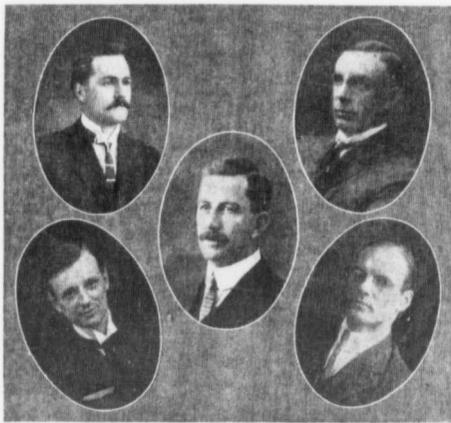


A Record of Achievement

Being a brief summary of the more important contributions which the organized Grain Growers have made for the betterment of conditions in the few short years of their history

By GEORGE F. CHIPMAN, EDITOR GRAIN GROWERS' GUIDE



Some of the Pioneers of the Farmers' Companies

Hon. Charles A. Hamm, provincial treasurer and minister of telephones, Saskatchewan, formerly general manager Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company; Cecil Beaman, vice-president and acting general manager United Grain Growers Limited; Hon. T. A. Cochrane, minister of agriculture for Canada, president and general manager United Grain Growers Limited; F. W. Fielden, general manager Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company; E. J. From, secretary United Grain Growers Limited.

In March 1917 Sir George Foster, Minister of Trade and Commerce, on behalf of the government proposed to the Canadian Council of Agriculture that the price of the year's crop be fixed at \$1.30 per bushel and asked the opinion of the Council. After one full day's debate on the subject, the Council, in meeting at Regina, declined to recommend the \$1.30. They agreed, however, to recommend a sliding scale from \$1.50 minimum to \$1.90 maximum, or if the government preferred a flat rate, they recommended \$1.70. The government felt this figure to be too high, and it was left in abeyance. Later on the American government fixed the price of wheat at \$2.21, after which the Canadian price was fixed at the same figure. Had it not been for the organized Grain Growers undoubtedly the government would have fixed the price of wheat at \$1.30 a bushel. Such a price would have diseased and ranged wheat production very considerably. However, the price of \$2.21 is not giving any special advantage to the farmer, as if there were fixed price undoubtedly the farmers would be getting \$4.00 or \$5.00 in every farmer on a 2,800 bushel carload of oats.

Three Great Companies

6. The three big farmers' companies:

Three Saskatchewan Grain Grower M.P.'s: Andrew Knox, representing Prince Albert; J. F. Reid, McKenzie; and J. A. Maharg, Maple Creek.

The Grain Growers' Grain Co., the Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Co. (these two now amalgamated and called The United Grain Growers Limited), and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Co. were entirely the development of the Grain Growers' organization. Conditions in the grain trade clearly showed that legislative enactments would not correct all the abuses. The farmers determined to go into the grain business for themselves and organized these companies for that purpose. They have now nearly 60,000 farmer shareholders and are marketing approximately one-third of the grain crop of Western Canada. The trading department of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association handling supplies and commodities used on the farm, is also an outgrowth of the Grain Growers' movement and is becoming a large commerce to the farmers and has received a great deal of attention by their organizations. Through the Joint Committee of Commerce and Agriculture better terms were received from the chartered banks. Rural credit societies are also being organized in Manitoba and Alberta which are extending much better credit facilities than previously to the farmers in these rural districts. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan also the governments have entered the mortgage loan business to control and regulate the general mortgage business in those provinces. In Manitoba farmers are borrowing money from the government at six per cent, and in Saskatchewan at six and a half per cent, which are lower rates than have prevailed or now prevail from private mortgage companies.

14. Marketing facilities for livestock have been vastly improved since the organized farmers decided to enter the livestock business. They now have offices in the Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton stock yards, and livestock shipping associations have been formed in many places throughout the three prairie provinces. The volume of livestock

ALTHOUGH it was only 17 years ago that the Grain Growers' organization had its beginning in Western Canada, it is possible even now to point to a record of achievements of which any organization might well be proud. It is hard to measure the influence and benefit of Grain Growers' work purely by means of legislative enactments. The beneficial influence of the Grain Growers has permeated the entire national life of Canada, but has been more directly seen and felt in the three prairie provinces. It is most significant and worthy of careful consideration that the Grain Growers' have not sought to bring about these benefits by revolutionary methods. They have, instead, devoted themselves largely to educational work and been content with the slower and more permanent process of evolution. What the future record of the Grain Growers will be it will be idle to prophesy, but judging from the past it is safe to assume that the influence of the organized Grain Growers will continue to be an important feature in moulding Canadian civilization.

The following points in the Grain Growers' record of achievements are necessarily extremely brief, but they give an idea of what has been done.

1. The Canada Grain Act has been described as the great charter of the Grain Growers' liberties. While not perfect, it safeguards the rights of the farmer very effectively and prohibits the abuses practised upon Grain Growers in the olden days. The old Manitoba Grain Act of 1900 was merely a beginning and was very inefficient. Through the influence of the organized Grain Growers' the act has been repeatedly amended, making the trading platform effective and providing car distribution, which gives the farmer freedom in shipping his grain. The hardest fought of the Grain Growers' history centre around the Grain Act and the fight was continued with unceasing energy until the victory was won. The Grain Act today, while being generally fair to the farmers, is not unfair to the other interests in the grain trade.

2. The regulation of Terminal Elevators by the Canada Grain Commission grew out of the charges made by Grain Growers that they were not fairly and honestly operated. The investigation by the warehouse commissioner six or seven years ago demonstrated largely the truth of the Grain Growers' charges. The inward and outward registration of warehouse receipts has prevented the juggling that was previously part of the elevator system.

Public Terminals

3. The government-owned terminal elevator at the lake front and the big interior terminals at Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Calgary, are directly a result of the Grain Growers' agitation. For years the Grain Growers demanded that all the terminals at the lake front be acquired and operated by the government. This was promised by the Conservative party prior to the election of 1911. The government, however, built only one terminal at the lake front and regulated the balance. The interior elevators were not built at the request of the Grain Growers, but as a part of government policy to relieve congestion, and they have proved of great assistance in facilitating the loading of these elevators, the government intended them to offset the demand for nationalization of all the terminals at Port Wynn and Fort Arthur.

4. Prior to three years ago, the commission on oats was one cent per bushel, the same as on wheat, barley and flax. The Grain Growers repeatedly demanded that the commission on oats be reduced to a half cent. As a compromise, the Grain Exchange finally reduced it to five-eighths. This means a saving of \$7.50 in every farmer on a 2,800 bushel carload of oats.

5. It was due to the organized Grain Growers that the price of wheat for 1917 was not fixed at \$1.30 per bushel.

the organized farmers of Canada have been able to present their demands to the government at Ottawa.

Commerce and Agriculture

8. In order to work with all other interests represented in the country, the organized farmers assisted in the organization of the Joint Committee of Commerce and Agriculture. On this committee the farmers are represented by the Canadian Council of Agriculture and the business interests are represented by committees from bankers, mortgage companies, railways, millers and all other business interests. This committee meets usually twice yearly and takes up matters of mutual interest to all the bodies represented. It has already wrought considerable improvement in banking and mortgage practices and further improvements are scheduled to be had in the future.

9. Collective buying of farm supplies in carload lots was practically unknown until seven or eight years ago. Prices were extremely high and the Grain Growers' local associations set out to reduce the cost by quantity purchases. Scores of manufacturers and dealers refused to sell in carload quantities but steady progress has been made until the volume of this business has grown into millions, including such articles as binder twine, fencing material, fence posts, hay, lumber, coal, etc.

Hall Insurance

10. Municipal hall insurance in Saskatchewan and Alberta was inaugurated directly on the recommendation of the organized Grain Growers and similar legislation was enacted in Manitoba, but has not yet been put into effect.

11. The half freight rates on seed grain were abolished by the Railway Companies three years ago. The organized Grain Growers protested, and after consideration the Railway Companies agreed to re-establish the seed grain rate provided the organized Grain Growers would issue the certificates through their local secretaries, and upon this system it is continued.

12. Before the Grain Growers organized there was no legislation permitting the organization of co-operative societies in the prairie provinces. Repeatedly the federal government was asked for such legislation but it was steadily declined. Consequently, the organized Grain Growers turned their attention to the provincial governments with the result that satisfactory co-operative legislation has been passed on the statute books in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, and co-operative societies have been steadily increasing in each of the three provinces.

Rural Credit

13. Satisfactory credit has always been a matter of the most vital importance to the farmers and has received a great deal of attention by their organizations. Through the Joint Committee of Commerce and Agriculture better terms were received from the chartered banks. Rural credit societies are also being organized in Manitoba and Alberta which are extending much better credit facilities than previously to the farmers in these rural districts. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan also the governments have entered the mortgage loan business to control and regulate the general mortgage business in those provinces. In Manitoba farmers are borrowing money from the government at six per cent, and in Saskatchewan at six and a half per cent, which are lower rates than have prevailed or now prevail from private mortgage companies.

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