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# HISTORIC SITES OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

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HISTORIC SITES  
of the  
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

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## *Introduction*

**M**ANY historic sites in Alberta are located amid the settings of natural beauty and are viewed with interest by thousands of visitors annually.

Some of these sites are marked by cairns of the Historical Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, others by the Provincial Government, while still others have been preserved by local groups interested in keeping alive some of the colorful history of Alberta.

This western province has had a colorful career that should be of interest not only to local residents, but to visitors and tourists from all parts of the world. Alberta has seen the fur traders and the buffalo, the whiskey traders and the Indians, the North-West Mounted Police and the cultural development of a pioneering people.

Carelessness and lack of interest in the past has caused the destruction of many sites of historic interest. Every Alberta citizen is urged to help preserve and protect the many sites that still lie unmarked within the Province.

# ON THE PEACE AND ATHABASCA RIVERS

## Fur Forts and Explorers

THE Peace and the Athabasca Rivers are the two main drainage basins in Alberta, north of the Saskatchewan River. Both flow into the Arctic drainage system and were the scenes of Alberta's earliest development.

For historical interest, trading posts on these rivers will be mentioned in two groups — those now identified by Historic Sites and Monuments Board cairns, and unidentified sites.

Eight cairns honoring the fur trade have been erected by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board—two on the Peace River, five on the Athabasca River, and one on Lake Athabasca. These are located at the sites of Fort Fork and Fort Dunvegan on the Peace River; Fort Assiniboine, Fort McMurray, Jasper House and Henry House on the Athabasca; Fort Chipewyan on Lake Athabasca; and one in Jasper Park in honor of David Thompson.

### FORT FORK

A cairn paying tribute to Sir Alexander Mackenzie and to Fort Fork is located on the old fort site about eight miles south-west of Peace River town. It lies on a point between the Smoky and the Peace. Remains of the fort include two chimney bottoms and three cellars, one of which is very large.

Mackenzie stayed at Fort Fork during the winter of 1792-93, while searching for the elusive Western Sea. The famous explorer already had completed his northern search, which led him up the great river he named River Disappointment, but which was later changed to the Mackenzie River, in honor of its discoverer.

Mackenzie left Fort Fork on May 9, 1793, following the Peace into the Rocky Mountains and eventually reaching the Pacific Ocean via the

Bella Coola River. On July 21, he and his nine companions arrived at Echo Cove—the first party to reach the Pacific Ocean by land. The return trip was made along the same route, with the group arriving in Fort Fork September 24, 1793.

The cairn, which was unveiled on July 1, 1929, reads: "Cairn and tablet on Lot 19, Shaftesbury Settlement to mark the site of Fort Fork, where Sir Alexander Mackenzie wintered in 1792-93 and from where he set out on the 9th May, 1793, on his quest for the Western Sea."

### FORT DUNVEGAN

The important place that Fort Dunvegan held in the development of fur trading and agriculture was honored by a cairn unveiled September 9, 1951.

First man to visit the approximate site of Fort Dunvegan was Alexander Mackenzie during the spring of 1793. On May 11 of that year the explorer met a band of Beaver Indians two days out from Fort Fork, near the present Dunvegan site.

In 1805 the fort was built by Archibald Norman McLeod, a senior partner in the North West Company. The name was chosen in honor of his ancestral home on the Isle of Skye.

Temporary quarters were constructed in 1805, and log buildings bastions, pallisades and block houses were completed by the spring of 1806. For about 50 years from the time it opened its doors, Fort Dunvegan was the centre of fur trading on the Peace River. The Hudson's Bay Company took over the fort in 1821, and operated it until its final abandonment in 1918.

The fort had been temporarily abandoned in 1824 because of trouble with the Indians, following an argument in which one Indian was killed and a white trader wounded. When it was reopened four years later the fort had fallen to ruin and was rebuilt. The last buildings in the fort were constructed about 1879. The factor's house is today the only building remaining.

In addition to its importance as a fur trading centre, Fort Dunvegan has historical interest in the field of agriculture. In the summer of 1806 their first garden was planted and by 1809 strawberries, raspberries, cherries and vegetables were being produced.

Inscription on the cairn reads: "Fort Dunvegan, Established 1805 for the North West Company by Archibald Norman McLeod. Fort Dun-

vegan was named after the ancestral castle of the McLeods on the Island of Skye. For many years it was a centre of the fur trade, a link in the chain of communication westward into British Columbia and the scene of the missionary enterprises and agricultural experiment. It was operated by the Hudson's Bay Company from 1821 to 1918."

## FORT ASSINIBOINE

A cairn has been erected on a gravelly bench about 30 feet above the level of the Athabasca River to mark the site and to pay tribute to a link in the transcontinental water route of the past century.

Fort Assiniboine was the northern point on the long portage from Fort Edmonton to the Athabasca River for freight en route to Fort Vancouver via Athabasca Pass and Boat Encampment. Apparently the post was in operation all year round, at least in the year 1827. In that year, David Douglas states that he reached Fort Assiniboine in May from the west, and found the post in charge of J. E. Harriott. In 1859, Dr. Hector stated the place consisted of a few ruinous huts on the left bank of the river.

The land on which the fort site is located was deeded to the University of Alberta by the late Dr. State but has since been destroyed in the expansion of business in the area. The Village of Fort Assiniboine is near the old fort site and the Town of Barrhead is 25 miles southeast.

The cairn on the fort site states, in part: "Cairn with tablet to mark the site of Fort Assiniboine and to commemorate an improvement in the early transportation system of Western Canada."



This is a photo of Jasper House as it appeared in the 1870's. In the foreground is a party which is preparing to cross the Athabasca Pass to reach the Pacific coast. Eventually the post was abandoned, fell to ruin, and left no visible trace today.

*Photo—National Parks Service.*

## **METHYE PORTAGE, FORT McMURRAY**

The 12-mile portage between the Clearwater River and Methye Lake was an important link for supplies being freighted to the Athabasca, Peace and Mackenzie Rivers. As part of the supply route, Fort McMurray was constructed at the fork of the Clearwater and Athabasca Rivers.

The fur resources of the Athabasca district attracted the Frobishers in 1775 as far as Isle a La Cross. Here they met some Chipewyan Indians who were en route to Fort Churchill. Their success in trading prompted independent traders to send a stock of goods into the Athabasca country in 1778 under Peter Pond.

Pond left Cumberland House with four canoes and crossed the Methye Portage to the Clearwater River. When he began his voyage down the Clearwater to the Athabasca, he became the first white man to travel in a westward flowing river of north western America. He continued past where Fort McMurray now stands and descended to Lake Athabasca.

The cairn located on the public school grounds in Fort McMurray states in part: "Cairn and tablet to commemorate the events connected with the earliest trade route between eastward and westward flowing waters which followed the Clearwater River and the Methye Portage, discovered by Peter Pond in 1778 and used continuously for more than a century."

## JASPER HOUSE

A cairn erected in Jasper Park adjacent to the Jasper Highway near the mouth of Rocky River pays tribute to a post built by the North West Company about 1813.

Jasper House was never an important fur trading centre but was invaluable as a supply depot for horses and canoes for freight travelling to and from the west coast via the Athabasca Pass.

David Thompson pioneered a route to the Columbia River through the Athabasca Pass in 1811, which opened travel via the North Saskatchewan River. About 1826 the Yellowhead Pass was discovered so that both routes were together as far as the mouth of the Miette River where it empties into the Athabasca.

As early as 1813 Jasper House was important as a connection for express. Horses and canoes were sent at least

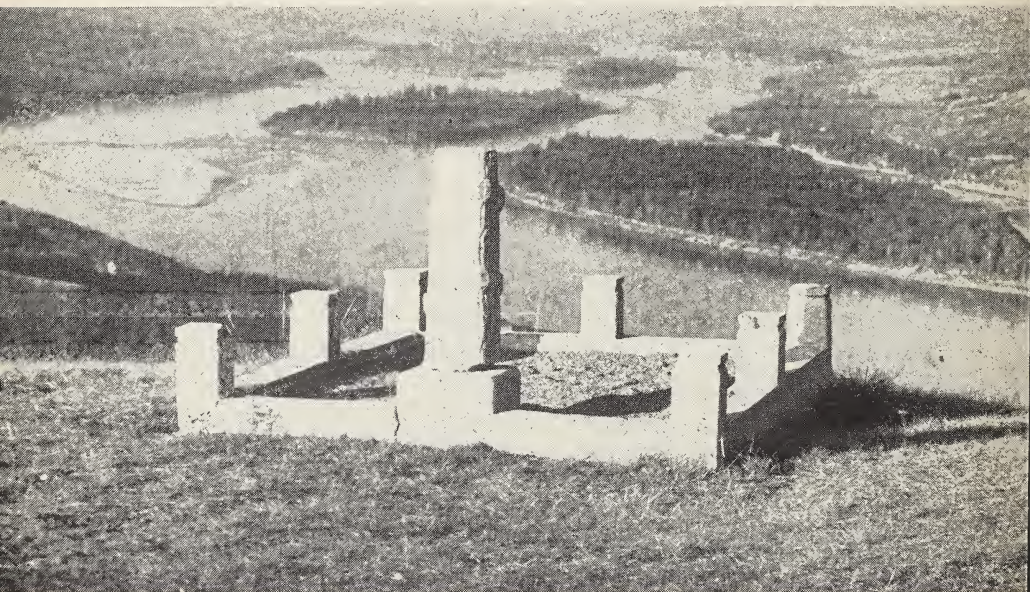
as far as the mouth of the Miette to meet the outgoing expresses and carried returning express to the same point. In later years Jasper House waned in importance until it was abandoned in 1884.

Inscription on the cairn reads: "Built by the North West Company, about 1813, at the Northern end of Brule Lake. Some time between 1827 and 1829 it was rebuilt near this site. For half a century it was a main support of the trade route across the mountains and an important point for all persons journeying through the Yellowhead and Athabasca passes."

## HENRY HOUSE

Another early post site within the boundary of Jasper National Park is that of Henry House which was constructed in 1811 by William Henry.

The cairn reads: "Cairn and tablet adjacent to the Jasper-Maligne Canyon road, about 400 yards north of



Grave of "Twelve Foot" Davis, overlooking the Peace River. Today, the grave is surrounded by a protective fence to save the grave marker from souvenir hunters.



the east end of the Athabasca bridge, to mark the site of Henry House, founded in 1811 by the North West Company. This post later became an important point in the transportation system of that Company and later of the Hudson's Bay Company.

### **ATHABASCA HOUSE**

One of the first forts in the Athabasca region, it was built by Peter Pond in 1778 on behalf of a group of free-traders. It was located on the west bank of the Athabasca River, about 30 miles from the river's mouth. With formation of free-traders into the North West Company in 1779, the post was retained for several years as a key fort for the new company. It was the only fort on the Athabasca until construction of Fort Chipewyan in 1788 and was also known as the "Old Establishment" and "Pond's House".

### **DAVID THOMPSON**

Another cairn located in the areas drained by the Peace and Athabasca Rivers which pays tribute to the fur trade is the David Thompson memorial in Jasper National Park.

David Thompson was one of the most famous explorers who had been in the employ of both the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. For some 27 years he served in the west and prepared the first accurate and scientific representation of Canada's geography.

In 1807 Thompson set out from Rocky Mountain House to discover the headwaters of the Columbia River and during the next three years built trading posts for the North West Company in southern British Columbia, Idaho and Washington.

When the hostility of the Peigan Indians prevented him from taking

the usual route to the west coast in the winter of 1810-11, Thompson discovered the Athabasca Pass, and transported his goods to the Big Bend of the Columbia. This pass later became an important route for carrying fur and freight over the mountains.

The cairn, erected in Jasper Park, reads: "In midwinter, 1810-11, David Thompson, of the North West Company, with ten companions discovered and travelled through this pass to the Columbia. It immediately became the regular route across the mountains and so continued until the advent of railway communications. To David Thompson, Canada owes the first accurately prepared map of the Great West embodying the results of his surveys and explorations from 1789 to 1812"

### **FORT CHIPEWYAN**

A cairn erected at Fort Chipewyan makes a threefold tribute to Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Sir John Franklin and to the fort itself.

The first fort on Lake Athabasca was built by Roderick Mackenzie of the North West Company in 1788. This first Fort Chipewyan was constructed about eight miles from the mouth of Athabasca River, on a rocky point projecting into the lake. In 1804 it was abandoned and a new fort was erected by the North West Company on a rocky point on the north shore of the lake—its present site.

After coalition in 1821, the Hudson's Bay Company operated this fort to the present date. In the same area the X.Y. Company constructed a fort in 1800 about one mile north of the present Roman Catholic Mission. The Hudson's Bay Company built Nottingham House in 1802 and Fort Wedderburne in 1815.

Some buildings from the last log fort at the site of modern Fort Chipewyan still are standing.

*NOTE:—In addition to the forts identified by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, there are other posts, forts and houses of which little or nothing remains today.*

*Most prominent of these are Fort Vermilion on the Peace and Athabasca Landing on the Athabasca.*

## **FORT VERMILION**

There were two Fort Vermilion posts on the Peace River. The first was built by Boyer in 1798 on the north bank of the Peace, near the mouth of Boyer River. After the union of 1821, this fort was taken over by the Hudson's Bay Company, which later built a new establishment about five miles farther upstream.

## **FORT LAC LA BICHE**

Rich fur yield of the Athabasca region prompted rival companies to build forts and trading posts along strategic water routes. Among the most durable was Fort Lac la Biche, built by David Thompson of the North West Company in 1798.

It was located on the east end of the lake to which Thompson gave the name "Red Deer".

In 1799 Peter Fidler of the Hudson's Bay Company built Greenwich House a short distance opposite Thompson's fort.

Following union of the two great companies in 1821, the first fort, Lac la Biche, was maintained by the Hudson's Bay Company until about 1912.

As the fur trade of the combined firms developed, fewer men were needed in transportation. Many displaced Metis were drawn to Lac la Biche and there formed a settlement. To accommodate their spiritual needs and instruct them in material ways, a Catholic Mission was founded at Lac la Biche in 1854. Its ruins are contained within the present townsite.

## **ATHABASCA LANDING**

Athabasca Landing played an important part in early history as a distributing post, rather than as a fur trading centre. In 1884, the Hudson's Bay Company established a post to supply their northern forts.

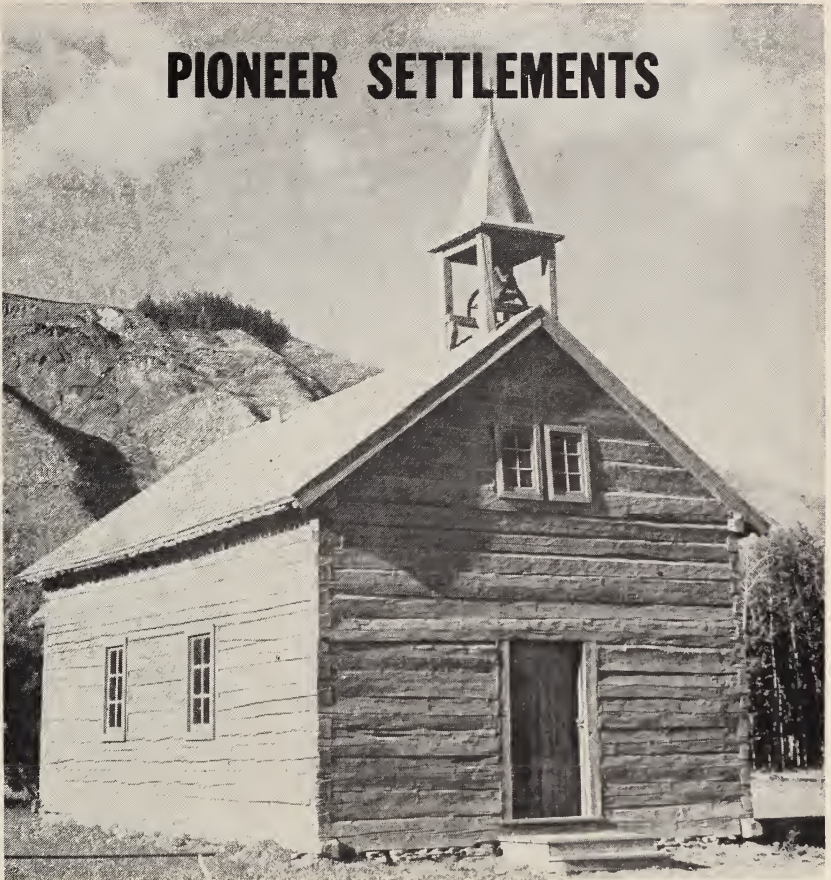
In later years, Athabasca became important to other companies dealing in the north. Supplies were freighted here during the winter and stored until the opening of navigation in the spring.

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Other posts located in this area include:

- (1) **On the Peace River drainage** — Red River Fort, Finlay House, Encampment Island Fort, Keg River Post, Horse Shoe House and McLeod's Fort.
- (2) **On the Athabasca River drainage** Pierre au Calumet and Lesser Slave Lake forts.
- (3) **On the Slave River** — Salt River House.
- (4) **On the Hay River**—Hay River Post and Fort George.

# PIONEER SETTLEMENTS



Grouard Church at the St. Charles Mission is located in the scenic valley of the Peace River at Dunvegan Crossing. The settlement played a vital part in the early missionary work of the area. The buildings have been partially restored.

There have been two major types of pioneer settlement in the Peace and Athabasca River areas. Religious leaders accounted for the first social development when they constructed numerous churches and missions throughout the north. Many of these old buildings still stand and remain as a symbol of the suffering and hardships of the early missionaries.

The second is land development. Countless pioneers who travelled by wagon and steamer to reach the rich farming areas of the north played an important part in the progress of Alberta. The trails travelled by these hardy pioneers are dealt with in another chapter.

Only the most well known monuments and sites will be dealt with here. These are the ones nearest civilization and preserved for future generations.

## THE OVERLANDERS

When gold was discovered in British Columbia in 1857, it drew men from all parts of the globe to an unknown country.

Many of these men travelled overland, crossing uncharted forests and prairies to reach their destination. In 1859 and 1862, several separate parties made the long overland journey through Canada, the former using the more southern Canadian passes.

The famous Overlanders of '62 adopted the Yellowhead Pass, some descending the Fraser, while a smaller number followed the North Thompson.

All of these gold-seekers endured many hardships and only the most courageous and determined men reached the shores of the Pacific.

A cairn erected by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board at Jasper reads: "Commemorating the courage and daring of the parties of gold-seekers, numbering about 250, who in 1862 left their homes in Upper and Lower Canada and journeyed overland by way of Fort Garry and Edmonton to Kamloops and Cariboo, pioneering an immigrant road to British Columbia.

"The only organized overland immigration from eastern to western Canada prior to the era of railways."

## ALBRIGHT CAIRN

A cairn was unveiled at Beaverlodge to W. D. Albright, pioneer agriculturist of the Peace River district. Born in 1881, Dr. Albright was a former editor of a farm newspaper who moved to the Peace River district in 1913 and formed the Beaverlodge Experimental Station. From this point he was successful in demon-

strating the value of the area in the field of agriculture.

## REV. BRICK CAIRN

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board has erected a memorial plaque at the Peace River post office in honor of Rev. J. Gough Brick, a pioneer Anglican missionary of the Peace River district.

Born in 1836, Rev. Brick came to the Peace River area in 1886, where he built a mission at Shaftesbury Settlement. During his eight years in the area, he helped the Indians and halfbreeds to develop agricultural plots so they would not have to depend solely upon game. In 1893, he demonstrated the quality of grain grown in the district by sending a sample of Red Fife wheat to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where it was placed on display.

## ST. CHARLES MISSION

The first permanent mission was formed in Fort Dunvegan in 1866 by the Roman Catholic Church. Father Tessier, one of the first resident fathers who remained at the mission for 13 years, named it St. Charles. In 1883 he was relieved by Father Grouard, Father Husson and Brother Renault.

It was Father Grouard who constructed the present church in 1884. With his own hands the priest cut, hewed and sawed the logs for the mission. Inside the church Father Grouard painted ornate decorations which can still be seen today. This church has been restored by the Alberta government and is maintained by the Oblates as a museum. A cairn with inscribed tablet has been erected on the site by the Alberta government.

## TWELVE-FOOT DAVIS' GRAVE

A famous name in the history of the north is that of Twelve-Foot Davis. He was not a giant as his name implies, but gained his title in a much more unique manner.

The pioneer took part in the Cariboo gold rush in British Columbia, but arrived at Barkerville late in 1862 after all the best land had been staked. When he began looking over the claims, he noticed that two—the Little Diller and Tontine—seemed to occupy more than the regulation 100 feet each. When he measured the areas he found they took up 12 feet more than their claims allowed. Davis immediately staked the 12-foot strip between the claims and took out \$15,000 in gold from his claim.

In later years he drifted into the Peace River district where he became a pioneer fur trader, with posts at Dunvegan, Fort Vermilion and Lesser Slave Lake. He was respected by everyone who knew him.

When he died in 1900 he was buried at his favorite spot on top of the hill overlooking Peace River town. His gravestone is in the form of a tree trunk, and is inscribed: "H. F. Davis, born Vermont, 1820. Died at Slave Lake, 1893 (sic). Pathfinder, Pioneer, Miner and Trader. He was everyman's friend and never locked his cabin door."

## OTHER SITES

Other historical sites of the settlement era include Shaftesbury and Spirit River Settlements; the old Anglican mission and graveyard near Dunvegan; the original Anglican Church at Peace River; and the original residence of the first Anglican Bishop of Athabasca.



This is the type of cairn being used by the Government of the Province of Alberta to mark many historic sites throughout the province.

## LAC STE. ANNE MISSION

One of the earliest missions in Alberta was the one at Lac Ste. Anne, established by Fr. J. B. Thibault in 1845. The site is marked by a cairn, with a plaque which reads: Site of the first Catholic Mission in Alberta organized by Father J. B. Thibault in 1845 and served by the Oblate Missionaries since 1852.

Monument donated by Mr. and Mrs. C. Devolder and family, Riviere Qui Barre.

Unveiled July 26, 1959. Plaque presented by the Province of Alberta."

# ON THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER



Chimneys are all that remain of old Rocky Mountain House. The chimneys are now situated amid a small park and have been cemented to preserve them against the weather. They are situated a few miles west of the town of Rocky Mountain House.

## CHAPTER II.

**M**ANY forts once dotted the North Saskatchewan River from its source in the Rocky Mountains to the shores of Lake Winnipeg. The great river drains a large area of the forests and plains in central Alberta and was one of the main arteries of the fur trade.

This chapter will deal with historic sites in the area drained by the North Saskatchewan and its main tributaries — the Battle, Vermilion and Brazeau Rivers — as well as the numerous other streams.

Cairns erected by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board paying tribute to the fur trade are located at the sites of Rocky Mountain House and Forts Edmonton and Augustus.

### ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE

About 1½ miles south-west of the present town of Rocky Mountain House are two chimneys, located in a small neat park. This is all that remains of the final Rocky Mountain House fort, constructed in 1864.

These were restored to a partial measure of their original height and are reinforced against the weather. Nearby is a cairn, erected in 1931 by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, which pays tribute to David Thompson and the fort.

Rocky Mountain House was established in 1799 by the North West Company and was for 70 years the most westerly and southerly fort in the Blackfoot country. In 1802, David Thompson made his first attempt to cross the Rocky Mountains, and from here in 1807 he set out on the expedition which succeeded in crossing to the headwaters of the Columbia.

From this date until the discovery of the Athabasca Pass in 1810-11, the route to the trans-mountain country lay up the North Saskatchewan. During these times, Rocky Mountain House was not only a trading centre for the Blackfeet, but a depot on the trans-mountain route.

After the union of 1821, the Hudson's Bay Company abandoned nearby Acton House in favor of Rocky Mountain House, and from 1828 until it was temporarily abandoned in 1861, it was opened only in winter for trade

among the Blackfeet, Bloods and Peigans. The post was re-established years later and operated until 1875.

Inscription on the cairn reads: "Built in 1799 by the North West Company. David Thompson wintered here in 1800-01, 1801-02, 1806-07, and from here he set out in 1807 for the discovery of the Columbia River. It was for over seventy years the most westerly and the most southerly post in the Blackfoot country and remained in operation until 1875."

### FORTS AUGUSTUS AND EDMONTON

A cairn erected near Lamoureux by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board pays tribute to the first two in a series of Forts: Augustus and Edmonton. Site of the final Fort Edmonton on the grounds of the Alberta Legislative Building is marked with a cairn erected by the



*Photo—Brown Collection.*

The buildings of old Fort Edmonton are shown in the foreground, while the new Alberta Legislative Buildings near completion in the background. The fort was dismantled in 1915 during landscaping of the grounds.

Government of Alberta Historic Sites Committee.

The first two forts were established by the Hudson's Bay and North West companies in 1795 near the Sturgeon River, close to the present Fort Saskatchewan. The H.B.C. post was called Fort Edmonton, while the N.W.C. post was Fort Augustus or Fort des Prairies.

These forts were abandoned in 1802 and new ones were built within the present city limits. They were also called Edmonton and Augustus, and remained in use until abandoned in 1810.

At that time new forts were built several miles downstream on the North Saskatchewan River, near the present village of Pakan. These third forts were variously known as Fort Edmonton, Fort White Earth, Lower Terre Blanche Fort and White Earth House. In addition, each company built an outpost several miles upstream from Edmonton, immediately south of Lake Wabamun. These posts were called Little White Earth House and Upper Terre Blanche Fort.

The traders soon found they had chosen their new forts unwisely. All were abandoned in April, 1913, when two new forts were built at the present site of Edmonton's power house. In 1821 the two companies amalgamated under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company. The North West Company post was used for a short time as living quarters but was soon abandoned. Meanwhile, the traders began having trouble at the fort. In 1825 it was flooded badly but was re-occupied when the water subsided. Another flood in 1830 was even worse, so the fort was abandoned.

In the summer of 1830 the traders moved to higher ground and started

work on the final Fort Edmonton. This work was not completed until 1832. When the old fort was abandoned, the employees tried to abandon the name also and dubbed the new post Fort Sanspariel. However, the original name was soon restored.

Inscription on the cairn at the Legislative grounds reads: "First established by Hudson's Bay Co. in 1795, Fort Edmonton was moved several times before settling permanently at this site in 1830. Here trade for furs and robes was carried on with the Indians. This monument is on the site of the north-east bastion. The fort was dismantled in 1915."

*NOTE:—There were numerous other posts within the Alberta section of the North Saskatchewan River. Among the most important of these were forts built on the site of the present Victoria Settlement, south of Smoky Lake. These served as trading centres for both the Woods and Plains Indians.*

*The following forts are listed from west to east along the river:*

## **ACTON HOUSE**

Acton House was constructed by James Bird of Hudson's Bay Company in 1799 on the left bank of the Saskatchewan River near Rocky Mountain House. Superiority of the North West Company in trading prompted the abandonment of the fort in 1807, and it was again established in 1819. Following the union of 1821, the Hudson's Bay Company finally abandoned Acton House in favor of the stronger Rocky Mountain House.

## **BOGGY HALL**

Boggy Hall was erected by the North West Company above Blue Rapids on the west bank of the Saskatchewan. The post had been abandoned by 1810, when David Thompson visited the site.



## QUAGMIRE HOUSE

North West Company built Quagmire House below Rocky Rapids, about 3½ miles upstream from Buck Lake House. Alexander Henry, Jr., in 1811 described it as "an establishment of ours on the north side, abandoned several years ago, situation being improper for trade, the remains of which are still standing. It was the most inconvenient spot for an establishment on the river, being surrounded by a deep swamp."

## BUCK LAKE HOUSE

This post was built by the Hudson's Bay Company on the north bank of the Saskatchewan, opposite the mouth of Buck Creek. This post was too small to be listed on the company records.

## FORT PIGEON LAKE

The Pigeon Lake post was constructed on the north-west corner of the lake by Hudson's Bay Company, and was included in their lists of 1869 and 1872.

## FORT WHITE EARTH

Adjoining forts were operated by the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company at the mouth of White Earth River, near the present village of Pakan.

The site has been marked with a cairn by the Government of Alberta Historic Sites Committee. Its inscription reads:

"In 1810, the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies abandoned Fort Edmonton, upstream, and established trading posts within a single pallisade at this point. However, the site proved inconvenient, and was abandoned in April 1813. The forts here

were also called Lower Terre Blanche or Fort Edmonton".

## FORT DE L'ISLE

This fort was established by Alexander Mackenzie of the XY Company in 1799, on an island about 20 miles above Fort George. Immediately afterwards the Hudson's Bay and North West companies built rival posts which operated for a short time.

A cairn erected at the site by the Government of Alberta Historic Sites Committee bears this inscription:

"Alexander Mackenzie of the newly-formed XY Co. established a trading post here in autumn of 1799. The Hudson's Bay and North West Companies immediately abandoned their posts downstream and established forts on the island to squeeze their competitor out of business. The XY Co. was finally absorbed by the NW Co. in 1804".

## FORT GEORGE

Fort George was built in 1792 by Angus Shaw of the North West Company on the north bank of the Saskatchewan River about four and a half miles above the mouth of Moose Creek.

The Government of Alberta Historic Sites Committee has marked the early fort with a cairn bearing these words:

"Constructed by Angus Shaw of the North West Company in 1792 for trade with the Plains tribes. Fur-bearing animals were soon destroyed in the area and in 1799 the post was temporarily abandoned in favour of Fort de L'Isle, 20 miles upstream.

Fort George was completely abandoned in spring of 1802.”

### BUCKINGHAM HOUSE

A cairn erected by the Government of Alberta Historic Sites Committee marks the post in these words:

“Constructed by William Tomison of the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1792 to compete with N.W.Co’s. Fort George for Indian trade. Although in competition, the forts used a common well and always stood ready to defend each other. This post was temporarily abandoned in 1799 and finally closed in 1802.”

### PAINT CREEK HOUSE

Adjoining forts were constructed

by both companies shortly after 1800 on the north side of the Saskatchewan River, facing the mouth of Vermilion River. Both were abandoned in 1816. A cairn was erected at the site by the Alberta Government in 1959. The post was also known as Paint River House or Fort Vermilion.

A Government of Alberta Historic Sites Committee cairn thus marks the history of this post:

“Two forts of the rival Hudson’s Bay and North West Companies were built within a single pallisade at this site shortly after 1800. Here trade was carried on with the Blackfeet and Cree tribes. The posts were also known as Fort Vermilion. They were both abandoned in May, 1816.”



This cairn and quiet graveyard are reminders of the Frog Lake Massacre. Victims of the Indian raid lie in this quiet plot.

# LAW AND SETTLEMENT



*Photo—Ernest Brown Collection.*

This picture of the original Fort Macleod shows it as it was built on an island in the Oldman River in 1874. By 1883, the river threatened to inundate the post. It was moved to its present site within the town of Fort Macleod. Nothing remains to mark the original site.

**T**HE cairns and historic sites of the law and settlement era in the North Saskatchewan River drainage districts may be roughly divided into three classes. These are: sites pertaining to the North West Rebellion; sites of religious development; and sites of cultural development.

## MASSACRE AT FROG LAKE HOUSE

The Hudson's Bay Company maintained a small post on Frog Lake, about 30 miles from Fort Pitt, on the edge of Frog Lake. It became famous in 1885, when it was destroyed by Indians taking part in the North West Rebellion.

A cairn erected two miles east of Frog Lake stands in memory of nine persons who were massacred by Big Bear's band of Cree Indians at the outbreak of the North West Rebellion on April 2, 1885.

In the spring of that year the whole region of the North Saskatchewan be-

tween Frog Lake and the junction of the South Saskatchewan was seething with unrest. Big Bear, a Plains Cree, moved from the south to Frog Lake among the Woods Crees as messengers hurried with news from Louis Riel.

Previous to the fatal day there had been numerous complaints from Big Bear's band in regard to meat rations. The whole band was ill at ease, even though their Woods Cree neighbors remained quiet.

On the morning of April 2, Big Bear's warriors struck. The priests were holding service when the Crees entered the village, and after ransacking the Hudson's Bay Company

store they entered the church. As the people rushed from the building, they were cut down by the Indians, until nine men, including the priests, were dead.

Following the killings, the natives razed the buildings and proceeded to Fort Pitt where they were successful in routing Inspector Francis Dickens and his men. When the band was captured by General Strange, the chief, Big Bear, was given a jail term and eight Indians were hanged for taking part in the actual killings.

The cairn at Frog Lake reads: "North West Rebellion. Frog Lake Massacre. Here on 2nd April, 1885, Rebel Indians under Big Bear massacred—Rev. Father Leon Adelaïrd Fafard, O.M.I.; Rev. Father Felix Marchand, O.M.I.; Indian Agent Thomas Quinn, Farm Instructor John Delaney, John Alexander Gowanlock, William Campbell Gilchrist, George Dill, Charles Gouin, John Williscroft. They took prisoners—Mrs. Theresa Delaney, Mrs. Theresa Gowanlock."

## ALBERTA FIELD FORCE

Early in the spring of 1885 rumblings of the Riel Rebellion were felt in the District of Alberta. Traders' stores and settlers' homes at outlying points were being pillaged by restless Indians and their Metis allies. Climax for defence action came with the Frog Lake Massacre on April 2.

By order of the Federal Department of Militia and Defence, Alberta defence was placed under command of Major-General Thomas Bland Strange, a retired Imperial and Canadian Militia commander who was then ranching east of Calgary.

Authority was given to form what became known as the Alberta Field Force, charged with home defence

and general duty in putting down the insurrection. Regular militia, the 65th Battalion of 327 men were despatched to Calgary from Montreal, while the Winnipeg Light Infantry with 340 men arrived from Manitoba.

Volunteers from the Calgary-Fort Macleod area, most of them cowboys familiar with horse and gun, were recruited to form the 150-man Alberta Mounted Rifles. This body was also referred to as the Rocky Mountain Rangers. From its ranks were drawn 40 men to reinforce Maj. S. M. Steele's Scout Cavalry of 20 North-West Mounted Police.

Detachments of infantry and Mounted Rifles were despatched to strengthen the defence of many points, including Fort Macleod, Calgary, Gleichen and Crowfoot, Red Deer and other settlements.

On April 20 the main body of the Alberta Field Force, including 175 wagons and carts moved out of Cal-



A statue honoring the pioneer missionary Father Lacombe stands near the old church at St. Albert.

gary, bound for Edmonton. Stops were made enroute to establish Fort Normandeau, Fort Ostell and Fort Ethier, and secure the safety of other points.

Arrival in Fort Edmonton May 1 was followed by outfitting for downriver travel to the strongholds of Chief Big Bear and Chief Poundmaker. Forts Edmonton and Saskatchewan were suitably garrisoned by the force. On May 14 the trip downstream began. Five scows previously built for the purpose were loaded with supplies for men and horses, a nine-pounder field gun, and infantry to man the gun.

At Frog Lake the force stopped to bury the massacre victims at the still-deserted settlement. Steele's Scouts were sent on the trail of Big Bear. Contact was made and the fighting body moved up but the wily Big Bear and his band of five to six hundred warriors beat a well guarded retreat to the east. Skirmishes took place at Fort Pitt, Frenchman's Butte and Loon Lake. At the latter point pursuit became impractical by the Alberta forces, and was shortly taken up by Maj.-Gen. Middleton and his forces from Winnipeg.

The Alberta Field Force returned to the Fort Pitt-Frog Lake area, where small bands of Woods Crees and Chipewyans who had been allied with Big Bear were rounded up. This action liberated many captives held by the Indians, including some of the hostages taken weeks before at Frog Lake.

On July 2, Big Bear and the small remainder of his once powerful band surrendered near Fort Carlton. With the surrender came the disbandment of the Alberta Field Force.

The cairn at Edmonton states: "The Alberta Field Force under Major - General Thomas Bland Strange, comprising detachments of the North-West Mounted Police, Alberta Mounted Rifles, Steele's Scouts, 65th Carabiners Mont - Royal, and Winnipeg Light Infantry, advanced from Calgary via Edmonton, using wagon and boat transport, and engaged the Indians under Big Bear near Frenchman's Butte and at Loon Lake. The operations of this force averted the danger of an Indian uprising in Alberta."

### THE MISSIONARIES

A monument erected at Wetaskiwin pays tribute to the two peacemakers — Rev. John McDougall and Rev. Father Lacombe, O.M.I.

Both men played an important part in making the Indians the friends of the whites and devoted their whole lives in pursuit of their respective religions.

"Preacher John," as he was fondly called by both Indians and whites, was the son of Rev. George McDougall and lived among the Indians most of his life. His father came to Alberta to establish a mission at Whitefish Lake about 1863 and another at Fort Victoria where he remained until 1871.

Father and son travelled together throughout Alberta, establishing missions and converting the Indians. In 1876 the son was left to carry on the work alone when Rev. George McDougall was frozen to death near Calgary. A cairn is to be erected on a nearby site where his body was found.

In 1874, Rev. John was commissioned by the Canadian Government to explain the coming of the North-West Mounted Police to the Blackfeet, Bloods and Peigans of southern Alberta. He visited Fort Kipp, Fort

Whoop-Up and Blackfoot Crossing and was successful in his mission.

In 1877, Rev. McDougall established a church at Calgary and in 1833 at Lesser Slave Lake. He built the Indian orphanage and mission at Morleyville, and in addition became superintendent for the Methodist Church of Canada. He died January 15, 1917.

Father Lacombe made his first trips into Alberta between 1850 and 1852 when he voyaged up the Saskatchewan in York boats to Fort Edmonton. Soon after, he established a colony, mission chapel and flour mill at St. Albert.

Father Lacombe was noted for settling the troubles and grievances of the Indians and making representations on their behalf to those in authority. In times of famine, Father Lacombe was always present to aid the natives and plead their cause.

He retired in 1904 to Pincher Creek but was always busy giving aid to the needy in his district. His death at Midnapore on December 11, 1916, ended the career of one of the real pioneers in Alberta.

The cut stone monument in Westskiwin city park, states in part: "To commemorate the public services of the Reverend Father Lacombe, O.M.I., and the Reverend John McDougall. During the troublous days of 1885 their influence with the Indians was a powerful factor in the preservation of peace in Alberta."

## PLAINS BUFFALO

The federal cairn erected in the North Saskatchewan River area pays tribute to the Plains Buffalo and the men who preserved the living species. It was erected at Elk Island Park, September 1, 1949.

The buffalo was the mainstay of the Plains Indians before the white man ever saw the Great Plains. It provided their food, clothing, homes, utensils, paints, and numerous other simple articles used by the natives. When the fur traders came, they, too, made use of the buffalo. It provided pemmican, clothing and robes as well as a regular supply of fresh meat. At that time buffalo were so numerous that it was thought they were inexhaustible.

But the wanton slaughter of the King of the Plains during the 19th century wiped out these millions of beasts, until by 1906 only a handful remained. In that year, Canada purchased about 700 head from a Montana rancher and shipped them to parks in Alberta. This was the last remaining large herd on the continent.

Today, this number has grown to more than 9,000 buffalo, of which about 1,300 are located at Elk Island Park.

The cairn at Elk Island Park reads: "From time immemorial the teeming buffalo of North America provided the Indians with tools and weapons, shelter, clothing, food and fuel, and played a central part in his social and ceremonial life. In the form of pemmican the bison were later the chief sustenance of fur-trader, Metis and explorer. Ruthlessly slaughtered for meat and hides this noble animal almost became extinct, but in 1906 the Dominion Government procured in Montana the last large herd. Their offspring now graze by thousands in various National Parks of Western Canada."

## FIRST WHITE MAN

In 1754, an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company named Anthony Henday left Fort York on the Hudson



The original blockhouse of Fort Ethier was built during the Riel Rebellion of 1885 and is preserved on a farm about five miles north of Wetaskiwin.

Bay to explore the unknown western plains in an effort to induce the Indians to bring their furs for trade. A cairn erected by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board at the junction of Highways No. 2 and 11, three miles north of Red Deer, pays tribute to this historic journey.

Henday crossed the central part of the province to become the first white man to visit what is now Alberta. He met the Blackfeet but could not persuade them to make the long journey to the east. He wintered in the province and returned to Fort York in 1755.

### OLD HERMITAGE

The first headquarters of the Church of England in the Edmonton district is honored by a cairn erected by the Anglicans at its original site on the present Old Hermitage Farm.

In 1875, an appeal was made by Anglicans at Fort Edmonton for a minister of their faith. This appeal

was answered by Canon William Newton, who arrived at the fort on September 28 of the same year.

Following his arrival, the missionary lived in an unfinished log building owned by the Chief Factor, and here held services during the winter. But the lack of accommodation prompted Canon Newton to construct his own church, and because all suitable locations near the fort had been taken, he chose a spot on the north bank of the river, seven miles downriver from the settlement.

The log cabin church was completed in mid-winter of 1876 and named the "Hermitage." From these headquarters missionary journeys were made for 20 years to settlements and camps throughout the district.

The church gradually grew from a simple log cabin to an elaborate establishment, complete with kitchen and dining room in one building, sleeping accommodations for guests, a chapel, library in another, and surrounded by a garden, lawns and flower beds.

The first Anglican Church was established in Edmonton by Canon Newton several years later, but following his retirement in 1891 he continued his missionary work at "The Hermitage."

Old McDougall Church at Edmonton has been reconstructed with original timbers and furnished with historical photos and relics.



## ST. ALBERT CHURCH

The cathedral constructed by Father Lacombe in the St. Albert area has been preserved as a museum in the town. The church was built in 1861 and now contains many mementos of the past century.

Walls of the chapel are lined with souvenirs such as hatchets and rifles from the North West Rebellion and Father Lacombe's Bible. The altar of the cathedral has been preserved, as are hand-made plow blades, cooking utensils, an 1870 hand press and other priceless possessions.

In the crypt of the nearby St. Albert Church, under the sanctuary, are found the tombs of Bishop Grandin, first bishop of Alberta; Father Lacombe; and Father Leduc, first vicar general of procurator for western missions.

A statue of Father Lacombe has been erected nearby.

## FORT SASKATCHEWAN

A cairn paying tribute to the first Mounted Police fort in the Edmonton district stands on the grounds of Fort Saskatchewan jail. The cairn was constructed by prisoners of the jail from stone taken from the foundation of the original Mounted Police guardroom.

The police post was constructed at Fort Saskatchewan in 1875 under Inspector Jarvis. There was considerable complaint from the citizens of Edmonton for not building the post nearer their settlement, but surveys for a railroad through the Yellowhead Pass crossed the river at that point, and it was thought to be a better site for transportation purposes.

However, the railroad was not built through the Yellowhead Pass, but the fort site remained. The first

fort consisted of men's barracks, officers' quarters, guard room and stables.

With the coming of law to the district, Edmonton began the rapid change from a fur-trading post to a modern-agricultural centre.

## FORT ETHIER

The old blockhouse of Fort Ethier, which stands on the Lucas farm, about five miles north of Wetaskiwin, is one of the most interesting historic sites in Alberta today. Constructed of squared timbers during the Riel Rebellion of 1885, it is sturdily built and contains twelve loopholes for rifleman to hold off an enemy attack.

After the rebellion broke out, the 65th Mount Royal Rifles was among the armed forces sent from eastern Canada to quell the disturbances. Capt. Ethier and a company of men were sent to the headquarters of the Peace Hills Indian Agency to construct a fort to protect the Calgary-Edmonton Trail. Working throughout the spring, the men built the blockhouse and fort, naming it after their captain.

In later years, the Indian Agent, Sam B. Lucas, purchased the site as a homestead and today the family has possession of the land and the historic site.

The fort was never engaged in actual combat with the rebels, but was successful as a show of force to local bands of warlike Crees.

## FORT OSTELL

A highway sign erected by the Alberta Government, one mile south of Ponoka, pays tribute to Fort Ostell, which was constructed during the Riel Rebellion of 1885.

When the rebellion broke out, a



war party of Crees frightened the operator of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Battle River Crossing into fleeing to Calgary. After he left, the post was looted by a party led by Coyote.

Shortly afterwards, the 65th Mount Royal Rifles arrived in the west from Quebec and No. 1 Company under Capt. Benjamin Ostell, was ordered to take over the deserted store and transform it into a fort. Ostell and his party strengthened the walls, cut loopholes, dug a moat which was spanned by movable bridges, and generally put the building into a state of defence. Upon its completion the post was named Fort Ostell in honor of its captain.

Although the fort was never engaged in combat, it served to pacify the rebellious Crees in the district and offered a tangible show of strength capable of protecting traffic along the Calgary-Edmonton Trail.

## FIRST ALBERTA LEGISLATURE

Twenty-five elected representatives gathered in the Thistle Rink in Edmonton on March 15, 1906, to conduct the first session of the First Alberta Legislature. The Thistle Rink was chosen because there was no other public meeting place with sufficient size and facilities to accommodate crowds at the inaugural occasion.

Lieutenant Governor L. G. Bulyea read the speech from the throne. The first government, Liberal, was led by Hon. A. C. Rutherford. He held the portfolios of Education and Provincial Treasurer. His cabinet included Hon. C. W. Cushing, Minister of Public Works; Hon. C. W. Cross, Attorney General; Hon. W. T. Finlay, Minister of Agriculture and Provincial Secretary; and Hon. L. G. DeVeber, Minister Without Portfolio.

Among the most pressing matters to be considered by the First Alberta Legislature were the locale of the provincial capital, site and design for a permanent legislative building, and general organization of a new provincial administration. Centres considered for the provincial capital included Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary and Banff. Edmonton was chosen by a vote of 16-8 and construction of the Terrace Building as a temporary government seat rapidly proceeded. Other decisions were made with similar dispatch. Excavation for the present legislative building began in August of 1907.

Average age of the first legislators, elected November 9, 1905, was about 45 years. None was Alberta born, the province having been too recently settled.

It is interesting to note some of the provincial traffic regulations established by that initial legislature. The speed limit for motor vehicles was set at 20 miles per hour, reduced to 10 miles per hour when overtaking horse drawn vehicles. For meeting horse drawn vehicles the limit was further reduced to five miles per hour.

A cairn paying tribute to the First Alberta Legislature was erected by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board, opposite the main door of the present Legislative Building.

## HON. FRANK OLIVER

A statue and tablet were erected by the Northern Alberta Old Timers' Association in 1917 to honor the Honorable Frank Oliver.

Frank Oliver arrived in Edmonton by ox-cart in 1880 to establish The Edmonton Bulletin—the first newspaper in Edmonton. His first plant was located in a log cabin now kept as an historic site.



Replica of an early Ukrainian home as used by pioneer immigrants to Alberta is displayed at Elk Island National Park. The building is furnished with handmade articles and implements brought from the Ukraine.

He built his second home a few years after his arrival and later was elected to parliament where he became Minister of the Interior. When the Laurier government was defeated in 1911, Frank Oliver resumed his role as publisher of *The Bulletin*.

Throughout his life Honorable Frank Oliver was known as a man with a fiery temper and a kind heart, who could wither an opponent with a bitter blast of words, either vocally or in print.

#### **THE EDMONTON BULLETIN**

The original office of *The Edmonton Bulletin* has been preserved by the Northern Alberta Old Timers' Association and was moved to the Edmonton Exhibition grounds in 1925.

When *The Edmonton Bulletin* pub-

lished its first paper in 1880, it was the first newspaper in Alberta and the second in the Canadian west. Publisher Frank Oliver turned out the four-page weekly paper on a hand-press, transported from the east by Red River cart.

When the first paper was being edited, Mr. Oliver discovered that he had no type large enough for the name of the newspaper, so with pioneer initiative he proceeded to whittle "*The Edmonton Bulletin*" from a piece of dry birch.

*The Bulletin* building monument is open only during Exhibition Week and an adjoining museum is operated by the Old Timers' Association. *The Edmonton Bulletin* developed from a weekly to a daily newspaper and by 1951, it was publishing three issues daily. It ceased publication on January 20, 1951.

## **J. WALTERS HOUSE**

The oldest house in Edmonton is still on display today on its original site. Built by John Walters in 1884, the log building is located on the Walterdale Flats, just west of the south end of the 105th Street Bridge.

John Walters, at the time he constructed the house, had a ferry service across the North Saskatchewan River. He was also a lumber dealer and early Edmonton businessman.

## **McDOUGALL CHURCH**

On the corner of 101st Street and Macdonald Drive in Edmonton stands the first Protestant church built in that city. It is located beside the new brick McDougall Church and is identified by a large plaque on the lawn.

The church was built in 1871 when Reverend George McDougall was posted to the Edmonton district. When the old log church was built it was known as Wesleyan Church and later as McDougall United Church.

Today it stands as a museum, containing photographs and relics of the bygone days.

## **UKRAINIAN PIONEER HOME**

A replica of the type of homes built by early Ukrainian settlers was opened August 5, 1951, at Elk Island National Park. This is the first unit of the Elk Island Park museum.

The building has a thatched roof, log beams, mud walls and earthen oven, typical of the early homes. In addition to the museum, plans are underway to include a replica of old Fort Victoria, an Indian encampment and articles portraying historical development of the area.

## **UKRAINIAN PIONEERS**

Tribute is paid to the early Ukrainian settlers to Alberta in a cairn located at Chipman, 40 miles north-east of Edmonton.

Many of the settlers arrived in 1891, building Ukrainian-style cottages and bringing with them many tools and utensils of the old country. Throughout the remainder of the Nineteenth Century, the pioneers were joined by many more eastern Europeans, who settled primarily in the Vegreville, Two Hills and Smoky Lake areas.

## **PEACE CAIRN**

A cairn erected near Wetaskiwin commemorates the signing of a peace treaty between the Blackfeet and the Crees. It was the signing of this treaty that gave Wetaskiwin (meaning Peace Hills) its name.

The cairn reads: "Wetaskiwin Spatinow. Erected July 1, 1927, in commemoration of treaty of peace made in these hills between the Blackfeet and Cree Indians. 1867."

## **OTHER SITES**

There are many other less important sites in this area.

On the northern edge of Pigeon Lake, the cellars of the pioneer Methodist mission can still be seen. This site is being restored by the Rundle memorial committee.

The cellars and graveyard of the first Wesleyan Mission in the area are located on the Goodfish Lake Indian Reserve, north of Vilna. This mission was opened by Rev. Steinhauer and was important in the early religious life of the Woods Crees.

# SOUTH and CENTRAL ALBERTA

## FORTS and INDIANS

THE area south of the North Saskatchewan River consists mainly of the Great Plains. The history and the original inhabitants of this area differ greatly from the rest of the Province. Here lived the Blackfeet, one of the most feared and respected nations on the North American continent. And here were the vast herds of buffalo that provided everything the Indians needed.

Because of their independence, these Indians were not trappers by profession, but were hunters. In those early days they needed the guns and supplies of the white man but did not live closely with him, as did the Cress and other Woods Indians.

This chapter deals with three main periods: early traders; the Indians; and the coming of the Mounted Police.



One of the earliest photos of Fort Calgary shortly after it was erected by the North West Mounted Police.

## FORT MACLEOD

A cairn erected by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board on the corner of 2nd Avenue and 23rd Street in Fort Macleod commemorates the arrival of the North-West Mounted Police and the construction of the first police fort on the Great Plains in 1874.

When Rupert's Land was transferred to Canada by the Hudson's Bay Company, the latter's authority ceased to exist over a large unorganized region. On the plains, just below the 49th Parallel, American fur traders had long been eyeing the lucrative market among the Blackfeet, Blood, Peigan, Mountain Stony, and Plains Cree tribes of Canada.

Within a few years several posts had sprung up on the Canadian plains, trading with the Indians and transporting goods from the United States to Canada without payment of custom duties. These posts were dubbed "whiskey forts" by Canadians and were accused of ruining the Indians with cheap whiskey.

The lawlessness on the plains culminated with the massacre of a band of Assiniboine Indians in the Cypress Hills by white wolfers. When news of this reached Ottawa a semi-military organization known as the North West Mounted Police was formed to act as the law-enforcing body in the West.

In 1874, 300 men proceeded to Dufferin, Manitoba, and set out for the unknown plains in July. By orders of Colonel French, one division was sent to the Oldman River, another to Fort Edmonton and the third to Swan River.

The first police fort was built on an island on the Oldman River and named Fort Macleod in honor of the

commanding officer, Colonel J. F. Macleod. The force was immediately successful in halting organized trading by Americans on Canadian soil and became famous for capturing horse thieves, placating Indians, and generally upholding the law on the prairies.

The inscription on the Fort Macleod cairn reads: "To commemorate the arrival in October, 1874, after an arduous march of 1,000 miles, of the North-West Mounted Police, and the building on the island immediately to the north-east of the town of the first fort, named after their commanding officer, Colonel J. F. Macleod. Their coming brought law and order into a wild and lawless country and laid the foundation of those social conditions which later made possible the settlement of the country and the birth of its cities, towns, villages and peaceful farms."

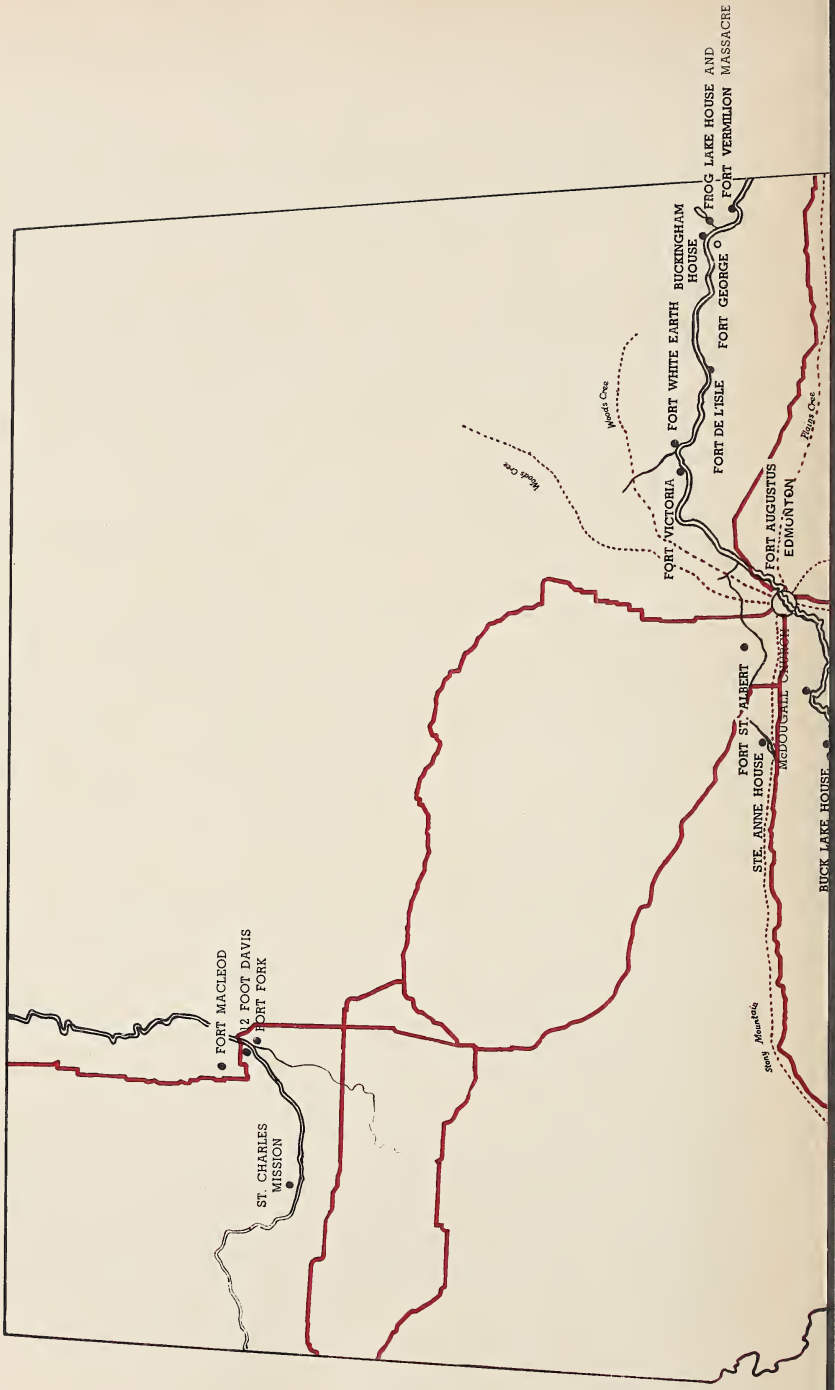
A museum, paying tribute to the Mounted Police, Indians and pioneers, has been established within a full-scale replica of a bastioned fort in the Town of Fort Macleod.

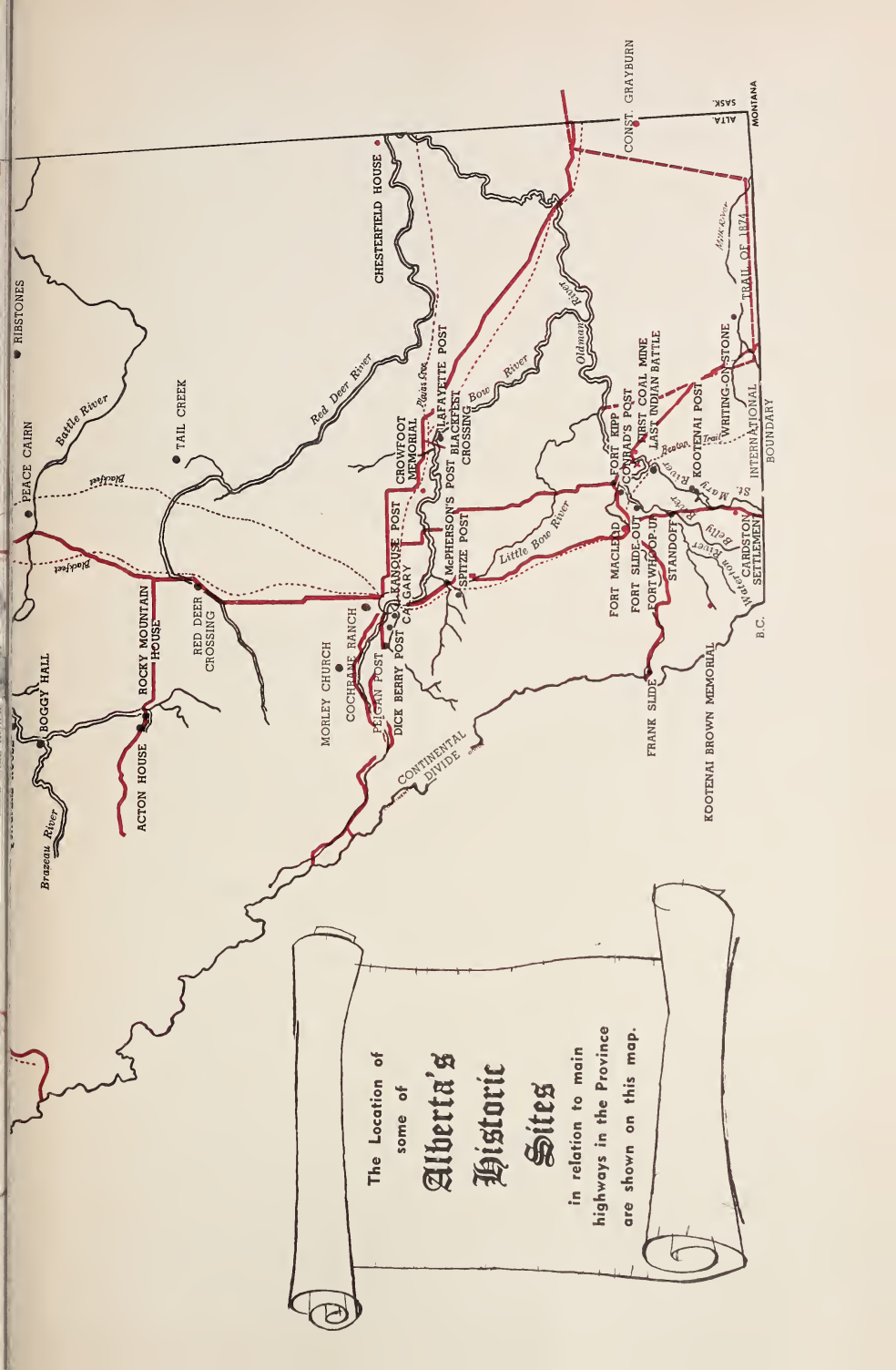
## FORT CALGARY

A cairn, erected in Central Park Calgary, and a stone near the Canadian National freight sheds pay tribute to the establishment of a Mounted Police fort on the site of present-day Calgary.

On August 18, 1875, "F" Troop of 50 men under Inspector E. A. Brisbois set out from Fort Macleod to establish a post at the junction of the Bow and Elbow Rivers. When they arrived at the site, they cleared the area and erection of the fort began. Before Christmas of the same year the fort was ready for occupancy.

Inspector Brisbois wished to name the establishment after himself, but





The Location of  
some of  
**Alberta's  
Historic  
Sites**

in relation to main  
highways in the Province  
are shown on this map.

Colonel Macleod, then Assistant-Commissioner of the force, decided it should be called Calgary. This name was derived from "Cal-garry", the name of the Macleod estate on the Isle of Mull. Translation of the Gaelic word is "clear, running water".

Inscription on the Central Park cairn reads: "To commemorate the arrival, in August, 1875, of Troop "F" of the North-West Mounted Police, under Inspector E. A. Brisbois, and the establishment of their post, Fort Calgary on the west bank of the Elbow River at its junction with the Bow River, within the limits of the city of Calgary."

The stone at the C.N.R. sheds is situated on the old N.W.M.P. reserve.

## PEIGAN POST

### (Replacing Old Bow Fort)

This fort was constructed by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1832 on the north bank of the Bow River at the mouth of the Old Fort Creek. It was also known as Bow River Fort and Old Bow Fort.

A sign erected by the Historic Sites Committee of the Government of Alberta on the Trans-Canada Highway reads: "In an attempt to lure the Peigan and Blackfeet Indians away from American traders on the Missouri River, the Hudson's Bay Co. constructed a fort four miles north of this point in 1832. It had a brief existence, for the Blood Indians, who were supposed to trade in Edmonton, were jealous and would not let their allies come to trade. The fort was under danger of attack on several occasions and was finally abandoned in January 1834. It was also known as Old Bow Fort".



*Photo—National Museum of Canada.*  
Crowfoot, great leader of the North Blackfeet, was a strong influence for peace during the period of transition. Although outspoken for the rights of his people, he realized his tribe would have to live with the whites.

## THE BLACKFEET TREATY (Treaty No. 7)

A cairn has been erected at the Blackfoot Crossing on the Bow River in commemoration of the historic signing of Treaty Seven in 1877.

Blackfoot Crossing had always been a popular spot with the Indians, and the Mounted Police, who had been given the task of preparing the natives for the meeting, decided the restful atmosphere of the quiet valley would be an excellent place for the treaty talks. When the Indians gathered at Blackfoot Crossing in the fall of 1877, it was one of the largest groups of Indians ever formed at one spot on the Canadian Plains. It was estimated that the Indians had no fewer than 15,000 horses and ponies with them, and teepees lined the river for miles.

The treaty, which was signed by all tribes in the area, surrendered



their tribal lands to the Government of Canada, and set aside suitable reserves for each tribe, as well as agreeing to treaty payments, food allowances and such.

Inscribed on the cairn at Blackfoot Crossing is the following: "Cairn and tablet in the Blackfoot Indian Reserve to commemorate the signing of Indian Treaty No. 7 on the 22nd September, 1877, by the representatives of the Crown and the Indians, whereby the latter surrendered their rights to 50,000 square miles of territory lying in the south western corner of Alberta."

### **CROWFOOT MEMORIAL**

A cairn was unveiled in September, 1948, at Gleichen in honor of Crowfoot, the famous chief of the Blackfeet Indians of southern Alberta. The monument is located less than half a mile from the Trans-Canada Highway, 60 miles east of Calgary.

In addition to the cairn, the grave of Crowfoot can be seen about 10 miles to the east, on the top of a high hill. Marking his grave is a tall wooden cross inscribed: "Father of His People."

Crowfoot was a leader of his people during periods of war, transition and peace. Born about 1830, he astonished his own tribe by preaching peace among the warriors. But his strong personality won them over, and his band never rose in armed revolt against the whites in Canada.

When the Mounted Police came west in 1874, Crowfoot questioned them about the Great White Mother and her system of law. Later, he was the signer of Treaty Seven for his people. When Crowfoot refused to join Sitting Bull in his fight against the white man, the Blackfoot chief

explained his actions. "Tell the Great Mother," he told the Mounted Police, "we have been loyal and that we know she will not let her children starve."

Inscription on the cairn reads: "Crowfoot, Great Chief of the Blackfoot Confederacy. Born about 1830, died April 25, 1890. Fearless in war but lover of peace, he promoted amity among the tribes of the plains and friendship with the White Man. Under his leadership the Blackfeet ceded to the Crown title to her tribal lands in 1877, began to adopt a sedentary life, and remained loyal during the North West Rebellion of 1885. His nobility of character, his gift of oratory and his wisdom in council gained for him the title 'Father of His People'."

### **JERRY POTTS**

Civilians attached to the North-West Mounted Police were of great help as guides and mediators between the early police force and restless Indians. None made a greater contribution to the force's successful policing of the west than did Jerry Potts. An historic sign on Highway No. 4 between Stirling and Warner pays tribute in these words:

"When the North-West Mounted Police came west in 1874, they had little experience with frontier life. By the time they reached this area, they were tired, footsore, and almost lost. To their rescue came a short, bow-legged plainsman named Jerry Potts. He led them to Fort Whoop-up, where the whiskey traders were put out of business and then to the Oldman River, where they built Fort Macleod. The native son of Scottish and Blood Indian parents remained as guide and interpreter for the Force until his death in 1896".

## **MASKEPETOON (The Broken Arm)**

Bloodshed over the usurpation of the Indians' land by the white man was averted through the diplomacy of the North-West Mounted Police, the missionaries, and not least of all by Indian leaders themselves. An historic sign on Highway No. 2 a short distance north of Hobbema pays honor to one of these Indian Chiefs in these words: "Maskepetoon was a great chief of the Cree nation. He was a noted warrior and was feared by his enemies. But when the Methodist missionaries arrived in the mid-1800's he put aside the scalping knife and picked up the peace pipe. Henceforth he became a beloved peacemaker and friend of the missionaries. But civilization came too soon. In 1869, while attempting to make peace with the warlike Blackfeet, the old leader was cruelly murdered by an enemy chief. So died Maskepetoon, the martyr of peace".

## **CHESTERFIELD HOUSE**

This fort was built by the North West Company about 1800. It was located on the South Branch of the Saskatchewan River at the mouth of the Red Deer River, near the present town of Empress.

It was abandoned in 1804 and rebuilt in 1805 by John McDonald for the North West Company and renamed New Chesterfield House. In 1822 following the union of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies, it was taken over by the Bay under Donald McKenzie and abandoned a few years later because of Indian trouble.

The X.Y. Company also operated a small post in the same neighborhood.

## **FORT NORMANDEAU**

The original Fort Normandeau, constructed at Red Deer in 1885 during the North West Rebellion, has been preserved at its original site by the Central Alberta Old Timers' Association.

The fort was constructed by Lieutenant Normandeau and 20 men of the 65th Mount Royal Rifles, when they were left to guard the settlers and Red Deer Crossing. The building, 14 by 28 feet, was completed on June 26, 1885.

It had a four-sided sod roof, peaked towards the middle and was surrounded by a high log fence, with two towers or lookouts on the front and one at the back. The fort was also surrounded by a ditch, eight feet deep and 10 feet wide, which was constantly filled with water.

## **RED DEER CROSSING**

A local cairn was unveiled on July 25, 1951, in memory of old Red Deer Crossing, 3½ miles upstream from Red Deer, on the site of the first trading post on the Edmonton-Calgary line.

The trail developed from an Indian path from Dog Pound to Lone Pine and crossed the Red Deer River at the safest spot all year 'round. In 1883, G. C. King built a small trading post at the crossing. It was bought by Reverend Leonard Gaetz in 1884, who held it during the uneasy times of the North West Rebellion.

## **RED CROW**

A cairn has been erected by the Blood Indians in southern Alberta to pay tribute to their famous leader, Red Crow, who signed Treaty Seven on their behalf. The cairn is located



Red Crow, famous head chief of the Blood Indians, is honored by a cairn constructed by the tribe, on Highway 2 near Standoff. He was the leader of that warlike tribe from 1870 to 1900, during their period of transition from warriors to successful ranchers and farmers.

*Photo—Public Archives of Canada.*

on the west side of Highway No. 2, near Standoff.

During his reign from 1870 to 1900, Red Crow was famed throughout the west as a warrior, diplomat and orator. He led several important war parties against the Crees, Assiniboines and Crows, but when the buffalo began to disappear, he was the first to recognize the fact that the Indians would have to settle on reserves and live as farmers and ranchers.

In the early days, Red Crow's importance surpassed even that of Crowfoot's, for while the Blackfoot chief had control of 1,000 tribesman, the Bloods totalled more than 2,200.

During the Riel Rebellion, runners were sent by the rebelling Crees to the Bloods, but Red Crow refused to hear their words and hurled their peace offerings of tobacco into the fire. During his peaceful existence, he showed his progressive spirit by being the first Blood to build a house, the first to own cattle, the first to use oxen in



Above is the cairn erected by his tribesmen in honor of the memory of Chief Red Crow, on the Fort Macleod-Cardston highway. The famous chief signed treaty in 1877 for his branch of the Blackfeet nation.

farm work, and his wives were the first to bake bread.

He died in 1900 as peacefully as he lived in the last two decades of his life. Shortly before his death he was able to boast: "I was never struck by an enemy in my life—with bullet, arrow, axe spear or knife." This was a great feat for a warrior who had killed numerous enemies and had once raided their camps from the Yellowstone to the Red Deer River.

#### LAST INDIAN BATTLE

A cairn erected by the Alberta Government in Indian Battle Park in Lethbridge marks the last great Indian battle in Canada which was fought between the Blackfeet and the Crees in 1870, near the present site of Lethbridge.

In the fall of 1870, the Blackfeet on the Great Plains had been weakened by an attack of smallpox, and their enemies, the Crees, concluded it would be an excellent time to attack. A war party, headed by chiefs Big

Bear, Piapot, Little Mountain and Little Pine, and made up of about 800 warriors, was organized from the ranks of the Crees and Assiniboines.

The Bloods and Blackfeet were then camped on the Oldman River, between Fort Kipp and Whoop-Up, while the South Peigans were camped on the St. Mary, above Fort Whoop-Up. The latter were well armed with repeating rifles and had retreated to Canada following a battle with Colonel Baker's expedition. The Crees swooped down on one camp and succeeded in killing a brother of Red Crow and two or three Blood women. Other camps in the neighborhood were aroused and in a short time the Bloods were fiercely engaged in battle.

By morning, the South Peigans had arrived with their modern arms and the Crees began retreating across the prairie toward the present site of Lethbridge. The main fighting soon was carried on between two parallel coulees, until the Blackfeet attacked the Cree position in force. The latter broke and ran, discarding belongings and retreating toward the river. They were pursued across the Oldman and for several miles across the other side.

When the battle was over, the Crees had lost between 200 and 300 men, while the Blackfeet had 40 killed and 50 wounded. The following year, a formal peace treaty was made between the two nations, ending all hostilities.

## TREATY No. EIGHT

A roadside sign erected by the Historic Sites Committee of the Government of Alberta on Highway No. 2 east of the turnoff to Grouard bears this inscription:

"In 1899, the Canadian Government negotiated a treaty with the Indians of Northern Alberta to give up their titles to the land in exchange for reserves and treaty rights. The first negotiations were held about ten miles north of here and on June 21st the treaty was signed. The commission was headed by Hon. David Laird, while the chiefs included Moostoos, White Partridge and The Fish. The treaty party then travelled north for other meetings where they obtained the signatures of the Cree, Beaver and Chipewyan chiefs who lived in the area."

## EARLY MAN SITE

The first professional archaeological expedition in Alberta in 1948 unearthed the relics of two separate Indian cultures at a site located north and west of Fort Macleod. A cairn has been erected to mark the site.

Located at the base of a buffalo pound, the site has revealed material such as arrow heads, scrapers and crude pottery made at least 3,000 years ago. One "dig" was 11 feet deep and revealed crude materials, while the other was near the surface and contained relics showing more craftsmanship. The project was sponsored by the University of New Mexico and was under the direction of Boyd Wettlaufer.

# AMERICAN POSTS

During the period following the transfer of Rupert's Land to Canada by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1869 to the time of the arrival of the North-West Mounted Police in 1874, the western plains were under practically no authority.

It was during this time that American traders moved across the border from Montana Territory to establish posts in Blackfeet country. Forts were set up as far north as Calgary and for several years they took most of the trade which had formerly gone to Rocky Mountain House and Fort Edmonton.

Unfortunately, none of these sites are marked by Historical Sites and Monuments Board cairns. A protected cairn made from fireplace stones marks the site of Fort Whoop-Up.

There appears to be a feeling that these posts were set up solely to trade whiskey and to rob the Indians of horses, furs and other wealth. But records prove that the larger traders sold approximately the same goods as did the Hudson's Bay Company, with the exception that they sold raw whiskey where the Bay sold rum.

Such companies as I. G. Baker Company, T. C. Power Brothers, J. B. Weatherwax, and others had an excellent reputation in the West and the main law broken when they set up forts in the Canadian west was their failure to pay customs duties.

However, there were numerous other free traders and wolfers whose lawlessness did give basis for criticism. But as W. S. Gladstone, an ex-Hudson's Bay boat builder who constructed Fort Whoop-Up said: "All in all, the old timers were a good lot of men. We all traded whiskey . . . There has been more crime since we have been civilized than there was before.

## FORT HAMILTON, OR WHOOP-UP

There were two Fort Hamiltons constructed on the St. Mary and Belly Rivers. The first was built in 1869 by John J. Healy and Alfred B. Hamilton, of Fort Benton. This fort was not strongly constructed and was partially destroyed by fire in the spring of 1870.

The same year a new post was constructed about 300 feet north of the original Fort Hamilton. To build a strong fort Hamilton and Healy hired a former Hudson's Bay boat-builder, William S. Gladstone, to do the job. The fort had a stockade, watch tower, loop holes, ramparts and wide gates.

The interior of the buildings were enclosed by large and heavy doors, while the storeroom, stables and living rooms of all the quarters were connected. In this manner, the occupants could move from room to room to protect the fort in case of attack.

This post soon became the centre of trading activities in southern Alberta. Although it was named Fort Hamilton it was soon given the name of Fort Whoop-Up. This nickname arose when a Mr. Wye, who was returning to Fort Benton, said: "Don't let the Indians whoop you up"; meaning, don't let them "round you up."

The fort was deserted in 1874 with the coming of the Mounted Police,

with the exception of one trader, Dave Akers. When the police arrived, Colonel Macleod offered Hamilton and Healy \$10,000 for the fort, to use as a garrison, but the partners refused, saying it had cost \$25,000 to build.

When the police became established at Fort Macleod, the old fort's glory waned, and in its dying days the interior was used for a garden by Dave Akers.

## STANDOFF

Second most important fort constructed by the Americans in southern Alberta was Standoff, built in 1871 at the junction of the Belly and Waterton Rivers.

This fort was built by a party of men, including "Dutch Fred" Wachter, W. McLean, Mr. Juneau and John "Liver-eating" Johnson. The party started out from Fort Benton in the summer with a load of trade goods. Included in their stock was some whiskey, used to assist the trading activities.

The United States marshal noted the departure of the group and learned of the supply of alcohol. He immediately followed them, and caught up with the party at the Milk River. When he ordered the men to come back to Fort Benton they protested that they were now in Canadian territory and that the marshal had no jurisdiction over them.

They then proceeded to the Belly River, where they built their trading fort, naming it Standoff in honor of "standing off" the marshal.

## FORT KIPP

Fort Kipp was constructed by two American traders, Joe Kipp and Charles Thomas, about 1870, near the junction of the Belly and Oldman Rivers.

In that year the American authorities were attempting to halt the illicit exporting activities of the traders, but the two men succeeded in crossing the border and establishing the post.

The fort consisted of log houses forming three sides of a square and

A band of Bloods camp in front of Fort Whoop-Up about 1874. The cannon at left is now in Galt Park, Lethbridge. Constructed in 1870, the fort ceased trading operations after the arrival of the Mounted Police. It was destroyed by fire in 1889. Note the flag.

*R.C.M.P. Photo.*





This is a sketch of Fort Kipp, made in 1875 by Dr. Neavitt, assistant surgeon with the North West Mounted Police. The post was used for a time as a police post but was eventually abandoned.

*Photo—Public Archives of Canada.*

contained a cook room, living quarters, trade and store rooms. The windows were high so that one could not look through them from the ground. Broad fireplaces of mud-plastered stone furnished the necessary heat.

### SLIDE-OUT

This fort consisted of little more than a group of trading shacks which were built on the Belly River between Fort Kipp and Standoff in 1873.

At first unnamed, the post was operated by a trader named Mose Solomon, who had an assistant named Miller. The assistant was hauling supplies to the fort in that year when he was killed by Blood Indians.

When an Indian boy reported the killing to the men at the post, they buried the body and decided that, because of the incident, the Bloods would no longer trade at this post. A Dutchman at the fort suggested they had better "slide-out", and thus gave the name to the post.

### CONRAD'S POST OR ROBBERS' ROOST

Conrad's Post was constructed in 1871 by I. G. Baker & Company at the mouth of the Belly and Oldman Rivers, three miles from Fort Kipp. It was named in honor of the manager of the company at that time. This post was also known as Robbers' Roost and Slough Bottom.

Soon after it was built, the fort was attacked by a band of Blood Indians, who were pacified before any damage was done. A second attack in the spring of 1873 was more successful and the Indians burned the fort to the ground.

### SPITZEE POST

This fort was built high on the Highwood River just west of the present town of High River about 1869 by Dave Akers and "Liver-eating" Johnston. The fort was abandoned because of Indian trouble and burned to the ground.

In December, 1872, Howell Harris and Asa Sample constructed another

post in the same area near the present Round T Ranch buildings for I. G. Baker & Company. The fort was abandoned in the fall of 1873 and was re-opened next spring.

### **KANOUSE POST**

H. A. (Fred) Kanouse constructed a fort on the Elbow River, three or four miles upstream from the Bow in 1871. This site is within the present limits of Calgary.

Constructed as an outpost of Fort Whoop-Up, the fort was 20 by 40 feet in size with a palisaded yard adjoining it to the north. There were four rooms — a kitchen-dwelling room, store room for furs, the store where trade goods were kept, and an Indian room. Admittance from the Indian room to the store was made through a trapdoor, allowing the Indians to enter only one at a time.

Soon after the fort was opened, a band of Bloods under White Eagle came to trade. In an argument that followed, a trader and an Indian were shot. This was followed by a three-day siege on the post, which escaped being destroyed when help came from a post on the Highwood River.

A short time later, D. W. Davis, later the Member of Parliament for Alberta, took charge of the post and operated it for several years before the arrival of the Mounted Police. A visitor in 1873 described Davis as "a very kindly hospitable man."

### **DICK BERRY POST**

In 1872, a trader named Dick Berry started to construct a post near Fort Kanouse, but was driven off by Indians before the first timbers were laid.

Berry then moved westward and constructed a post about 12 miles

upriver from Kanouse. Berry was later killed in ambush by a Blood Indian named Old Woman's Child.

### **LAFAYETTE POST**

Lafayette Post was established at Blackfoot Crossing in the early 1870's by Lafayette French.

The independent trader became a staunch friend of Crowfoot when he saved the chief from an attempted murder at Spitzee Post. Following the incident, French set up a post at Blackfoot Crossing, where he operated until after the arrival of the Mounted Police. The post was later sold to the Canadian Government, as it lay within the new Blackfoot reserve.

### **KOOTENAI POST, FORT WARREN**

In 1874, Kootenai Brown and Fred Kanouse opened a trading post at what is now the Dardanelles between middle and lower lakes in Waterton National Park. This post was established for trading with the Kootenay Indians.

The North-West Mounted Police refer to a post operated by Fred Kanouse named Fort Warren. This post was established "in the foothills" to trade with the Kootenays.

In 1874, Fort Warren was attacked by the Indians, but they were beaten off before the arrival of the Mounted Police. However, the fort was damaged by an accidental discharge of dynamite following the fight.

No mention is made by the Mounted Police of the exact location of Fort Warren, so that it is possible that Kootenai Post and Fort Warren are one and the same.



## CONRAD'S OUTPOST

A one-roomed trading post was operated by Charles Conrad during the 1870's at the mouth of the Little Bow on the Oldman River. Howell Harris described it as ". . . a small one-room shack . . . with a young man in charge." It was attacked by Peigans during its first summer of operation but escaped destruction after the Indians looted the post.

## LEE'S POST

A trader named Lee constructed a trading post on the south side of the Oldman River, near the mouth of Pincher Creek in the middle 1870's.

## LIVINGSTON POST

Sam Livingston, a pioneer resident of Calgary district, constructed a trading post in the early 1870's. It was located about 20 miles west of the present city of Calgary.

## PINE COULEE POST

A trading post was in operation in the bottom of Pine Coulee, south of the present town of Nanton, when the Mounted Police arrived in 1874. It was reported to the police by Three Bulls of the Bloods and the traders, Harry "Kamoose" Taylor and William Bond were arrested.

## McPHERSON'S POST

At the time of the arrival of the North-West Mounted Police in Calgary in 1875, a trader named Edward McPherson was operating a trading post on the Sheep River, near the present town of Okotoks.

This trader sold luxuries and supplies to the men at the new police post for some time.

*NOTE: — These are the main posts mentioned or identified in early historical writings of southern Alberta. In addition there are numerous other names of forts*

Trading was big business in the late 1800's and the Hudson's Bay Co. had stores established at all vantage points in the west. Here is a view of a typical store, at Pincher Creek, taken about 1882, with trading Indians, the store manager, and his staff posed outside.

*Photo—Ernest Brown Collection.*



*which are mentioned, but not identified. In many cases these are likely duplicates of the above posts, as many were given nick-names.*

A fort dubbed WILLOW CREEK POST was supposed to have been in operation on Willow Creek, about one mile from the Oldman River. Late

19th Century writers mention seeing the ruins of a post at that point and believe it was destroyed by Indians.

Some of the other names mentioned in early writings are: DUTCH FRED'S TRADING POST, LAFAYETTE FRENCH'S POST, KAMOOSÉ TAYLOR'S POST, and an unnamed post at the head of Willow Creek.



A typical sod house common to the prairies in the early days of the west. These pioneers have gathered buffalo bones for later sale.

# PIONEER SETTLEMENT

**T**HIS chapter includes religious, cultural and industrial development of southern Alberta, plus later period historical sites.

On the Alberta prairies, most of the religious and cultural development has taken place within the past three-quarters of a century. The most important events in this group have been marked with federal or local cairns.

## RUNDLE MEMORIAL

The memorial to Reverend Robert T. Rundle was erected at Banff in May, 1941, sponsored by the United Church of Canada.

The first missions of the Wesleyans or Methodist Church in western Canada were established in 1840. Reverend Rundle, who arrived at Fort Edmonton on September 1st of that year, was the first missionary to visit what is now Alberta.

He was given quarters in the fort and supplied with materials and food by the Hudson's Bay Company. In the course of his ministry, Rundle visited Beaver Lake, Rocky Mountain House, the Blackfeet on the Bow River, and the Stonies near Banff. He camped within sight of the mountains in 1841, and entered the Banff area twice before he left the country in 1848.

Inscription on the memorial reads: "In memory of Reverend Robert T. Rundle, Methodist minister, first missionary in Alberta 1840, visited Indians at Banff 1841, erected by the United Church of Canada, May, 1941."

## FIRST COAL MINE

A cairn, erected in Galt Park, Lethbridge, pays tribute to the first coal

mine in Alberta and to Nicholas Sheran, the man who developed it.

Nicholas Sheran was born in New York and came to the American frontier following the Civil War. From Fort Benton he travelled across the line into Canada in 1870 with trader John Healy.

He came in search of gold, but instead found coal. He found it sticking out of the earth along the river banks and immediately set to work to develop his find. This he did successfully until the time the Galts turned to the west to take a hand in the development of the new country.

Sheran had been supplying Lethbridge and Fort Macleod districts, as well as northern Montana, with coal. Sir Alexander T. Galt looked admiringly at the efforts of the pioneer and soon after built the famous Galt Mines at Lethbridge. Sheran never lived to enjoy the real development of his find. He drowned in 1882 while fording the Oldman River.

The cairn in Galt Park reads: "Cairn and tablet to mark the site of the first coal mine in Alberta. It was situated on the west bank of the Oldman River at the present site of the Federal Mine, and was operated by Nicholas Sheran in 1872."

## R. B. BENNETT

A stone monument was erected by the Historical Sites and Monuments Board of Canada on the grounds of Calgary Public Library, to pay tribute to an outstanding Albertan, R. B. Bennett.

Bennett came to Alberta as a lawyer and for many years represented the C.P.R. in Calgary. However, his greatest fame came in the political field, where he served as a Conservative member in the Territorial and Alberta Legislatures, and the Federal Government, and became the prime minister of Canada from 1930 to 1935.

The cairn states: "Richard Bedford Bennett. Of old colonial stock, he practised law in Chatham, N.B., and for many years in Calgary, Alberta, having moved to the North West in 1897. Elected from Calgary to the Legislative Assembly of the North West Territories in 1898, to the Alberta Legislature in 1909, and to Parliament in 1911, he was long in the forefront of public life and was Prime Minister of Canada from 1930 to 1935. Retiring in 1939 to live in England, he was raised to the peerage in 1941 as Viscount Bennett of Mickleham, Calgary and Hopewell. His devotion to Canada and the Empire was steadfast and enduring. Born in Hopewell, N.B., 3rd July 1870. Died at Michleham, England 27th June, 1947."

## STEPHANSSON MEMORIAL

A cairn was unveiled at Marker-ville on Labor Day, 1950, by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board to pay tribute to the Icelandic poet, Stephansson Gudmundsson Stephansson.

The poet was born on a farm in Skagafjord, Iceland, in 1853, of a peasant family and came to Marker-ville in 1889. When he started farming, Stephansson sowed his grain by hand, cut it with a scythe attached to a cradle, and when the cutting was all done he would then wash and level a large area of the ground and flay the grain. During these tiring days of labor, the poet always found time to go to his log cabin and write his poems. These were in his native tongue and lost much of their beauty in translation.

Many volumes of his poems still are in the hands of members of the family and have not yet been translated into English. Stephansson died in August, 1927.

## McKINNEY MEMORIAL

A cairn erected in Claresholm by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board in 1947 pays tribute to Mrs. Louise Crummy McKinney, the first woman member of a legislature in the British Empire.

Mrs. McKinney represented Claresholm constituency in the Alberta Legislature following an election in June, 1917. She was born at Frankville, Ontario, in 1868, and died at Claresholm in 1931.

Inscription on the memorial reads: "Louise Crummy McKinney. The first woman to become a member of a legislature in the British Empire. Elected by the constituency of Claresholm to the Legislative-Assembly of Alberta, 7th June, 1917. Born at Frankville, Ontario, 22nd. September, 1868, Died at Claresholm, Alberta, 10th July, 1931."

*NOTE: — Following are the historic sites of the pioneer settlement era, some of which are marked by local cairns, while others still are unidentified.*

### **KOOTENAI BROWN MEMORIAL**

A cairn was unveiled in 1936 at Waterton Lakes National Park in honor of John George "Kootenai" Brown, a colorful figure of the early west.

Unlike most early pioneers, Kootenai Brown left a written memorial of his life in a journal he maintained as first guardian of Waterton Lakes National Park.

Brown was born in England in the 1840's and was educated at Eton and Oxford. He later went to India as an army officer and continued on to San Francisco in the early 1860's.

Several years later he and a companion came through the Kootenays

into the Waterton Lake country and here Brown stayed. He first operated a trading post and later became park guardian. He died on July 18, 1917, and was buried beside the lakes he loved.

### **CARDSTON SETTLEMENT**

A cairn has been erected by the Mormon Church in the park surrounding the temple at Cardston, in tribute to the arrival of the first settlers in 1887.

About 40 Mormons, led by Charles Ora Card, arrived at the site of Cardston on June 3, 1887, after travelling across the unsurveyed prairie from Salt Lake City, Utah.

For the first winter they lived on the scanty crops they planted and the supplies brought from the United States. Later they laid out Cardston townsite and planned the future "Temple City of Canada."

**Cairn erected by the Mormon Church in Cardston pays tribute to the first Latter Day Saints who settled at the site in 1887.**



Other cairns to this historic trek have also been erected on Lee's Creek where the party first camped, and south of Immigration Gap where the party crossed the International Boundary into Canada. The Alberta Government has commemorated the event by a rustic sign on the southern outskirts of the town and a cairn at the site of the Card home on the main street, at Cardston.

### **OUR LADY OF PEACE MISSION**

A local cairn was unveiled on August 21, 1941, at the farm of O. S. Nickle, 21 miles southwest of Calgary, on the site of the mission of Our Lady of Peace, founded in 1873 by Father Scollen.

This was the first Catholic church south of Red Deer and it was from this site that missionaries journeyed through southern Alberta. The stones from the original mission were used in the construction of the cairn.

Inscription on the cairn is: "On the site of the first church in southern Alberta this tablet commemorates the missionary labor of Father Constantine Scollen, O.M.I., born in Ireland in 1841, who established the mission of Our Lady of Peace, in the country of the Blackfoot in 1873, and of Father Leon Doucet, O.M.I., born in France in 1847, who joined Father Scollen at this spot in 1875 and spent a lifetime as 'Missionaries-aux-pieds moin'."

### **THE GREAT DIVIDE**

The boundary between Alberta and British Columbia on the Trans-Canada Highway is marked by a plaque on the archway.

The lowest known point on the Great Divide, which extends the length of the continent, is in the

vicinity of Dease Lake, where the altitude is only slightly over 2,700 feet. On the Alberta side of the arch is the provincial coat of arms, between the words "Great Divide" in rustic lettering.

### **MORLEY CHURCH**

A church constructed in 1872 at Morley on the Stony Indian Reserve by Reverend George McDougall and his son, Reverend John McDougall, is preserved as an historic site.

The church was built on an impressive site on the banks of the Bow River by the two missionaries to preach among the Stony Indians. The building remained in use until 1921. It has since been restored through the efforts of the historical committee of the Alberta Government and a Calgary social club and is used for special services.

A cairn paying tribute to the McDougalls, the Stony Indians, and the Old Timers is located nearby.

### **SPRINGBANK CHURCH**

A cairn was erected in 1959 to mark the site of the rural South Springbank Church, now within Calgary's western city limits.

The church was established in 1895 to serve the pioneers of the area. Over the years, different Protestant denominations co-operated to provide ministers for Sunday services. The plaque pays tribute to the Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist and Anglican denominations. The church was removed from the site in 1951.

### **TAIL CREEK**

Once a settlement for mass buffalo hunts in the 1870's, all that re-



*Alta. Govt. Photo.*

The old church at Morley, constructed by Missionaries George and John McDougall, is fronted by a cairn bearing three plaques. One pays tribute to the missionaries and the church, and the second to the Stony Indians and the third to Southern Alberta oldtimers.

mains of Tail Creek today is a scattering of some 40 unmarked graves. The settlement was located about four miles south east of Nevis.

The settlement began as a cluster of huts set up by buffalo hunters each fall, when hunting was its best. In its heyday, Tail Creek had some 2,000 inhabitants, a population greater than St. Albert, Lac St. Anne or Edmonton. Metis, Indians and white men lived and hunted from more than 400 log cabins snuggled on the slopes of a shallow valley at the junction of Tail Creek and the Red Deer River west of present day Stettler.

There was little variety in the low-roofed, long walled huts. Straw and earth spread over poles served as a roof, while doors and floors were hand hewn from logs. Inside plaster of mud and straw, and windows of animal skins made the dwelling snug during severe winter weather.

Dancing and gambling were two favorite leisure pastimes. One huge

cabin was used for meetings and social affairs. To protect the Indians and Metis from the whiskey traders of the south, the N.W.M.P. stationed a garrison of four men at Tail Creek in 1876. Excessive slaughter of the buffalo herds sounded the death knell for the settlement's existence. In 1878 the teetering community was razed by fire and was never rebuilt.

### **WRITING-ON-STONE**

In the valley of the Milk River, about 75 miles southeast of Lethbridge, is a small area of sandstone cliffs on which are inscribed ancient picture script.

The first known white man to see these pictographs was James Doty, who visited the site in 1855. He wrote: "They (the sandstone rocks) are worn by the action of the weather into a thousand fantastic shapes, presenting in places smooth perpendicular surfaces, covered with rude hieroglyphics and representations of men, horses,

guns, bows, shields, etc., in the usual Indian style.

“No doubt this has been done by wandering War Parties who have here recounted their coups or feats of war or horse stealing and inscribed them upon these rocks.”

In the 1890's many Indians believed the carvings had been made by spirits. One Blackfeet tale is told of a youth who left his war party and “advanced to the stone and traced with his finger the wonderful writing which the spirits had made thereon. Whilst thus engaged his whole body was seized with trembling, weird voices were heard in the air, the ground shook with a violent tremor, and a feeling of helplessness took possession of the group.”

Most of the petroglyphs are in groups and appear to portray some event such as a hunt, fight or raid. Some of the carved rocks have fallen or cracked over the years, but most of the writing remain in an excellent state of preservation.

A cairn has been erected at this site by the Historic Sites Committee of the Alberta Government.

## IROQUOIS INDIANS

Inducement to Indians to harvest the fur riches of western Canada were not always successful before the advent of the well organized fur trade in this region around the turn of the last century. In at least one instance outside Indians were brought in to do what the native Indians declined to do. A sign erected by the Historic



Shown is a portion of the curious petroglyphs at Writing-on-Stone. It depicts a group of people attacking an animal that could be a buffalo, with arrows and spears.



Sites Committee of the Government of Alberta on Highway No. 16 near Spruce Grove thus explains the presence of Iroquois Indians in the west: "In the late 1700's, when the fur traders first entered this area, they found it difficult to induce the savage tribes to gather furs. So, the Hudson's Bay Co. hired a number of Iroquois Indians from the Caughnawaga Reserve near Montreal and brought them west as hunters and trappers. These men, led by Callihoo, lived near Jasper for many years and in 1876 they took a reserve twenty miles north of here. Most of them intermarried with the Crees and their descendants still live in the area".

### **DOWLING MEMORIAL**

A cairn has been erected on Highway No. 1 near the Minnewanka road in Banff National Park, paying tribute to Donaldson Bogart Dowling, a pioneer in the field of coal, petroleum and natural gas development. Dowling was a member of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy.

### **MASSACRE BUTTE**

A prominent elevation two miles north of Cowley, off No. 3 Highway, marks the local where an immigrant train of twelve men, women and children were massacred in 1867 by a war party of Blood Indians.

The party, led by the noted Blood warrior Medicine Calf, struck while the train was in night camp. The only victim to be identified was a man named John Hoise. The train was part of Captain Fiske's expedition from Minnesota and had left the main party in Montana.

The hill today is under cultivation. Signs of the vicinity indicate the butte may have been used as a lookout for

large Indian camps pitched on the flats of the Crowsnest River about a quarter mile from the hill. On the flats are still visible many stone "tepee rings" to denote Indians occupancy.

A cairn to mark the site of the massacre has been placed by the Historic Sites Committee of the Government of Alberta.

### **MURDER OF SGT. WILDE**

A sign on Highway No. 6 some five miles south of Pincher Creek gives the following account of savagery and justice:

"In 1896, a Blood Indian named Charcoal murdered a fellow tribesman who was paying too much attention to his wife. In the weeks that followed, he was sought throughout much of this prairie and foothill country. On November 11, Sgt. W. B. Wilde of Pincher Creek detachment, North-West Mounted Police, found his trail a few miles east of here. He was overtaking him on horseback when Charcoal wheeled in his saddle and shot the Mounted Policeman. He was captured by his own people and executed on March 16, 1879".

### **CONSTABLE GRABURN**

When the North-West Mounted Police came west in 1874 a year after their formation, they faced many difficulties in making the edict of law and order stick among the restless Indians and infamous whiskey traders of the southern prairies. That a handful of police could suppress lawlessness among thousands under their charge is a ceaseless tribute to the courage and tact of the N.W.M.P.

They accomplished this without loss through violence of a single member until 1879. At this time Constable

Marmaduke Graburn, recent recruit from Ottawa, was ambushed and shot to death. Scene of the violence was near Horse Camp, an outlying camp serving Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills. Constable Graburn had left a fellow policeman and the camp's horse herder to recover some forgotten tool at a nearby garden. He failed to return that night. A search party organized the following day discovered the constable's body in brush-choked coulee. A cairn today marks the site.

For two years an Indian by name of Star Child was sought as a prime suspect in the murder. He was arrested in camp near Fort Macleod in 1881 and was charged with the crime. Insufficient evidence at trial brought acquittal.

In 1882, Constable Johnston, who was Graburn's camp mate at the time of the murder, was accidentally shot and killed by a fellow policeman who was cleaning a gun. He was buried beside Constable Graburn at Fort Walsh.

### **RALPH CONNOR MEMORIAL**

A cairn at Canmore, near Banff National Park, pays tribute to Rev. C. W. Gordon, who became famous under the pen name of Ralph Connor.

During his years as a Presbyterian missionary, Rev. Gordon saw many events in the west which he used in such books as "Corporal Cameron" and "The Sky Pilot". He was also noted for his reminiscent books of "Glengarry School Days" and "Man From Glengarry".

His works are still popularly read by young people and are on many selected reading lists for schools.

### **FIRST WOOLLEN MILL**

Samuel W. Shaw, a successful

chemist and businessman from Kent, England, settled in the Midnapore district in 1883 and in 1890 opened the province's first woollen mill.

Mr. and Mrs. Shaw and their children travelled to the end of steel at Swift Current, Saskatchewan, in the spring of 1883. Thirty tons of plant machinery were left at Swift Current, for rail shipment to Calgary after the C.P.R. line reached that centre in the fall of 1883. With a caravan of five span of oxen, wagons, food, medicine and clothing sufficient for two years they struck across the prairies. Their goal was the Peace River Country but at Calgary they turned south and settled at Fish Creek, eight miles from Calgary.

Ultimately the family became homesteaders, ranchers, storekeepers, postmaster and woollen-manufactures. Theirs was one of Alberta's earliest industrial plants, producing blankets, suiting and other goods. The mill was finally sold in 1905 and a few years later fire destroyed it.

Samuel Shaw died in 1919 at the age of 76. His wife, Helen, lived to the age of 94 and died in 1941.

A sign to mark the site of the first woollen mill and pay tribute to a pioneer family has been erected on Highway No. 2 at Midnapore.

### **FIRST CHEESE FACTORY**

A sign has been erected near the original site of Alberta's first cheese factory, which was constructed in 1888 by Ebenezer Healy on his homestead near Springbank, 18 miles west of Calgary.

Healy was born in Nova Scotia, coming west in 1882. He lived in Regina until 1887, when he moved by covered wagon to the homestead near



*Alta. Govt. Photo.*

A view of the Frank Slide, showing the rubble resulting from the collapse of a section of Turtle Mountain. Beneath are buried 66 persons and a portion of the town of Frank. Foreground can be seen the modern town of Bellevue.

Calgary. He brought 20 head of dairy cattle and was a successful dairy rancher until 1888, when overproduction of milk was the main problem in the district. To solve the problem, Healy constructed a cheese factory on his farm and operated it successfully until 1896, when it was converted into a cream separating station.

### **FRANK SLIDE**

Two historic highway signs have been erected to commemorate the disaster of the Frank Slide, in the Crows nest Pass, which took the lives of more than 70 persons in 1903.

Frank was one of the first communities in the Pass and most of its inhabitants were engaged in coal min-

ing. But on April 29, 1903, a section of Turtle Mountain crumbled into the valley, partially destroying the town and forcing the abandonment of the remainder.

The sign states: "Disaster struck the town of Frank at 4:10 a.m., April 29th, 1903, when a gigantic wedge of limestone, 2,100 feet high, 3,000 feet wide and 500 feet thick, crashed down from Turtle Mountain. Ninety million tons of rock swept over a mile of valley, destroying part of the town, taking 70 lives, and burying an entire mine plant and railway in approximately 100 seconds. The old town was located at the western edge of the slide where many cellars still are visible."

## PIONEER TRAILS of ALBERTA



Overland travel was no easy thing in the pioneer west. This train of carts is preparing to take a load of trade furs to a central market.

**W**ATER and overland trails used in opening up the west were many and valuable to the pioneers. It is not feasible to deal with them all, in and detail. They may be divided generally into three classes:

**Trans-continental water routes used first by the fur traders.**

**Settlers' trails and modern highway and railway routes that followed old Indian trails.**

**Pioneer trails blazed through the wilderness to reach farming country.**

Before the arrival of the settlers to what is now the Province of Alberta, many overland and water routes had been developed by the fur traders, who in turn had adapted Indian travel routes and trails.

The general water routes to Alberta naturally followed large rivers that traversed fur areas and were in constant use from the time that Peter

Pond approached northern Alberta in 1778.

The most important water route through Alberta followed the North Saskatchewan and served the numerous trading posts on both sides of the Rocky Mountains. Goods were transported up the Saskatchewan from either Montreal or York Factory by canoe or boat to Fort Edmonton.

From here they were taken across the mountains via the Athabasca Pass to Boat Encampment and on the Fort Vancouver.

The return route was by canoe up the Columbia to Boat Encampment and by pack horses to Henry House on the Athabasca River, a few miles below the present Jasper. From Henry House the packs of fur were sometimes taken down the Athabasca by boat to Fort Assiniboine and by pack horses to Edmonton, or they were taken by pack horses directly from Henry House to Edmonton.

In 1826, the Yellowhead Pass was adapted. This followed the same general route from the east to Henry House but turned off at the Miette River. The water route through Rocky Mountain House was used only from 1807 to 1811.

Most overland trails developed by early settlers were usually well-worn trading trails of Indians and fur traders. When Edmonton became an important trading centre for the main three tribes of Indians in the area, clearly defined trails marked their travels from their hunting grounds to the Saskatchewan River.

The three tribes trading at Edmonton were the Blackfeet, Crees and Mountain Stonies. The Blackfeet nation, made up of the Blackfeet proper, Bloods, Peigans and the allied tribe of Gros Ventres, hunted on the Great Plain of the south. The Plains and Woods Crees hunted throughout the wooded area of Alberta and south of the North Saskatchewan to the edge of the plains. The Mountain Stonies or Assiniboines claimed the foothills area from the Bow River to the Athabasca.

From these hunting areas, definite trails were followed, some of

which became immigrant trails and today are the site of modern highways or railways.

Most prominent of these routes are the following seven railway lines:

1. Edmonton to Jasper . . . Trail of Mountain Stonies, now followed by the main C.N.R. line.
2. Calgary to Edmonton . . . Trail of the Blackfeet, now followed by the C.N.R. line.
3. Eastern trails to Edmonton and Calgary . . . Trails of the Plains Crees, now followed by main C.N.R. and C.P.R. lines.
4. Edmonton to St. Paul . . . Trail of Woods Crees, followed by the C.N.R. line.
5. Edmonton to Lac La Biche . . . Trail of Woods Crees, followed by the N.A.R. line.
6. Edmonton to Athabasca . . . Trail of Woods Crees, followed by the C.N.R. line.
7. Edmonton to Whitecourt . . . Trail of Woods Crees, followed by the C.N.R. line.

## BENTON TRAIL

One of the earliest overland trading routes of Alberta was the Benton Trail, which connected Fort Whoop-Up, near the present city of Lethbridge, to Fort Benton, in Montana Territory. This route was developed in 1869 when Fort Benton interests opened a fort in Canadian Territory.

This route became an important immigrant trail for settlers coming to Alberta from the United States and later extended north to Calgary. It can be generally traced by No. 2 Highway from Calgary to Fort Macleod and across the Blood Reserve to Lethbridge; No. 4 Highway from Lethbridge to Coutts, and by the

American No. 91 Highway from Sweetgrass to Shelby and on to Fort Benton.

A cairn erected at Coutts by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board and a rustic sign erected by the Alberta Government pays tribute to this early overland trail.

## **KLONDIKE TRAIL**

The madness of the Yukon gold rush in the late 1890's left its mark in far removed Alberta. Some 2,000 gold seekers from all parts of the world used the end of the railway line at Edmonton as a jumping-off point in their northward scramble to the Yukon. Many used the well defined Assiniboine Trail to Fort Assiniboine on the Athabasca River and then struck off north and westward over the Swan Hills wilderness.

From the Peace River country they pushed on toward their goal, over a route which presented unbelievable obstacles. The year-long journey would have taxed even the most seasoned travellers of the north, and for the inexperienced trekkers it spelled stark disaster.

Only a handful ever completed the journey. The trail was dotted with graves of those who had tried but failed.

An historic sign marking the trail is located on Highway No. 18 between Barrhead and Fort Assiniboine.

## **CALGARY - EDMONTON TRAIL**

The Calgary-Edmonton Trail, as we know it today, was made in 1875. But the main credit should go to Rev. John McDougall and his brother David, who cut out the northern half of the route in 1873, when making a cart road from Fort Edmonton to

Morley. It followed an old Indian trail past the Bear Hills, across the Red Deer River and down to Morley. After the establishment of Fort Calgary in 1875, the route branched at Olds and went directly south along the route we know today.

The first mail service between Calgary and Edmonton started in July, 1883, with a wagon making fortnightly trips to carry light freight, Royal Mail and passengers. The first stage-coach passenger service started in the following month, making the trip in five days each way.

The first survey of the trail was made in 1886 when the surveyor, somewhat prophetically, stated: "Great traffic and immense travel some day may be done this way." After the construction of the C. & E. Railway in 1891, the trail lost much of its popularity for several years until the automobile became the popular mode of travel.

Signs commemorating this trail have been erected on the outskirts of Calgary and Edmonton by the Alberta Government.

## **WINNIPEG TRAIL**

Rev. George McDougall established a mission in 1862-63 at Victoria, present site of Pakan, which became a stop on the main overland route from Winnipeg to Edmonton.

The Hudson's Bay Company opened a trading post at Victoria shortly after the mission came. The heavy volume of supplies going to Fort Edmonton could not easily be freighted up the fast flowing Saskatchewan River between Victoria and Edmonton. Some freight began to be taken overland, along the route first followed by Capt. Palliser and others. As the settlements of Winnipeg and



Water transportation was the main means of moving goods in bulk in Alberta's early days. Here, scows are being loaded at Edmonton for passage to Lloydminster and Battleford.

Edmonton mushroomed in growth, the Victoria trail became a section of the Winnipeg trail of the 1870's. Fort Pitt and Fort Carlton were other intermediate points.

A cairn located near St. Brides at the junction of the Highways No. 36 and No. 28 marks the route of overland freighting from the Red River country to Edmonton in these words: "Near this point the highway crosses the old Winnipeg Trail. It was used extensively by explorers, traders and missionaries until the railway superseded it as the important transportation link between Edmonton and Winnipeg. The automobile and the modern highway result in its passing, forever, from the Alberta scene".

#### **BOUNDARY MARKERS**

By Dominion Order-in-council of 1882, part of the vast North-West

Territories was divided into four provisional districts, Alberta, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Athabasca.

These divisions remained until 1905 when the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were created, incorporating virtually all the lands of the four old districts.

A three-sided cairn located six miles south of Coronation marks the axis of three of the old districts, Alberta to the west, Saskatchewan to the northeast and Assiniboia to the southeast. The District of Athabasca extended from the 55 parallel, the northern boundary of Alberta and Saskatchewan, to the 66th parallel, a rectangular block stretching from the west coast to Hudson Bay.

Additional cairns to show geographical relation of one district with another have been erected as follows:

On Highway No. 43 a short distance south of Valleyview, marking the northern boundary of the old District of Alberta, with the District of Athabasca to the north; on Highway No. 16 east of Innisfree, showing the dividing line between Alberta to the west and Saskatchewan to the east; on Highway No. 1 near Alderson, marking the boundary of Assiniboia which lay to the east and Alberta to the west.

### COCHRANE RANCH

The earliest ranching enterprise in Alberta was that of the Cochrane Ranch Company (Limited), which established headquarters in 1881 about one mile west of the present town of Cochrane. The original ranch house still stands and up to a short time ago remained in use.

The Cochrane Ranch Company received a dominion charter in May of 1881, giving it rights to 109,000 acres of rangeland. Lease holders paid only one cent per acre a year. Duty payments on cattle imports from the United States were exempt, to promote effective stocking of the rangelands.

President of the company, which was capitalized at \$500,000 and made up of eastern Canada industrialists and "gentlemen", was Senator M. H. Cochrane. His son, W. F. Cochrane, was manager, while Major James Walker, former North-West Mounted Police inspector, was the first local manager, Resident general manager in Montreal was Dr. D. M. McEachern, noted professor of veterinary medicine and surgery.



*Alta. Govt. Photo.*

Reported to be the oldest ranch house in Alberta, this log structure was built in 1881, and stands today in its original site about one mile west of Cochrane.



In the first year the company imported several thousand head of cattle from Montana. Heavy losses were suffered that first winter and in 1882 the cattle headquarters was moved to another part of the leased range, near Waterton Lakes. After a series of initial setbacks the company concentrated on cattle, sheep and horse ranching in turn and eventually prospered.

The leased land was purchased outright from the Federal Government and Senator Cochrane gained sole ownership before selling the land to his son. In 1906 almost the entire block was sold to the Church of the Latter Day Saints. Selling price of \$6 million made it the biggest land deal in Alberta up to that time.

Cochrane settlement was named by the C.P.R. after Senator Cochrane and Cochrane Lake in the same area was named after his manager son.

## **FIRST OIL WELL**

Remnants of equipment of the first successful oilwell in Alberta are located along Cameron Creek in Waterton Lakes National Park. It was drilled in 1902, using cable tools and a wooden winch drill rig.

Indians in the area had long been aware of oil seepages along the creek and imparted the information to John George (Kootenai) Brown, an early Waterton District rancher. In 1886 the legendary Kootenai Brown reportedly skimmed some of the oil seepage off the creek and used it for greasing farm machinery. William Aldridge, one of Brown's workers, later dug pits to collect the seepage

and sold the skimmings to neighboring ranchers.

Shortly before the turn of the century, John Lineham of Okotoks and Surveyor A. P. Patrick organized a company to drill for oil at Cameron Creek. Drilling started in 1902 and oil was struck at the 1,020 foot level. A flow of 300 barrels per day was claimed of the well.

Cable tool drilling cut the well casing and incoming gravel embedded the tools. Cave-ins above the lost tools were cleaned out and in 1904 a pump was installed. Lineham certified in 1906 that the well had produced 8,000 barrels of crude, 700 of which were sold.

The well soon ceased production and none of the many test wells drilled at the site or in its vicinity in later years yielded even a show of oil. The oil city which promoters had visualized in the mountains remained but a dream. In its stead there stands a drill stem protruding from the Lineham well. On the ground nearby is the pioneer drilling rig's wooden winch and yards of frayed and tangled steel cable.

## **THE RIBSTONES**

Two large rocks, laboriously carved and chiselled with lines resembling the ribs of buffalo, are marked by a cairn on the farm of L. G. Dobry, near Viking.

The ribstones are believed to have had a sacred meaning for the Indians of this area and were carved a thousand years ago or longer. Legend has it that Indians sacrificed buffalo on the stones at the start of each hunt, believing that the sacrifices would ensure success.

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