

# TOFIELD-EDMONTON'S NEIGHBORING G.T.P. TOWN

Thriving community in the Heart of the Far-famed  
Beaver Lake District. Point on the Transcontinent-  
al from which branch line runs to Calgary

Tofield, the first town east of Edmonton on the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, lies just beyond the Beaver Hills in the heart of the Beaver Lake district. On the first of July last, Tofieldians celebrated the sixteenth anniversary of the settlement of which the town is now the centre. The name "Tofield" was first applied to a country post office established fifteen years ago, with Geo. Cookson, Sr., as first postmaster. The name came from the settlement doctor, J. H. Tofield, M.D., who lived on a homestead and cared for the sick for many miles around.

The town is thirty years old and has been moved twice in that time. It was located at first near the old country post office. After waiting two years for the railway, to survey the townsite it was moved to the Crafts and Lee property, where it was purchased and picturesquely on a hill overlooking the Beaver Lake, for a short time. Then it descended from the hill and moved to its present site a half a mile away.

**Branch Line to Calgary.**  
In October, 1909, Tofield was incorporated as a town, the first on the G.T.P. in Alberta. Since that time its growth has been steady and substantial, and now it takes its place in the front rank of the towns of the province.

The town was selected by the Grand Trunk Pacific as the point from which the branch line, south to Calgary should be run. The steel on this line is now laid beyond Camrose and within a year trains will be running from Tofield to Calgary. From Edmonton, Tofield is forty miles distant by rail.

**Assessment of Town \$215,000.**  
The limits of the corporation enclose an area of 1,280 acres, and extend to a point a mile distant from the margin of the Beaver Lake, which is growing in popularity as a summer resort.

The assessment of the town on a single tax basis is approximately \$275,000. There is but a small debt. A few weeks ago, by-laws were passed for the raising by debentures of \$4,000 for a water-works system, \$2,500 for sidewalks, \$750 for exhibition grounds, \$465 for a market site, and \$565 for a nuisance ground. The work of drilling with light shot. At some places the

which have visited the community, every all-weather building is equipped with fire extinguishers and the town has two portable engines of 50 gallon capacity each.

A rural phone system has been established in Tofield connecting the town with farmers for miles around and giving the farmers communication with one another. The government phone system has been in operation in Tofield for some time.

**A Fine Brick School.**  
Tofield boasts a fine brick school building erected last year at a cost of \$11,000. The building is two stories high and contains four rooms. It was opened last fall and occupied by classes at New Year's. The school work is in charge of three capable teachers, who teach besides the regular public school course that of the first two years of the High School. There are 110 pupils on the roll and the average daily attendance was 85.

**Three Resident Ministers.**  
The Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches have resident ministers at Tofield. All the other fraternal societies have branches in the town. The Agricultural Society holds an annual exhibit which will this year take place on September 27-28.

The members of the Tofield town council are: J. O. Latorneau, mayor; A. Lamoureux, M. W. Ferguson, J. B. Harper, A. S. Maxwell and R. E. Emery. The officers of the Board of Trade are: N. C. Legge, president; James A. Young, vice-president; Dr. J. L. Hammond, secretary, and W. C. Smith, treasurer. Tofield has a weekly paper widely known as the Tofield Standard. R. N. Whitford, formerly of Edmonton, is editor.

**Coal at \$1.75 a Ton.**  
Coal of excellent quality may be purchased at \$1.75 at the mine, a short distance south of the town. Two mines were in operation last winter and a third company has bought coal lands and will commence operations in a few months.

The whole of the western part of the Beaver Lake District is underlain with lignite coal. At some places the



BOATING ON BEAVER LAKE.

for which is now in progress.

**Three-fourths Town is Sold.**  
About three-fourths of the townsite has been sold. Lots on Main street with a 25-foot frontage sell for prices ranging from \$575 to \$900 according to location. Lots in the residential district are to be had for \$75, while some choice locations are offered for sale at \$300.

**Town Recovers from Fire.**  
A fire visited Tofield on April 27th last which did \$10,000 damage. Practically no trace of it is to be found now, as all the buildings destroyed have been reconstructed.

A little over a year ago the town was visited by a fire which destroyed four buildings on the opposite side of the street. Better ones have been built in their place.

The town has a volunteer fire brigade which has done very effective work in checking the conflagrations

coal crops out near the surface and the ground has only to be stripped to lay it bare. In other places it is found at a depth of from forty to fifty feet. In drilling the town well a seam of hard coal several feet thick was struck at a depth of a little over 100 feet.

**Beaver Lake, a Beauty Spot.**  
Beaver Lake, the shore of which is just two miles from the centre of the town, is one of the beauty spots of Alberta, and the largest lake of the central portion of the province. The lake is eighteen miles long and twelve miles wide. The shore is mostly sandy and recedes so gradually that one hundred yards from the beach the water is not more than four feet deep. It is an ideal place for boating and bathing and the lake bears its quota of water craft. There is splendid fishing to be had and in the shooting season parties of sportsmen gather

There have been splendid crops in the Tofield district, although grain growing has not been gone into extensively before, because of the difficulty of marketing the grain. Elevators have now been built and the G.T.P. has brought the town's market to the door.

A large number of farmers have over 100 acres in crop with wheat, oats and barley. One farmer, twelve miles southeast of Tofield, has 200 acres in crop, mostly with oats and barley. His fields promise a good yield. Many others have equally promising stands of grain. It is common to find 3,000 acres in crop on farms where last year there were but thirty or forty acres broken.

A number of letters received recently by the board of trade of Tofield are given below as throwing an interesting light on the experience of settlers in the Beaver Lake district. It was requested to write an article on my experiences in Alberta. I lived in a thriving town of 6,000 in South Dakota, and in the spring of 1902 finding I had not been able to live within my income, and concluding it was time to make a change, I resolved to move to Alberta. We started on the 13th of May, and soon after arrived at Tofield. Not being a scientific farmer I am unable to give you all the tabulated returns of a scientific farm, but by experience I have threshed out some results that satisfy me. Cattle was my first thought with the unlimited range and abundance of hay. In the meanwhile I got a few hogs to dispose of from time to time. Four cents is the minimum price and nine cents the maximum.

I have also raised considerable grain, with yields of from 50 bushels up of oats, 30 and up of barley and 20 and up of wheat, prices averaging probably 25c, 30c, 35c respectively. Some money can be made raising grain for market.

Several years ago my attention was drawn to the possibilities of the dairy business, which I have taken up of late as the best paying business on a farm, with a result that now the income derived from fifteen cows keeps my family comfortably with many of the luxuries of life. This income, supporting the family, then leaves an absolute profit of all grain raised for the market, of all hogs or other stock disposed of and of any other produce that we may have to sell.

This is the experience of one that came to Alberta without any capital when only standing my firm conviction that I say there is not a country on God's green earth where I could

have done better and enjoyed myself so well. While I am proud of having been born under the folds of "Old Glory" I am doubly thankful for the reputation that led me to the green fertile fields of the Beaver Lake district.

**C. C. HARRIMAN.**  
Tofield, P.O.

**Successful in Gardening.**  
I came to the Beaver Lake district from St. Louis, Mo., eight years ago. Since then I have been farming and raising garden truck for sale. In this district one can raise good crops of small grain. Oats do particularly well. As soon as the farmers "catch on" to raising alfalfa, it will be grown for hogs to eat green, and for hay. Some I sowed last June is green to-day, April 28th.

All kinds of farm roots and all garden vegetables do well if given half a chance. We have asparagus big enough to eat now. Timothy does well here, but is not much used as the prairie hay can't be beat. He haven't tried raising apples yet, but red, black and white currants grow to perfection.

**Better Than Minnesota.**  
I left the State of Washington four years ago for Alberta. I landed in Tofield the 11th day of May, 1906, and have been engaged in farming in Beaver Lake district ever since. I have farmed in Minnesota, Dakota and Washington, but the Beaver Lake district is better than any of them for mixed farming. All kinds of grain do well here, including fall wheat, which is a success. I have raised it three years and it has done well. Horse, cattle and hog raising is also a paying business. One can raise them cheaper here than any other place I know of.

**How to Grow Strawberries.**  
It is a surprise to the writer of this article that so many of the people of Alberta seem to think strawberries can not be raised in this province. However, I have been very successful in raising them for two years on our farm 1 1/2 miles from Tofield. The method followed is this: The ground in which they are to be planted must be free from all weeds. The ground should be laid out in rows four feet apart. Then set good thrifty plants two feet apart in the rows. Keep them free from weeds and grass, and pick off all the blossoms the first year. Then in the fall cover them with hay that is free from weeds and wild oats. They will have the following year an abundance of large strawberries. Care should be taken in not uncovering them too early in the spring, and also in keeping the runners out close.

**The Beaver Lake District.**  
The Beaver Lake District proper comprises an area lying within a twenty-five mile radius of the town of Tofield. The soil of this district is two-TOFIELD. The soil is a rich black loam with a clay subsoil. This soil grows a natural grass, which provides fattening fodder for cattle when cut and cured as hay.

But few homestead lands are available now in the district. Unimproved lands can be purchased from \$10 to \$15 per acre and the best of the \$15 to \$20 per acre according to location and the extent of the improvements.

For dairy produce Tofield offers a good market. Most of the live stock is marketed in Edmonton, the J. Y. Griffin Co. being the chief buyers. Tofield's Splendid Crops.

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This is the experience of one that came to Alberta without any capital when only standing my firm conviction that I say there is not a country on God's green earth where I could

had hoping for better things. Yet no one dreamt of doing better than there should come such a great change! What was then a great lone, silent country, has today become a bustling scene of activity. And the Bardo settlement, too, has caught the spirit of progress and development. Good roads, well cultivated fields, well built comfortable farmsteads and a fine new church bear witness that a new era of progress and civilization has been ushered in.

And the hardy pioneers are reaping the fruits of their early trials and hardships. P. B. ANDERSON.  
Bardo, P. O.

**Any one can come to this district with money enough to make the first payment on a quarter section and in four years have the land clear, if he only gets into the harness himself and leaves liquor alone. But bear in mind the dollars do not lie on top; you must dig them out. They are here to find if you want them. For a poor man such as I was there are many advantages in this country which I have not mentioned.**

**Bardo P.O.**  
**Have Raised Apples.**  
I am requested to state briefly what the productions of our favored district are. We have raised crops of wheat from 40 to 50 bushels per acre, oats 75 to 140 bushels, barley 25 to 45. Peas, rye and flax have also been grown. I have had corn every year for fifteen years, and always had

**Story of Bardo Settlement.**  
The Bardo settlement was started in 1894, by Norwegian land seekers from Minnesota. There was little do-

**OX POWER BREAKING.**  
In Alberta in those days. Things looked very dull and discouraging and our early settlers of Bardo got their share of the hardships of pioneer life. Their chief occupation was stock raising and dairying. What little grain they raised was threshed out with a home-made machine turned by hand power. Their hearts yearned for the past—for the friends and home they had left; the present raised 40 bushels wheat.

I have been requested to give a few remarks about our district. I landed here ten years ago and must say that I like it fine. I came from Iowa, where the price of land ranged from \$50 to \$100 per acre, and here at that time it was \$2 per acre. It is now from \$15 up, and I take it one year with another we can make as much off each acre of cultivated land here as we could in Iowa. We have splendid crops of wheat, oats and barley. The wheat has been touched by frost a few times, but I think the main trouble is that we have been using a late wheat. I have raised 40 bushels to the acre of good Red Fire wheat. Potatoes and all kinds of roots do well. We raise quite a number of cattle as we have lots of hay and good water. Horses do well on the prairie the year round. Wild small berries grow in abundance. I live at the south end of Beaver Lake.

**P. O. MOLINE.**  
Tofield, P.O.

**Experience in Sheep Raising.**  
I arrived in the Beaver Lake district seventeen years ago, from Nebraska. It is my opinion that this district affords the very best conditions for mixed farming. In the early years, being so far from markets, money came slowly, but with the coming of the railroad and the market near at hand things are going right along.

**Settled 17 Years Ago.**  
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12-23-19, Ross Creek P.O.

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**Took Up Mixed Farming.**  
I came to the Beaver Lake district eight years ago from Oklahoma. I had a large family of small children and \$1,000.00. First thing I bought some land and built a house on it. Tofield, a great x fitter and

Then I went into mixed farming. Now I have a 480 acre farm with house and barn, 12 horses, 25 cattle, 150 sheep and a steam threshing outfit.

A man can make a living, and then some, easier in this district than anywhere I know.

**HENRY WOOD.**  
2-22-19, Tofield P.O.

**Experience of Old-Timer.**  
Secretary Board of Trade, Tofield, Alta.

**Dear Sir:**  
In reply to yours of recent date inquiring if I could, as an "old timer," recommend the Beaver Lake district to homeseekers coming west, I would answer emphatically, YES. I consider Beaver Lake district one of the best parts of Alberta.

With its rich agricultural lands underlaid with vast beds of coal of good quality, it is second to none in the whole of Alberta.

My brother and I came here together in the year 1892 from England. We made it a point to see the country north-east, east and south-east of Edmonton, also around Wetaskiwin, east along Battle River and south of that river, but when we came to Beaver Lake we soon decided on a country—a lake 18 miles long and 10 miles wide, teaming with good fish and thousands of wild geese, ducks and other fowl. When we examined the soil and found it rich, it was an easy matter to make up our minds what to do even though it were 75 miles from Edmonton by wagon road. We have farmed and ranched here

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