

THE GAELS IN CANADA

This article is not a highly rose-coloured picture of the Prairies, but rather a fairly true picture. The difficulties and obstacles to be encountered are clearly pointed out. However, the author feels that for long-suffering and brave Scots these obstacles should be only stepping-stones to victory and great success. The whole article is a serious attempt to attract Scottish Gaels to Western Canada while the most fertile land is obtainable at the lowest price.

First there is a brief history of a Scottish settlement in Canada - the arrival of soldiers (Fraser Highlanders), the successive immigrations into Eastern Canada (Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Cape Breton), then into Upper Canada and eventually into the Prairies. Wherever these pioneer Scots settled they had freedom of worship, freedom of language and freedom from landlords.

A brief mention is made of the rise to prominence of many Gaels, i.e. Alexander MacKenzie, Sir John A. MacDonald, Lord Strathcona and many others.

Then the Prairies are described in fair detail - the illimitable areas of fertile soil, the wheat production and advanced methods of harvesting, minerals, healthy climate, freedom from grinding landlords and above all the glorious opportunity of ownership of their lands. Minute instructions are given to potential immigrants - the clothes they should bring with them, the amount of money needed, etc.

The author reminds the future Scottish citizens to the Prairies that Canada is a land of brave, free and conquering men. Canada wants men of this calibre. Therefore, since they are the descendants of conquering men, if they are not contented with their lot in Scotland they should sacrifice their homeland and come to the Prairies - the open door to freedom from landlords, to victory and success.

Finally there are many excerpts from letters sent to Scotland by Scottish immigrants describing their Prairie homes, comforts, opportunities for education, freedom, places of worship and pleasant social gatherings.

This is a very interesting publication. It gives a good insight into life on the Prairies during the early twentieth century.