

# EDMONTON MAN OF GROWTH OF WEST

Hugh McKay an Old Time Settler Now Visiting the City.

HOW THE CONDITIONS HAVE CHANGED

A Long Step Forward From the Days of the Old Red River Carts.

Hugh McKay of Edmonton, an old-time settler, is paying a visit to the Pacific Coast and with his family is at present staying at the Queen's Hotel.

Mr. McKay came out from Scotland in the early seventies and settled in Ontario, where he remained for a period of eight years before removing to Edmonton.

"Traveling in those old days was somewhat primitive in method, and we could not yet beyond Winnipeg by rail, and thence we had to proceed by cart, known as the Red River cart, to our destination. These carts were made entirely of wood, even the wheels having no iron shoeing, and were broken down and repaired as they often did, they had to be repaired with lashings of shagbark or rawhide. These rough carts were drawn each by one ox, and the cracking and groaning of them as they labored along with their load could be heard a mile away.

"Edmonton was then merely a Hudson Bay fort, and the settlement comprised little more than the company's establishment, a few squatters' cabins and three little stores; and for trading was the general purpose of all. Some of the settlers were just beginning to break up and grow wheat, and were attempting to grow wheat. The price of wheat was \$2 per bushel, oats the same, and all sorts of provisions were very dear. The cost of common bacon was

Three Pounds for a Dollar Salt and sugar were the same price, tea 75c per pound, Indian flour \$12 per sack and imported flour from Minneapolis \$24 per sack. Transport from Winnipeg alone was at the rate of \$14 per 100 pounds.

"Men had to work pretty hard to get a living there in those days," said Mr. McKay, thoughtfully. "I took up a homestead two miles from the city and went into farming, with good success from the commencement. The soil and yield could be better anywhere. The only trouble experienced was that on two occasions, thirteen years apart, we were haled out. This, however, is a rare occurrence, and on the two occasions I mention, the crops, though beaten by thunder, storm, hail, rain and wind, were not by any means a total loss. After one storm, which occurred on the 8th of July and began with a heavy rain, it sprang up again and rained by the 5th of September, and that year I threshed 1000 bushels of wheat, 70 acres. The loss was considerable, of course, but the crop was not so much as could be sold locally for 35c per bushel.

"At first our farming was simply for home supply, stock, etc., for the population was limited to the police and Indian reserves, which at that time numbered more than about 150 all told. "The railway came through about 14 years ago, and immediately all this was changed. Even when railway construction started from Calgary, the nucleus of a market was created, and we used to haul our grain by wagon half way, to meet the requirements of the advancing construction works. Before we shipped our grain to the coast, we shipped it to the Sackatchewan River to the Indian reserve. Our yield of oats was from 80 to 135 bushels (or 34 lbs) per acre, taken by weight, and of wheat, 100 bushels (or 34 lbs) per acre, or an average of 50 bushels. "As for root crops, I myself have raised cabbages weighing 25 lbs. per head.

All Roots Grow Splendidly Carrots, turnips, beets, parsnips—fact there has lately been some talk of starting a beet sugar factory and refinery in the district. Before the old country I thought I could not get the beet root to grow, but here at home and took with me samples of wheat and oats, and with the farming districts, sampling their grain, and nothing I could see in Scotland could compare with the Alberta wheat.

"I had in all 270 acres, having originally homesteaded 160 and taken advantage of the subsequent enactment which enabled the first settlers to acquire a second homestead, lived in my case to 110 acres by reason of subdivisions. I recently sold my first homestead to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company at \$225 per acre, or \$24 an acre, and the second at \$200 to \$250 per acre, retaining about eight acres only for myself and family. I sold a small portion eight years ago for \$10 per acre, and thought then I was doing well. Since I sold to the G. T. P., I have been offered \$600 per acre for the land.

"Our city population is now very close on 12,000, and inside of another year we will see three railways there. The C. P. R. is putting in a new high-level railway bridge, about 300 feet above the Saskatchewan River. The C. N. R. was in last Christmas, and the Grand Trunk Pacific is now laying the crop out in 1907. Altogether things are most promising for the future. If we had the navigation facilities of this coast there would be nothing left to desire, as it would give us access to the markets of the Orient. This, however, may come sooner than one expects.

"It will take the G. T. P. about another year to reach the coast, and west, unless they commence working at both ends. They have now over 2000 men at work and would put on another 2000 if they could get them. The construction work in our country is easy, but the road through the mountains will be a more lengthy process, although they contend that they have found a place, possibly the Jasper Pass, where the difficulties to contend with will be comparatively small. It is my opinion, however, that the

C. N. R. will get in first. They are now forty miles west of Edmonton, with two branches, one to the west and another to the northwest. The latter will most likely stretch in through

the Peace River country, opening up a very valuable tract of land. This tract is rapidly being settled and already constitutes one good market. It was, in fact, one of Edmonton's best helps in the early days, for the land was so good that they raise nearly enough for their own requirements. There is now about 150 miles northwest of Edmonton, a strip of territory, and settlers, chiefly from the States, have been steadily going in, following the lines of the survey, and many have made considerable money by taking up land in the new townships springing up along the railway lines, for speculative purposes. Mr. McKay denies any intention of changing his place of abode to the West, notwithstanding his many attractions. Edmonton, he says, is good enough for him. The climate, though cold there in winter is healthy, and comparatively mild on account of the absence of wind. "Last winter was a very exceptional one. We had not," said Mr. McKay, "enough snow to work a sheep, and there is no doubt that the climate is changing, and that the more it is cultivated the more it will change for the better. We are beginning to see apples growing at Edmonton. Mr. Daly has had apples and small fruits, raspberries and currants, blackberries, and some strawberries, have been growing for several seasons in the garden.

**The Main Difficulty** In this respect is that farmers have not time during the busy season to attend to such things. I do think myself that any man who indicates any intention of leaving cannot do better than go to Alberta. Many young men take up land and put in their regulation time upon it during the winter, working out in the town, and so get along well. Building, however, is expensive, lumber is dear, and there is no stone to be had nearer than Calgary. There are, however, no factories for town building, and on the prairie they find sufficient timber for their log houses, spruce and poplar, which is brought in by rail during winter from the outlying districts where it is fairly plentiful.

"In fact," concluded Mr. McKay, "the conditions of life in our district are, in my opinion, at the present day, second to none in Canada, and at the moment its opportunities and possibilities are unlimited."

**EXPENSIVE SAILORS.** Puget Sound boarding house proprietors are charging \$75 a man to furnish crews for the local naval and military vessels.

**GEOLGICAL SURVEY.** A. P. Low, of the Geological Survey, is at the Hotel Vancouver, having arrived from the East yesterday morning.

**PERSIA.** The action of the Shah in endeavoring his realm with the rudiments of constitutional government, caused some uneasiness in the eyes of the British.

**Survey Work in the Interior.** Mr. C. Cassell is carrying on the work of the department in the Similkamen, and this was inspected. Mr. Low came out via Spence's Bridge, and was accompanied by the chief of the department, Mr. Low is on his way to Mexico to attend the international congress of geology, which is being held at Mexico City.

**Of Great Benefit.** to the mining community. The new mine later takes a great deal of interest in the work of the survey and wishes to make the most of the information obtained. Up to the present the survey has been associated with the work of the department, and the consideration it deserves. From the creation next session of a portfolio of the mining province of British Columbia, it is expected that a much larger sum will be granted with a consequent increase in the efficiency of the work.

**NOTICE is hereby given that** Assessment No. 27 of one-half per cent. per share on the capital stock of the B. C. M. L. Co., Ltd., is due for payment on August 15, 1906, in delinquency in respect to the shares standing in the name of undermen, and such delinquent shares or such portions thereof, shall be liable to be sold by public auction, together with the costs of sale will be sold by auction on Friday, August 31, at 11 a. m. at the Board of Trade Rooms, Victoria.

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A hundred years later the Sufy (Safaw) dynasty was nearing its end. A few years later Nadir Shah was crowned, having already been crowned in Persia. He was seen by his child successor (Abbas VII.) pass away. Two years later he is preparing to invade India. During Nadir Shah's reign Persia was a land of confusion and a trade with Persia by way of the Caspian. The period between the death of Nadir Shah and the rise of the Afghans was a time of anarchy and was marked by factional unrest, rival claims of the throne committing atrocities and bloodshed. Shah Abbas, the founder of the new dynasty, died on a third of the 10th century. He had war with Russia as well as Turk, and saw the birth of Persia. In recent years Persia has recognized the seriousness of England's claim to control the Persian Gulf. In 1887 Sir Henry Drummond Wolff went as minister to Persia, and the British ambassador, Lord Curzon, and the growing rivalry between England and Persia. In recent years Persia has recognized the seriousness of England's claim to control the Persian Gulf. In 1887 Sir Henry Drummond Wolff went as minister to Persia, and the British ambassador, Lord Curzon, and the growing rivalry between England and Persia.

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