

beautiful city. Its wooden frame houses tended to decay quickly, the writer noted, and its old buildings looked scruffy rather than quaint.

In recent years, a growing affluence has wrought change. Tall office buildings and high-rise apartments are now commonplace in a city whose buildings were once so modest in size that it was said a cannonball fired from a rooftop would do little damage.

The chief landmark today is the 407-foot-tall Richardson building, named for a family of stockbrokers and financiers which includes James Richardson, Defence Minister in the Trudeau Government, Winnipeg, whose population is roughly half that of Manitoba as a whole, also boasts the tallest apartment building in Western Canada. And its citizens claim its new \$15,000,000 Convention Centre is going to be unique in North America.

Winnipeg's birthday celebrations were timed to reach a peak in May with the visit of Princess Margaret and her husband, who took part in two days of festivities. Centennial decorations and flags were mounted on main streets. Parades, concerts and an air show were scheduled.

One of Winnipeg's distinctive aspects is its integrated ethnic background. It is an intriguing melting pot. The Scots brought their thrift and money-making flair as well as a firm puritanism, the Jews introduced the needle trade and made Winnipeg one of Canada's biggest garment centres. Ukrainians developed the agricultural arts and the Icelanders, some say, endowed Manitoba with beautiful women. Many of the new ethnic groups from Europe congregated in North Winnipeg, swelling the city's mixture of races, tongues and talents and giving rise eventually to whispers of a "North Winnipeg Mafia" — the phrase

applied to the remarkable number of people from the area who have become powerful figures in the official life of Ottawa, Canada's federal capital.

It has been written of Winnipeg that there are few places in the world where the races mix so freely and with so much equality, and where the people pride themselves with so much justification on an absence of racial bias.

Some of Manitoba's earliest settlers were French. At Portage la Prairie, 50 miles

Friendly city

Winnipeg is often called the Friendly City. One of the most striking testimonials came as long ago as 1913 from a distinguished visitor, the British poet Rupert Brooke. He wrote that the manners of people he met in Winnipeg "impress the stranger as better than those of the East . . . more friendly, more hearty, more certain to achieve graciousness."

west of Winnipeg, the explorer La Vérendrye built Fort La Reine in 1738. Portage also has a large Indian population, descendants of the Sioux who fled the United States in 1862 after massacring nearly 1,000 settlers in Minnesota. The Portage Sioux provided some of Canada's best soldiers in two world wars.

Scotsmen have played a notable part in the Winnipeg story. One of the most notable was a certain Thomas Spence of Edinburgh who in 1854 created at Portage la Prairie what he called the independent state of "Manitobah." But independence was shortlived and the citizens clamoured to return to the tutelage of Britain's Colonial Office, charging that Spence had

used public funds to buy liquor for his "government." Despite this interlude, Spence later became a clerk in the real Manitoba's Legislative Assembly. One of Winnipeg's streets is named after him.

Another famous son was John W. Dafoe, editor in chief and president of the Winnipeg *Free Press*, who reigned over the paper from 1901 until his death in 1944. A man of strong and independent mind, Mr. Dafoe is remembered as one of Canada's greatest newspapermen. He fought for lower freight rates, a Hudson Bay railway and greater Canadian autonomy. He also supported the move towards the Commonwealth, then called the Empire. Sir Harry Brittain, British founder of the Commonwealth Press Union who celebrated his 100th birthday in London earlier this year, recalled in an interview that Mr. Dafoe had given him strong support when Sir Harry first mooted, many years ago, the idea of a link between newspapers in the empire.

Weather often gives Winnipeg a basis for conversation. Winter brings temperatures of 40 degrees below zero (fahrenheit) or more at times and the flat land around Winnipeg is so prone to floods that a huge concrete ditch has been built to girdle half the city. Now there are plans for a 14-block area of downtown Winnipeg to become an enclosed, weatherproof city-within-a-city for pedestrians. Office blocks, apartments, hotels and convention centre will be linked by climate-controlled pedestrian corridors.

And in suburban Fort Garry, an arched roof with a plastic dome will link two facing apartments. The aim is for the heat of the

Loopholed walls and the roofed bastion at Lower Fort Garry. On the right is the trading store and fur warehouse, built in 1833.

