

Conditions in the West

Heavy Liquidating in Winnipeg Wheat Market.—Navigation Closes Uneventfully—Shortage of Boats for Winter Storage

Special Correspondence by E. CORA HIND, Commercial and Agricultural Editor, Free Press, Winnipeg.

Winnipeg, December 15th.—Winnipeg market certainly made new records on the down grade today. The break in Winnipeg was 15 1-4 cents for December and 13 3-4 cents for May. This meant that December wheat sold within 1-8 of 49 cents under the high point of the season which was \$1.97 and May wheat sold at 31 1-8 cents under the high point which was \$1.97 3/4. At no time during the day was there any very great volume of wheat pressing on the market it went down with extreme ease, some times there being a cent between trades.

The decline was attributed almost wholly to the peace talk which was certainly made the most of by the bear interests. It was generally understood that the wheat bought went into pretty strong hands. Oats were effected by the slump in wheat, but in Winnipeg the buying on the decline was of an excellent character; oats are undoubtedly even yet the cheapest thing on the Winnipeg market.

There seemed to be a feeling among the trade that prices may go even lower, possibly under \$1.50. This calls to mind the suggestion made some time ago to the government that the maximum price of wheat be fixed at \$2 and the minimum at \$1.50.

Elevator companies with big lines of interior houses report that receipts are very small, this is owing in some measure to the sudden severe cold snap and also to the near approach of the holiday season. Receipts at Winnipeg are still running between 1,000 and 1,100 cars per day. The cold has put a stop to any threshing that was being done and it is probable that there will be very little more threshing completed now until next spring. There is still a very considerable percentage of unthreshed grain in the fields, but elevator men report that recent receipts on their houses are in a very bad condition.

Following the slump in wheat, prices of flour were lowered 70 cents per barrel, bringing the price of No. 1 Patent down to \$1.25 per sack. The Winnipeg Grain Exchange has received the statement from Brit. and as to the percentages of flour that must be taken from the wheat. These are rated at 76 per cent for No. 1 Northern, 75 per cent for No. 2 and 73 per cent for No. 3. Millers when asked, stated that roughly speaking this meant an addition of from 8 to 10 per cent in the amount of flour to be taken from a bushel of wheat. Looking over the whole wheat and flour situation, it would seem as if liquidation had been so heavy that the only thing that would prevent re-advance to higher levels would be the serious consideration by Britain and her Allies of peace proposals, which so far as the Canadian West is concerned is regarded as utterly improbable.

Close of Navigation.

The official close of navigation on the Great Lakes which is always scheduled for December 12th, proved this year to be the tamest and quietest that the big lake ports have ever known. The storm of Friday the 8th had delayed some boats coming up and there was practically nothing doing. Unofficially, navigation is still open though with the present low temperature it may close at any moment. There are heavy stocks in the lake terminals and a shortage of boats for winter storage. During the past few days a fairly active effort has been made to secure more bottoms for winter storage at the head of the lakes, but without much success. In the present crop year from the 1st September to the 13th December, 65,588,000 bushels of grain were shipped to Canadian ports and United States ports, of this amount, 39,500,000 went to the United States and only 26,180,000 to Canadian ports.

Live Stock.

The Dominion Government scheme for paying the expenses of men who wished to come in to the Central Stock Yards to buy young feeding and breeding cattle on their farms has worked out most successfully. In the period between October 10th, when they commenced operations, and December 10 8,241 head of young cattle have been moved through their agencies back to the farms to be finished. Of this number 6,515 head were shipped from Winnipeg. The number of heifers included in this movement

is 2,540, and it is estimated that 85 to 90 per cent of them are old enough to breed at once.

Live stock movement in the West is very active at the present time, and there is a keen demand. This is evident by the fact that a sale of Shorthorn cattle held at Calgary during the present week 68 head brought \$21,000, this is certainly a record for western Canada. The firm selling these cattle, to wit, Yule and Bowes, are two young men still in their early thirties and they have made a profit on this transaction of just about \$10,000. At a sale of Percheron horses held in Calgary this week also, 36 head were sold at an average of \$386.50. One of the most gratifying features of these sales is that the purchasers are mainly Alberta farmers who have during 1915 and 1916 secured such heavy returns from their wheat crop, but refuse to put all their earnings into more wheat and are insuring themselves against loss in future possible dry years by investing in cattle or some other form of live stock.

GRAIN AT THE HEAD OF LAKES.

Fort William, Dec. 16th, 1916.

Statement of stocks in store in terminal elevators at Fort William and Port Arthur on December 15th, 1916, with receipts and shipments during the week.

Elevator	Wheat.	Oats.	Barley.	Flax.
C. P. R.	2,015,142	868,126	99,492	.....
Empire	757,202	344,412	21,411	184,147
Consolidated	606,303	278,567	18,149	102,681
Ogilvie	888,915	175,488	20,470	.....
Western	421,069	213,540	13,010	252,732
G. G. G. Co.	719,295	513,827	37,686	.....
Fort William	576,721	449,669	25,427	46,394
Eastern	752,103	490,621	14,228	.....
G. T. P.	1,958,347	1,233,073	72,328	62,660
Can. Nor.	2,399,296	1,161,716	233,942	95,707
Horn and Co.	215,114	114,249	44,190	105,262
Can. Govt.	1,213,082	451,241	65,549	85,478
Thunder Bay	532,604	327,565	31,309	50,552

Total 13,055,239 6,622,103 697,197 985,619

A Year Ago 9,235,859 3,273,127 798,837 651,400

Receipts 5,311,527 2,475,139 277,493 278,208
 Ship.—Lake 5,517,472 2,613,246 401,039 82,698
 Ships.—Rail 215,959 159,729 1,821 80

Stocks by Grade.

Wheat.		Oats.	
One Hard	19,898		
One Nor.	717,917	1 C. W.	24,252
Two Nor.	1,983,952	2 C. W.	1,706,113
Three Nor.	1,618,837	3 C. W.	572,931
No. Four	1,334,479	Ex. 1 Feed	912,071
Others	7,380,154	Others	3,406,735

Total 13,055,239 Total 6,622,103

Barley.		Flax.	
3 C. W.	99,898		
4 C. W.	221,210	1 N. W. C.	750,019
Rejected	43,998	2 C. W.	152,007
Feed	183,566	3 C. W.	59,887
Others	148,523	Others	23,704

Total 697,197 Total 985,619

MONTREAL GRAIN STOCKS.

The following table shows the stocks of grain and flour in store in Montreal on the dates mentioned:

	Dec. 16, 1916.	Dec. 9, 1916.	Dec. 18, 1915.
Wheat, bushels	1,131,658	1,246,502	1,453,915
Corn, bushels	8,439	7,127	6,068
Peas, bushels	3,396	3,396	1,234
Oats, bushels	5,324,164	5,491,148	2,023,812
Barley, bushels	107,556	96,461	21,273
Rye, bushels	167	167	14,282
Buckwheat, bushels	4,318	4,319	6,703
Flour, sacks	22,904	22,366	47,640

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WINNIPEG GRAIN RECEIPTS.

The receipts of grain at Winnipeg for the week ended December 16, 1916, compared with last week and the corresponding week a year ago were as follows:

	This week.	Last week.	Last year.
No. 1 Northern	400	590	.....
No. 2 Northern	916	1,329	.....
No. 3 Northern	960	1,188	.....
No. 4 Northern	381	487	.....
No. 5 Northern	187	251	.....
No. 6 Northern	116	192	.....
Feed Wheat	144	236	.....
Rejected	94	119	.....
No. grades	771	1,318	.....
No. 4 Special	203	325	.....
No. 5 Special	153	234	.....
No. 6 Special	76	112	.....
Winter Grades	2	8	.....
Totals	4,435	6,289	7,103
Oats	1,442	1,729	1,596
Barley	239	296	328
Flax	163	302	94