

antiques. Comments *The Calgary Herald* in an anniversary book:

"Within 10 years, it is confidently predicted, the Glenbow collection will bear comparison with anything similar anywhere in the world, including such historic capitals as London and Paris. Perhaps, to a degree, Calgary deserves the image of a city with a big dollar sign hanging over it, but it's impossible to put a dollar value on something like Glenbow."

If beef was king in Calgary's early days, oil began to make a splash in 1914 with the Turner Valley discoveries. The oil that came out, so the story goes, was so pure that promoters poured it straight into their cars and sped back to Calgary to spread the news. Oilman Carl Nickle has recorded:

"The boom was historic. Ordinary business in Calgary came to a standstill. Hundreds of brokerage houses sprang up . . . hundreds of companies were formed. . . as much as \$500,000 changed hands daily."

The First World War temporarily stilled the excitement, but again in the 1920s Calgary became known as the most speculative city in Western Canada, in line with its characteristic gambling spirit. But many people had despaired of further gushers when on February 13, 1947, Imperial Oil struck it rich at Leduc near Edmonton, the capital of Alberta and habitually Calgary's friendly rival.

## Oil boom

Largely because of the oil boom, Calgary's population spurted from 129,000 in 1951 to 250,000 in 1961 and 398,000 10 years later. Old residents now scarcely recognise the city they once knew. Since 1947, Calgary's non-stop expansion has furrowed the brows of every civic administration. Don McKay, mayor in the frantic 1950s, went to Dallas in Texas to see what happens to an exploding oil capital, and was told "you will have tall buildings upon tall buildings." And so it proved. Calgary built outward, absorbing small municipalities one by one, enabling the city to grow as a unit instead of as a conglomeration of self-contained units. High-rise laws were changed in 1958 to accommodate 20-storey Elveden House, replacing the 12-storey Palliser Hotel as the tallest building in town. Now the 626-foot Calgary Tower, the city's most conspicuous landmark, lords it over all. In one year recently, the city spent \$500 million on high-rise business and residential construction.

Amid the concrete, parks and statues abound. Some 5,000 acres of the city are devoted to parks and recreation areas. A new Education Centre includes the 21-foot-high Armengol sculptures, purchased for the city from the British Pavilion display in 1967.

Despite narrow streets, reflecting an unreadiness for expansion, Calgary has become, more than any other community in North America, a city of cars. There are

some 255,000 registered cars and lorries in the city. And there are 52,000 motorcycles and trailers. Even Los Angeles they say, can't compete with Calgary on a car-per-capita basis.

Within the city limits, homes still outnumber flats, and commercial buildings outnumber everything in the downtown sector. "Commerce is what Calgary is all about," says one urban study which acknowledges that the high-rise jungle, while imposing, is not particularly pleasing aesthetically. One of Canada's 10 biggest cities, Calgary ranks third as a location of company head offices, with 34 against 118 for Toronto and 84 for Montreal.

## Livestock centre

Proximity to ranching and farming country has made Calgary a leading market centre for livestock. Packing plants and stockyards had a \$125 million turnover in a single year. The city's St. George's Island zoo has won world fame through its exotic forms of wildlife and 46 lifelike models of the dinosaurs which once roamed the plains northeast of the city.

Oil centre, ranch centre, agriculture centre and rodeo centre. Still not enough for Calgary, a city surrounded by some of the finest playground areas in North America. Fifty miles to the west along the trans-Canada highway is Banff National Park, renowned for skiing and scenery. A few miles away Lake Louise and an intermountain highway to Jasper National Park attract tourists from many countries. To the south lie Cardston's famed Mormon Temple and Waterton Lakes National Park, while a northern route winds through fine farming country and lake resorts to Edmonton.

## Caustic publication

Calgary can boast personalities to match its past. One of the most striking was the late Robert Chambers Edwards, universally known as Bob, a native of Edinburgh who started a caustic, highly idiosyncratic publication called the *Calgary Eye-Opener*, first published in 1902 and irregularly thereafter. Fond of a tittle, he preached prohibition in his columns but himself, in the terminology of the day, was a Wet rather than a Dry.

Yet he loved to poke fun at those who shared his weakness, as he did when recording that a Mrs. Alex Muggsy had cancelled her weekly musicale because her husband, "old man Muggsy," had been entertaining his friends at a "boozicale." Edwards was outrageous, but refreshing, and in tune with the times. His paper had the largest circulation of any paper west of Winnipeg. He had a talent for spotting people destined for high places, among them R. B. Bennett who became a Canadian Prime Minister and had a viscounty conferred upon him in England, where he came to live in 1938 and where he was buried.

One of Calgary's most controversial politicians was William Aberhart, hot gospeller of a new political philosophy called Social Credit. Social Credit swept into power in Alberta in 1935, winning 56 of 63 Alberta seats, and the party Aberhart founded remained in power in the province until 1971 — 36 unbroken years. One of Aberhart's promises was a basic dividend of \$25 to every citizen; the money was never paid.

Many British families have contributed to the Calgary story. One was the Samuel Shaw family, consisting of father, mother and nine children who emigrated from Kent in England in the late 19th century. From his home in the Fish Creek area, Shaw arranged to have a private telegraph line set up between his farm and Calgary.

The late Max Bell, Calgary oilman and publisher, cultivated the dream of winning the English Derby at Epsom. He came close. His horse Meadow Court ran second in the 1965 Derby to Sea Bird II, then went on to win the Irish Derby at The Curragh.

## Cufflinks are Dinosaur Bones

Dinosaur bones from southern Alberta, fashioned into jewellery for tourists, are the basis of a successful business selling through a crafts shop in Calgary. The 60 million-year-old bones, fossilised into rock with a hardness rating of seven (compared with a diamond's rating of 10) are cut, polished and mounted as cufflinks, earrings, tie tacks, necklaces and rings by the firm of Green's Rock and Lapidary.

Oscar Green, founder of the firm, cut his first pair of dinosaur cufflinks 16 years ago. When he took them to merchants in Drumheller he was told they would not sell. But they did — first through the Drumheller Museum and now through the Cabin Crafts Shop in Calgary. In 1973 his firm grossed C\$250,000 (about £110,000.)

The developing of this bone jewellery trade has put the scientific community somewhat at odds with collectors, tourists and craftsmen. To some, the collectors are stone-age grave robbers, while the collectors mutter about those palaeontologists who "think fossils were willed to them by God."

Mr. Green himself believes there is no need for conflict, because "when a unique specimen is found, the first one called is the palaeontologist." It was he who discovered the pachyrhinosaurus skull on display at the Drumheller Museum.

Mike Komarevich, a craftsman working with the bone, agrees. He says the "rock hounds" are not destroying valuable fossils: they are just picking up loose pieces which are so small the palaeontologist isn't interested in them. ♦