



CANADA
TODAY / D'AUJOURD'HUI

MANITOBA

After Many a Rise and Fall, a New Sense of Calm

Manitoba is in the centre of the continent. Its people live midway between the Atlantic and the Pacific and as close to the bottom of the United States as to the top of Canada.

Someone once said that Canada suffers from too much geography, but Manitoba has suffered from an excess of history. It began with the Métis rebellion led by Louis Riel, and its first hundred years were its hardest.

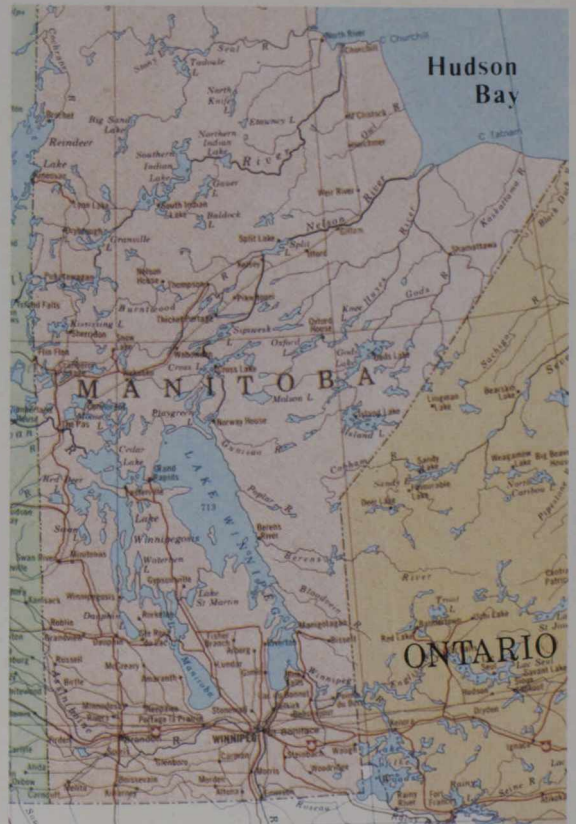
Once Winnipeg, its sole metropolis, aspired to be the Chicago of the North, but now it is content to be a clean and pleasant middle-sized city, with a stable and industrious population, one of Canada's leading regional theatres, a world-renowned ballet company and the best curling team (called a rink) in Canada.

Once its farmers struggled to grow wheat where none had grown before. Now its research scientists develop new strains designed to grow abundantly wherever a reasonable farmer wishes to plant them.

Once its farmland and cities were ravaged by floods. Now, through elaborate systems of dikes, drainage channels and floodways, the waters have been brought under control.

It has learned how to make adjustments and solve problems.

In this issue of CANADA TODAY/D'AUJOURD'HUI we look at Manitoba, past and present.



The Province

Manitoba is twice as big as the British Isles.

Very little of it is prairie and less than 15 per cent of it is farmed. The farmland, level prairies and rolling pasture, makes a right triangle in the south, with the base on the United States border and the high side touching Saskatchewan. Almost all Manitoba's people live there. Above are

plateaus and thickly wooded river valleys, and above them coniferous forests and granite outcrops. At the top are muskeg, tundra and Hudson Bay. There is a lot of fresh water too: three huge lakes—Winnipeg (a tidal lake bigger than Lake Ontario), Manitoba and Winnipegosis—are splashed all over the map.

The City

Winnipeg is Manitoba's one big city. Some 585,000 people, 57 per cent of those in the province, live in it or its suburbs.

It is 112 years old this year. It began as a village at the edge of the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Garry, at the junction of the Red and

Assiniboine Rivers.

It is now peaceful, prosperous, somewhat self-conscious. It is Canada's middle urban child, junior to the cities of the East, older than those of the West. In 1910 it was Canada's third most populous city—after Montreal and Toronto. Van-

cover passed it in the 1920s and now it ranks seventh, behind Ottawa-Hull, Edmonton and Calgary.

It has memories and distinctions, good and bad. The juncture of its two most important thoroughfares, Portage and Main, for example, is reputed to be the coldest, windiest corner in the country.

Andrew H. Malcolm, of *The New York Times*, took its temperature a few years back.

"To set the record straight once and for all, Winnipeg is not a very cold city. It is a very, very cold city. Indeed Winnipeg, which is 250 miles north of Fargo, N.D., may be the world's coldest provincial capital still inhabited by 581,000 humans. It gets so cold here that soft ice cream hardens outdoors. Tires on parked cars can freeze lopsided and auto exhausts hang in the air until whipped away by the wind. Many elderly people virtually hibernate until spring and drive-in waitresses wear parkas."

There is an old, self-deprecating Manitoba saying, that the province has ten months of winter and two months of bad ice. That may be true of Churchill up on Hudson Bay, but it is not true of Winnipeg. (Winnipeg is almost as close to Milwaukee as it is to Churchill). It has the regulation four seasons, a long winter, a short spring, a full-length summer with temperatures usually between 70 and 90, and an abbreviated fall.

Summer comes for three, sometimes four, ecstatic months. The days are warm and dry, the

A Three-Star City

The first green Michelin guides for Canada, one in French and one in English, came out in June. Seven cities received triple stars. Winnipeg was one of them. Michelin ranked it specifically as among the world's best cities.

air is pure and the nights are cool. Everyone has a cottage at the lake or knows someone who has. Manitoba has 100,000 lakes. A family which wants to can find one to have all to itself.

Observation from the Rev. George Young, Methodist Pastor, 1868

"What a sorry sight was presented by the long-thought-of town of Winnipeg on the day we entered it. What a mass of soft, black, slippery and sticky Red River mud . . . Streets with neither sidewalks nor crossings, . . . a few small stores with poor goods and high prices, one little tavern where 'Dutch George' was 'monarch of all his survey'—a few passable dwellings . . . neither church or school in sight or prospect; a population about one hundred instead of one thousand as we expected."



Winnipeg.

A Little History

Henry Hudson arrived in the Bay in 1610. He and his son were set adrift in a boat by his crew and no one knows if they ever got ashore. Sir Thomas Button came looking for Hudson two years later and explored the mouth of the Churchill River. For the next two hundred years the territory would be thinly populated by Indians and fur traders.

Lord Selkirk, a Scottish philanthropist, planted displaced Scottish and Irish tenant farmers in the Red River valley in 1811. The colony grew painfully until the 1860s when settlers began pouring in.

In 1869 the new Dominion of Canada bought broad territorial rights from the Hudson's Bay Company for £300,000 and some land. Immediately Métis Louis Riel led the Red River colony in revolt.

The Métis, French-Indian hunters and boat men, threatened by the arrival of new white settlers from Ontario, stopped the just-appointed Governor from entering the colony, occupied Fort Garry and formed a national council. The council wanted the territory accepted as a province, and the question probably would have been resolved peacefully if the Métis had not executed one of their prisoners. The government sent a military expedition, and the Métis retreated to the Saskatchewan River valley.

Manitoba, now dominated by the new immigrants, became a province in 1870. Riel was elected to and expelled from Parliament, banished from the country and committed to an asylum. He became a U.S. citizen, taught school in Montana, and returned to lead a second rebellion from Saskatchewan in 1885. He was captured, tried and hanged. The execution would remain an issue in Canadian politics for decades to come.

The Buffalo with the Roman Nose

On August 2, 1870, the Canadian government arranged for Manitoba to have a coat-of-arms. It would feature a buffalo.

Some thirty-three years later the Manitoba government discovered that the federal government's order-in-council had never been registered. It passed its own order-in-council and got in touch with the College of Heralds in England.

On May 10, 1905, the College announced that a coat-of-arms had been granted. It described it as, "Vert on a rock, a Buffalo Statant proper, on a chief Argent the Cross of St. George." This meant a buffalo standing on a rock, on a green background, with a Cross of St. George, backed by silver, over his head.

The design arrived with a bill for 25 pounds and 1 shilling. It had one striking peculiarity—the buffalo had what could only be considered a human face, its features depicted in contrasting areas of black and white: deep-set eyes, a high forehead, a stiff upper lip and a noble nose. There



Manitoba's coat-of-arms.

were faint suggestions of a goatee and either horns or curly locks.

The government was disconcerted, but the coat-of-arms was official and for some years it appeared on provincial documents. Then various departments began substituting buffaloes, with proper buffalo faces. In 1946 the King's Printer decided that substitutions had gone too far and he restored the strange original. It can be found today on the provincial flag, on official stationery and various documents and at the Provincial Garage on Kennedy Street in Winnipeg, carved in stone.

The Economy

Manitoba is in an economic holding pattern; times have been worse but they could be better.

In the early and mid-1970s the province's economic indicators were among the most discouraging in the country. Since then things have improved relatively. Manitoba is now doing as well as most of the other provinces, better than some.

The province should have a real growth of about 2 per cent this year, down from 3.5 per cent last year.

The population, which fell from 1978 to 1980, is climbing again—it is now an estimated 1,033,000.



Lockheed assembly plant in Winnipeg.

The cost of living is relatively cheap; Manitoba had a 10.9 per cent inflation rate last year, compared with 12.5 for all Canada. This year it is expected to fall slightly.

Long-term prospects are pretty good. Large-scale investment plans are afoot, and the city of Winnipeg's downtown is getting a \$96 million overhaul.

Agriculture

This year the price of land was high, the grain harvests good and the market prices a disappointment.

The most significant crops, as always, are grain, wheat particularly. Saskatchewan grows more wheat and Alberta almost as much, but Manitoba has much of the marketing machinery—the Wheat Board and the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange are in downtown Winnipeg—and the centre of Canadian grain research is at the University of Manitoba.

In the trading room of the Exchange, which is a full block long, feed wheat, feed oats, feed barley, rye, rapeseed, flaxseed, corn, gold and silver futures and options are traded.

During the crop year ending July, 1981, there were 2,259,225 futures contracts valued at \$11.9 billion, a volume that was close to that of the year before but with a value up by more than \$2 billion.

Trading in wheat futures declined by 33 per cent and barley dropped by 23 per cent, but there were big gains in oats, rye and flaxseed.

Manitoba's agriculture (unlike that of Saskatchewan or Alberta) has a great variety; it includes market gardening vegetables like

potatoes and brussels sprouts, and livestock. The cost-price squeeze has hit cattle producers hard, reducing the size of herds and driving some out of business; the number dropped from 19,500 in 1981 to 18,000 in 1982.

Fishing

Manitoba's lakes hold eighty species of freshwater fish—the greatest variety in North America.

Only fifteen are harvested commercially. Yellow pickerel and whitefish are 75 per cent of the catch, followed by sauger or perch, pike, tullibee, lake trout, yellow perch and mullet.

The catch, second only to Ontario's, totaled 48.5 million pounds in 1981-82.

It was marketed by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation in Winnipeg (which markets all prairie fish) and brought an estimated \$42 million. Most of the harvest goes to the U.S.

Minerals

The market for the province's main minerals, copper and nickel, has been hurt by a slackening demand in the United States for steel, autos, housing and durable goods.

Forest Products

Commercial forests extend over 40 per cent of the province's land area.

High interest rates and low housing starts have hurt the sale of lumber. Inventories increased by 27.8 per cent in 1981, and this has caused short-term layoffs of workers.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing is a bright spot. Employment has remained constant at around 66,000 and capital investment rose 69.7 per cent last year. Manitoba's garment, furniture, food and machinery plants serve the expanding markets of western Canada and are suffering less from the recession than their eastern counterparts.

Winnipeg is a centre for the manufacture of aircraft components, buses and railway rolling stock, much of which is exported to the U.S.

A Few Vigorous Words from the Government

Premier Howard Pawley of the New Democratic Party took office in the fall of 1981, succeeding Conservative Sterling Lyon. Mr. Lyon was a neo-conservative. Mr. Pawley is not.

In its 1982 budget address, the Pawley administration outlined its program for the immediate future:

- A \$23 million interest rate relief program to provide assistance to homeowners, farmers and small business operators.
- New job creation programs to stimulate employment in the short-run.
- A new residential rent control program.
- An increase in minimum wages.
- Major increases in assistance to municipal governments and school divisions to ease the property tax burden.
- An increase in Pensioners' School Tax Assistance.
- A continuation of the Hydro rate freeze.
- A \$17.5 million Beef Income Stabilization program.
- A freezing of University tuition fees and community college fees.

How to Keep the Wheat from Rusting

The first prairie farmers had little going for them except hope, in some cases desperation, and a handful of seed. The weather was unlike any they had known—long winters, extreme temperatures and limited rainfall. Plants with shallow roots died in the summer. A crop planted too soon would be killed by the frosts of spring, and one that took too long to ripen would be killed by the frosts of fall.

The first Manitoba farmers (the first on the prairies) learned by trial and error and the quick learners survived. Their descendants are more fortunate. Manitoba has been the research centre for grain farmers for most of the century.

The Winnipeg Research Station of Agriculture Canada began in 1925 as the Dominion Rust

Research Laboratory. The original building, a relatively small but handsome brick structure, now contains the complicated instruments used to measure the quality—the protein content and flour yield—of grain samples sent in by breeding stations across Canada.

Across the road is the research centre's main building, modern and much bigger.

The first laboratory was concerned, as the name suggests, with rust, a plant disease that plagued the prairies in the 1920s. Although the last major epidemic was twenty-six years ago, it returns from time to time in more virulent forms, and the centre is still preoccupied with developing new rust-resistant strains.

Barrie Campbell, the ranking wheat breeder in Canada, has supervised the introduction of seven wheat varieties since he joined the Winnipeg facility in the 1940s. When he arrived the staff was developing Selkirk, the variety that would be used to beat back the rust epidemic of 1956.

Today most prairie farmers growing bread wheat use seeds developed by him and his associates. The most popular one right now is Neepawa, which was sown in 61.7 per cent of the 23.75 million prairie acres in bread wheat in 1980.

The development of new strains involves a team of experts—entomologists, chemists, geneticists and pathologists—and years of crossing, growing, testing and winnowing.

The first step is arranging an epidemic. Gordon Green, a colleague of Campbell's and an expert on cereal diseases, started one in 1980 at the centre's field operation at Glenlea outside Winnipeg.

It affected some 40,000 plants. The few that rejected the rust were selected and cross-bred. They will be cross-bred again and again.



Dr. Barrie Campbell in the rust nursery.

The centre has also developed superior strains of durum wheat, the kind used to make noodles, and Terra, Hudson, Sioux and Kelsey varieties, and it pays attention to the problems of other plants. Glen Wylie, who was transferred to the Winnipeg station when the Federal Parasite Laboratory at Belleville, Ontario, was closed down in 1972, is trying to find a parasite that will attack the flea beetle, which feeds on rapeseed. The beetle, which came to Canada from Europe in the 1920s, can wipe out a whole crop in the spring when the leaves are small.

Wylie imports parasites from Europe. Cocoons are sent to Ottawa where they are stored. When the parasites emerge, they are sent to Wylie in Winnipeg. He releases them in a plot of rapeseed infested with beetles, hoping to find the particular parasite that will find the beetle a perfect host.

The Centre is directed by Dr. D.G. Dorrell and has over 100 staffers, including such veterans as Fred Watters, the head of the station's cereal crop protection unit, who has been working for thirty years, off and on, on controlling insects in stored grain by radiation; and Harold Wallace, 74, who retired in 1973, but still works in the basement on a University of Manitoba research project.

Upstairs in the library the ashes of Professor A.H. Reginald Buller are encased in the wall. Professor Buller was never on the facility staff, but he worked with the staffers through most of his professional life and gave his book collection to the library before he died.

He also left behind a number of limericks, the most famous of which was published in *Punch*. It had to do with the theory of relativity.

There was a young lady named Bright,
Whose speed was far faster than light.
She set out one day
In a relative way
And returned home the previous night.

Politics

Late last year New Democrat Howard Pawley became Manitoba's Premier.

The NDP took 47.3 per cent of the vote and thirty-four seats in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. Outgoing Premier Sterling Lyon and the Progressive-Conservatives got 44 per cent and twenty-three seats.

The Liberals lost their one seat (their only provincial seat west of Ontario) and the newly formed Progressive Caucus lost its three. The Manitoba legislature now has only two parties (like Saskatchewan's and British Columbia's).

The voters were divided by a diagonal line that ran from northwest to southeast, cutting right across Winnipeg. The NDP took the section to the north, including North Winnipeg's ethnic groups



Premier Howard Pawley

and the loggers, miners, fishermen and small farmers above the city. The Conservatives carried affluent and Anglo-Saxon South Winnipeg and the prosperous southern farm country.

The election followed a familiar pattern—in Manitoba there are real ideological differences between parties, and neither the Conservatives nor the NDP can be considered to have a permanent advantage.

The divisions go back to the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919. The strikers formed the Independent Labor Party, which in turn helped found the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), a social democratic alignment of farmers and urban workers.

The rise of the CCF was rapid but severely hampered by voting limitations. For four decades the political division of the province greatly favoured the rural population—it took seven city votes to equal four rural ones. In 1945, for example, the CCF, strong in Winnipeg but weaker in the country, led the province in the popular vote, but wound up with fewer seats in the legislature than either the Liberals or Conservatives. In 1961 the Canadian Labour Congress and the CCF allied themselves and the NDP was formed.

In 1966 Duff Roblin and the Conservatives won, riding in on a wave of enthusiasm for the government-sponsored Churchill Forest Industries development at The Pas in the northern part of the province. The development wound up costing the provincial taxpayers an estimated \$165 million.

In 1969 the Conservatives revised the electoral map, giving the city a fair share of seats in the Legislative Assembly. Two years earlier the Con-

servatives had moved right and elected Walter Weir, an undertaker from the small town of Minnedosa, as leader. The Liberals, the official Opposition party, followed suit, electing Bobby Bend, an Anglo-Saxon fiscal conservative, to replace their Franco-Manitoban leader.

The shifts left a large part of the political spectrum—the left and centre—up for grabs. The NDP, led by Ed Schreyer (now Canada's Governor General), grabbed it.

Schreyer was a vigorous supporter of Prime Minister Trudeau's bilingualism and biculturalism programs. Bend, the new Liberal leader, was not.

In the 1969 election the Liberals, who had been getting more than a third of the popular vote, took less than a fourth, and the NDP passed both of the established parties and formed a minority government.

Larry Desjardins, the St. Boniface Liberal member of the Legislative Assembly, then switched to the NDP, giving them the extra vital seat and carrying a great many Franco-Manitobans with him.

In 1977 the Liberals moved back to the left and lost many of their remaining rural voters. This time their misfortune benefited the Conservatives and Sterling Lyon became Premier.

The NDP's somewhat surprising sweep last year seemed to end, for the time being at least,

Lyon's experiment in "neo-conservatism." The Conservatives campaigned on the promise of three "megaprojects"—an \$800 million Alcan aluminum smelter, a \$600 million potash mine near the Saskatchewan border and a multibillion-dollar hydro grid to carry the province's surplus power to Saskatchewan and Alberta. The three projects, which were far from final form, did not apparently catch the voters' interest; and memory of Lyon's earlier lifting of rent controls, cutting of the provincial civil service by 1,300 and putting universities, hospitals and social programs on tight budgets lingered on.

Since the election the NDP has pursued a moderate course.

Premier Pawley is committed to some fairly large public expenditures, including \$50 million for housing construction, \$20 million for a proposed government oil company, \$23 million in interest-rate assistance for homeowners, farmers and small businesses, a \$10 million expansion of the government's forestry complex and a \$1.5 million program in rural redevelopment.

One of Lyon's "megaprojects," the aluminum smelter, was postponed indefinitely by Alcan because of slackened demand, and the power grid has been postponed for two years. The potash program is still alive, but the industry is in a severe recession.

The Garrison Diversion

As a recent public opinion poll showed, 98 per cent of Manitoba's citizens are opposed to the diverting of U.S. river water into Canada through the Garrison Diversion.

The project has been pushed with varying degrees of energy by North Dakota since 1889. Congress authorized it in 1965.

It is a complex and expensive proposal: the best estimates are that it would cost \$1 billion. In its full form a dam, already in place, and a series of canals, pumps and reservoirs would take Missouri River water and carry it east and north to irrigate some 250,000 acres of dry North Dakota farmland. The main problem from the Canadian standpoint is that the diversion would move water from one river basin to another. Some water that would normally flow down the Missouri and into the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico would run off into the Souris and Red Rivers and ultimately into Lakes Winnipeg, Manitoba and Winnipegosis and Hudson Bay.

Scientists believe the water would transfer three predatory fish species, and this would reduce the fish populations that are the basis of Manitoba's large commercial and sport fishing industries by 50 to 75 percent.

The hazards first became apparent in the

mid-1970s. The Canadian government argued in a series of notes to the U.S. State Department that the project would violate the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty, which says that the "water herein defined as boundary waters and waters flowing across the boundary shall not be polluted on either side to the injury of health or property on the other."

The two governments referred the question to the International Joint Commission in 1975. The Commission concluded that "the construction and operation of the Garrison Diversion Unit as envisaged would cause significant injury to health and property in Canada as a result of adverse impacts on the water quality and on some of the more important biological resources in Manitoba."

Support for the project in North Dakota, which has been solid for ninety years, has recently been less so. The Committee to Save North Dakota, a group of farmers whose land would be appropriated, argued that to construct a project to irrigate 250,000 acres, some 225,000 acres, much of it productive farmland, would be turned into canals and reservoirs. One of the twenty-five counties that had been part of the Garrison Conservancy District withdrew from the program, and four other counties have considered doing the



same. The North Dakota legislature, which had supported the project unanimously year after year, most recently voted 28 per cent against it.

In May, 1981, the National Audubon Society sued successfully to halt construction on the project but the injunction was overturned in Appeals Court in January of 1982. A group of South Dakota farmers, worried about the possibilities of flooding and water pollution of the James River, won a preliminary injunction in May, which was lifted in June.

Meanwhile, the project moves slowly ahead, despite assurances from the U.S. government that no portion directly affecting Canada will be built until its objections are resolved.

Tenders have been let for construction of the Oakes pumping plant. In August bids on the construction of a section of the New Rockford Canal were opened.

The federal and provincial governments fear that as such components are built, pressure will increase to complete the project since they can never be fully used unless other portions, which would have a serious impact on Manitoba's watershed, are also built.

The General Strike

The most traumatic event in Winnipeg's history was the General Strike of 1919. It involved 35,000 workers and lasted six weeks. It collapsed after its leaders were arrested and sent to the penitentiary.

H.C. Pentland, in his *Canadian Dimension*, says:

"The victory was a Pyrrhic one for Winnipeg's commercial aristocracy; the city over which it presided, after 1919, was a city in decline."

The strike grew out of a basic division in the city's population. Most of the immigrants who came to Winnipeg in the 1860s were from Ontario and Great Britain, and they established a dominance that would last a long time.

By 1913 Winnipeg had a population of 150,000 and the number of people not of British origin had increased enormously, but the civic leaders and prominent businessmen were all Anglo-Saxon and Protestant.

The rich lived in the south end of town, and they were rich by any standard. A writer described Armstrong Point, an exclusive residential peninsula jutting into the Assiniboine River:

"There were no houses . . . There were only castles, huge castles three full stories in height, some with leaded glass windows, and all, certainly, with dozens of rooms. They were built in an assortment of architectural styles and peopled by names from Winnipeg's commercial and industrial *Who's Who*."

The prosperous middle class lived in the west end of town. The north held most of the newcomers—by the records of the time it had 83 per cent of the Slavs, 87 per cent of the Jews, 67 per cent of the Scandinavians, and 22 per cent of the Germans. A few of the residents were mildly prosperous but most were not.

During World War I the cost of living went up 75 per cent while wages went up only 13. In 1919 the average construction worker in the city earned \$900 a year. The minimum income needed for an average-sized family was calculated at \$1500.

In March, 1919, representatives of western labour unions met in Calgary and voted to form One Big Union, OBU, a national organization that would include all working people, skilled and unskilled. The biggest representation, forty-seven delegates, was from Winnipeg.

On May 1 the Winnipeg construction workers, who had lost much ground during the war, went on strike. The next day the metal workers, who were trying to gain recognition of their union as a bargaining agent, followed. On May 15 the overwhelming majority of the other union members voted to support them with a general strike.

The Strike Committee of 300 was soon opposed by a Citizen's Committee of 1,000, including the city's business and government leaders. The Citizen's Committee recruited 2,000 special police and fired the regular ones. The federal government sent in additional Royal

Canadian Mounted Policemen and organized and armed a militia.

On June 17 the six most prominent strike leaders were arrested in their beds at gunpoint. On June 21 an organization of war veterans sympathetic to the strikers organized a mass rally. Streetcars were blocked and one was set on fire. The special police fired a volley and one man was killed. They then cleared the streets with clubs and the militia moved in with machine guns. The Strike Committee called off the strike on June 26.

The Big Flood

On April 7, 1950, the Winnipeg City Engineer said that a flood was "highly probable."

He also noted that the \$1.1 million program of dike construction authorized the year before had not been carried out.

By April 22, the Red River, swollen by heavy snows and rain and fed by tributaries on both sides of the border, went over its banks and spread over farms, towns and villages.

On May 10, 70,000 people were evacuated from Winnipeg. Thousands of volunteers piled millions of sandbags along temporary dikes. Thirty thousand more people were evacuated and 10,500 homes were flooded.

On May 22 the waters began to recede. Losses were estimated at \$175 million.

By 1952 a system of permanent dikes had been built along the Red River and part of the Assiniboine, and, after much campaigning by city leaders, the federal government contributed \$315 million toward the construction of a twenty-nine-mile floodway. The project, which involved the moving of more earth than was moved in the construction of the Panama Canal, was completed in the early 1960s. "Duff's Ditch" (after Premier Duff Roblin) was widely criticized as an unnecessary expense until it saved the city from serious flooding in 1966.

Ghost Story

In July, 1924, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the inventor of Sherlock Holmes and an enthusiastic believer in spiritualism, came to Winnipeg to lecture.

Dr. Thomas Glendenning Hamilton, a surgeon and an experimenter in telekinesis—the moving of inanimate objects by spiritual forces—invited him over for the evening.

He came and they sat down in a bedroom Dr. Hamilton had converted into a seance room. They were joined by the rest of the Hamilton family, a few friends and Mrs. Elizabeth Poole, a medium.

Mrs. Poole "charged" the table by placing her hands on it for a moment. The table was then put



Winnipeg General Strike, June 10, 1919.

inside a cabinet shaped like a phone booth and the lights were turned off. Two of the group held Mrs. Poole's hands. Sir Arthur stood in front of the cabinet.

The table moved violently up and down and lunged at Sir Arthur like, in his words, "an angry dog." Sir Arthur was so impressed that he described the evening at length in his book, *Our Second American Adventure*, and he came back to visit the Hamiltons twice, after his death.



The 1950 flood.

The Royal Ballet

Winnipeg was once described by a native as "one hundred and fifty dollars away from anything." He went on to say that "we figured we'd just have to do these things ourselves."

What they did was build a cultural oasis of their own. The keystone is, of course, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, a troupe that travels to great acclaim all over the world (it will be in London from October 19th to the 30th at Sadler's Wells).

A few years ago Agnes de Mille, the USA's great lady of the dance, published an appreciation of the company in its magazine *Ballet-Hoo* in which she described her first visit to Winnipeg in 1963.

Below are excerpts.

"In October 1963, I received a letter from an unknown writer in an unknown place called Winnipeg, Manitoba. The letter asked me to do a ballet. . . . I did not say 'no'. . . .

"The dancers were waiting for me in the overheated lounge of a cabaret, the uncleared tables and dirty linen pushed to the sides. . . .

"I relaxed a little when I saw that the rehearsal discipline never lessened, but rather intensified over the week. . . ."

Miss de Mille wound up enchanted.

"Winnipeg is absolutely self-contained. Very little seems to happen. . . . Yet this provincial cut-off town boasts a good symphony, a fine ballet company, and one of the three best repertory theatres on the North American continent. No middle-western city in the United States, with the exception of Chicago, had until ten years ago comparable cultural organizations. . . .

"The citizens of Winnipeg support the company because it is fine and because the citizens are neither surfeited nor corrupted. They still take joy in beautiful things. . . ."



The Royal Winnipeg Ballet in Five Tangos



Paul Kane: Assiniboine Hunting Buffalo. Ontario Artist Paul Kane wandered through Canada's West from 1846 to 1848, sketching the Indians.

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