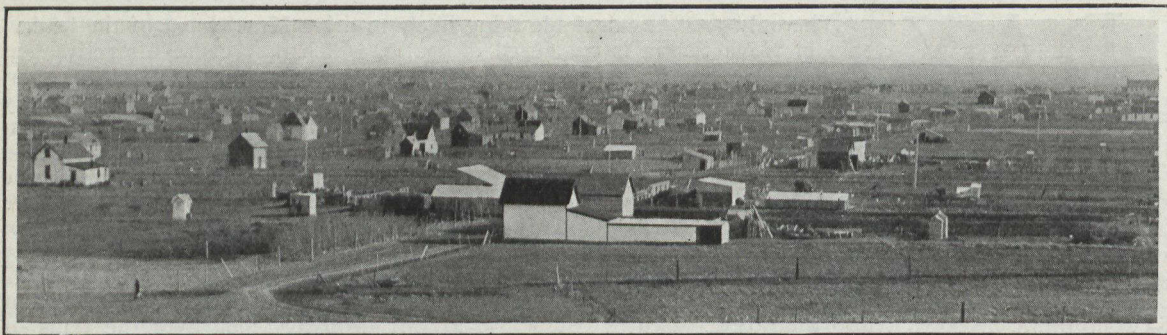




Raymond, one of the dozen Mormon towns in Alberta.

WHERE RELIGION IS BUSINESS

This second article on Mormons and Mormonism in Alberta describes the growth of the settlements and the way in which religion affects their business life. Their religion, their family life, their education and their business are all one. In other words, it is all religion. The ecclesiastical rule dominates everything and everybody. Body and soul, the Mormon belongs to his Church, and the Church is the Church of Utah, not of Canada.

By NAN MOULTON

IN '87 the cottonwood shack of the Gentiles and the few tents of the Lord's Anointed set among the undulating prairie grasses, bunch and brome and buffalo! In 1911 the beat of civic pulses throughout the wide plains, irrigated now and cropped, the day of beet-raising merged into a madness for wheat, and the southern emptiness of a province-map spangled with the map-maker's hieroglyphs that mean towns, villages, hamlets and settlements! By the original Lee's Creek, and stretching up the bench-lands is the mother-town, Cardston, satellited, within a radius of, say, twenty miles, by the settlements of Leavitt, Mountain View, Caldwell, Beaver, Taylorville, Aetna and Kimball. Following the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company's line of rail north-east, we pass the towns of Magrath, Raymond and Stirling, and hamlets such as Spring Coulee, Welling and Raley. When the conductor announces "Chin," and then repeats "Chin-chin! Chin-chin!" you wonder if he is flip-pant, but "Chin" is a truly station. Then east from Lethbridge the Mormon clusters go, Taber, the biggest town ("Taber-nacle" is a conjuring word with them, first syllable "Taber," second syllable transposed "Elcan"—and two more places named to the glory of Zion.) Then north the colonization creeps to Gleichen and back again down another line to High River and Claresholm and Macleod. And not long ago the Mormon Church—the church in Utah—bought the whole big Cochran ranch for \$400,000, for colonization purposes, and is now selling this land to settlers, largely Mormon.

At the present time, I was told, there is not much direct Mormon immigration—for some reason the Church is not encouraging immigration to Canada just now, but there is more or less coming and going always, and the natural growth, and the "gathering" the fruits of the missionaries' labours. As soon as you are caught in the game, whether you are in Denmark or England or Scotland or Sweden, it's, "I borrow you in the name of Zion, one, two, three!" and off you go to America, where the Saints are gathering in Zion along the Rocky Mountains, gathering against the last days. But the "gathering," though sure, has been rather slow, for 'tis only a rare taste that accepts Joseph Smith's golden tablets and the testimony of the three to whom the angel came. But, slow or not, does Canada realize that Alberta, from Gleichen on the north, to Cardston on the south, and from Macleod on the west, to Taber on the east, is polka-dotted with Mormon settlements; that in and around Cardston are only about two hundred Gentiles out of over two thousand population; that Taber, population 3,500, is forty per cent. Mormon; that Raymond is ninety per cent. Mormon, and that *there are in Alberta at the present time, upwards of eight thousand Latter-Day Saints, preaching and practising a religion than which never existed a more utterly un-Canadian conception?*

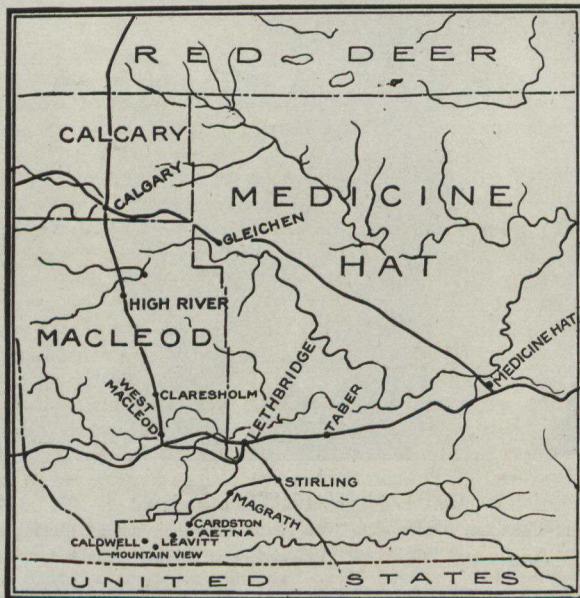
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THE illuminating rock-bottom reason for the first coming I got from the principal of their only church school in Canada. And, whatever may be true to-day, there is no doubt that, in the beginning Canada and Mexico were what Frank Cannon calls them, "polygamous refuges." Mr. Bramwell said that at the time of the trek to Canada the

church authorities were divided as to the pledge given that there should be no further practice of polygamy. Some held that the pledge was given *only* to the government of the United States, others that the Mormon Church was bound by it everywhere. Followers differ where heads do not agree. And those who held that the promise did not obtain outside of United States territory, prepared to leave such territory. When they encountered Canadian law they found that it stood for other ideals. A deputation went to Ottawa and promised to be good. Later I shall tell the story of the keeping of that promise.

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UNTIL about ten years ago, the story of the growth of the Mormon colony centres around Cardston. Besides the forty odd in eighty-seven, three more families came in the fall, through the summer of '88 there was a constant trickle that counted one hundred that year, and in four years five hundred Saints had added to the growth of Alberta. (I do not know which year brought the



The Mormon settlements in Alberta began at Cardston, and have swung south to the border, east to Taber, north to Gleichen and west to Macleod. In this district there are some 8000 Mormons.

necromancer who started with ten horses, sold eighty before he reached the border, and arrived in Canada with sixty in fine condition.) In 1894 Cardston was incorporated a village with the present Mayor Hanmer the first overseer, and in 1902 reached the status of a town with C. O. Card the first mayor.

From the first the Latter-Day Saints have been farmers, and the inventors of American irrigation. It is told of Mr. Card that he measured his first crop of wheat daily and found that the growth was 21-4 to 21-2 inches a day. But that was the crop the frost got, even two and a half inches a day not counterbalancing a June sowing. In '88 a ditch was

taken out and surveys made for another ditch that would irrigate three to four thousand acres of bench land. After two or three years these ditches were not used, the Cardston country not depending on nor needing irrigation. They are visible across the creek to this day, looking like the old Danish trenches outside of Winchester. Besides having successful gardens and farms, the Mormons have gone in much for cattle, horses and sheep, from which their present prosperity has largely resulted.

It was in 1899 that the big irrigation scheme was born. The present Conservative member, C. A. Magrath, had been an interested visitor to the Mormon settlements. He was a director and owner in the earlier land and coal and railway companies that preceded the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company, and the possibilities of irrigating were borne in upon him. The big ditch was a good deal of a colonization scheme, and Magrath yearly sold much land down in Utah. The company argued that the experienced Mormons would be the best men to do the work. For \$100,000 in land and cash the church (in Utah always) contracted to build the irrigation ditch from the intake at Kimball, from the St. Mary's River to the Belly River, at Lethbridge, and to start three settlements along its length. These settlements are now the towns of Raymond, Magrath and Stirling. Our old friend, C. O. Card, was in charge of the work on the canal. The Church sent on many of the Cardston settlers to help and sent in more workers and settlers from Utah. This was the period of the biggest Mormon influx. Some of the land then valued at two or three dollars an acre now is valued as high as fifty or sixty dollars. The canal system now includes one hundred and fifty miles of main waterways. The irrigation canal is like a bank account or a sinking fund—sort of an insurance against dry seasons. In ordinarily good seasons it is not needed. The system is never used for grain, dry farming methods being in vogue, but the hay crop, the beet-yield and gardens are the recipients of its benefits.

It was odd that a mining man, in search of ranching property, first saw the possibilities of the beet sugar industry in Alberta. Jesse Knight knew that irrigation and beets had made Utah. And Apostle John W. Taylor, with him, had visions beyond beets and sugar, when the Mormons came flocking to a work they knew, visions of a Zion in Canada, and a temple and unutterable growth and glory. So, with a blaze of trumpets, the temporal industry and the church centre were started on their way. The town was named Raymond, after Mr. Knight's son. The factory is there, its highest handling forty thousand tons of beets, with 125 men employed in the busy seasons, the beets yielding 260 pounds per ton, the sugar market mostly in Alberta and British Columbia. The big trouble is the difficulty of securing labour in the beet fields at the two rush seasons, the thinning and the harvesting. Japs come in and Indians are employed, but the labour is inadequate. Too, the farmer finds wheat more remunerative than beets. So, though the sugar industry is a success, and the town of Raymond grown to over two thousand, the time is not fulfilled when Raymond is to be the Zion of Canada and the mysteries of the temple are to be administered therein.

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THE Mormon lives near his church, in touch with its various duties and activities, under the eye of its ecclesiastics. During the day he goes out to his farm, but his garden is in the town, and his lesser agricultural efforts are concentrated there. That is really what the community life of the Mormons in Canada is—just a being together for church and schools and social intercourse, not having possessions in common nor working by co-operative methods, as is the manner of some religious communities. There are the wealthier and those of meagre fortunes, but help is ready and terms easy and patience long for the convert or the married young-and-poor or the shiftless or the foreigner or the unfit or the ignorant. Raymond alone is not four-square, but starts from a centre from which the streets diverge like the radii of a circle. "Ray Knight went to Paris," Mr. Stirling Williams explained, "and came back with different notions."

The church organization and government is founded on the most wonderful system and ramifications, coherent and far-reaching. Talk about paternalism! Talk about the German army! The Mormon Church is a theocratic government wherein the members enjoy a quite abridged liberty in novel contentment; it is an absolute monarchy resting ostensibly upon the consent of the governed. Mr. Card had planned to go to Mexico—the Church sent him to Canada. Mr. Bramwell had a future across the border—the Church suddenly ordered him to