

SUMMER FAIR DATES—Calgary, June 28-July 6. Edmonton, July 8-13
Saskatoon, July 15-20. Brandon, July 22-27. Regina, July 29-August 3



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How the Grain Growers Grew

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Head. From that time onward the Grain Growers have been an increasing power in the West."

First Annual Convention

Following the organization meeting of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association in the town hall of Indian Head in December, 1901, a regular convention was called to assemble at the same place on February 1, 1902. This was the first Grain Growers' Convention to be held in Western Canada. The chair was occupied by the first president, W. R. Motherwell, who made a short address, showing that the farmers were laboring under a serious grievance which had led to their organization. The secretary-treasurer was John Millar of Indian Head, and his report was read showing that although the organization was only a few weeks old, four Agricultural societies had affiliated and 12 branches had been formed, with a total membership of about 500. The following committees were appointed, introducing names which have become very familiar to the people of Western Canada during the past 17 years.

Credentials: Messrs Balfour, Osler and Fitzgerald. **Resolution:** Messrs Snow, Dayman, Plim, Livingston, Brown, Dorrell, Ellis and Geo. Brown. **Constitution and Finance:** Messrs. Lang, Snow and Spring Rice. The credential committee reported the attendance of the following duly accredited delegates: Balaras: Messrs. Barwell, Stevens, Invarson and McKinnon. Moose Jaw: H. Dorrell. Indian Head: Geo. Lang. Welwyn: D. D. McFarlane. Wolsley: M. Snow, W. Gibson and J. Nix. Moosomin: R. J. Plim. Grenfell: Wright and Fitzgerald. Ellishoro: W. H. Ellis, J. B. Gordon and R. J. Campbell. Summerberry: Robt. Mills, W. P. Osler and J. Tinsel. Kinliss: Thos. Smith and E. Shaw. Firdale: R. G. Ward, Chickney: W. M. Tate. Torlie: H. Olders. Regina: Geo. Brown, G. Spring Rice. Spy Hill: J. A. Brown.

It is interesting indeed to read the minutes of that first convention. Reflected in the resolutions which were passed, were the various issues upon which the grain growers of the three Western provinces were later to make their fight. Three of the most typical resolutions are reproduced as follows:—

"That section No. 42 of the Grain Act be amended to empower the Warehouse Commissioner to compel all railway companies to erect every loading platform approved by the said commissioner within thirty days after said approval is given, and in default the commissioner shall have power to impose penalties on such defaulting railway, and collect same through the courts; and that the height of such platform be level with the floor of the car, and that this amendment come into force on May 1, 1902. (Motherwell and Snow).

"That railway companies be compelled to provide farmers with cars to be loaded direct from vehicles at all stations, irrespective of there being an elevator, warehouse or loading platform at once, station or not; and that this amendment come into force on May 1, 1902. (Motherwell and Lang).

"That the Grain Act be amended making it the duty of the Railway Agent, when there is a shortage of cars,

to apportion the available cars in the order in which they are applied for, and that in case such cars are misappropriated by applicants not entitled to them, that the penalties of the act be enforced against such parties. (Brown and Snow).

Rapid Growth of the Movement

It was not until the first Grain Growers' Association was formed in the Territories that it finally became apparent that the farmers were in earnest about their grievances and really intended to fight. About the first thing that was done to indicate the spirit of the grain growers was a local action taken against railway agents in an effort to test the validity and force of the grain act. A test case was held at Sinitaluta and the grain growers won it. After that the farmers were treated differently in the matter of the distribution of cars. When a farmer wrote his name in the car order book at the railway depot he got his car in his proper turn. The elevator company was not able to get them all as previously. When the Manitoba Grain Act became the Canada Grain Act a few years ago a special grain commission was appointed to administer it, the car distribution clause was secured and retained. It is enshrined today in the minds of pioneers of the grain growers' movement as a sort of bill of rights—a stable monument to their cause. From that time, up to the present day, the struggle for equal rights with other interests has continued with a measure of success, at least, to the organized farmers. They have fought the transportation companies and the financial and manufacturing institutions of the country and have flourished and grown strong on such stern diet. The grain growers of the west have banded themselves together and developed a class spirit which would have done justice to that of the old covenants of Scotland almost two centuries ago. Their determined and uncompromising spirit has been developed by the same deep sense of conviction and the consciousness of obstacles to be overcome. Their expression of political faith for many years was that of the first French republic, namely, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." But the grain growers of the West, it is most important to note, have not been political agitators as has been the case with so many other farmers' movements throughout America. While living under the aegis of the French revolution, they have kept their feet solidly upon the earth. The Grain Growers' Movement, which otherwise might have become a body of revolutionists, has been ballasted by the establishment of a series of successful commercial institutions, and today the watchwords of the whole movement are "Organization—Education—Co-operation."

After its birth in Saskatchewan the Grain Growers' idea spread very rapidly. In April, 1902, Mr. Motherwell, at the request of J. W. Scallion, of Virden, went into Manitoba and assisted in the organization of the first Grain Growers' Association in Manitoba. The first president of the Manitoba association was Mr. Scallion, who is still the grand old man of the movement in that province, and we hope will live for many years



The Secretaries of the Three Provincial Farmers' Organizations.
H. Higginbotham, Secretary U.F.A. J. B. Musselman, Secretary Sask. G.G.A., and
W. R. Wood, Secretary Man. G.G.A.

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