

Strathcona District.

Strathcona is the northern terminal of the Calgary & Edmonton Railway, and has a population of nearly 2,000. Eleven years ago, three or four log cabins, the homes of pioneer settlers of the district, were the only habitations within the present corporation of Strathcona, and the iron horse has not got this far in his journey northward. In the summer of 1891 the railway arrived and the embryo town appeared; the C. P. R. Hotel, still one of the best hostels in the district, was erected, a post office, called South Edmonton, was established, and a public school opened with twenty pupils. The Edmonton Milling Co. erected a roller process flour mill here, the first north of Calgary, and mercantile business of all sorts sprang up. But settlement was sparse, the settlers poor, and an Indian Reserve adjoined the town on the south, so development was slow. In 1894 the Reserve was opened for settlement, and was invaded by a thrifty class of farmers, who soon became producers and the backbone of the town's local trade. Not until after the financial depression of 1895 had passed—which penetrated to this far-away corner of the continent—did the village begin to grow rapidly. About that time the Kootenay mining region of British Columbia began to open up and a good market for all our grain, meat and farm produce was established. Since that time Providence has smiled alike upon our farmers, ranchers and business men. During the rush to the Klondyke over the Edmonton trail this town enjoyed a large measure of the outfitting trade.

The town site lies high and level, 200 feet above the waters of the Saskatchewan River, which bounds it on the north. On the east is a creek with a deep valley, toward which the east half of the town site slopes gently, thus ample opportunity for drainage is afforded, and the Saskatchewan would have to rise 200 feet to flood the people out.

It is estimated that the current year's improvements will amount to over \$125,000, an increase of \$15,000 over the improvements of last year.

Strathcona has a progressive town council, composed of A. Davies, W. H. Sheppard, Jas. M. Douglas, J. Carmichael, J. J. Mackenzie, A. H. Richards, with J. J. Duggan as Mayor and A. C. Rutherford as Secretary-Treasurer. According to C. P. R. statistics, the shipments of last year were as follows: oats, 539 cars; hogs, 75 cars; cattle, 55 cars; horses, 7 cars; rolled oats and mill stuffs, 51 cars; barley, 2 cars; wheat, 29 cars; hides, 3 cars; flour, 12 cars; fresh meat and bacon, 9 cars; coal, 8 cars; brick, 12 cars. There were heavy oat shipments to South Africa, while cattle and hogs were principally shipped to British Columbia markets.

Speaking of the sugar-beet industry in the Strathcona district, the Plaindealer says:

"In the spring of 1901, Mr. Mills secured forty pounds of sugar-beet seed for experimental purposes. Farmers were notified through the press where they might get it and instructed as to the culture it should receive. That year twenty-six farmers in various parts of Northern Alberta secured seed for planting and instructions. In the fall, three

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sample parcels from different farmers were sent in to Mr. Mills, and by him forwarded to the Government Analyst Mr. F. T. Shutt, at Ottawa, and the following were the test returns:

	Per cent. Co-efficient of sugar. of purity.
No. 1	15.01 84.7
No. 2	12.84 79.2
No. 3	14.02 81.5

"These results being so encouraging, Mr. Mills resolved to continue his investigations in 1902, and hence secured another quantity of sugar-beet seed for distribution and experiment. Twenty-one farmers in widely-separated parts of the district secured parcels, but when the fall came only four samples returned for testing. These samples were sent to Ottawa, and the following tests reported by the official chemist:

	Per cent. Co-efficient of sugar. of purity.
No. 1	13.66 73.3
No. 2	16.04 78.0
No. 3	13.77 81.2
No. 4	17.41 84.1

"These figures indicate a most satisfactory quality of beets, the highest test being better than the highest prizewinner in Ontario, and the average better than shown in any other district in Canada. Under such encouraging conditions it would appear that there is a bright future for the beet-sugar industry in Northern Alberta. Already a factory to cost half a million dollars is in course of erection in the Mormon colony in Southern Alberta. In the East, there has been some difficulty in securing laborers for the weeding and thinning of the beet crop, but this is a difficulty

which could be met in this district better than in many others, by reason of the fact that we have so large a population from Central Europe, people accustomed to hoe crops. The fact that we have right here the prospective railway center of Northern Alberta makes this point especially suitable as a site for a beet-sugar factory. The refining process requires a large amount of lime, which commodity is plentiful up river, and would be easily obtainable for manufacturing purposes.

"Another strong point in favor of sugar-beet culture in Alberta is that the sowing time is late, from the 15th to 30th of May being considered good time to get beet seed in the ground; then, the harvest time is also late. The roots stand lots of frost, and show the largest percentage of sugar when gathered late in October, just before the ground freezes, thus early and late frosts are no detriment to successful culture."

The Brackman-Ker Company has a very large local trade in rolled oats, and also ship extensively to the Kootenay and Pacific Coast, as well as to the Yukon. They began operations in Strathcona in 1895, and that year they purchased 38,000 bushels of grain. Their business has developed gradually with the growth of the district, and this season they handled 880,000 bushels. The capacity of their mill is 150 bbls. rolled oats, 25 bbls. oatmeal and two tons of pearl barley daily. The accompanying cut shows one of the twenty trains of oats shipped by the company to South Africa toward the close of the war. Within thirty days they filled an order for 4,000 tons, weighing from 39 to 43 pounds per bushel. With the development of the district they purpose increasing their elevator and mill capacity. This company has mills at New Westminster and Victoria, B. C., besides having branch offices and agencies at various points in the Kootenay. Their elevator capacity is now 300,000 bushels, the elevators being situated at Strathcona, Leduc, Wetaskiwin, Lacombe and Red Deer, Alberta. The capital stock is \$500,000. Mr. D. R. Ker is the general manager, and Mr. Henry Brackman, the president, both of whom reside at Victoria, B. C. The manager for Alberta is Mr. T. W. Lines.

Strathcona Town.

H. F. Sandeman is among Strathcona's leading land agents. He has large tracts of land for sale in the Strathcona and Battleford districts, and is also agent for C. & E. town sites. Mr. Sandeman has been in the business five years, and is thoroughly acquainted with the district.

J. G. Tipton & Sons do a good real estate business in Strathcona and Leduc. They have improved farms and wild lands for sale in Northern Alberta.

Bush & Bragg rank high in the real estate business of Strathcona. They have 40,000 acres for sale in the Strathcona district. This land is well watered and suitable for mixed farming or stock-raising.

W. H. Sheppard is the genial proprietor of the Strathcona House, which he has run for the past eight years. Mr. Sheppard's is a first-class hotel and it is provided with probably the best sample rooms on the line, while the cuisine is first-class. The hotel is well furnished and lighted with electricity, while Mr. Sheppard is a model host.

Aylwin & Williams, of Edmonton, have large tracts of land for sale in the Strathcona district. They have been ten years in the business, and are in a position to satisfy land seekers in this fertile region.

F. G. Haldane & Co., of Edmonton, are large real estate dealers, and have a large area of improved farms and wild lands for sale in Strathcona district. Mr. Haldane came from Ottawa, and had such faith in the country that he invested every dollar in land, and he is well pleased with results.