long needed renovations, and a guest editorial in the Review queried, "Have¹⁶ We Forsaken Our Homes?" At long last a new park site, to be called Jubilee Park, was being prepared for tree planting, and a new skating rink was rapidly approaching completion. Spring indications predicted a "bumper" crop, and plans were underway for a rousing celebration of the town's 25th Anniversary that fall.

Then came the hottest and driest summer yet on record. For over 35 days through June and July - the most important period of the growing season - there was not a drop of rain. Crops were scorched and seared beyond repair. Many farmers put "poverty boxes" in place of twine and bundle carriers on their binders in order to collect what feed they could. Some used mowers and rakes to cut the stunted grain and weeds. Still others turned stock into their fields or simply ploughed them under.

Gone were the farmers' hopes for a paying crop and a start towards recovery. Gone were the merchants' hopes for a revival

¹⁵ Review, Oct. 3, 1935.

¹⁶ Ibid., April 9, 1936.

of trade. And gone were the council fathers' chances for a substantial collection of taxes - past and present. In August the bank notified the Council that the town's line of credit was ended. Thus, on September 27, the day of the town's Silver Anniversary, there seemed little to celebrate.

'It is regrettable,' said the Review, 'that the year 1936, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the town of Coronation, is possibly one of the leanest years in the history of this area. Short crops coming at a time when the price of wheat is on the road to recovery to a profitable level, following five or six years of disastrously low prices for livestock as well as grains, has done much to curb unbridled enthusiasm in the event, which would otherwise have been expected in this community.'¹⁷

And there was still worse to come.

The 1936 wheat crop for the whole area averaged 4.8 bushels per acre; that of 1937 averaged only 2.7. So dry was the summer that there was very little hay, pasture grass was thin and spotty, and even the weeds were stunted. Many who had cut their "crops" (grain and weeds) the previous year for coarse feed, now found this source practically worthless. With no feed reserves farmers faced the necessity of getting rid of cattle and horses before winter set in - cattle that had provided milk, cream, butter, and beef, and horses that were badly needed to put in next year's crop. A mild winter would have been a godsend. Instead, it was long and hard.

Many farmers, who had taken the opportunity, in October, of selling to the government what cattle they wouldn't be able

¹⁷ Review, Sept. 24, 1936.

to feed, had gotten rid of their thinnest and scrubbiest animals. Others, trying desperately to make their own way unassisted, had gambled on a mild winter which would have enabled them to hold over their stock. Government shipments of feed did not begin to go around, and each passing week of bad weather made the situation more serious. On February 20, 1938, the following urgent request was forwarded to the
18
Minister of Agriculture in Edmonton.

Honorable Sir,

At the annual ratepayers' meeting held in Coronation on Saturday, Feb. 19, it was unanimously requested that the gravity of the livestock and feed situation be brought to your personal attention.

Last fall the farmers shipped 362 head of cattle from this point under government optional marketing plan, and the farmers who reduced their livestock to schedule set out in the Dominion-Provincial agreement re feed and fodder assistance are being taken care of.

We have a large number of farmers who keep off relief from the revenue received from operating or owning a larger number of stock, especially milk cows than allowed by the feed policy, and these farmers kept their stock figuring they had a sufficient amount of feed to carry their stock through a normal winter, whereas they have had an abnormal winter, and are now out of feed, with no means to procure more, and their stock (horses and cattle) are dying by the dozen daily, and the situation will steadily grow worse until spring.

The residents feel that when they have been able to go so far on their own, the government should surely step in under the abnormal winter conditions, and provide sufficient feed to save this stock which is so badly needed in the district.

Prompt action and results are earnestly demanded by the residents and the council of

The Municipal District of Coronation, No 334
E.J. Gibson, Sec'y-treas.

Two weeks later came the reply from a sorely pressed government.
 "It is impossible for us to extend help in any district other than provided for under the policy as set out for the Drought Area."¹⁹

It was not only livestock that went short of feed in the winter of '37-'38. Cash for the purchase of groceries was practically nonexistent. Particularly hard up were those families who, through the years, had struggled so desperately to keep off relief. The arrival, in mid-December, of boxcar loads of apples, cheese, dried beans, and fish, sent by the Dominion Government Relief Foods Organization, did much to²⁰ make for a merrier Christmas.

During the period of the mid-Thirties a new political movement was sweeping the countryside. As is so often the case, depression had brought discredit to the government in power, and people were looking round, searching for a party whose policies would lead them back to good times. The conservative methods of old line parties did not seem to hold the answer, and so, when the extravagant trumpeting of Social Credit reached their ears, many turned in that direction with the blind hope of drowning men. So wonderful did the cries of "twenty-five dollars a month and plenty for all" sound that few dared stop and ask where the money would come from.

In the early days of Social Credit, religion and politics

¹⁹ Letter dated March 3, 1938. Reprinted in the Review, March 17, 1938.

²⁰ The food was rationed out to everyone in the district; half a box of apples per person, ten pounds of crabapples per family, nine pounds of fish per person - and so on.

were closely intertwined, and many gatherings carried the emotional appeal of a revival meeting. Coronationites were first subjected to the doctrines of faith and hope on July 10, 1934, when William Aberhart and Ernest Manning addressed an overflowing crowd at the Elks' Hall.²¹ Scores of converts were made that night, and in the weeks that followed, their numbers were rapidly swelled. Social Credit became the main topic of conversation in the homes, in the fields, in the shops, and on the streets. Even talk of the depression was pushed, for the moment, into the background, though of course the two questions were basically inseparable. Heated arguments, bristling guest editorials, and stormy political rallies featured the ensuing pre-election campaign. The main controversy was between U.F.A. and Social Credit factions, though the Liberal camp had a closely knit band of followers as well.

Just before election day the Social Credit candidates brought before the people the following platform promises:²²

- (1) Banish poverty from Alberta.
- (2) Pay a basic dividend - tentatively set at \$25 a month - to every citizen.
- (3) Establish a "just price" for both producer and consumer.
- (4) No new money would be used.
- (5) Non-negotiable securities would be used for the purchase of goods and services.
- (6) The basic dividend would be collected by a levy.

It was more than enough. On August 22, 1935, Coronation joined with the rest of the province in giving Social Credit

²¹ That afternoon Mr. Aberhart had visited the high school, said a few words, and then shook hands with all the students. The author was present, both there and at the political meeting that night.

²² Review, Aug. 29, 1935.

almost a clean sweep in the election. William Aberhart became the new premier of Alberta with an overall majority of 23 49. Voting in the Coronation constituency showed Social Credit with 2561 votes, U.F.A. with 848, and Liberals with 612, while in the town, itself, the figures were 180; 48; and 87 respectively. 24 Thus the Social Creditors had received 64 percent of the district's votes. Two months later, when the Liberals swept to an overwhelming victory in the dominion election, 25 Alberta elected 15 Social Credit candidates out of 17 seats, and the Acadia Constituency, of which Coronation was a part, followed suit with a large Social Credit majority. 26

Once the die had been cast, loyal party members sat back anxiously to await realization of their government's sweeping promises. Others sat back and waited to shout, "I told you so!" With the passage of time it became evident that the provincial leaders had bitten off more than they could chew. 27

23 The standing of parties on Dec. 15, 1935, was Social Credit 56, Liberals 5, and Conservatives 2. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1936, p.401.

24 Review, Aug. 29, 1935.

25 Mackenzie King's Liberals won 171 of the 245 seats. So decisive was the victory that Social Credit, with 17 seats, became the third largest party. The Conservatives won 39 seats. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1937, p.355.

26 In the Acadia riding, V. Quelch, the Social Credit candidate, polled 6,166 votes, C.C.F. had 1,859 votes; Liberals 1,444; and Conservatives, 1,024. Ibid., p.234.

27 The \$25 a month dividend pledge at no time seemed likely to be fulfilled. On August 6, 1936, the Review remarked that "The Social Credit dividends couldn't have come in a more opportune time, that is, if they come. But if they are based on production, which it finally seems that our government has agreed that they are, then this district is far from producing anything like sufficient goods to pay twenty-five dollar monthly dividends, much less seventy-five."

Many of them were newcomers to the complexities of top level finance and dominion-provincial rights and responsibilities. Some of their plans they themselves threw out. Others were
²⁸
 thrown out for them.

Early in July, 1936, the Coronation constituency was notified that it would be allowed \$5,000 in Prosperity Bonds per month to be used for road work. Only those on relief were to be employed in the undertaking, and the government, by pamphlet and radio, stressed the importance of keeping the certificates in circulation. Should the public refuse to take change in that medium and force the merchants to send it back to the wholesalers there was the possibility that there would be no more scrip issued for future projects in the district.

The experiment was short lived. It soon became obvious that no amount of wheedling or threatening would change human nature. The old familiar cash was so much more comforting and concrete than the new and uncertain scrip. "It is quite clear now," remarked the Review on September 10, "that the 'prosperity certificates' have lost their momentum. Their velocity is changed to stampede and that in the direction of the government coffers where they will be exchanged by the admittedly overloaded merchants for a more readily transferable
²⁹
 type of credit."

28 Among the Social Credit legislation thrown out by the Supreme Court of Canada were three of Mr. Aberhart's basic bills covering the licensing of banks, the providing of additional credit, and the ensuring of accurate news, all of which were declared ultra vires in March, 1938. Canada Law Reports: Supreme Court of Canada: 1938, pp. 100-101.

29 Review, Sept. 10, 1936.

These major setbacks might have split wide open a government less sincere and less devoted to the task it had undertaken. Instead, the provincial leaders - men of intelligence as well as conviction - stopped to take stock of their mistakes, and their successes. Gradually the more radical of their proposals were dropped, and the party's platform placed on a more secure foundation.³⁰ Albertans discovered that, overshadowed by certain hair-brained schemes, much solid legislation had been passed. By the time of the next election they had decided that the good far outweighed the bad, and in this and subsequent polls the people of the province rallied enthusiastically around their own special government.³¹

Meanwhile there were abundant signs that the long period of lean years was just about at an end. Spring rains on top of heavy winter snows were giving the 1938 crop a fine send off. Cream prices were fairly good,³² helping to make up for the smaller herds, poor feed, and cold weather which had severely affected the output of milk. In April the local council received the heartening news that its line of credit had once again been approved at the bank, and that the town was being

30 With the passage of years, Social Credit shifted from a radical left centre party to a conservative rightist group.

31 In the elections of 1940, 1944, and 1948 the Social Credit government was returned by overwhelming majorities. The party standings in these years were as follows: December, 1940, Social Credit 35, Independents 19, Liberals 1, Labour 1, (Vacant 1); December, 1944, Social Credit 51, Independents 3, C.C.F. 2, Veterans & Armed Forces 1; December 1948, Social Credit 51, Liberals 2, C.C.F. 2, Independent Social Credit 1, Independent 1. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1941 p.396; 1945, p.383; 1949, p.428.

32 On Feb. 24, the Coronation market price of cream was 32¢ after a six cent jump in the preceding two weeks.

advanced \$15,000 - with the stipulation that the money was not to be used for debenture payments.

By mid-July many crops looked good for at least 25 bushels to the acre, and ideal ripening weather assured a bountiful harvest.³³ "The fields appear to be laden with grain as they never were before," observed the Review,³⁴ "and very little of the land which was ever cultivated is not now covered with crops...." At last there would be money coming in, and local merchants were busy planning ways and means of helping to spend it. "New Stock, Low Prices and Wider Range Merchandise to Be Featured For Shoppers" was the headline advertising Coronation's "Mammoth Harvest Shopping Carnival."³⁵ The Star Theatre made plans to reopen after months of idleness, and the town fathers decided now was the time to clamp down on persistent tax defaulters.³⁶

Plans for public spending were once more underway as well. The Coronation-Veteran stretch of Highway Number 12 was to be gravelled, and the Public Works Department was authorized to

33 The growing enthusiasm was momentarily dampened by the sudden outbreak, in July, of a strange malady (Equine Encephalomyelitis) which attacked the horses in the area. With symptoms resembling a form of sleeping sickness, horses went into comas, staggered about, or stared glassily into space. Many died, and even those that lived seemed to lack strength and spirit, and could no longer do the work to which they had been accustomed. In spite of farmers taking every precaution they knew how, there was hardly a herd in the district that escaped. Only with the arrival of government prepared serum and mass vaccination did the spread of the disease slacken.

34. Review, Sept. 8, 1938.

35 Ibid., Oct. 20, 1938.

36 By the end of 1938 the town's uncollected taxes amounted to \$62,914.

construct one block of cement sidewalk on one side of any street they deemed advisable. The Council even found the wherewithal to make a grant of \$10 to a needy national organization, whereas a few months before, they, themselves, would have been only too glad to receive any and all donations. The depression was indeed over.

Chapter VIII

THE END OF DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR II

The depression had vanished even more quickly than it had come. Almost over night, it seemed, drought, recession, and despair were replaced by bountiful harvests, mushrooming construction, and renewed hope. Plans that had long been shelved were gotten out, dusted off, and put under way. Farmers, merchants, and householders looked to their homes and business establishments; town fathers took stock of long needed public projects; and higher up the governmental ladder, ways and means were being devised to combat the crippling effects of future crop failures.

The lean years had left their mark, however. By the end of the 'Thirties many familiar faces from earlier days were missing. From the town, in the ten years from 1931 to 1941, the exodus had taken 157 persons, and in the same period 182 ruralites had left the district in search of greener fields.¹ There were changes, too, in the condition of the farmland. In 1931 there were 513 occupied farms in the area. Ten years later there were only 478. Meanwhile the area under crop had fallen from 100,790 acres to 75,645, and the area of prairie or natural pasturage had risen from 98,944 to 141,015 acres.

¹ From statistics enclosed in a letter to the author, dated June 28, 1949, from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ottawa. The town population in 1931 was listed as 738, and in 1941 as 581, while the municipality figures were 2,022 and 1840 respectively. The actual number of people leaving would be somewhat higher than listed because during the period there were a few incoming replacements - especially in town.

The actual acreage sown to wheat had dropped considerably - from 73,208 to 43,273 - while at the same time there was a corresponding increase in coarse grains and tame hay for feeding purposes. Oat acreage rose from 21,465 to 23,501, barley from 2,482 to 4,363, rye from 398 to 730 and cultivated hay from 617 to 2,157.²

This switch from wheat to feed was a natural result of the growing dependence on livestock and mixed farming. In spite of the difficulties in carrying animals through the long, hard winters, the number of livestock (exclusive of poultry) in the area actually increased during the 'Thirties. In 1931 there were 6,617 cattle as compared to 8,248 ten years later. Swine increased from 3,408 to 4,944, horses showed a decrease from 5,547 to 4,602, and poultry dropped sharply from 44,865 to 33,773.³ Farmers were learning from bitter experience that returns from cattle and hogs, though less spectacular than wheat in good years, were more dependable over long periods.

Not all of the above trends were the result of hard times alone. The rural exodus, begun by the depression, was carried along by the forces of war and its aftermath.⁴ Many sons and daughters of the farm, serving in the armed forces or carrying on war work in bustling cities, discovered new interests and decided to make their homes elsewhere.

2 Letter from Dominion Bureau of Statistics, dated June 28, 1949.

3 Loc. cit...

4 In the five years after 1941 the rural municipality lost a further 346 persons. Meanwhile the town population rose from 581 to 633. Loc. cit...

Though the actual number of farms in the district continued to decrease (by 1946 there were only 453 as compared to the 478 five years before), the average area of each farm showed a steady increase in size.⁵ This condition was partly brought about by the great influx of new and improved farm machinery,⁶ which enabled one man on a tractor to farm far more acres than had been possible with horses. In a ten hour work day, seven horses and a two bottom plow could cover about five acres. A tractor and a tiller could not only turn over 25 acres in the same period, but could seed it to crop in the same process. For the work horse the handwriting was on the wall.

As the 'Thirties merged into the 'Forties, farm dwellers were entering a new period of prosperity and progress. Good crop years, profitable stock-raising conditions, and special government innovations combined to make the farmers' returns more certain than they had ever been. The new government regulations came a little too late to help the worst years, but once in effect they seemed to offer hope that times would never get quite as bad again. Of considerable importance to the western producer was the "pegging" of the price of wheat - a measure undertaken by the Canadian Wheat Board after its

5 In 1931 the average area of each farm was 504 acres; in 1941 it was 593 acres; and in 1946 it was 693 acres. Letter from Dominion Bureau of Statistics, dated June 28, 1949.

6 In the twelve month period before April 1940, fifteen new tractors were sold in the district, and more orders were pouring in. Review, April 4, 1940.

7
reorganization in 1935. Especially in 1938 when the farmer had not had a paying crop for several years did the wheat peg assure him of substantial returns and enable him to at least make a start towards getting back on his own feet.⁸

More far reaching were the benefits derived from the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, instituted in 1939.⁹ Under this plan, acreage bonuses were paid to all farmers in the prairie provinces who lived in areas which had crop failures. The area unit was the township, and there were three categories of awards: viz. when the average wheat yields for the township were 8 to 12, 4 to 8, and 0 to 4 bushels per acre. Certain restrictions were laid down limiting the cultivated area eligible for payment and the maximum value of the awards in

7 Statutes of Canada, 25-26 George V. Chap.53, "An Act to provide for the Constitution and Powers of the Canadian Wheat Board," assented to July 5, 1935. Government Boards had handled the marketing of Canadian grain from 1917 to 1920, and many farmers associated the high prices of that period with the centralized policy then in effect.

8 The pegging of wheat guaranteed farmers, selling to the Canadian Wheat Board, a certain set minimum price for that particular crop year (twelve month period from July 31), and at the same time made provision for later participation certificates (bonus payments) if the years's crop was sold at a substantial profit. In 1938 the Wheat Board set the price for No.1 Northern wheat at Ft. William or Vancouver as 80 cents per bushel. Because of freight and handling costs, the Coronation price is 18½ cents less than the Ft. William listing. In other words, in 1938, Coronation farmers were assured of at least 61½ cents per bushel for top quality wheat if they decided to sell to the government board. See appendix, p. iv , for a list of Canadian Wheat Board initial payments from 1935 to 1950 - at Ft. William and at Coronation.

9 Statutes of Canada, 3 George VI, Chap.50, "An Act to Assist Agriculture in the Prairie Provinces," assented to June 3, 1939.

all cases. Payments under the act were made in two instalments, 60 percent in December of the year of the award, and 40 percent in March of the following year. This system provided cash for the winter and at the same time kept back some reserves to help put in the all important next year's crop.

The assistance P.F.A.A. had given in helping to stabilize the grain growers' income has been tremendous. In the ten years since its inception in 1939, farmers in the Coronation district have received a total of \$637,429.01,¹¹ and 2,826 individual awards have been made. In 1949, alone, 413 farmers received \$136,102.50. Only in 1940, 1942, and 1944 - all good crop years - were there no payments¹² to the area.

From 1941 to 1943³ many farmers were in receipt of still another source of income. This was the wheat acreage reduction

10 The award was made on one half the total cultivated acreage up to, but not exceeding 400 acres, and the maximum individual award for the "8 to 12" category was set at \$200, for the "4 to 8" at \$300, and for the "0 to 5" at \$500. Also the "8 to 12" category could only come into effect when the price of No.1 Northern Wheat was less than 80¢ per bushel at Fort William. From material enclosed in a letter to the author dated June 14, 1950, from the Prairie Farm Assistance Branch, Dept. of Agriculture, Regina, Sask.. Included were a copy of the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, an explanation of the act, a summary of the one percent levy collected, a summary of payments by provinces, and a detailed list of all payments made to the Paintearth Municipal District No.53 with breakdown figures for the townships involved.

11 Ibid... The above figure only includes payments to farmers living within the boundaries of the Municipal District of Coronation, No. 334.

12 Before 1947 it was necessary for the Governor in Council to declare a Crop Failure Year or Emergency Year before payments could be made. Now it is automatic. However, 1942 was the only year in which no P.F.A.A. program was in effect.

bonus or summerfallow bonus as it came to be called.¹³ During these years the dominion government called upon producers to raise only as much wheat as could be sold in the domestic and export markets during the ensuing twelve month periods. However, an unlimited production of coarse grains was needed for livestock feeding to produce "the Animal Products and Fats needed in the Domestic Market as well as the Bacon, Dairy Products and Eggs Wanted by Britain."¹⁴ Flaxseed, too, was urgently needed to meet the wartime vegetable oil requirements of Canada and the United States.

Ottawa, therefore, was prepared to pay farmers for switching from wheat to coarse grains and grasses, or for letting their land lie fallow.¹⁵ In 1941 a total of 343 Coronation farmers received upwards of \$85,000 in summerfallow bonuses,¹⁶ and when to this was added the \$113,000 in acreage bonuses, the resultant sum assured the district of fairly substantial returns even in this, a very bad crop year.¹⁷

During this same period when the graingrower was consolidating his improving position, the fortunes of the livestock producer also were taking a swing for the better. Year after

¹³ Statutes of Canada, 6 George VI, Chap.10, "An Act respecting Wheat Acreage Reduction," assented to March 27, 1942.

¹⁴ Dominion Department of Agriculture advertisement carried in the Review, April 2, 1942.

¹⁵ For every acre taken out of wheat production (based on 1940 figures) \$2.00 was paid.

¹⁶ Review, June 20, 1941; Edmonton Journal, Jan. 24, 1942.

¹⁷ The overall average for Coronation's crop census division was only 5.9 bushels per acre.

year the Castor-Coronation Co-operative Livestock Shipping Association broke new records in volume of stock handled and profits made. In 1943 this organization shipped 780 cattle, 11,697 pigs, and 181 sheep worth a total of \$374,082.00.

The following year nearly 1500 cattle and over 10,300 hogs were sold for almost \$400,000.¹⁸ The same increases were shown in general shipments from the Coronation stockyards. In 1940 there were 2,103 cattle, 2,761 hogs, and 367 sheep shipped. Two years later the figures reached 2,621; 4,415; and 368; and by 1944 they had risen to 3,578; 7,443; and 466.¹⁹ Good prices and a fairly steady market encouraged more and more farmers to raise stock, thus spreading out their risk as well as their investment. Many who had never before raised tame hay, planted fields to brome grass, alfalfa, and clover. In 1931 the Coronation district had had only 617 acres planted to tame hay. By 1946 this figure had jumped to 6,457.²⁰ It seemed at long last that the dangers of single crop farming were being neutralized.

Meanwhile the greatly increased purchasing power in the hands of the district's rural population was having a marked effect on conditions in town. As always, the fortunes of the town businessman were almost entirely dependent on the progress of his country neighbour. Farming represented the basic industry and therefore the real basis of wealth while the town provided secondary services and lived off the fruits of

¹⁸ Review, July 20, 1944 and July 12, 1945.

¹⁹ Ibid., June 20, 1946.

²⁰ Letter from Dominion Bureau of Statistics, dated June 28, 1949.

the hinterland. Now with the return of good times the wheels of progress, stilled by the depression, were once more beginning to turn.

As sales increased, store owners were able to carry out badly needed repairs and alterations. Shops, long idle, were open again for business, and plans for new establishments were being drawn up. A disastrous \$100,000 fire,²¹ which in December, 1942, completely destroyed the Builders' Hardware and Howards' Garage, was only a temporary set back. Within a year and a half a fine new building had risen above the ruins - its clean, modern lines setting a standard for other construction work to follow.

Keeping pace with private progress was the program of public works and reforms cautiously set in motion by the town fathers. The bitter lessons of the past decade had been well learned, and before any great spending was done, steps were taken to fortify the position of the budget. By 1939 the town debt was almost wholly debenture debt, and in July of that year, arrangements were made for refunding this over a period of 20 years at $4\frac{1}{2}$ percent interest. Previously due in ten instalments, the new agreement cut the annual payment from \$7,400 to around \$3,600 - thereby permitting the Council a much freer hand in future planning. Later in the same year a

²¹ Coronation had had no serious fire for several years. From 1933 to 1936 there had been only eight fire calls, and the fire loss over that period had amounted to \$67.40. The 1942 fire, however, showed up certain weaknesses in the care and handling of equipment though the tower and water supply were among the finest in the province. Aroused citizens pointed out the dangers of false security, and steps were at once taken to prepare adequately for future emergencies.

further reduction in annual commitments was made when a new contract with the power company provided an annual saving of \$400 for the town and some \$300 for domestic and commercial users.

Gradually the town improvement program gained momentum. In 1939 three street blocks were resurfaced with gravel, and eleven others were given their first coat. In the same year the first of several hundred trees were planted in Jubilee Park, along the boulevard on Windsor Avenue, in front of the hospital, and in windbreaks along the northwest borders of town. Within a few summers these trees had added welcome patches of green and shade to streets that had long been bare and forbidding.

Improving conditions brought a recovery of lost civic pride, and in June of 1941 the decision to turn on the town's bright lights was made. Consequently a string of varicoloured globes were strung along the base of the water tower's elevated tank, and a large light was lit on the very peak. At night this beacon, shining some 150 feet above the ground, proudly advertised the town for many miles in all directions.

Working side by side with the Council during these years was an energetic and far-seeing Board of Trade. Any plan for the betterment of the town received its whole hearted support, and in many cases its members were the originators, as well as the backers, of beneficial schemes. The return of good times had snapped the lethargy and defeatism of "depressionites," and citizens were again anxious to make their's one of the most progressive towns on the map.

One project, which typified the new found spirit and showed what could be accomplished when everyone chipped in and helped, was the construction of a recreation dam beside the fairgrounds one mile north of town.²² For several years there had been talk of building a public swimming pool, but nothing had been done. Now a start was made. In 1940 a local delegation to the Credit Foncier land company in Edmonton had received the promise of a gift of the required acreage for an artificial lake once the necessary plans had been completed, and in the following summer work was begun. By the end of October a large rock-faced embankment had been built, complete with drain pipe and shut off for controlling the flow of water. A fine diving pier had been constructed, and a cottage for dressing rooms provided. Further arrangements were under way for the providing of beach sand and the planting of trees.²³

For two summers the new dam provided a recreation spot for young and old alike, and the addition of water sports to the Dominion Day celebrations proved to be an extremely popular innovation. Plans were being made for bigger and better days to come when unforeseen circumstances brought bitter disappointment. By mid-summer each year there developed in the water a form of green algae which caused minor disturbances of the

²² See map of the town in the appendix, p.xxix. The dam was to be built across the Ribstone Creek which had its beginnings two or three miles north of town.

²³ The cost had been well shared. Twelve acres of land had been donated, the town had spent over one thousand dollars, and the municipal district several hundred dollars. In addition many residents had given freely of their time and labour and were prepared to assist further.

skin. The addition of chemicals to the stagnant water seemed to have no effect, and after such a hopeful beginning the project finally had to be abandoned. Though the scheme eventually failed, its initial fulfilment showed the value of cooperative effort on a community basis, and most citizens realized that this one failure need not discourage the group planning of future ventures.

Coronation's twenty-fifth anniversary had come during the very worst part of the depression, and at that time few residents of the district had felt the urge to celebrate. They were determined, however, not to let the thirtieth anniversary in the fall of 1941 pass by unheralded. Festivities were in charge of the Womens' Institute and the Board of Trade who officially named the occasion Pioneer Day and claimed as their honoured guests all those Old Timers who were in the area on or before September 27, 1911. All pioneers were asked to sign a register in the Old Timers' Hut, filling in their name, birthplace, manner of travel from their jumping²⁴ off place, and date of arrival. They were then given souvenir identification cards which entitled them to special discounts at all business places, and free admittance to the dance at the Elks' Hall or the movie "North West Mounted Police" which had been brought to the Star Theatre especially for the occasion. It was a day in which Coronationites paused to think back on the progress that had been made since those first hardy pioneers had pushed into the country far ahead of the creeping

24 A complete list of the oldtimers who signed is given in the appendix on p. ix .

lines of steel. It was also a day to take stock of present surroundings and look forward to what lay along the pathway ahead.

Pioneer Day had been both happy and successful. Celebrating had not been completely carefree, however, for in the back of everyone's mind were thoughts of the struggle that was then taking place in Britain and the Continent, and the growing realization that World War II was going to be neither short, easy, nor free from personal sacrifice. Just as had happened twenty-five years before, the present war had exploded rather unexpectedly for the western farmer, engrossed as he was in trying to extricate himself from the bonds of depressionism. And just as before, he realized the benefits of wide markets and high prices, but was faced with the hardships of insufficient help and the heartbreak of family losses.

In 1914 most Englishmen and many Canadians had felt that Canada was merely carrying out the necessary obligations of a "colony" to its mother country. By 1939 there was a new air of independence and self respect evident in the dominion, yet the loyalty to England and the British Empire seemed strong as ever. This had been shown earlier in the year by the thunderous ovations and unbridled enthusiasm which greeted the King and Queen at every stop, large and small, in their tour of the country. In wishing to pay their respects to the royal family Coronationites were no different from other of their fellow Canadians. Several hundred journeyed to Edmonton

to see their majesties on June 2,²⁵ and a day later an estimated one thousand persons got up in darkness and drove the eighty miles to Wainwright where the royal train made a brief stop²⁶ on its way eastward.

After the war was declared, local residents lost no time in answering the call to arms. Within ten days Norman McFarlane and Melvin Madore had left Coronation for Calgary to commence training with the Calgary Highlanders. They were the first of an ever increasing flow of enlistees. By July, 1942, there²⁷ were 103 from the district in uniform, and still the figure²⁸ rose.

Before the end of that first September Coronation had organized a local Red Cross branch, and by the first week of December over \$700 had been collected. Other welfare groups, too, were quick to organize for war work. Among their many activities was the sending of food parcels and cigarettes to local boys overseas, and all through the war years, the Review published in its pages "thank you letters" from grateful soldiers in every theatre of war - soldiers that had grown up

25 Boys of the Coronation cadet corps had fine views of the royal procession when they were chosen to help line the streets. Parading with Edmonton Xavier cadets they were posted along 109 Street and Jasper Avenue.

26 Review, June 8, 1939.

27 This total included 4 women. Ibid., July 2, 1942.

28 The United Church Honor Roll, complete except for Roman Catholic figures, shows that by the end of the war 230 from the district had joined the armed forces. Of these, 220 were men: 178 in the Army, 37 in the Air Force, and 5 in the Navy; and 10 were women: 7 in the Air Force, 2 in the Army, and 1 in the Navy. From statistics included in a letter dated March 29, 1951, to the author from the President of the Soldiers' Comfort Fund.

across the street or down the road a ways.

In July, 1941, a local reserve detachment of the Calgary Regiment was formed in the Coronation-Veteran district. Uniforms were issued, and where possible up to date equipment was made available. The school grounds were used for drilling, and periodic field manoeuvres added a semblance of realism to the training. Much good work was done by this group, and many volunteers received excellent preparation for the more arduous conditions they later faced in Canada's fighting forces.

Nothing better typifies the fine spirit of loyalty and patriotism which characterized Coronation's all round war effort, than the enthusiastic response which met all national drives for funds. In 1942 the Coronation branch of the Red Cross collected \$1500. Two years later they received nearly \$2000 - many hundreds of dollars more than the \$1250 quota which they had been given. Even more noteworthy were the results of the nine victory loan drives, as pictured below.

	<u>Year</u>	<u>Quota</u>	<u>Subscribers</u>	<u>Amount Subscribed</u>	<u>Percentage Subscribed</u>
1 Victory Loan	1941	17,000	358	53,600	315%
2 Victory Loan	1942	25,000	462	58,150	233%
3 Victory Loan	1942	32,000	392	53,450	167%
4 Victory Loan	1943	61,000	624	94,650	155%
5 Victory Loan	1943	83,000	707	109,500	132%
6 Victory Loan	1944	83,000	736	136,050	164%
7 Victory Loan	1944	135,000	-	154,450	114%
8 Victory Loan	1945	145,000	698	195,550	135%
9 Victory Loan	1945	185,000	619	188,050	102%

Though substantially increased each year, every quota was considerably oversubscribed. Only in the last loan was trouble

²⁹ Review, June 20, 1941; March 12, 1942; Nov. 12, 1942; April 29, 1943; Nov. 4, 1943; May 18, 1944; Nov. 16, 1944; May 24, 1945; Nov. 15, 1945.

experienced in reaching the objective, and an extra week sent that total over the top. Here was a record Coronationites could well be proud of.

As the months dragged by, those at home became ever more aware of the emptiness created by the departure of their sons and daughters. Gone from the streets were all but a few of the town's young men. The theatre and dance hall were now patronized by older people and a new group - the budding adolescents. Here and there an occasional man in uniform, home on leave, was surrounded by a circle of friends. Labour was becoming ever more scarce, and farmers in particular were hard pressed to find harvest help. Soldiers on special furloughs, town merchants working half days, and high school students, excused from school, managed to meet the emergency more or less adequately each fall.³⁰

Sports, too were severely affected. For years Coronation had had no outstanding hockey or baseball teams. Then, towards the end of the 'Thirties, a group of high school students began to develop into fine competitors. On the baseball diamond and in the hockey rink, boys like Bill Duncan, Basil Meyers, Wilfred and Claude Luke, and Albert and Craig Thomas began to win junior tournaments with consistent regularity. The prospects looked bright for future competition. Then came the war, and within a few months the group had been scattered to the four

³⁰ In 1942, forty-five French Canadian boys, aged around 17 and 18, made the trip by special coach from Shawenegan Falls Technical School, Quebec, to aid in harvest operations. In view of the fact that the youths were not used to western farming methods and were handicapped by language difficulties the experiment was not too successful.

corners of the earth - Canada, Britain and the Continent, and the Far East. They never got together again.

It had not taken long for local boys to see action. In September, 1941, Coronation received word that Privates G. Taylor and J. Miller had been among the landing party in the Spitzbergen raid. The following August, Trooper William Stannard was "officially reported missing in action" in the Dieppe raid. This was the first of the dreaded telegrams bearing news of battle wounds, capture, and death. The worst part of the war had just begun.³¹

So accustomed had people become to the inconveniences and the hardships, the restrictions and the rations, the suffering and the tragedy of war, that it seemed almost incredible when, in the spring of 1945, unmistakable signs pointed to an early end of the six year struggle. Coronation, along with every community throughout the nation, made plans for a monstrous celebration. At 9:00 A.M. on Monday, May 7, the fire siren screamed the joyous news of victory. Schools were let out, and merchants and businessmen closed to decorate their premises. That night a large and happy crowd staged an impromptu dance as a preliminary to the official holiday events scheduled for the following day.

At 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, practically the whole populace turned out for one of the largest parades the town had ever had. At the head of the procession were two horseback riders carrying flags of the United Nations; and behind them came the

³¹ The previously mentioned United Church Honor Roll listed eleven local boys killed on service.

mayor, the chief magistrate, and the local R.C.M.P. officer; returned men of World War II and service personnel on leave; the Canadian Legion and other war veterans; the local tank corps; the school army cadet corps; the girls' cadette corps; the Masonic Lodge; and finally bands of school children. Later in the day a thanksgiving service was held, and that night festivities ended with a huge bonfire at the west end of town.

V.J.Day celebrations on August 14 were similar though somewhat anticlimactic to those they succeeded, for most citizens had felt that with peace in Europe, overall victory could not be far behind.

One last bit of war work remained to be done, and the people of Coronation were quick to assume responsibility. In June, 1945, a Citizens' Committee for War Veterans was organized to "cooperate with returning veterans and to help in every way towards the smooth working of their rehabilitation; to take up problems and complaints with the proper authorities; and in general to act in an advisory and helpful capacity." ³² Much good work was done by this group in assisting the sometimes difficult transition from soldier to civilian. On July 26 the rehabilitation committee sponsored a "Welcome Home" reception and banquet at the Royal Crown Hotel. Guests of the occasion were servicemen (on leave or discharged) and their wives or parents, as well as representatives from the Board of Trade, the Womens' Institute, and the Soldiers' Comfort Fund. It was good to see the boys coming back, and it was even better to be among those returning home.

32 Review, June 21, 1945.

Chapter IX

THE WAY AHEAD

With the end of hostilities a brand new period of prosperity had begun for the people of Coronation and district. The next five years were to see more progress than any similar period since the very first days of the founding of the town. Bottomless markets, consistently high prices, generally good crops, and government bonuses brought wealth, optimism, and ambitious hopes for the future.

In the country the municipality had set in motion an ambitious program of road building. Payment of back debts¹ on top of current taxes provided the necessary money for increased public spending, and government grants were becoming ever more generous. In 1941 the municipality had set aside \$3,000 for main road improvements, and the province provided \$2,000.² The following year the government sent \$2,500 to be matched³ dollar for dollar by the municipal district, and that summer a start was made on gravelling the road north to Brownfield and the Battle River. By 1943 the district had decided to purchase some big power road equipment so that larger projects could be undertaken locally.

1 In February, 1942, there were still \$75,000 in outstanding taxes, and over \$40,000 for relief seed grain, fodder, and fuel oil owing to the municipality. Review, Feb. 26, 1942.

2 Ibid., April 24, 1941.

3 Ibid., July 30, 1942.

Meanwhile, plans were underway in the province for reorganizing smaller municipalities into fewer large districts. In the fall of 1943, C.E. Gerhart, now Minister of Municipal Affairs,⁴ spoke before a Coronation audience and told them of the benefits to be derived from the regrouping process.⁵ Because of lower administrative expenses and larger grants and assets, the bigger municipalities would be able to provide social services impossible in smaller areas. To add weight to the arguments, arrangements were quickly completed for gravelling the highway to Veteran. The government was to provide the necessary money and a gravel loader; the district to furnish the trucks.

Early in 1944 the amalgamation was completed and the old districts of Coronation, Progress, and part of Stocks became the new municipality of Paintearth, M.D. Number 53, with headquarters at Castor.⁶ The area was divided into five divisions, each of which was to elect its own councillor, and these five men were to choose one of their members to act as reeve. Advantages of the increased spending power were seen at once. In 1944 Paintearth asked the government for \$4,000 and received \$10,000 instead,⁷ and that summer the grading was finished from

⁴ Coronationites were extremely proud of the rapid rise of their onetime fellow citizen. Mr. Gerhart, mayor of Coronation from 1936 to 1940, was elected to the Alberta Legislature in 1940 and reelected in 1944 and 1948. He was appointed Minister of Municipal Affairs in 1943, Minister of Trade and Industry in 1944, and Provincial Secretary in 1948.

⁵ Review, Nov. 11, 1943.

⁶ See map in appendix, p. xxviii.

⁷ Review, Nov. 2, 1944.

Brownfield to Silver Heights on a highway "second to none."

The year, 1945, found the district planning a \$50,000 road program.⁸

The path of the new district was not entirely smooth. When the old municipal office in Castor burned down early in 1946 and work was begun on a new building, eastern ratepayers brought forward a petition that the perfectly good office in Coronation be used,⁹ but nothing was done. A short time later there was much ill feeling over charges by two councillors that only 30 percent of tax arrear collections rightfully belonging to the old Coronation municipality were being allotted to the eastern divisions. The Paintearth administration was branded a "dictatorship" and a delegation was sent to the Minister of Municipal Affairs - to no avail.¹⁰ Gradually, however, as residents came to realize that narrow localism and general welfare were incompatible, difficulties were ironed out, and a spirit of harmony was achieved.

In keeping with the trend towards larger administrative units, the Coronation and Castor school districts, in December of 1945, signed up for amalgamation. Henceforth there was to be one large division, Castor S.D. Number 27. Under the terms of the agreement the Coronation school was to receive a badly needed new heating plant in 1946 and a three room addition to the old building in 1947-1948. The extra classrooms were to

8 Review, April 19, 1945.

9 Ibid., March 28, 1946.

10 Ibid., April 11, 1946.

make room for the additional enrollment which a school bus service covering a wide radius would provide.¹¹ The resultant closing of many one room rural schools would facilitate administrative procedure, and at the same time provide a richer curriculum and more uniform opportunities for the children of the district. Most citizens appreciated these very real benefits of the scheme. They were somewhat concerned, however, with the thoughts of the long winter bus rides over poor roads, and the expected increase in education costs.¹²

The construction of a new wing to the school was only one of the many projects underway in town. During the war, and in the years following, Coronation was in the midst of a major building boom, and for the first time in years, town lots were in demand. In 1945 alone, 60 lots became revenue producing. Among the newly erected business establishments were two garages, a frozen food locker plant, two farm implement shops, and a large apartment block. Other businessmen were renovating and adding to their shops, and many residents were improving old, or building new homes.

11 Two school buses in 1946, the first year of operation, picked up 30 rural children. By 1950, six buses servicing a radius of 7 to 10 miles in all directions, were bringing 75 country children to school in town. The enrollment of Coronation school at this time was 250. From statistics included in a letter of March 29, 1951, to the author from George High, resident of the Coronation district.

12 Coming at a time when all living costs were sky-rocketing, tax-payers were often prone to blame the school amalgamation alone for their higher taxes.

There were other innovations in the post-war period too. A dominion meteorological station was set up, a brome-seed¹³ cleaning plant was established, compulsory milk pasteurization was put into effect, and a local flying club was organized. There was even some talk of putting in a sewage system for the¹⁴ town.

The weather station, housed in the old municipal office, provided hourly weather reports for airway purposes and sent in synoptic weather observations every six hours. Careful records were kept of all temperature and precipitation readings, and with Coronation now in official radio weather forecasts, local residents received the benefits of early and accurate¹⁵ warnings of frost or blizzard.

The flying club was a result of an increasing public awareness that the Air Age was at hand. In September, 1945, the town secretary was in receipt of a letter from the Calgary Board of Trade stating that they expected to have three companies operating commercial air service out of that city within a short time, and requesting information as to what plans

13 Set up in 1947 under the auspices of the Seed Growers' Association, the plant was expected to receive and clean 1,000,000 bushels of brome seed annually.

14 In June of 1946 the Board of Trade urged the Council to have engineers investigate the cost of constructing a sewage system. At a later meeting in November a report was given listing the estimated cost at \$30,000 to \$40,000. No further action was taken at that time.

15 The weather station was not set up until the spring of 1944 so there are no figures with which to compare the statistics of the last few years. An exact record of the depression drought period would have been particularly useful. A summary of available statistics is given in the appendix, p.vii .

were contemplated for landing facilities in the Coronation

16
area. Four months previously, the Honourable C.E. Gerhart,
17
speaking at an Air Conference in Edmonton, had said in part:

Those municipalities that are going to step out and get an air strip will be on the air map. Those who don't, five years from now will wish they had because just as the automobile has caused our little villages to become smaller and those 50 or 60 miles apart to become larger, it seems to me air travel will make that distance greater than 50 or 60 miles.

Coronation's Board of Trade was quick to take up the question of a local landing strip, and they received the whole-hearted support of ex-Air Force boys who still had the urge to fly in their blood. Enthusiasts pointed out that the town's weather station was the natural centre for such air routes as Edmonton to Minneapolis, and Calgary to Saskatoon, and visions of Coronation as an air-base hub began to replace the old hopes of a thriving railway centre.

Though the flying club was formed, the landing strip built, and an airplane purchased, immediate results fell far short of what had been predicted. Commercial airlines were slow to show active interest, and flying as a hobby was found too expensive for most. Perhaps the future would prove these pioneering steps worthwhile.

Meanwhile two long-range activities that could hold tremendous possibilities for Coronationites were getting under-way in the area. Either was potentially capable of changing

16 Review, Sept. 27, 1945.

17 Loc.Cit..

the whole aspect of present life in the district. One was the search for oil, the other the promise of irrigation.

As part of the intensive survey being carried out in Alberta by American oil companies, seismographic testing was begun in the Coronation area in the year, 1942.¹⁸ Drilling commenced in the spring of 1949, and by December of 1950 some ten wells had been sunk. Though traces of gas and oil were found, no sensational strikes had been made, and the year ended, rife with the usual hopes, fears, and rumours, but with few concrete results from which to forecast the future.

More tangible than oil, and more certain of securing dividends for all, was the water of the Red Deer River which the dominion government P.F.R.A. was hoping to make available to residents of half a million acres in east-central Alberta.

The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act was passed by Parliament in April, 1935,¹⁹ to help prairie farmers combat the crippling combination of drought and economic depression in the Thirties. Its practical policies (both immediate and far reaching) have proven invaluable to countless dry belt dwellers.

18 The search was widespread and thorough, and at one period in 1949, some 50 American oil and survey men had their headquarters in town. Hotel, restaurants, and boarding houses were overflowing, and merchants did a good business catering to the free spending visitors. Enthusiastic sportsmen, the Americans entered their own baseball and softball teams in local competition - with good success - and on the ball diamond, as on the streets of town, the nasal twang of the Eastern States and the slow drawl of the deep South became familiar sounds.

19 Statutes of Canada, 25-26 George V, Chap.23, "An Act to provide for the rehabilitation of drought and soil drifting areas in the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta," assented to April 17, 1935.

The main objectives of P.F.R.A. have been to improve farming methods, to better utilize the land, and to conserve water. Its water development program has been conducted on both small and large scales - dugouts and stock-watering dams making up the former, river and large stream irrigation works, the latter.

Coronationites first became aware of the Red Deer River irrigation scheme as a postwar possibility when delegates from the area met at Hanna in October, 1944, to organize an association for the purpose of getting the government to finance and operate such a project. P.F.R.A. had already made a preliminary survey of the area, but because of the high estimated cost of construction, the matter had not been pressed.²⁰ Further investigation, however, showed great possibilities, and with local and provincial governments definitely ranged in favour²¹ of the scheme, P.F.R.A. began planning in earnest.

As envisaged, the Red Deer Project would be a combined irrigation and power project to serve an area of approximately 500,000 acres lying between Coronation on the north, the Red deer River on the south, and between Hanna on the west and the Alberta-Saskatchewan boundary on the east. Water from the Red

²⁰ P.F.R.A., A Record of Achievement, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1943, p.65.

²¹ On December 12, 1945, the Honourable C.E. Gerhart, speaking before a Hanna audience, said, "My constituency runs from Coronation east to the Saskatchewan boundary and from Hanna east to the boundary. This area needs water and I am here to help you get it. All my colleagues in the government are strongly in favor of irrigation for the whole province where needed." Review, Dec. 20, 1945.

Deer River would be stored and diverted by a dam near Ardley, Alberta, and would be carried to the irrigable area by a main canal about 100 miles in length, terminating in the natural reservoirs of Hamilton and Kirkpatrick Lakes near Coronation.²² In addition to the direct irrigation benefits, the power installation would yield an estimated 30,000,000 kilowatt hours of electrical energy annually.²³

According to a letter, dated June 12, 1950, from the Director of P.F.R.A.,²⁴ the engineering survey was practically completed at that time, and other surveys such as soils, economics, and power were expected to be finished towards the end of the year. Once the final report was completed, further discussion would take place between the provincial and dominion governments, and it was here that the fate of the project, and of the entire region, would be decided.

For Coronationites a new era seemed about to begin. Conditions in the area south of the Battle River were considerably different in 1950 than they had been half a century before. Well cultivated fields of wheat, and endless miles of barbed wire neatly divided up once limitless rangeland. Gravelled highways and criss-crossing road allowances ignored the paths of pioneer trails. Truck and automobile had replaced sleigh

22 See map in the appendix, p.xxvii.

23 Thirteenth Annual Report on Activities under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa, 1948, p.11.

24 Letter to the author from L.B.Thomson, Director of P.F.R.A., Regina, Sask., dated June 12, 1950.

and buggy, and on the farm the once noble horse had become almost a parasite. The days of the hitching posts and the livery barns were all but forgotten.

Gone, too, was something of the neighbourliness of earlier days.²⁵ Long distances were no longer a hardship. The car and the movie had combined to shift the recreation centre from home and fireplace to street and cafe. One fine result of the change, however, was the increased intermingling of town and country dwellers. Theatre, dance hall, curling rink, ball diamond, skating rink, schoolhouse, church - all became centres where common interests helped build a richer understanding between town boy and country boy, town mother and country mother, merchant and farmer. Completely interdependent as their economic existence was, so was it only right that their social and cultural lives should merge together.

Coronationites, at the halfway mark of the Twentieth Century, were riding the crest of a wave of prosperity. Times had never been better nor had the future ever looked brighter. Irrigation, if it came, could well mean realization of their most cherished dreams. A controlled water supply might still make Coronation the Wonder City of a mecca-land of milk and honey. But, till such a time arrived, Coronationites would do well to remember the bitter lessons of the past. Farming at the best of times was a gamble. For those, in the semi-dry belt between the Battle and Red Deer Rivers, to stake

²⁵ The box socials and the whist drives, the sleighing parties and the local Christmas concerts were becoming relics of a bypassed age.

their entire fortunes on a single crop, wheat, was worse than foolhardy. Never, over a long period, could they hope to win. For them the dice were loaded.

Coronation's history, from the days preceding the coming of the white man down to the present time, though different in detail, is typical of dry belt pioneering throughout the West. Typical are the periods of boom and depression, of hope and frustration. The original hardships, the hoped for miracles to be derived from railway expansion, the unbounding faith in the land, the gradual disillusionment, the distrust of Eastern big-business, the growth of co-operative movements and new line parties, the depths of depression and the blossoming hopes with the return of good times, the rallying to the Mother Country in two world wars, and the utter dependence on wheat - these, too, are all typical.

Mirrored in the story of Coronation is the story of much of Canada's West.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Year	Population Prairie Provinces	Immigration Arrivals	Homestead Entries	Winnipeg Wheat Prices
1870		24,706		107¢
1871	73,228	27,773		127
1872		36,578		127
1873		50,050		123
1874		39,373	1,376	114
1875		27,382	499	103
1876		25,633	347	108
1877		27,082	845	137
1878		29,807	1,788	101
1879		40,492	4,068	107
1880		38,505	2,074	120
1881	118,706	47,991	2,753	126
1882		112,458	7,483	121
1883		133,624	6,063	111
1884		103,824	3,753	100
1885		79,169	1,858	89
1886		69,152	2,657	81
1887		84,526	2,036	83
1888		88,766	2,655	93
1889		91,600	4,416	99
1890		75,067	2,955	85
1891	251,473	82,165	3,523	93
1892		30,996	4,840	80
1893		29,633	4,067	73
1894		20,829	3,209	61
1895		18,790	2,394	72
1896		16,835	1,857	65
1897		21,716	2,384	79
1898		31,900	4,848	93
1899		44,543	6,689	71
1900		23,895	7,426	75
1901	419,512	49,149	8,167	75
1902		67,379	14,633	73
1903		128,364	31,383	79
1904		130,331	26,073	92
1905		146,266	30,891	90
1906	808,646	189,064	41,869	76
1907		124,667	21,647	88
1908		262,469	30,424	104
1909		146,908	39,081	109
1910		208,794	41,568	100
1911	1,328,121	311,084	44,479	96
1912		354,237	39,151	97
1913		402,432	33,699	88
1914		384,878	31,829	100
1915		144,789	24,088	128
1916	1,698,137	48,537	17,030	138

Year	Population Prairie Provinces	Immigration Arrivals	Homestead Entries	Winnipeg Wheat Prices
1917		75,374	11,199	220¢
1918		79,074	8,319	222
1919		57,702	4,227	221
1920		117,336	6,732	263
1921	1,956,082	148,477	5,389	165

Compiled from data contained in Mackintosh, Economic Problems, pp.281-283, and The Canada Year Book: 1950.

APPENDIX B

Year	Winnipeg Wheat Prices	Coronation Average Wheat Yields	Alberta Average Wheat Yields	Wheat Board Prices Ft. William	Wheat Board Prices Coronation
1920	263¢				
1921	165	8.7bu.	10.4bu.		
1922	121	9.9	11.3		
1923	110	28.6	28.0		
1924	107	6.0	11.0		
1925	168	18.7	18.3		
1926	151	19.1	18.5		
1927	146	25.3	27.4		
1928	146	22.8	25.5		
1929	124	4.9	12.3		
1930	124	20.2	20.5		
1931	64	16.1	17.7		
1932	60	16.5	20.4		
1933	54	9.0	13.0		
1934	68	11.5	15.0		
1935	82	8.7	13.2	87 ¹ / ₂ ¢	69¢
1936	85	4.8	8.8	87 ¹ / ₂ ¢	69
1937	123	2.7	9.7	87 ¹ / ₂ ¢	69
1938	131	15.3	18.6	80	61 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1939	62	13.9	19.3	70	51 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1940	76	18.0	20.8	70	51 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1941	74	5.9	15.1	70	51 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1942	77	22.4	26.8	90	71 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1943	94	17.5	17.1	90	71 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1944	135	16.3	14.7	1.25	1.06 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1945	144	9.2	12.9	1.25	1.06 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1946	175	14.1	18.2	1.35	1.16 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1947	175	9.5	15.5	1.35	1.16 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1948	175			1.55	1.36 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1949				1.75	1.56 ¹ / ₂ ¢
1950				1.40	1.21 ¹ / ₂ ¢

1 Taken from The Canada Year Books

2 Taken from Acreage and Production of Principal Grain Crops.
Coronation is in Census Division VII.

3 From Reports of the Canadian Wheat Board.

4 Coronation's price is 18¹/₂ cents less than that at Ft. William.

APPENDIX CPopulation, Racial Origin, and Religious Denominations of CoronationPopulation

	Total		Male		Female	
	Munic.	Town	Munic.	Town	Munic.	Town
1916		456		257		199
1921	2,042	645	1,180	338	862	307
1926	1,865	713	1,072	368	793	345
1931	2,022	738	1,149	385	873	353
1936	1,941	605	1,099	312	842	293
1941	1,840	581	1,033	305	807	276
1946	1,494	633	847	325	647	308

Racial Origin

	1921		1931		1941	
	Munic.	Town	Munic.	Town	Munic.	Town
British Races						
English	857	273	663	279	543	228
Irish	335	124	342	108	285	73
Scotch	285	119	303	133	209	100
Other	28	21	17	27	38	10
European Races						
Austrian	7	-	3	-	8	-
Belgian	8	-	11	-	12	-
French	64	11	86	21	82	32
German	132	25	232	33	252	32
Hungarian	-	-	2	-	9	-
Jewish	-	-	-	5	-	7
Netherlands	50	11	47	10	44	6
Polish	4	-	10	8	9	10
Roumanian	-	-	5	-	8	6
Russian	86	1	56	6	98	15
Scandinavian	174	34	233	74	224	47
Ukrainian	-	-	1	-	12	6
Other	8	4	10	8	7	1
Asiatic Races						
Chinese and						
Japanese	2	20	1	24	-	7
Other	-	-	-	1	-	-
Indian	-	1	-	-	-	1
Unspecified	2	1	-	1	-	-
Total	2,042	645	2,022	738	1,840	581

Religious Denominations

	1921		1931		1941	
	Munic.	Town	Munic.	Town	Munic.	Town
Adventist	18	-	3	-	5	-
Anglican	238	105	255	133	235	115
Baptist	126	17	101	20	136	9
Brethren	9	-	-	-	3	-
Greek Catholic	-	-	-	-	23	-
Greek Orthodox	5	-	18	-	23	-
Jewish	-	-	-	5	-	7
Lutheran	231	29	269	50	318	48
Mennonite	14	-	3	-	24	-
Methodist ¹	410	261	-	-	-	-
Penticostal	-	-	-	1	-	7
Presbyterian	681	137	43	41	74	17
Roman Catholic	237	50	258	55	176	64
United Church ¹	-	-	1,030	403	665	277
Other	73	46	41	28	158	34
Not stated	-	-	1	2	-	3
Total	2,042	645	2,022	738	1,840	581

From data enclosed in a letter dated June 28, 1949, from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ottawa.

¹ Methodist included with United Church in years 1931 and 1941.

APPENDIX DWeather Bureau StatisticsHighest Temperature

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1944					85.0	95.1	91.8	82.0	80.3	72.4	46.9	43.2
1945	41.2	38.0	57.1	65.0	83.8	87.6	93.1	91.2	84.0	83.8	45.0	41.0
1946			65.4		83.0			87.0	82.2	57.2	61.0	41.1
1947	47.0	40.0	51.5	76.0	73.0	78.8	92.5	90.1	82.0	72.2	63.0	41.1
1948	44.4	35.2	40.0	58.9	81.8	88.8	87.0	90.9	88.0	74.5	48.0	37.0
1949	41.0	37.0	52.8	80.0								

Lowest Temperature

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1944					22.5	38.1	44.2	39.0	24.9	25.8	17.7	23.0
1945	22.8	27.9	29.0	4.5	14.0	30.8	42.8	37.6	17.5	7.1	24.8	22.6
1946			2.2		15.6				28.0	12.8	25.5	31.0
1947	38.0	41.3	26.0	13.2	20.0	30.1	38.6	38.2	31.8	19.5	9.0	4.8
1948	15.0	27.0	24.2	11.9	31.1	37.8	44.0	38.0	20.2	15.0	10.8	31.0
1949	35.3	33.0	14.0	22.0								

Monthly Mean Temperature

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1944					64.9	69.2	73.2	71.5	64.2	62.4	29.4	
1945	20.0	21.4	35.5	82.6	59.3	66.9	76.7	67.0		40.2	21.8	15.7
1946			30.4	44.9	47.9				50.8			
1947	42.0	1.1	17.2	39.9	48.3	56.2	67.4	58.9	44.4	43.9	20.0	15.1
1948	16.5	0.5	2	10.1	25.2	52.7	59.9	61.1	20.2			4.2
1949	1.1	3.7	24.3	45.8								

Total Precipitation

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1944					1.51	2.14	4.53	2.27	1.86	.07	3.62	.45
1945	0.98	.52	.53	1.03	.45	2.87	2.15	1.20	1.41	4.45	5.15	
1946	5.0		.62	.35	1.94	3.63	1.03	4.61	2.78	.88	0.47	1.63
1947	0.43	0.35	0.56	1.28	0.75	2.72	1.30	3.94	2.57	1.16	1.08	0.44
1948	0.89	2.34	0.89	2.75	0.61	0.99	3.39	1.13	0.66	0.25	0.63	0.79
1949	1.00	0.62	0.50	0.16								

The Coronation Weather Bureau began operation in 1944.

APPENDIX EMayors of Coronation and Their Terms of Office

H.S.Northwood	1911 - 1915	Five Years
J.E.Bonsall	1916 - 1917	Two Years
A.O.Thomas	1918 - 1920	Three Years
R.G.Kahl	1921 -	One Year
D.A.Thomson	1922 - 1923	Two Years
Frank Burns	1924 - 1925	Two Years
J.E.Bonsall	1926 - 1935	Ten Years
C.E.Gerhart	1936 - 1940	Five Years
John Anderson	1941 - 1946	Six Years
John Stewart	1947 - 1950	Four Years

From statistics enclosed in a letter dated Feb. 8, 1951,
from the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Edmonton.

APPENDIX FRegister of Pioneers

30th Anniversary of Founding of Town of Coronation: September 27, 1941
(Each name is followed by: date of arrival; manner of travel from jumping-off place; birthplace)

1897

John Nelson; July, 1897; Wagon from Sedgewick driving cattle; Norway

1903

W.W. Greathouse; July, 1903, Drove cattle from Billings, Mont.; Howard C., Ark..

1904

Lillian Annie Carter; July, 1904; Running gears of wagon from Alix; Minnesota.

George Lewis; May, 1904; Saddle horse, High River; Scotland.

1905

John Bargholz; March, 1905; Livery from Red Deer; Davenport, Iowa.

H.N. Black; May, 1905; Horse and wagon from Red Deer; Melton Mowbray, Eng..

Annie Bedson; June, 1905, Horses and wagon from Red Deer; Yorkshire, Eng..

John E. Carter; July, 1905; Team and wagon from Lacombe; Plainville, Kansas, U.S.A.

J.L. Carter; May, 1905; Team from Wetaskiwin; Texas, U.S.A.

Edmond Chabrier; September, 1905; Horses from Red Deer; Nacazaki, Japan.

S.E. Chabrier; September, 1905; Horses and wagon from Red Deer; north France.

Joseph A. Crower; April, 1905; Saddle horse from Olds; Ontario.

Albert J. Dolling; October, 1905; Oxen from Stettler; London, Eng..

E.W. Eksandh; September, 1905; Horses from Stettler; Smaland, Sweden.

E.J. Gibson; May, 1905; Team and wagon, Blackfalds; Wheatley, Ont..

Mrs. E.J. Gibson; July, 1905; Team and wagon, Blackfalds; Guelph, Ont..

Gladys Gibson; July, 1905; Team of horses from Blackfalds; Detroit, Mich..

T.E. McConkey; Fall, 1905; Horses and wagon from Okotoks; Grey Co., Ont..

James Richardson; April, 1905; Team from Red Deer; Eng..

Wm. Roach; March, 1905; Horses from Red Deer; Port Perry, Ont..

W.W. Warnock; September, 1905, Milch cow and horse, Stettler; Ont..

1906

Mrs. J. Anderson; October, 1906; Drove cattle from Stettler; Bagot, Man..

Mrs. J. Anhorn; March, 1906; Wagon from Stettler; Fresno, California.

Mrs. John Bargholz; March, 1906; Team from Stettler; Rice Lake, Wisconsin.

Edward Bartlett; September, 1906; Walked from Stettler; Owen Sound, Ont..

Alex Bernhardt; July, 1906; Team from Stettler; Kitchener, Ont..

Mrs. E. Binning; July, 1906; Horses and wagon from Bowden; Camburn, Eng..

Mrs. Reatha M. Brown; 1906; Wagon from Alix; Alix.

Mrs. Archie Carter; June, 1906; Wagon from Stettler; Man..

Mrs. J.L. Carter; June, 1906; Team from Stettler; Man..

J. Collier; May, 1906; Native; Bulwark.

E. Doering; June, 1906; Team and wagon from Stettler, North Dakota.

Enock Evans; October, 1906; Horses from Stettler; Wales.

1906(Cont'd)

R. Goodall; March, 1906; Prairie schooner and team from Calgary; Northampton, Eng..
 Henry Goodenough; Spring, 1906; Team and wagon, Lacombe; Nebraska, U.S..
 Mrs. Mary Goodenough; Spring, 1906; Team and wagon, Lacombe; Nebraska, U.S..
 Aug. Krauss; July, 1906; Livery from Wetaskiwin; Germany.
 Basil Lind; Spring, 1906; Oxen and wagon from Stettler; Portage La Prairie, Man..
 R. Lind; June, 1906; Oxcart from Stettler; Portage La Prairie, Man..
 H. McLarty; December, 1906; Sleigh from Stettler; Ontario.
 Mrs. H. McLarty; June, 1906; Wagon from Stettler; Quebec.
 M. McRae; September, 1906; Horses from Stettler; Moray, Scotland.
 George Omilusik; Spring, 1906; Walked from B.C.; Poland.
 Keith Roach; June, 1906; Team from Stettler; Manitoba.
 Emily Robson; October, 1906; Team and democrat from Stettler; Devon, Eng..
 C.D. Schaffer; Fall, 1906; Oxen from Stettler; South Dakota.
 W.J. Snider; 1906; Team from Stettler; Ontario.
 Peter Sterger; March, 1906; Team from Stettler; Russia.
 Mrs. Peter Sterger; March, 1906; Wagon from Stettler; Saradough, Russia.
 D.F. Valantive; June, 1906; Horses from Wetaskiwin; Wetaskiwin.
 H.A. Vought; May, 1906; Team; Minnesota.
 Mrs. H.A. Vought; April, 1906; Team from Stettler; Berling, Miss..

1907

Stephen Banister; May, 1907; Horses from Calgary; England.
 Mrs. Mabel Black; May, 1907; Horses and wagon from Stettler; Brandon, Man..
 Fred Cameron; June, 1907; Horses from Stettler; Ontario.
 Jennie E. Crower; June, 1907; Wagon, Eagle Hill (W Olds); Northumberland, Eng..
 Richard Ewbank; November, 1907; Team, Stettler; Yorkshire, Eng..
 W.E. Glasier; March, 1907; Wagon from Stettler; Ontario.
 Mrs. W.E. Glasier; March, 1907; Wagon from Stettler; Ontario.
 Mrs. R. Goodall; August, 1907; Team from Stettler; Midnapore; N.W.T..
 John Handby; December, 1907; Wagon from Stettler; Eng..
 William Handby; December, 1907; Team of horses from Stettler; Yorkshire, England.
 Henry Heidecker; May, 1907; Wagon from Wetaskiwin; Germany.
 W. Henson; March, 1907; Sleigh from Hardisty; England.
 Mrs. W. Henson; March, 1907; Sleigh from Hardisty; England.
 Frank E. Hilstob; March, 1907; Horse team from Stettler; Iowa.
 Mrs. Ruth Huff; October, 1907; Team from Stettler; Virginia.
 S. Kisch; December, 1907; Team from Sedgewick; Minnesota.
 A. Landvik; August, 1907; Team and wagon from Stettler; Norway.
 Mrs. R. Lind; May, 1907; Horses from Stettler; U.S.A.
 Sam Mills; April, 1907; Horses from Stettler; Bracebridge, Ont..
 D. Nicoud; November, 1907; Livery from Castor; France.
 Mrs. Don O'Connor; May, 1907; Native daughter; Puffer.
 W.J. Radel; 1907; Horses from Castor; Wisconsin.
 F. Robinson; April, 1907; Oxen from Stettler; Liecester, Eng..
 E. Stokes; May, 1907; Team of horses from Stettler; Fingal, Ont..
 Mrs. Ed. Stokes; May, 1907; Team of horses from Stettler; Iona, Ont..
 Halvor Tangen; June, 1907; Bicycle from Stettler to file; Blanchard, N.D.
 Mrs. R.J. Twa; March, 1907; Sleigh from Hardisty; England.
 Lester H. Wager; April, 1907; Wagon and horses from Stettler; New York.

1908

R.H. Bowden; May, 1908; Horses from Stettler; Owen Sound, Ont..
 Fred Burgman; May, 1908; Oxtteam from Stettler; Hohah, Minn..
 Frank Burns; February, 1908; Team from Stettler; Castle Douglas, Scotland
 Mrs. J.W. Cameron; May, 1908; Horses from Stettler; Middlesex, Ont..
 Elry Cline; April, 1908; Native, Coronation.
 Wm. Constable; April, 1908; Horses from Stettler; Glasgow, Scotland
 Carl Ekman; July, 1908; Walked from Williston(s. Castor); Brainard, Minn..
 Edwin Ekman; May, 1908; Oxen from Stettler; Minnesota.
 Walter Ekman; May, 1908; Two oxen, one horse wagon, Stettler; Brainard, Minn..
 P.O. Glomlien; Spring, 1908; Walked from Stettler; Norway.
 Jos. Haggerty; April, 1908; Walked from Stettler; Hamilton, Ont..
 L. Hansen; March, 1908; Horses and slwigh from Stettler; Iowa.
 Mrs. Fred Hudson; May, 1908; Native daughter; Puffer (Fairfield)
 A. Kortgaard; August, 1908; Freighted from Hardisty; Madison, Minn..
 H. Lewis; May, 1908; Wagon from Stettler; England.
 Wallace H. McComish; October, 1908; Drove from Banff; Ontario.
 Mrs. Ex. O'Hara; April, 1908; Team from Stettler; Ontario.
 Mrs. Emma Stockwell; November, 1908; Horses from Hardisty; Deerfield Twp., Iowa.
 V.H. Stockwell; Dec., 1908; Team and wagon, Hardisty; Sherwood, N. Dak., U.S.
 Mrs. M.J. Taylor; June, 1908; Oxen from Stettler; Cobalt, Ont..
 O.H. Walhovd; April, 1908; Team from Wetaskiwin; Norway.
 Ingvald Wee; November, 1908; Team of horses from Stettler; Hanska, Minn..
 Helene F. Wilson; October, 1908; Native daughter; Talbot.

1909

J. Edgar Agar; May, 1909; Team from Stettler; Kleinburg, Ont..
 R.F. Agar; Spring, 1909; Horses from Castor; Vaughan, Ont..
 A.L. Anderson; January, 1909; Oxen and horses from Stettler; Grant Co., Minn.
 J. Anderson; March, 1909; Team from Stettler; Ontario.
 Ole Bakken; July, 1909; Walked from Hardisty; Waldris, Norway.
 M. Bernhardt; Fall, 1909; Horses from Bassano; Kitchener, Ont..
 Mrs. N. Bowers; September, 1909; Team from Hardisty; Minnesota, U.S.A.
 Wm. B. Butterwick; October, 1909; Native; Coronation.
 Archie Carter; May, 1909; Wagon from Alix; Kansas.
 Severin Christofferson; April, 1909; Oxen and wagon, New Norway; Bergen, Norway.
 L.J. Cochrane; June, 1909; Horses from Red Deer; Milbrooke, Ont..
 Mrs. F. Colson; July, 1909; Horses and wagon from Stettler; Bracebridge, Ont..
 Frank Colson; July, 1909; Horses and wagon from Stettler; Bracebridge, Ont..
 Mrs. J.A. Crane; September, 1909; Team from Idaho; Idaho.
 James Crane; November, 1909; Horses from Wyoming; Ohio
 W.D. Duncan; April, 1909; Horses from Stettler; Ontario.
 Kalla Eksandh; November, 1909; Horses from Stettler; Gotland, Sweden.
 W.E. Hazlewood; June, 1909; Horses and wagon from Stettler; Kirkton, Ont..
 Geo. C. Johnson; July, 1909; Democrat from Hardisty; Paris, France.
 Geo. Jorgenson; August, 1909; Four-horse team loaded; Caledonia, Minn.
 Louis Larsen; May, 1909; Horses from Wetaskiwin; Norway.
 Thos. Laycraft; April, 1909; Team of horses from Hardisty; Leeds, Quebec.
 E.G. Leake; July, 1909; Wagon from Hardisty; Ontario.

1909 (Cont'd)

Mrs.E.G.Leake;July,1909;Wagon from Hardisty;Ontario.
 H.J.Leake sr.;July,1909;Wagon from Hardisty;Ontario.
 J.E.Leake;July,1909;Wagon from Hardisty;Ontario.
 Mrs.B.Lind;August,1909;Horses from Sedgewick;DesMoines,Iowa.
 Peter Lindell;May,1909;Team of horses from Bassano;Malmo,Sweden.
 Mrs.Wallace McComish;May,1909;Team from Stettler;Spokane Wash..
 Rod McLeod;April,1909;Team from Stettler;Broughty Ferry,Scotland.
 Elmer Moore;May,1909;Horse back with bunch of cattle;Nova Scotia.
 Mrs.Elmer Moore;September,1909;Prairie schooner from Stettler;U.S.A..
 Aug.Nicoud;Dec.,1909;First train Stettler to Castor,then horses;
 Tsere,France.
 N.R.Osetsky;Fall,1909;Oxen and wagon,Stettler;Oddessa,Russia.
 Mrs.A.Quast;May,1909;Oxteam from Stettler;Russia.
 J.W.Peet;Aug.,1909;Team and wagon from Calgary;Austin,Minn..
 Fred Rall;May,1909;Team oxen from Stettler;North Dakota.
 Nels Rodvang;Aug.,1909;Horses and sleigh from Wetaskiwin;Valdris,
 Norway.
 Henry Roessler;March,1909;Team from Stettler;Ashley,North Dakota.
 Gustav Schoene;October,1909;Team of horses from Stettler;Germany.
 Phil Taylor;Fall,1909;With oxen from Stettler;Morristown,Wales.
 Bill Thomson;April,1909;Oxteam from Stettler;Orkney Islands,Scotland.
 A.S.Waltham;April,1909;Team from Stettler;Ontario.
 John Whittaker;September,1909;Team of horses from Stettler;
 Bismark,N.Dakota.

1910

J.W.Bargholz;October,1910;Native son;Coronation.
 E.Binning;April,1910;Horses and wagon from Bowden;Clay Co.,Iowa.
 R.Boettcher;March,1910;Oxen from Castor;Russia.
 Herb Brigham;March,1910;Team horses from Castor;Yorkshire,Eng..
 M.R.Butterfield;April,1910;Horse and buggy from Hardisty;Hartington,
 Neb..
 O.J.Cook;June,1910;Walked from Castor;Ontario.
 T.H.Cuthbert;May,1910;Team and wagon from Medicine Hat;Victoria,B.C..
 Ora E.Dafoe;March,1910;Team and supplies from Castor;Avon,Ont..
 Roland Eksandh;November,1910;Native son;Talbot.
 Geo Fair;April,1910;Horses from Castor to Haneyville;Arkona,Ont..
 Merle Gatchell;August,1910;Walked from Castor;Michigan.
 John Hallett;April,1910;Oxteam from Castor;England.
 H.J.Hamner;August,1910;Team from Castor.
 Mrs.O.C.Hamner;August,1910;Team from Castor;Toronto,Ontario.
 Ogle C.Hamner;August,1910;Horses from Castor;Clinton,Ont..
 Thorvald Hansen;July,1910;Team from Castor;Denmark.
 N.W.High;April,1910;Wagon from Castor;Ontario.
 Mrs.Frank Kilborn; May,1910;Horses and democrat from Stettler;
 Brockville,Ont..
 William F.Kilborn;May,1910;Horses and democrat from Stettler;
 Brockville,Ont..
 Mrs.P.C.McLean;May,1910;Oxen and wagon from Castor;Bangor,Ont..
 Peter C.McLean;May,1910;Oxen and wagon from Castor;Dutton,Ont..
 Mrs.M.McRae;September,1910;Horses from Castor;Inverness,Scotland.
 John A.Miller;Fall,1910;Team and sleigh,Huxley;Portsmouth,England.
 Edwin Nelson;June,1910;Horses from Castor;Holland,Sweden.

1910 (Cont'd)

J.Osetsky; March, 1910; Oxteam from Stettler; Russia.
 Mrs. J.Osetsky; March, 1910; Oxteam from Stettler; Russia.
 Ernest Paterson; April, 1910; Team and wagon from Castor; Ontario.
 E.A.Perry; July, 1910; Oxteam from Hardisty; Valley Field, Que..
 H.M.Perry; July, 1910; Prairie schooner from Hardisty; Ontario.
 Mrs. K.Perry; July, 1910; Prairie schooner from Hardisty; Ontario.
 John Perry; July, 1910; Horses from Hardisty; Ontario.
 Geo. G.Price; March, 1910; Wagon from Castor; Wales.
 Mrs. Geo. G.Price; March, 1910; Wagon from Castor; Streetsville, Ont..
 Alex. Quast; June, 1910; Team from Castor; Russia.
 E.W.Robinson; March, 1910; Oxen from Castor; Ontario.
 Mrs. E.W.Robinson; August, 1910; Horses and wagon from Hardisty; Peterborough, Ont..
 P.V.Sandberg; February, 1910; Rode on lumber from Castor; Sweden.
 Mrs. P.V.Sandberg; October, 1910; Team of horses from Castor; Wyley, Minn..
 Mrs. Starzman; October, 1910; Team of horses from Castor; Greenock, Scot..
 G.Starzman; October, 1910; Team of oxen from Camrose; Youngstown, Ohio.
 F.C.Stockwell; October, 1910; Team from Castor; North Dakota.
 Melvin J.Taylor; April, 1910; Team from Castor; Ontario.
 J.W.Thring; May, 1910; Six oxen and wagon from Roland, Man.; Wilts., Eng..
 Edward Towns; April, 1910; Team from Castor; N.Dakota.
 Mrs. Annie Townsend; July, 1910; Team from Castor; London, England.
 Mrs. Fred Wagner; April, 1910; Team and wagon, Castor; Bessarabia, Russia.
 Ole Walhovd; July, 1910; Team from Pigeon Lake; South Norway.
 Mrs. Gwendolyn Warnock; October, 1910; Team from Castor; Castor.
 Mrs. Jennie Taylor Watson; April, 1910; Team from Castor; Ontario.
 R.Watson; April, 1910; Freight car; Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

1911

Jas. O.Barnes; March, 1911; Team from Castor; Ontario.
 H.B.Bedson; May, 1911; Oxen from Castor; Toronto, Ontario.
 J.E.Bonsall; September, 1911; Team from Castor; Paltimore, Que..
 D.N.Campbell; November, 1911; train; Ontario.
 Mrs. L.J.Cochrane; May, 1911; Team of horses from Castor; Ontario Co., Ont
 Mrs. J.Collier; April, 1911; Native daughter; Bulwark
 Mrs. Oscar Cook; 1911; Train; Sarnia, Ontario.
 Wm. Couturier; December, 1911; Train from Castor, 2¹/₂ hours; Michigan.
 A.B.DeWitt; Spring, 1911; Team from Stettler; Napanee, Ontario.
 Mrs. Albert J.Dolling; October, 1911; train from Winnipeg; Plymouth, Eng..
 Charles Duer; May, 1911; Horse team from Castor; Kansas.
 Mrs. Sarah L.Golby; June, 1911; Horse and buggy from Castor; Brinsmead, Neb..
 Rosalie Heidecker; March, 1911; Horses from Stettler; Crimea, Russia.
 Alb. Hofer; December, 1911; Horses from Stettler; Berne, Switzerland.
 Henry Jorgenson; Thanksgiving, 1911; Horses from Stettler; Minnesota.
 Mabel Kisch; May, 1911; Stork; Michigan.
 Orin Kartgaard; October, 1911; Train; Minnesota.
 Mrs. Alice Kotow; June, 1911; Wagon from Castor; Russia.
 S.Laycraft; July, 1911; Native son; Veteran.
 Mrs. Anna Lindquist; April, 1911; Team of horses from Castor; ButterCo., Nebraska.
 Byron Lindquist; April, 1911; Wagon from Castor; Harrison, Idaho.

1911 (Cont'd)

J.E.Maddock; November, 1911; Team from Castor; Ontario.
 Mrs. J. Mayhew; November, 1911; Train; Huntsville, Ont..
 Joseph Mayhew; September, 1911; Buggy from Castor; Ontario.
 Mrs. M. J. McMahon; November, 1911; First passenger train; Ontario.
 R. M. Merchant; April, 1911; Horses from Castor; Mica, Washington.
 W. W. Merchant; September, 1911; Team of horses from Castor; Renfrew Co., Ont..
 M. Mjolsness; April, 1911; Team and buggy from Stettler; Hendrum, Minn..
 Mrs. M. Mjolsness; June, 1911; (first bride); Horse and buggy from Stettler; N. Dak..
 G. R. Miller; Spring, 1911; Oxen from Huxley; Portsmouth, England.
 Mrs. Leslie Moore; August, 1911; Oxen from Stettler; Provmont, Michigan.
 Mrs. A. Nicoud; August, 1911; Team from Castor;
 H. S. Northwood; September, 1911; First train to Coronation; Chatham, Ont..
 Don O'Connor; April, 1911; Livery from Castor; Ontario.
 Mrs. J. O'Hou; April, 1911; Oxen and wagon, Huxley; Summerset, Eng..
 Ed. Osetsky; July, 1911; Native son; Coronation.
 Mrs. E. Paterson; July, 1911; Democrat from Castor; Ontario.
 Leonard E. Paterson; July, 1911; Democrat from Castor; Ontario.
 J. H. Paugh; September, 1911; Saddle horse from Castor; East Bideford, P.E.I.
 Chris Petersen; May, 1911; Team from Castor; Denmark.
 Mrs. Chris Petersen; May, 1911; Work train from Castor; Denmark.
 Ernest Robson; July, 1911; Native son; Coronation.
 Jens Sande; March, 1911; Oxen from Castor; Hammar, Norway.
 H. F. Schmidt; June, 1911; Horses from Castor; Aabenvan, Denmark.
 W. P. Sharplin; March, 1911; Ox team; London.
 George Sneath; August, 1911; Ox team from Castor; Galt, Ont..
 Mrs. D. Valantine; October, 1911; Train from Nebraska; U.S.A.
 Mrs. O. H. Walhovd; April, 1911; Team from Wetaskiwin; Norway.
 R. Wangsness; March, 1911; Team; Elbou Lake, Minn..
 Mrs. G. Augusta Whittaker; March, 1911; Horses from Castor; Yorkshire, Eng..
 A. C. Williamson; April, 1911; Team from Castor; Colorado.
 Mrs. W. H. Wilson; August, 1911; Team from Castor; North Dakota.
 Dewey Woody; April, 1911; Horses from Castor; Moore, Montana.
 L. H. Woody; April, 1911; Team and wagon from Castor; Indiana, U.S..
 L. R. Woody; Spring, 1911; Horses from Castor; Montana, U.S.A..
 Mary E. Woody; April, 1911; Team and wagon from Castor; Illinois, U.S..
 J. Zimmerman; August, 1911; Native son; Coronation.

Taken from the Review, Oct. 2, 1941. This is a complete list of those who registered in the Old Timers' Hut in Coronation.

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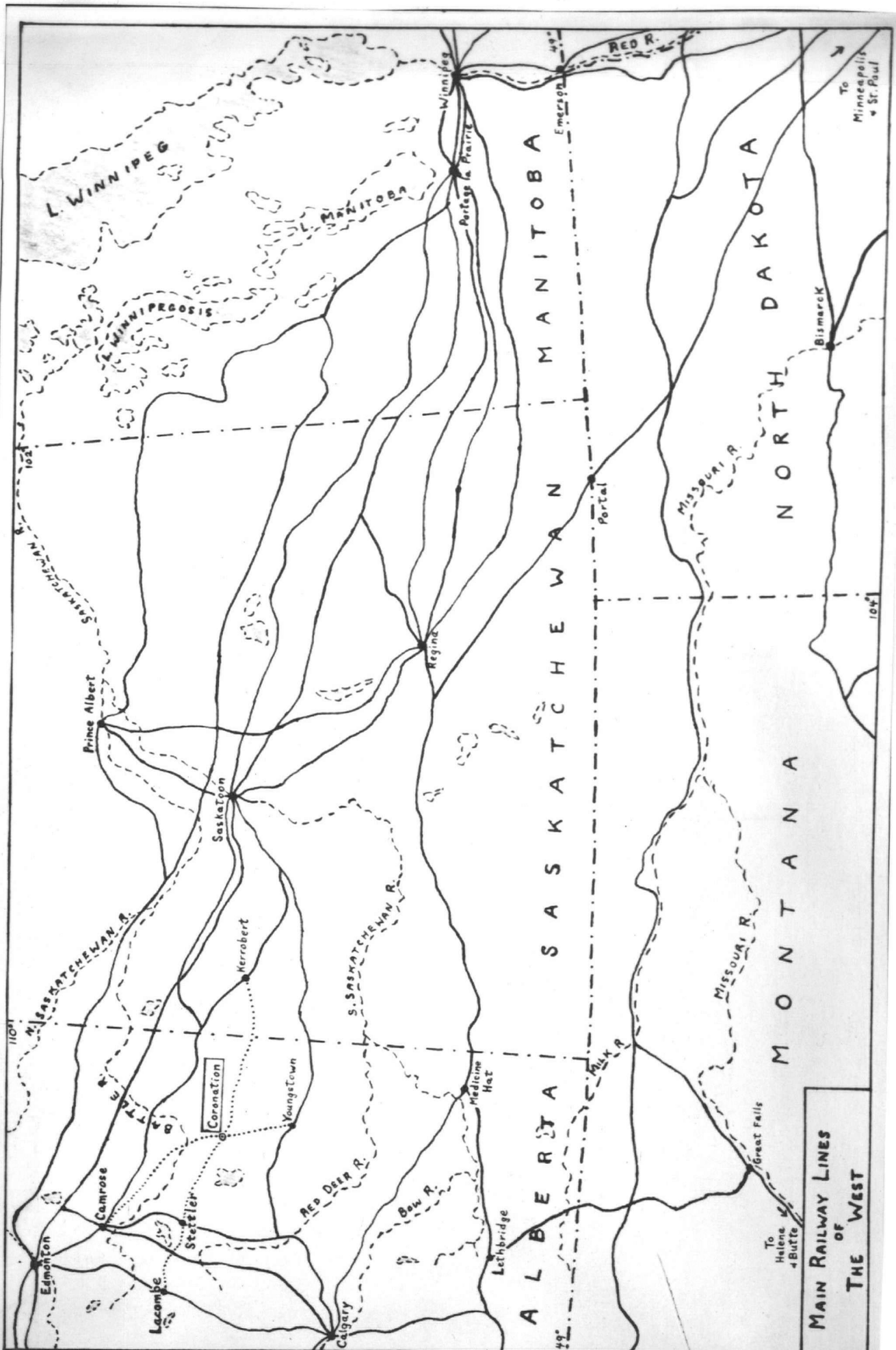
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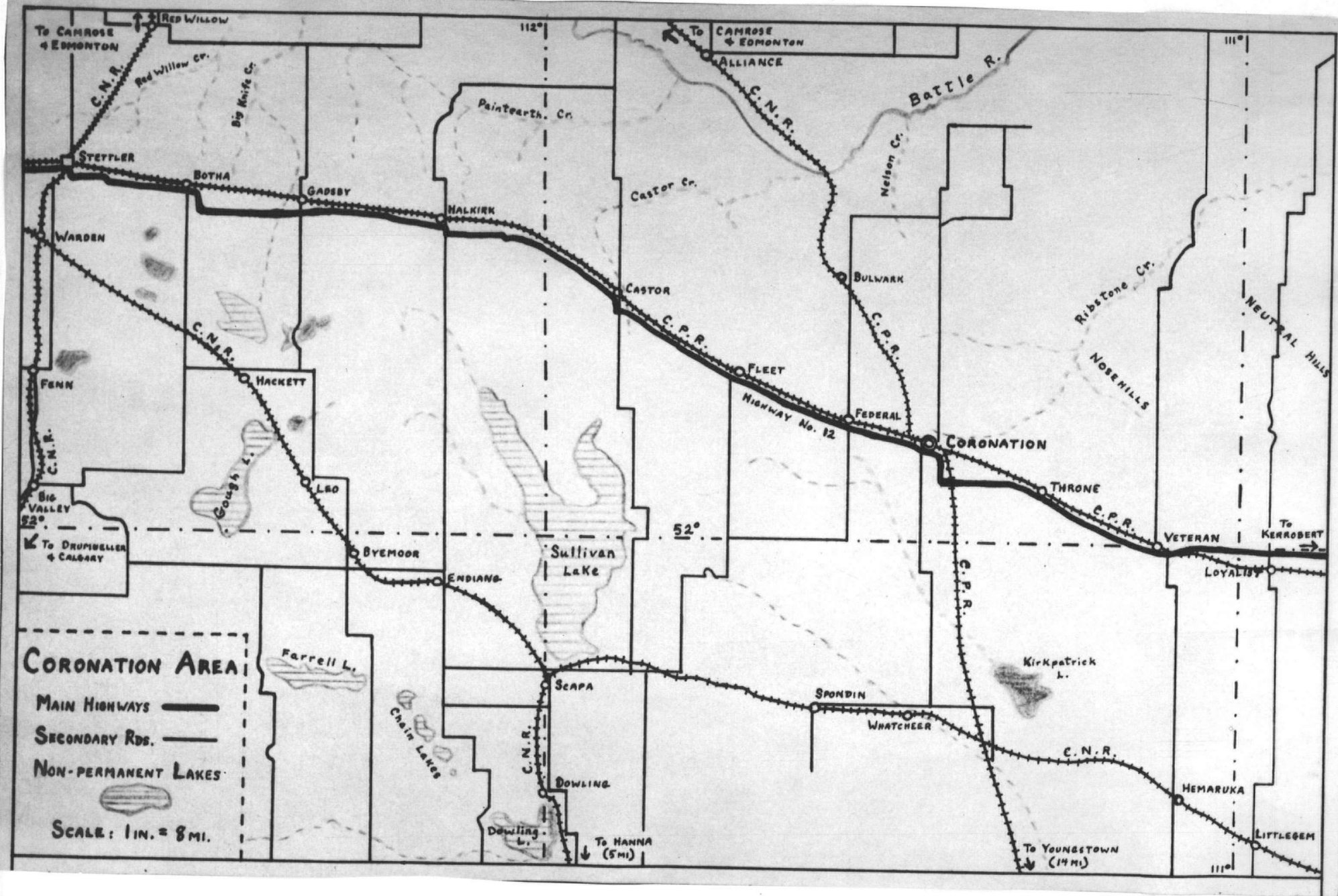
MAPS



MAIN RAILWAY LINES
OF
THE WEST

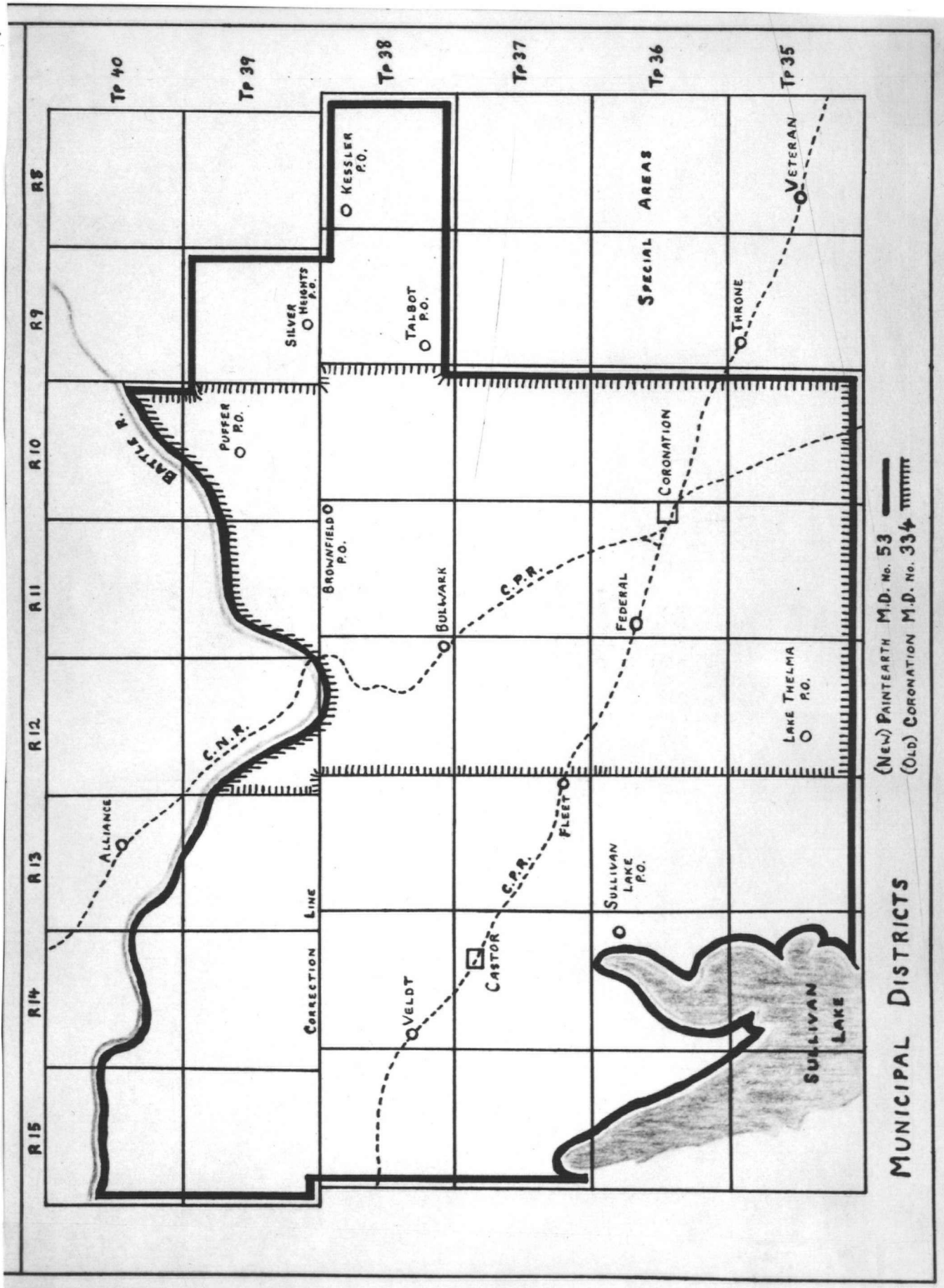
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Based on maps in The Times Atlas of the
World : "Western Canada"- Plate 84; "United
States - Central Section"- Plate 91; "United
States - Western Section"- Plate 92.



2

Based on National Topographical Series
maps: Red Deer - Edmonton; Wainwright -
Battleford; Banff - Bassano; and Hanna -
Kindersley.

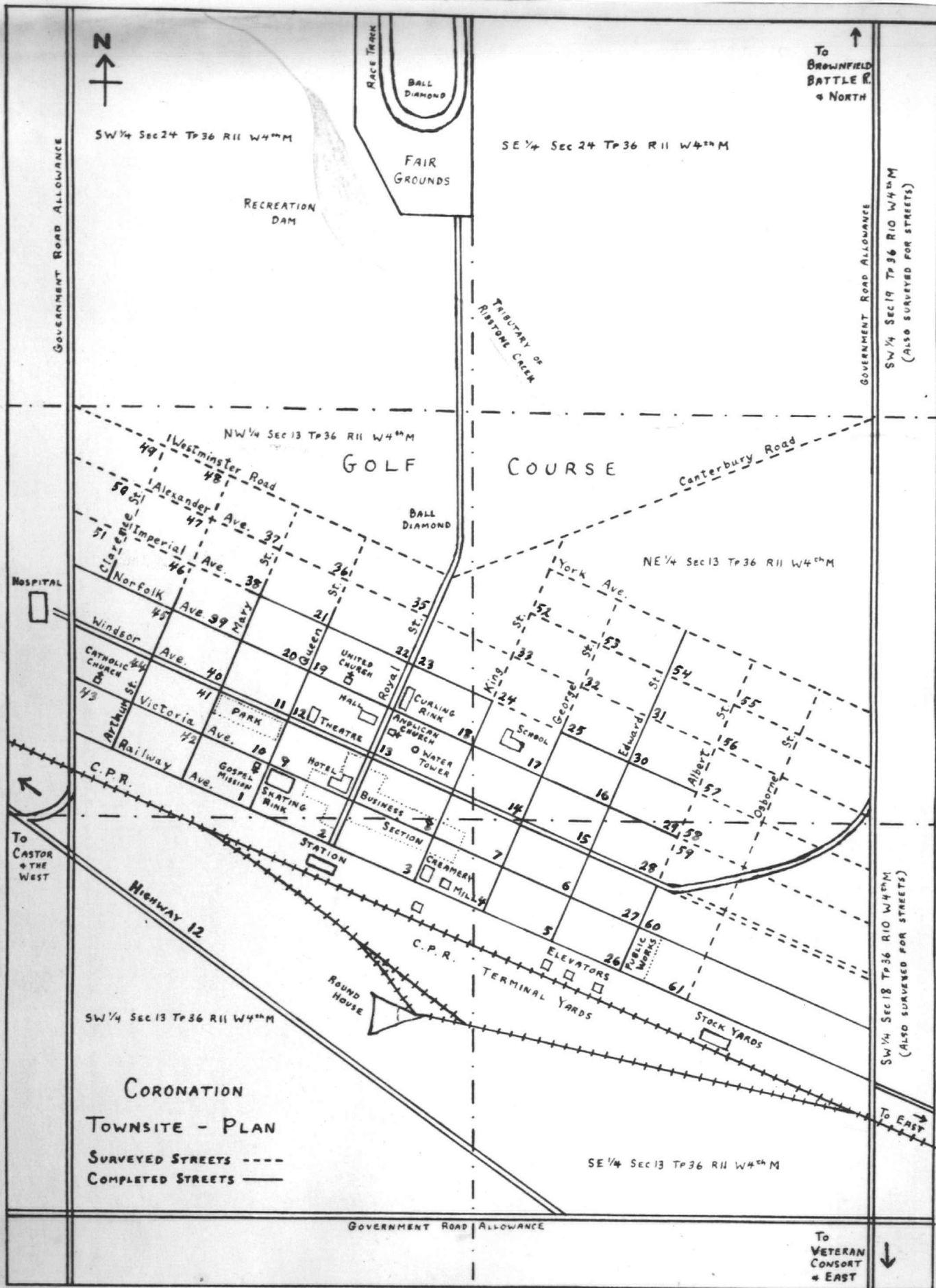


(New) PAINT EARTH M.D. No. 53
(Old) CORONATION M.D. No. 334

MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS

3

Based on map on file in the Paintearth
municipal office at Castor.



4

Based on original survey map, on file
in the Coronation Review office.