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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

The City of Strathcona  
1891-1912

"We see just ahead the glory of the sun in his might"

by

John Frederick Gilpin

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT ..... History

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING, 1978

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and  
recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for  
acceptance, a thesis entitled The City of Strathcona; 1891-1912;  
"We see just ahead the glory of the sun in his might"  
submitted by John Frederick Gilpin  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

*Reuben H. Thomas*  
Supervisor

*William C. Anderson*

Date *October 15, 1977*

## Abstract

This thesis is a study of the City of Strathcona from its origins in 1891 as a Calgary and Edmonton Railway townsite to its demise as an independent community by virtue of its amalgamation with Edmonton in 1912. This study of Strathcona's history examines both the realities of its growth in spatial, economic, political and social terms as well as its great expectations for future development. This thesis will show how Strathcona's great expectations focused on the idea of its development as a significant metropolitan centre in the Edmonton region through the construction of railways. This thesis examines the origin of this idea and its support within the community. The contradictions which developed between Strathcona's metropolitan dreams and the realities of its limited growth are pointed out. In this examination of Strathcona's failure to establish itself as the dominant urban centre in the region, the broader question of Edmonton's success is discussed. In answering the question why Strathcona failed, geographical and social as well as regional and national economic forces are considered. This thesis will conclude that Strathcona failed as a metropolitan centre because of the manner in which geography, the railway interests and other urban centres interacted in order to prevent it from developing a significant hinterland.

### Acknowledgements

The author wishes to acknowledge the help of a number of people who have assisted in the preparation of this thesis. The research into the history of Strathcona could not have been completed without access to the City of Strathcona records which were made available to me through the City of Edmonton Archives. The co-operation of the City Clerk's Office and the staff of the City of Edmonton Archives is gratefully acknowledged. I also wish to thank Mr. Tony Sheppard for allowing me access to the diaries of his Grandfather, W. H. Sheppard.

The study of the documents used in this thesis was greatly assisted by my advisor, Dr. L. H. Thomas. The interest of Dr. Alan F. J. Artibise of the University of Victoria in this study of Strathcona has also been of great benefit.

The preparation of the final document was greatly facilitated by Mrs. Lillian Wonders, who assisted in the preparation of the maps, and Mrs. Edith Stodola, who typed a number of rough drafts as well as the final copy.

My final acknowledgement must go to my parents who assisted in many ways to bring this thesis to fruition.

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## Introduction

Between 1891 and 1912 a separate urban community existed on the south side of the North Saskatchewan River across from Edmonton. This fact runs counter to the pattern of urban growth which has characterized the Edmonton Settlement since the early 1870's when the first buildings were constructed outside the walls of Fort Edmonton on the north side of the River. This separate community was known as the unincorporated Town of South Edmonton from 1891 to 1899 and the incorporated Town/City of Strathcona from 1899 to 1912. For the purpose of this thesis the name Strathcona has been adopted to cover the entire period from 1891 to 1912.

The emergence of this separate south side community can be traced to the townsite development activities of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company which had been incorporated in 1890 for the purpose of constructing and operating a railway "from a point on the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, within the town of Calgary, to a point at or near Edmonton, with power to extend authority to the International boundary . . . and northly to the Peace River."<sup>1</sup> The provisional shareholders of the Railway as specified by the Act of Incorporation included: James Ross, Edmund B. Osler, Herbert C. Hammond, William MacKenzie, Nicol Kingsmill, Herbert S. Holt and Donald B. Mann.

This Company had taken the initiative in the spring of 1891 to create a townsite by negotiating agreements dated the 24th of March with Joseph McDonald,<sup>2</sup> owner of river lot eleven, Frederick H. Sache,<sup>3</sup> owner of river lot fifteen "A" and Alexander McDonald, John Cameron, Malcolm McLeod and Sarah McLeod,<sup>4</sup> owners of the southerly 103 1/3 acres of river lot seventeen plus the fractional west half of section twenty-eight, township fifty-two, range twenty-four west of the fourth meridian. An agreement dated the

6th of April with Thomas A. Anderson covering river lots thirteen and fifteen completed the arrangements by which the land for a townsite was assembled by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company.

The terms of these agreements for all parties were the same to the extent that the owners agreed to provide the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company with sufficient land up to a maximum of thirteen and one-half acres for right-of-way and station grounds, plus a half interest in the remaining portion of land in return for the construction by the Railway Company of a station and engine shed at a specified distance from the various properties involved. The distance specified in the agreements was twelve chains for river lots thirteen and fifteen and forty chains for river lots eleven, fifteen "A", seventeen and the fractional half of section twenty-eight.

The agreements further specified that the survey of the townsite would be undertaken by the Railway Company with the cost being shared equally among the parties. The agreements concluded by stating that upon completion of the survey a division of the land would be made or an agent for the joint sale of all townsite properties appointed.

The Railway Company moved quickly to fulfill the terms of the agreements when the head of steel reached the townsite in July, 1891. By the 25th of July the survey of the townsite was in progress under the management of J. McArthur.<sup>6</sup> The plan of survey was registered as Plan 1 in the Land Titles Office for the North Alberta Land Registration District at Edmonton on the 25th of September, 1891.

The division of the land between the respective owners was made during a visit to Edmonton by A. M. Nanton in August, 1891.<sup>7</sup> The administration of the land acquired by the Railway Company was placed

in the hands of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Townsite Company, the affairs of which were in turn administered by the firm of Osler, Hammond and Nanton.<sup>8</sup>

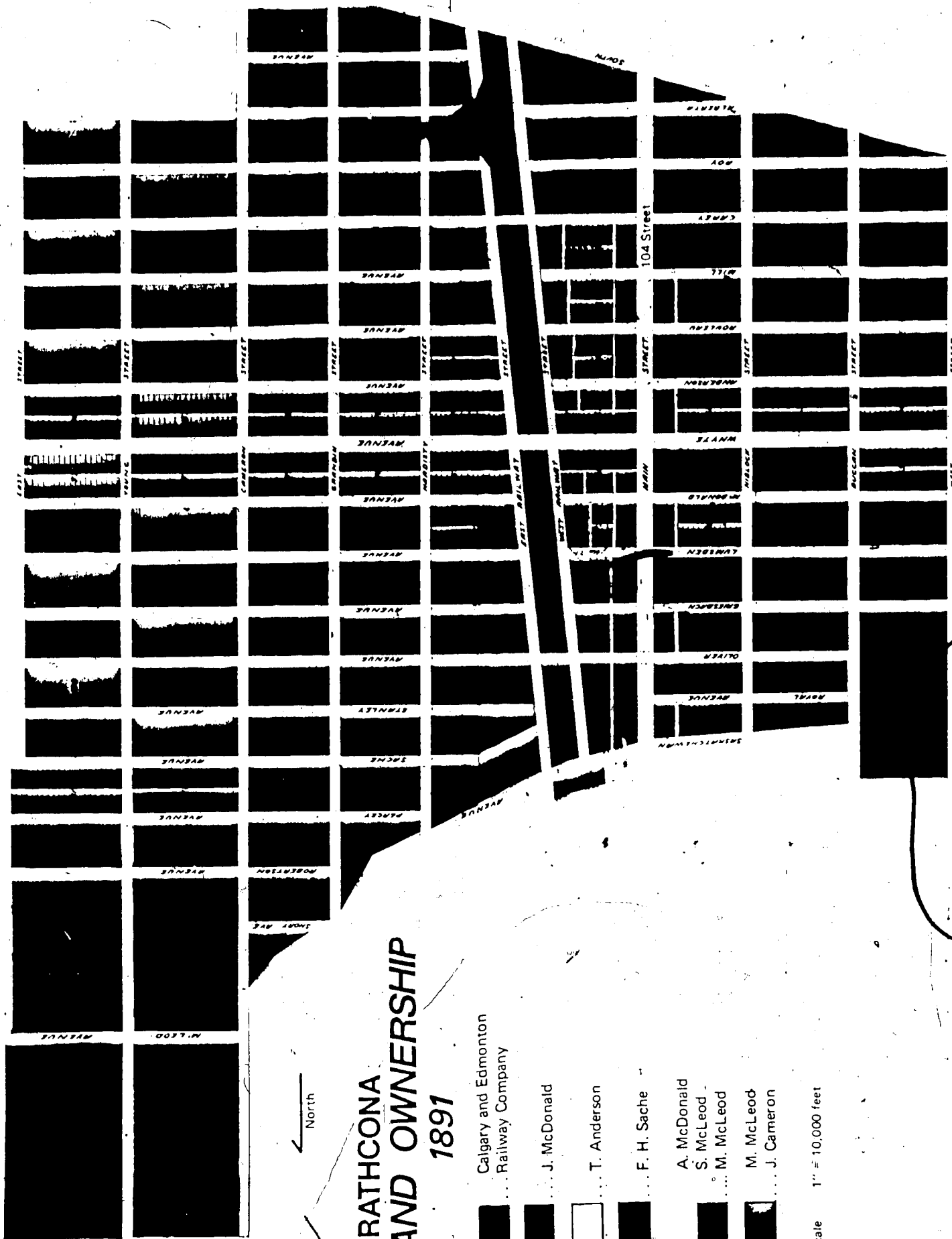
The pattern of land ownership which emerged by virtue of the agreements noted above is indicated on Map One. The data presented also includes an agreement prior to October, 1891, between Thomas A. Anderson and the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company by which the latter acquired the total ownership of river lots thirteen and fifteen.

The principal interest of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company was in the land grant provided by the Dominion Government and the various land purchases made directly by the Company. Thus the railway was completed as quickly and as cheaply as possible through such cost saving measures as the elimination of a telegraph line. The lack of interest of this Company in the railway business was also demonstrated by the fact that the line was leased to the Canadian Pacific immediately upon its completion. Such an eventuality had been provided for in the Act to Incorporate the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company.

The construction of this railway was therefore not part of a long term plan to establish any one railway's control over Northern Alberta. The Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company preferred to enjoy the short term profits to be derived from the upgrading of the transportation link between Edmonton and Calgary and the establishment of a townsite near Edmonton. It was hoped by the Company that this new townsite in which they were the major land owner would usurp the position of Edmonton as the dominant urban centre in the region.<sup>9</sup>

The geographical aspects of the railway townsite as it developed from 1891 to 1912 are the valley of the North Saskatchewan River and an

COLOUR



# STRATHCONA LAND OWNERSHIP 1891

Calgary and Edmonton  
Railway Company

J. McDonald

T. Anderson

F. H. Sache

A. McDonald

S. McLeod

M. McLeod

M. McLeod

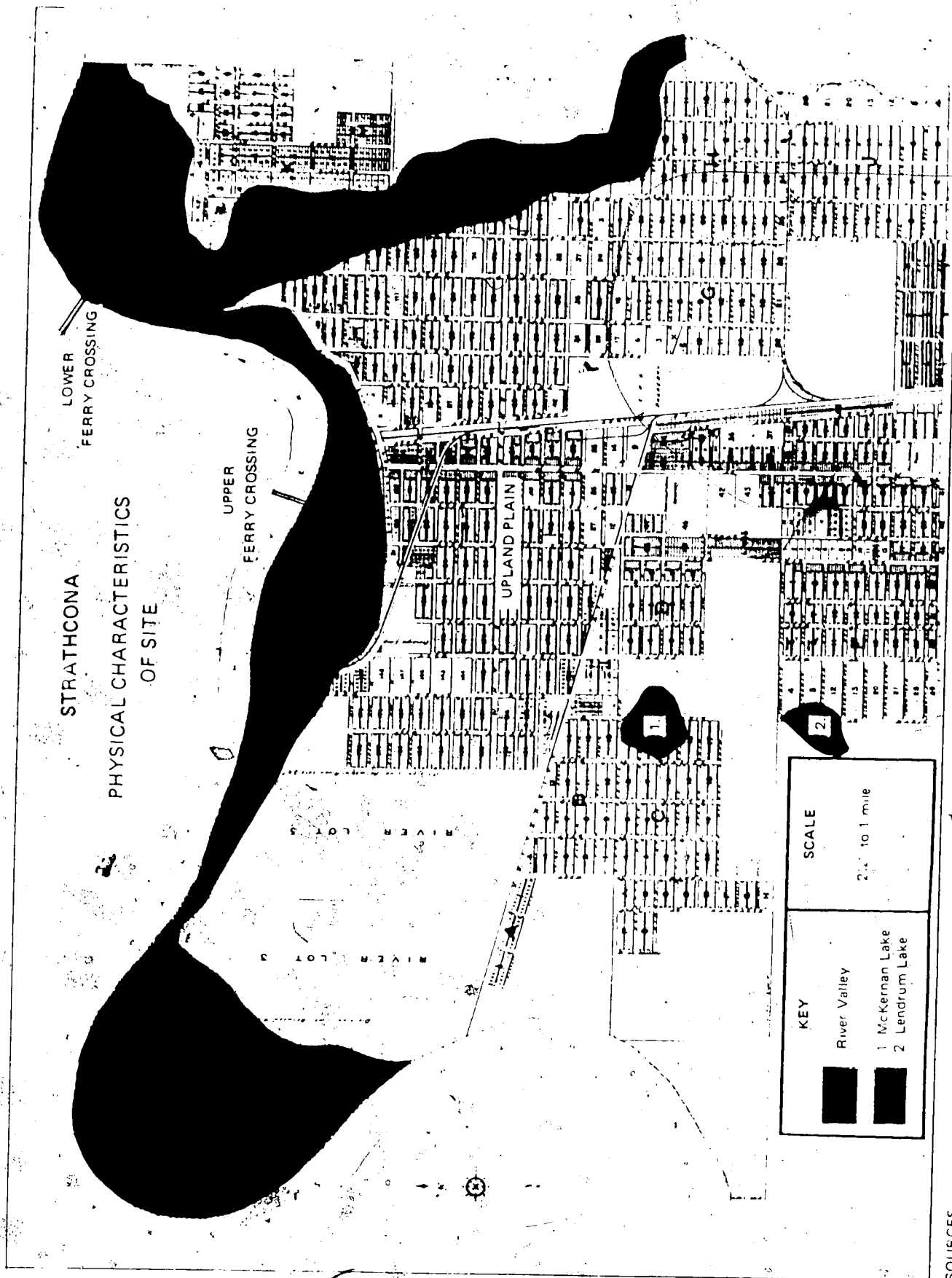
J. Cameron

Scale 1" = 10,000 feet

upland plain. This division between upland plain and river valley as well as the townsite's other geographical features are illustrated by Map 10. The river valley which varies in width at Strathcona from one-half to one mile, constituted up to approximately 30% of its total area. The river and its associated valley also served to define the northern and western boundaries of the site. The North Saskatchewan River, which averages 200 yards in width, is located approximately 160 feet below the general level of the upland plain. It follows a meandering course on the valley bed, thus creating a series of floodplains separated by undercut cliffs. These floodplains cover a significant area between the river and the actual bottom of the valley slope. The river, which is subject to seasonal fluctuations in flow, is frozen over usually between November 1st and December 15th to spring break-up which usually occurs between April 11th and 16th.<sup>10</sup>

The upland surface which constitutes the remaining 70% of the site is part of a level till plain which has been modified over much of its area by lacustrine depositions from Lake Edmonton.<sup>11</sup> The subsoil is predominantly clay. Additional features of this upland portion of the site include tributary streams which have created valleys which serve to subdivide this upland surface and two relic lakes. McKernan and Lendrum Lakes each covered a total area of approximately thirty acres.

In addition to these lakes, numerous swamps and ponds in which the water varied with the dryness of the season were also present. The upland portion of the site was originally covered by parkland vegetation consisting of scrub brush and small diameter poplar trees. The north facing valley slope and the floodplains were by contrast heavily forested by white spruce, balsam poplar, aspen poplar, some paper birch and the red



SOURCES Mundy's Map of the Twin Cities, 1911

COLOUR

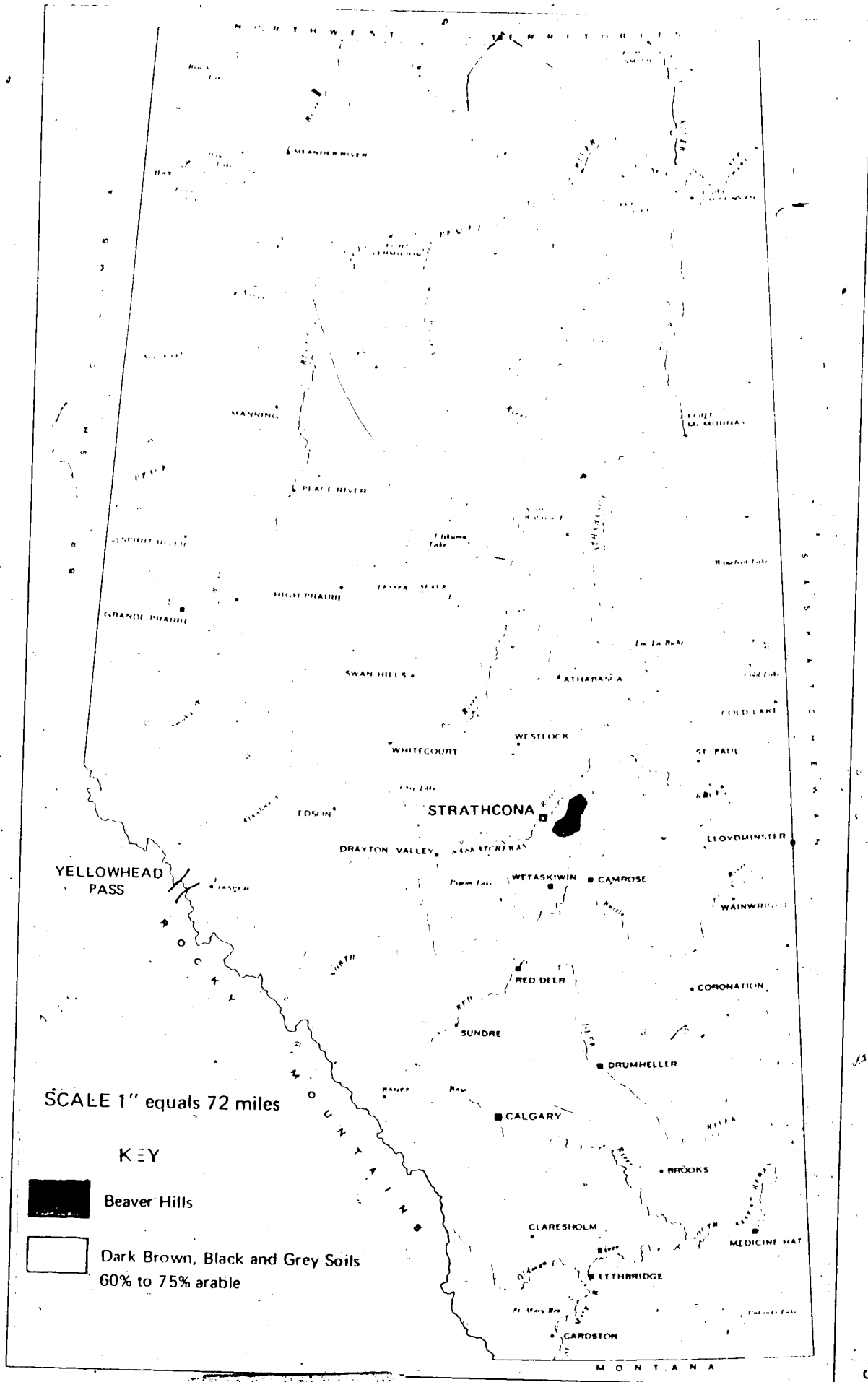
dogwood.<sup>12</sup> Other on-site resources included brick clay, coal and placer gold deposits. The coal resources consisted of easily accessible beds of lignite coal. Its composition made it suitable for domestic use and for raising steam in fixed installations, although it was not suitable for general use in railway locomotives.<sup>13</sup>

Geographical features of regional importance which had implications for its future growth are illustrated in Maps Three and Four. These features include the Beaver Hills and the Yellow Head Pass. Based on Department of Interior maps of the period, the Beaver Hills covered approximately 750 square miles in an area commencing two miles east of Strathcona.<sup>14</sup>

This feature of the landscape is a region of recessional moraine containing many lakes and other bodies of water. The elevation of the Beaver Hills extends up to 2,500 feet while the level of the upland plain of the townsite varies from 2,100 to 2,200 feet. The irregular terrain, large bodies of water and the elevation of the Beaver Hills presented potential problems with respect to railway and roadway construction. The Yellowhead Pass, which was located 200 miles west of Strathcona, was a positive aspect of Strathcona's location. This Pass had been found suitable for a transcontinental railway during the initial surveys conducted by the Canadian Pacific Railway. Thus Strathcona was favourably located given any future transcontinental railway construction projects.

Other geographical features of regional importance included the soil and commercial stands of timber. As illustrated on Map Three Strathcona was located within a region containing dark brown, black and dark grey soils which were 60% to 75% arable. Thus a significant potential existed for the growth of an agricultural community adjacent to Strathcona. The

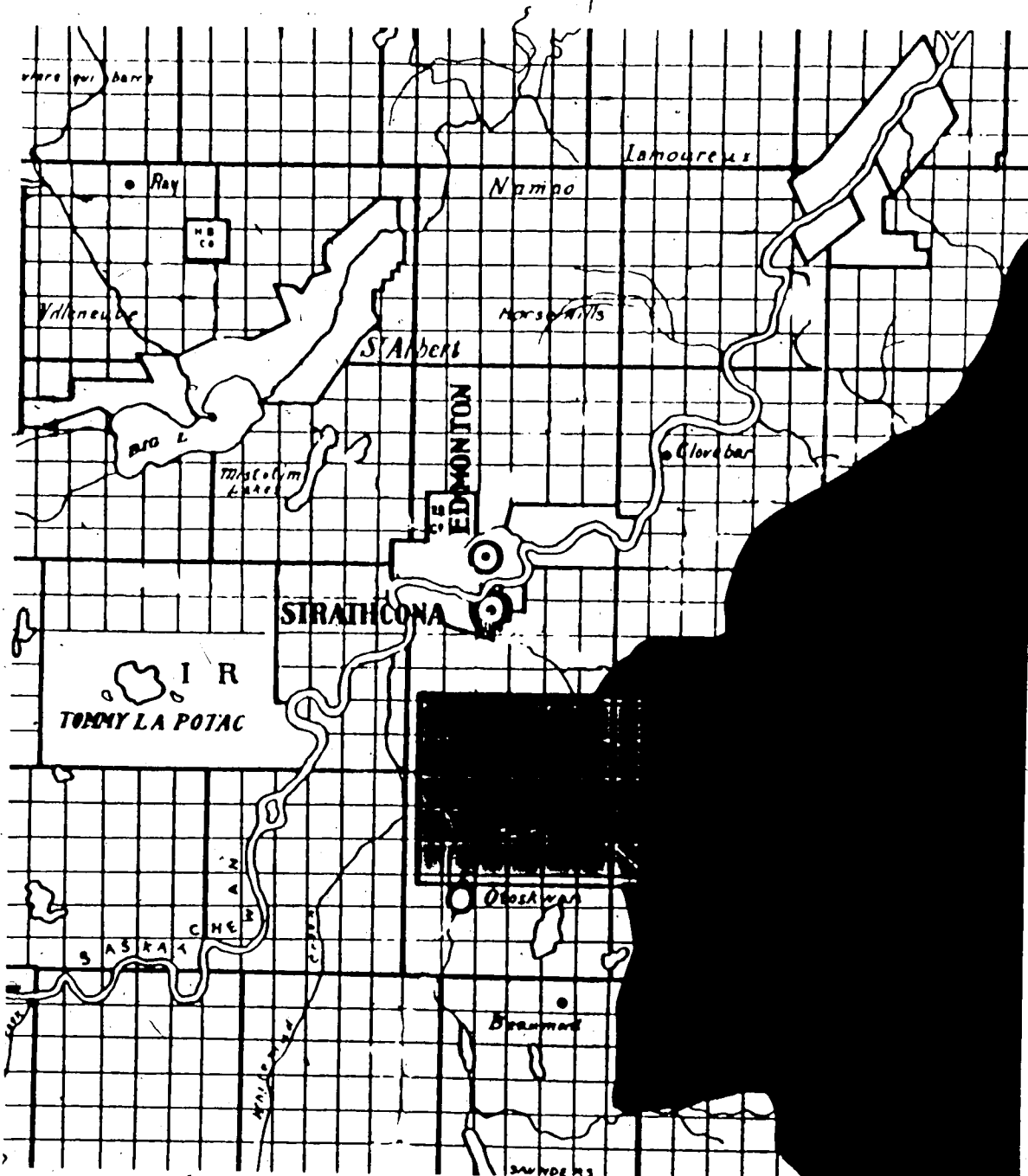
# STRATHCONA'S SETTING



Sources  
 Atlas of Alberta  
 Edmonton Sheet Department of the Interior, 1911



# STRATHCONA DISTRICT



SCALE 1" equals 5 miles

## Sources

STRATHCONA: The Railway Town and Manufacturing Centre of Alberta, 1903

Edmonton Sheet Department of the Interior, 1911

## KEY



Papaschase Indian Reserve



Beaver Hills

COLOUR

commercial stands of timber included white poplar which averaged ten inches in thickness, black poplar, white birch which attained a diameter of eighteen inches, spruce and tamarac.<sup>15</sup>

The foregoing material has outlined the events surrounding the establishment of the townsite of Strathcona. Having provided this information, which is necessary to understanding the parameters within which Strathcona would develop, the following chapters will examine the physical, social, political and economic growth of Strathcona with a view to delineating those factors which serve to explain its twenty-one years of separate development and its amalgamation with Edmonton. By so doing these chapters will be concerned with the extent to which the Railway Company actually presented a decisive challenge to the position of Edmonton and the willingness of the citizens of this new community to carry this challenge through to a successful conclusion. In order to place the history of Strathcona in a broader context, this thesis will also be concerned with the theme of Edmonton's rise as a metropolitan centre during the period from 1889 to 1912. In so doing, the question of Strathcona's status as a separate community and its place in the overall growth of urbanism in the greater Edmonton area will be evaluated.

## Footnotes

- 1 Statutes of Canada, 53 Vic., Cap. 84, assented to 24th April, Entitled An Act to Incorporate the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company.
- 2 Day Book A, Number 870, Land Titles Office for the North Alberta Land Registration District, Edmonton.
- 3 Day Book A, Number 769, Ibid.
- 4 Day Book A, Number 800, Ibid.
- 5 Day Book A, Number 808, Ibid.
- 6 Edmonton Bulletin, 25 July 1891.
- 7 Edmonton Bulletin, 22 August 1891.
- 8 R. G. MacBeth, Sir Augustus Nanton: A Biography, (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1931), p. 34.
- 9 This interpretation of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway's intentions is suggested by an article entitled "Edmonton Progress" which appeared in the 26 August 1891 Manitoba Daily Press and by correspondence between Osler, Hammond and Nanton and the Dominion Government dated September 1891 as contained in the Immigration Branch Records RG76, Vol. 24, File 531. Public Archives of Canada.
- 10 W. C. Wonders, "River Valley City - Edmonton on the North Saskatchewan", The Canadian Geographer No. 14 (1959), p. 9.
- 11 W. C. Wonders, "Edmonton, Alberta: Some Current Aspects of Its Urban Geography", The Canadian Geographer No. 9 (1957), p. 17.
- 12 W. C. Wonders, "River Valley City - Edmonton on the North Saskatchewan", The Canadian Geographer No. 14 (1959), p. 10.
- 13 Sally Anne Hamilton, "An historical Geography of coal mining in the Edmonton area", (M. A. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971), p. XV.
- 14 Edmonton Sheet, Surveyor General of Canada, 1906.
- 15 South Edmonton News, 7 February 1895.

## Chapter One

### The Physical Development of Strathcona

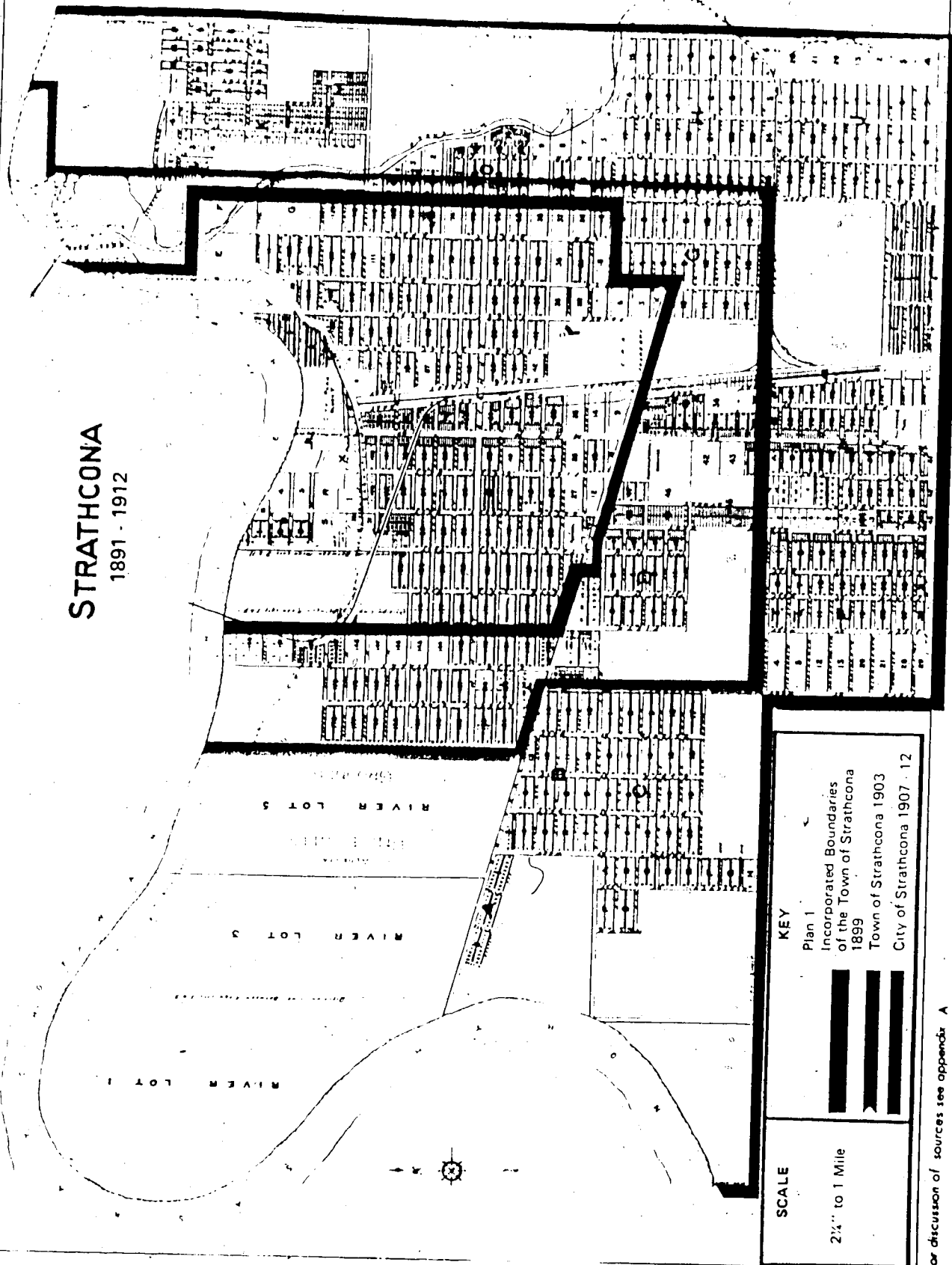
The emergence of Strathcona as a physical entity can be divided into the following three periods; 1891-98, 1899-1906 and 1907-12. The boundaries of this community which are associated with these various periods are illustrated by Map Five. As this map indicates, the thrust of Strathcona's expansion by virtue of the boundary extensions carried out in 1903 and 1907 was to the south and west.

The registration of Plan 1 in 1891 marks the beginning of the first period of Strathcona's development during which time the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company played a dominant role in influencing the growth of this community. The street names noted on this plan honoured a number of C.P.R. officials, the original owners of the townsite, notable citizens of Edmonton and Alberta. Plan 1 which covered 925 acres was the cornerstone upon which the physical development of Strathcona took place. The boundaries of the Town of Strathcona as incorporated in 1899 did not vary significantly from the area which it encompassed. The area defined by this plan did not encompass any existing buildings of consequence, nor did it have to take into account the land ownership rights of any individual and/or organization such as the Hudson's Bay Company which were not a party to the agreements with the railway company. The plan also failed to take into consideration the location of the Calgary and Edmonton Trail.

The plan of survey is on north and south and east and west lines and is uniform, covering all the properties irrespective of their boundaries. Two streets 100 feet wide extending to the extreme boundaries of the properties cross each other at right angles a short distance northwest of the station. The street running north and south is on the line between river lots 11 and 13, the property of Jas. MacDonald and Thos. A. Anderson respectively.

# STRATHCONA

1891 - 1912



**KEY**  
Plan 1  
Incorporated Boundaries  
of the Town of Strathcona  
1899  
Town of Strathcona 1903  
City of Strathcona 1907-12

**SCALE**  
2 1/4" to 1 Mile

for discussion of sources see appendix A

All other streets run parallel to one or the other of these and are 66 feet wide. The lots are 33 x 132 feet, laid off in blocks which lie lengthwise east and west, making the lots lie north and south, with some variations near the station.

As indicated by Map One the location of the main north-south street was east of the Calgary and Edmonton Trail. As Map One also indicates, the location of the two main streets, namely 104th Street and Whyte Avenue, and the initial subdivision of the blocks along these streets favoured the real estate interests of the railway company.

In addition to carrying out the survey of the site, the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company also constructed the first buildings at the new town which included a station, section house, engine house, coalshed, water tank and hotel.<sup>17</sup> The hotel was located on the north-west corner of Whyte Avenue and 103rd Street, thus initiating the physical growth of Strathecona to the west of the station along Whyte Avenue. In August, 1891, the railway company undertook the grading of Whyte Avenue from the railway track to 104th Street and 104th Street from Whyte Avenue to Saskatchewan Drive.<sup>18</sup>

This grading program provided further incentive for the growth of Strathecona's central core along Whyte Avenue between 103rd and 104th Streets. In 1892 further public works were undertaken by the promoters of the townsite. These public works included the grading of Whyte Avenue east from the railway tracks to 99th Street; 99th Street from Whyte Avenue to Saskatchewan Drive;<sup>19</sup> 100th Street from Whyte Avenue to 76th Avenue; 76th Avenue east along the road allowance between section 21 and 28 to Mill Creek where a bridge was built.<sup>20</sup> The last significant public work undertaken by the railway company was the construction of a road from Saskatchewan Drive near the railhead to the upper terry crossing. This road provided a more convenient route from Walterdale to the new townsite.

15  
This improvement to the site was registered in the Land Titles Office for North Alberta as Plan 1-6 in January of 1890.

The extent to which the new community depended upon the good offices of Oster, Hammond and Nanton to provide public works can be illustrated by a meeting held in South Edmonton in March, 1894, to deal with the question of a bridge across the North Saskatchewan River:

It was proposed . . . that this meeting of South Edmonton citizens request Messrs. Oster, Hammond & Nanton to confer with the Edmonton delegates and meet them at Ottawa on a date to be afterwards fixed regarding the question of the traffic bridge. 21

The townsite Company's willingness to serve the needs of the citizens, however, did have a limit as was explained by Mr. Charles Lott during a visit to Strathcona in April, 1895, for the purpose of looking into the matter of street improvements:

Mr. Lott, one of the head agents for Messrs. Oster, Hammond & Nanton . . . informs us of many things their company have done for the Town for which we have not given them credit, and stated that the other townsite owners who have as much property in the townsite as them, should at least meet the company half way. 22

Despite the lack of a local government, some citizens of this new community were prepared to undertake improvements to the site through their own efforts:

Today the long talked of work has begun on grading Whyte Ave. Robert Turnbull, Harry Wilson and Jas. McDonald prepared and started a contribution list for this work and already some forty-five dollars have been subscribed. From the railway crossing to the Raymond Hotel will be graded now and all the streets will be done as soon as funds are available. 23

Statute Labor District No. 47 also provided a formal structure through which local residents could undertake public works. Work on Whyte Avenue was undertaken in this way under the direction of Statute Labor Overseer

March 20 to June, 1898.<sup>24</sup>

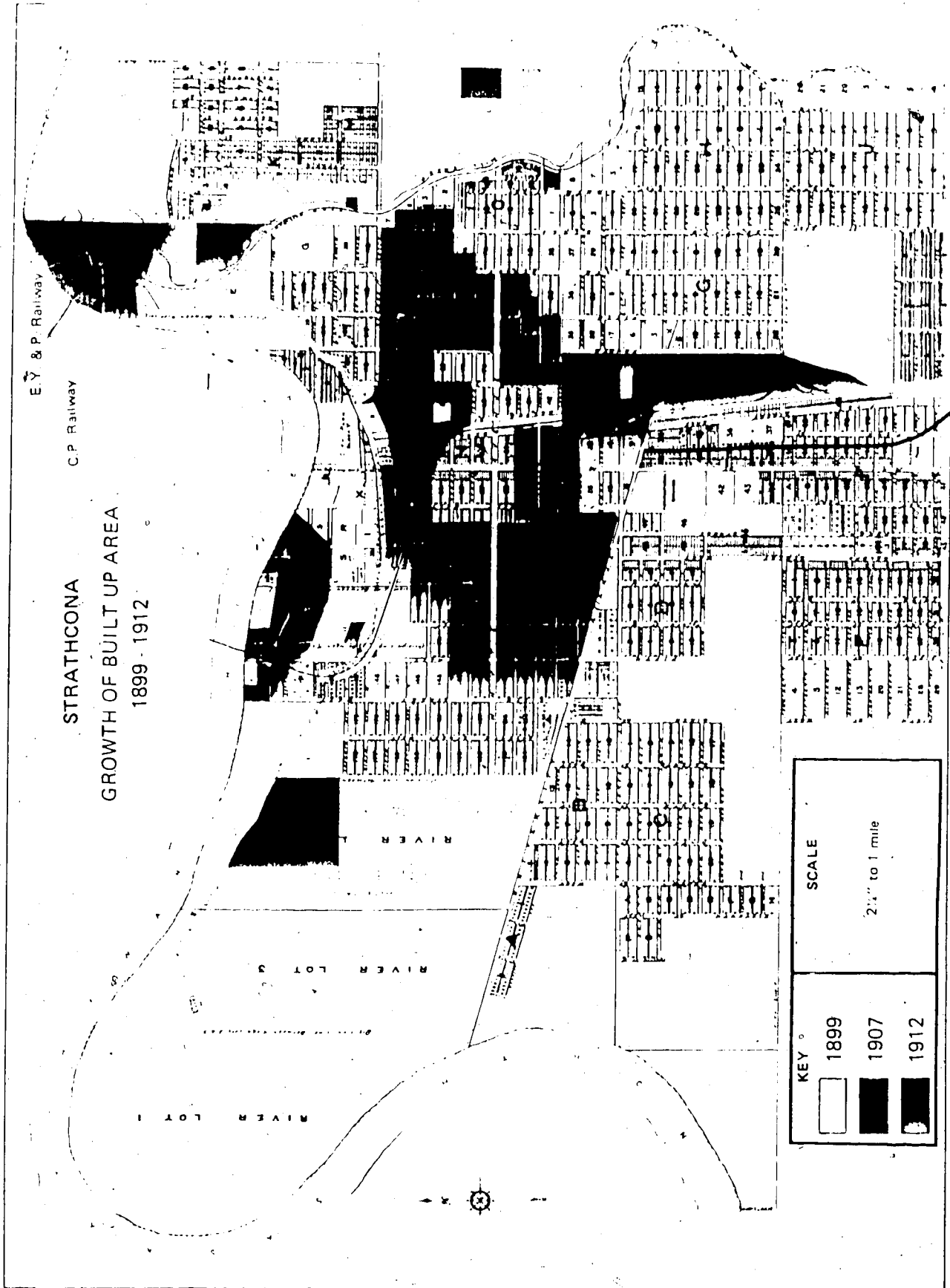
In addition to developing various railway properties and various road allowances included in the plan, the railway company through its agent Ostry, Hammond and Nanton, engaged in an active sales program on a nationwide basis for the disposal of its property in Strathcona as well as other townsites along the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. In many cases these properties were sold on condition that a structure be erected in a specified length of time.<sup>25</sup> The net result of the railway's development efforts and the construction programs undertaken by the various individuals and companies who were attached to this site is illustrated by Maps Six and Seven.

By 1899 the built-up area of Strathcona covered approximately 20% of the site as incorporated in that year. The area covered by the built-up area constituted approximately 40% of the total amount of land that had been subdivided and available for sale. These proportions of built-up area to total area and built-up area to total amount of subdivided land were to be a characteristic of Strathcona's physical growth throughout its history.

As Map Seven illustrates, the land use pattern evident in this built-up area can be considered in terms of four types, namely; commercial, residential, industrial and public or semi-public. The commercial land use was concentrated in a core area located on Whyte Avenue west of the railway station between 103rd and 104th Streets. By 1899 the lots along Whyte Avenue between these two streets were occupied with one exception by commercial structures thus creating the largest single concentration of buildings in Strathcona.

The high intensity of land use characteristic of the central core





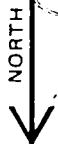
for discussion of sources see appendix A





COLOUR

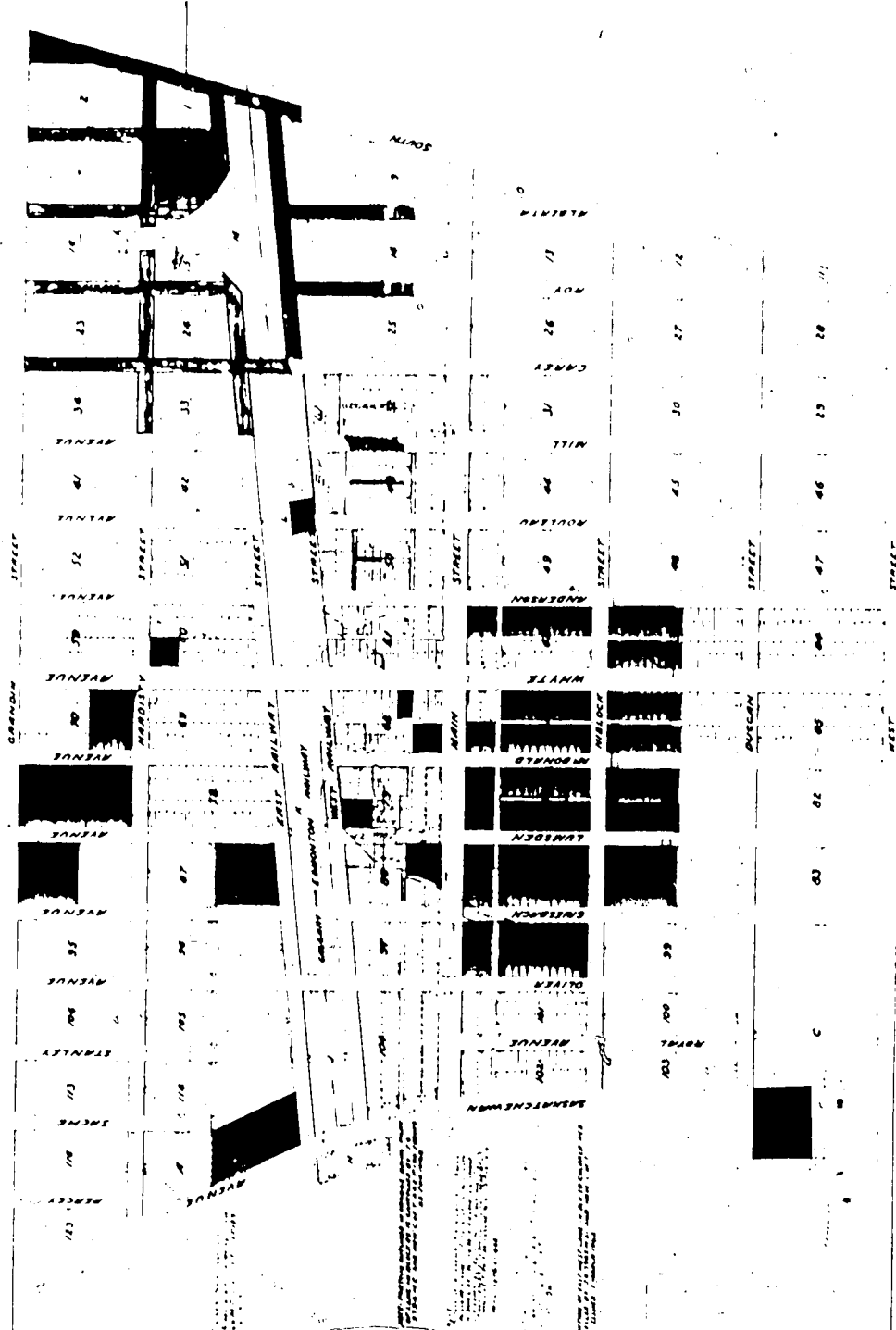
# STRATHCONA

## LAND USE

1899



-  Residential
-  Industrial
-  Public, semi-public
-  Commercial



For discussion of Sources see Appendix "A"

*h*

Scale 1 inch equals 800 ft.

COLOUR

by 1899, however, was not evident in the residential areas. In most cases the blocks of land used for residential purposes were occupied by only two to three buildings. Residential land use predominated northwest of the central core near Strathcona's public school located on the southeast corner of 84th Avenue and 105th Street which had been constructed in 1894.

As noted earlier, a contributing factor to the location of these major concentrations of commercial and residential land use was the decision by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company to grade Whyte Avenue between 103rd and 104th Streets and 104th Street from Whyte Avenue north to Saskatchewan Drive as their first improvement made to this town site.

The areas of industrial land use were not concentrated at one location but were fragmented and not contiguous with other uses of land use. This fragmentation reflects the role of factors such as location of resources, proximity to markets and modes of transportation.

The importance of the first three factors can be illustrated by the growth of industrial land use in Walterdale. This industrial growth included a sawmill, tannery and brickyard. John Walter established his sawmill operations there in order to utilize the river as a means of transporting the logs from his timber limits located to the west. The Pollard Brothers brickyard was located in Walterdale in order to take advantage of the deposits of clay. In the case of the sawmill and the brickyard, this location placed them close to their principal markets, namely, Strathcona and Edmonton. The Bedard Tannery was located in Walterdale in order to take advantage of the availability of water from the river.

The amount of land devoted to public and semi-public use was rela-

tively small in proportion to other types of land use. This fact reflects the newness of Strathcona, which was still in the process of undergoing social and political development.

In terms of the commercial, residential, industrial and public or semi-public structures, a variety of construction materials can be noted. The commercial and residential structures were predominantly of wood frame construction. However, brick was used as a construction material by Sam Parrish when he built his second and third stores in Strathcona's commercial core. Bricks had been manufactured locally since 1881 when J. Hourston and W. Humberstone started a brickyard in Edmonton. Brick was also used by W. E. Ross when he built his business block in 1894. Both the brick and wood commercial structures with the exception of the railway hotel and the Raymond Hotel were one to two stories high and one lot in width. In some cases these commercial structures extended the full length of the lot. The false fronts on the wood stores were also evident on "main street" Strathcona. The industrial structures were generally substantial buildings as illustrated by the following description of the Edmonton Milling Co. plant:

The main building is 39 feet by 48, and has three stories and a basement, the engine room is 20 x 36 feet with a coal room attached 12 x 36. There is also an outside store house 16 x 48 feet. The building is frame, very substantially built, and entirely encased with iron, with the exception of the engine house which is solid stone, the main building is set on a stone foundation the walls being 10 feet in height, and the roofs also being covered with iron, makes the mill almost impreg- 26  
nable from danger of outside fires . . .

The use of brick as a construction material in public buildings was begun in 1894 with the completion of Duggan Street School.

The second period of Strathcona's physical growth began with the

Incorporation of the Town of Strathcona on June 15, 1899. Incorporation provided the citizens of this community with a begin through which they could undertake the regulation and development of their community. Thus throughout the period from 1899 to 1906 the Town Council rather than the Calgary and Edmonton Railway tended to be the single most important factor in the overall development of this community. The Council's role in this regard was primarily evident in its public works program.

This program included the establishment of municipally owned electric light, water and sewage systems plus the construction of a fire hall which performed a variety of functions for the town. The Town Council through the Public Works Committee also undertook various street improvements, sidewalk construction projects and drainage works. The Town Council also arranged to provide telephone service to this community through a franchise arrangement with the Edmonton District Telephone Company. This agreement was embodied in By-law 29 and ratified on November 20th, 1900.

The Town Council of Strathcona also influenced the growth of the community through the passing of by-laws regulating the types of building material that could be used in the core area. The impetus for such a by-law was a concern for the prevention of fires. This concern was embodied in By-law 63 passed in 1902 which created a fire limit zone. This fire limit zone, which covered the lots along Whyte Avenue between 103rd and 104th Streets on both sides of the street, was specifically designated as an area wherein no wooden buildings could be constructed. By-law 63 was extensively revised in January, 1907, shortly before Strathcona's rise to City status for the purpose of "heading off cheap wooden structures which were in course of erection in the business section of the town."<sup>27</sup> These revisions were contained in By-law 167

which created first and second class fire limit zones, the extent of which are indicated on Map Eight.

Within the First class fire limit zone:

No person, persons, corporation or corporations [was allowed to] build or erect any building or addition to any existing building, unless the same shall be built with main walls of stone, brick, iron or concrete, and roofed with tin, iron, zinc, copper, slate, tiles, felt and glazed with shingles embedded at least one half-inch in lime mortar. Provided always that any foundation laid, built or erected within the said limits shall be composed of brick, iron, stone or concrete. 28

The by-law also imposed the same types of requirements with respect to building materials for the external walls in buildings which were to be erected in the second class fire limit zone. The by-law also required that wooden buildings:

enlarged or removed from any place within or without the said second class fire limits to any place within the same shall have stone, iron, brick or concrete foundations and be veneered or encased on the outside with brick or iron; and the roof if not covered with tin, iron, zinc, copper, tiles or felt and gravel shall be shingled in lime mortar not less than half an inch in thickness. 29

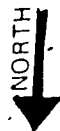
The by-law further stated that:

no person shall repair or alter with wood the external wall of any building to be erected within the said first or second class fire limits. 30

This by-law as revised thus excluded wood as a significant construction material from the core area in any new buildings or building additions undertaken in the period from 1902 to 1912. Brick was, therefore, the predominant construction material in the period after 1902 during which time considerable redevelopment and utilization of unoccupied land was undertaken.

Despite the predominance of the Town Council during this period,

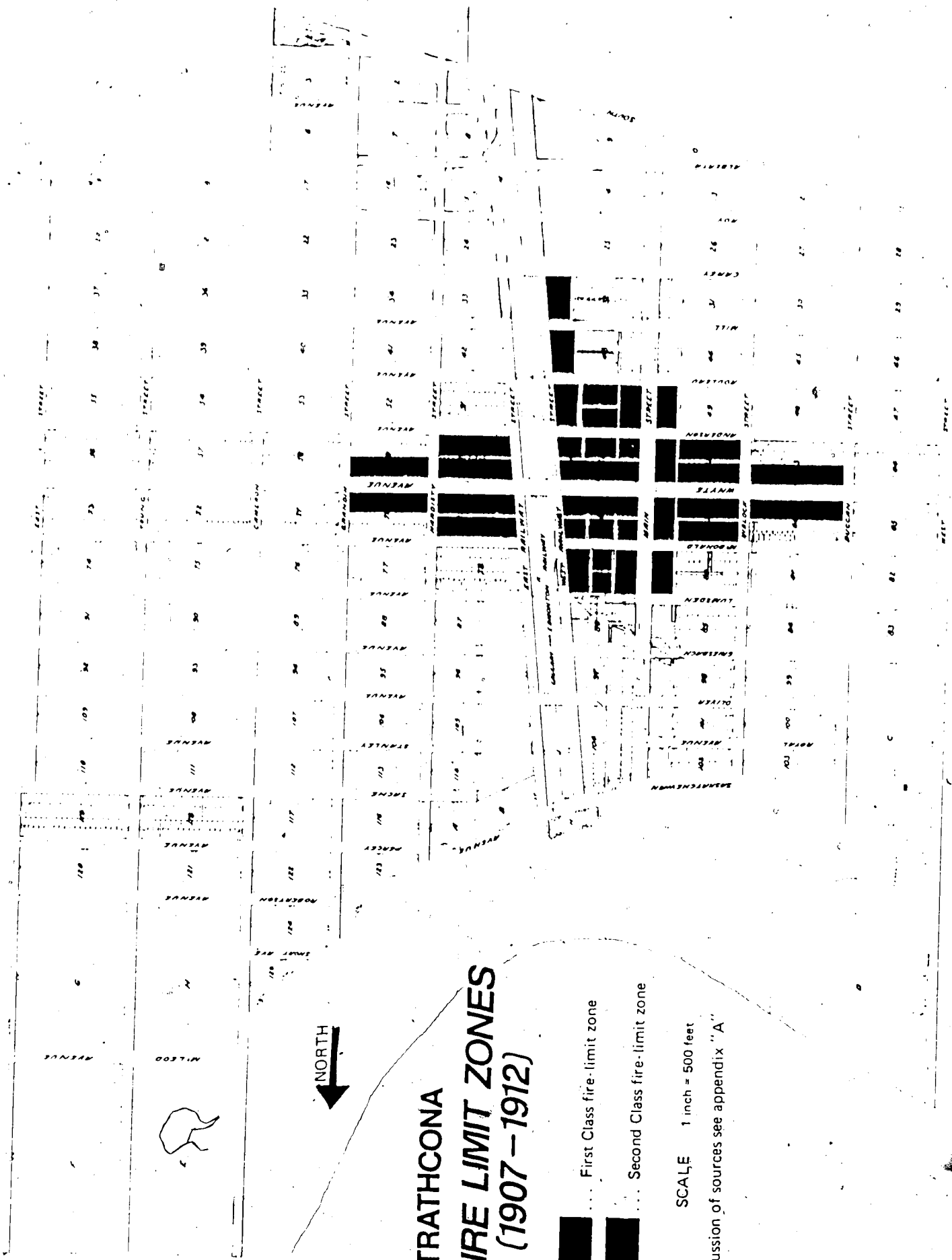
# STRATHCONA FIRE LIMIT ZONES (1907-1912)



- First Class fire-limit zone
- Second Class fire-limit zone

SCALE 1 inch = 500 feet

For discussion of sources see appendix "A"



railways continued to contribute to the physical growth of Strathcona through the construction of the Edmonton, Yukon & Pacific Railway. This railway had originally been chartered in 1896 under a Dominion Statute by a group of Edmonton entrepreneurs as the Edmonton District Railway for the purpose of constructing a railway from Edmonton to various neighbouring communities such as Strathcona, Fort Saskatchewan, Stony Plain, St. Albert and Fort Assiniboine. By August, 1898, however, the railway had passed into the hands of William MacKenzie and Donald Mann. Upon acquiring the charter, they quickly constructed the Strathcona to Edmonton section of the line over a bridge provided by the Dominion Government. The inauguration of this section took place in October, 1902.

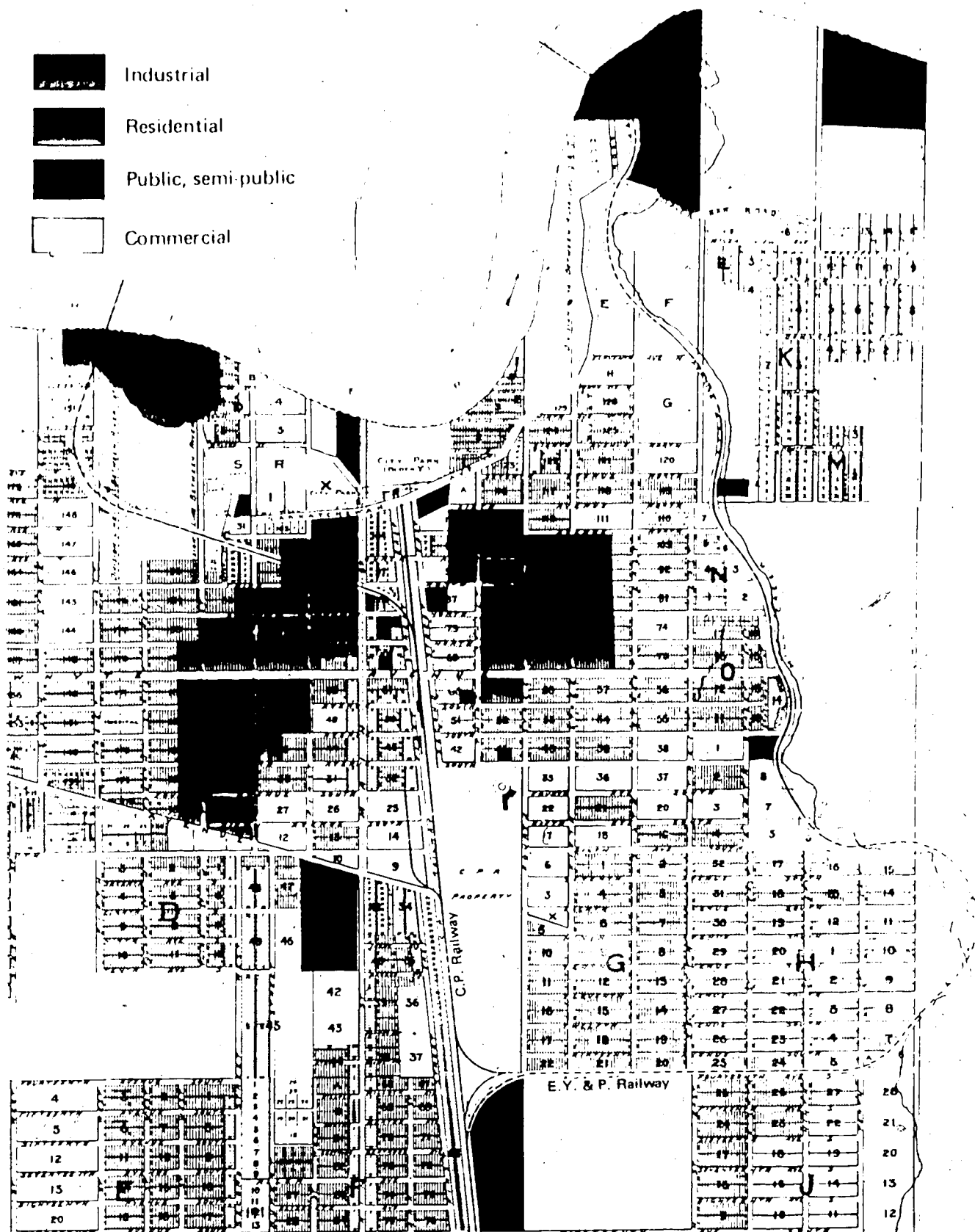
The changes which took place in Strathcona's built-up area during the period 1899 to 1906 have been summarized by Maps Six and Nine. As these maps illustrate, significant changes in the direction of growth and the type of growth had taken place. These changes include the growth of a significant area of residential land use on the east side of the railway tracks as well as the growth of industrial land use on the Cloverdale Flats and in Mill Creek. These industrial land use changes reflect the role of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway in providing transportation facilities and the boundary extensions carried out by the town of Strathcona which took in land upon which industrial development had taken place prior to expansion. It also should be noted that land use for public or semi-public purposes is becoming increasingly important.

Significant changes also began to occur within the central core area as the redevelopment of some of the property along Whyte Avenue was carried out. A case in point was the construction of the Dominion Hotel on the south side of Whyte Avenue between 103rd and 104th Streets. This was a three story brick structure which replaced a two story wooden



# STRATHCONA

## LAND USE 1907



3 inches equals 1 mile

structure which had also functioned as an hotel.

The most dynamic period in Strathcona's physical development occurred between 1907 and 1912 during which time a number of agencies including the Council of Strathcona, the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian Northern Railway and the Dominion Government all contributed to moulding the appearance of this community which had acquired the status of a City. The City Council played its role through the construction of a number of municipal buildings which included a city hall, a new fire hall, library, hospital and public market. In some cases the construction of these buildings had been the subject of discussion prior to 1907. Other public works undertaken included the upgrading and extension of the municipally owned utility systems, street improvements, sidewalk construction and the construction of a bridge across Mill Creek. A street railway system was also built to serve the needs of Strathcona during this period.

The City Council was also concerned about the aesthetic and recreational aspects of the growth of the community. In May, 1907, landscape architect, J. M. Todd, submitted a report to the Council on a beautification program involving parks and boulevards. The development of a parks system was begun in April, 1907, when the City purchased land owned by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company on the river bank. Other parks were developed with land provided by private citizens such as A. C. Rutherford. In 1910 the City also purchased the athletic grounds located on University Avenue from the Strathcona Industrial Exhibition Association.

The Town Council also negotiated an agreement for the establishment of railway terminal facilities in Strathcona. This terminal agreement was responsible for a significant construction program in Strathcona by the Canadian Pacific Railway which included a new station, a twelve

staff locomotive roundhouse and related service facilities as well as extensions to the railway yards. The construction of the buildings which were called for in the agreement was commenced in the spring of 1907.

By virtue of this terminal agreement, the land utilized by the Canadian Pacific Railway rapidly increased thus accentuating the role of the railway as a divisive factor within the community. This problem was inherent in Plan I, as adopted in 1891. The role of the C. P. R. as a divisive factor was further accentuated by the entry of this company into Edmonton over the High Level Bridge. In order to provide a southern approach for the High Level Bridge, a railway right-of-way through an existing residential district of Strathcona was necessary.

The Canadian Northern Railway, as has been noted, was a part of the history of Strathcona since 1898 when Mackenzie and Mann acquired the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway and initiated construction of a line from Strathcona to Edmonton. Construction activities undertaken directly by this company included a station located on 80th Avenue between 103rd and 104th Streets and a right-of-way which ran south from this station to the City limits, both of which were constructed between 1910 and 1912. The Canadian Northern station and the right-of-way was located west of the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks in an area of unoccupied land.

The entry of the C. N. R. into the community was thus achieved without having to disrupt existing built-up areas. The railway station and the track running south were built in order to serve two branch lines which the C. N. R. was planning, which were to run south from Strathcona to Calgary. The C. N. R. applied in 1909 for permission to build the first of these branch lines which was intended to follow a route south from Strathcona and west of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway

as far south as Red Deer at which point it would cross the Calgary and Edmonton and proceed on to Calgary.<sup>31</sup> The construction of this line was, however, delayed indefinitely because of the objections to its location by the C. P. R. and the many communities along the existing railway from Calgary to Strathcona, including Strathcona.<sup>32</sup> The second C. N. R. branch line was built by this company under the terms of the provincially chartered Alberta Midland Railway Company.<sup>33</sup> It had been incorporated by the Alberta Government in 1909 and became part of the C. N. R. in the same year.<sup>34</sup> The line was to follow a course southeast from Strathcona to Camrose, Stettler and Calgary. The finalization of the location of this line was delayed until November, 1911, because of objections from the various communities affected, including Strathcona.<sup>35</sup>

The Dominion Government contributed to the urban landscape of Strathcona through the construction in 1911 of a post office and armory. The construction of the post office had been urged by Strathcona on the grounds:

That having regard to the civic and commercial interests of the City of Strathcona this council is of the opinion that the present post office accommodation of the city is not only inadequate, but a disgrace to a city of the importance and dignity of Strathcona; and this council is further of the opinion that immediate steps should be taken to press upon the Post Office authorities at Ottawa the absolute necessity of provision being made in the Supplementary Estimates for a post office site and building in this city.

36

The construction of other monuments to Strathcona's civic pride and its abiding hope of future growth occurred during this period. Buildings included in this category are the Metropolitan Methodist Church, Strathcona Public Library, Strathcona Fire Hall No. One and the Canadian Pacific Railway Station.

The changes in Strathcona's built-up area in the period from 1907 to 1912 are summarized in Maps Six and Ten. During the period, expansion of existing areas of commercial, residential, industrial and public land use occurred. New areas of growth developed on river lot five where the University of Alberta was being constructed and east of Mill Creek. New types of land use that are evident during this period include a number of parks which were developed by the City.

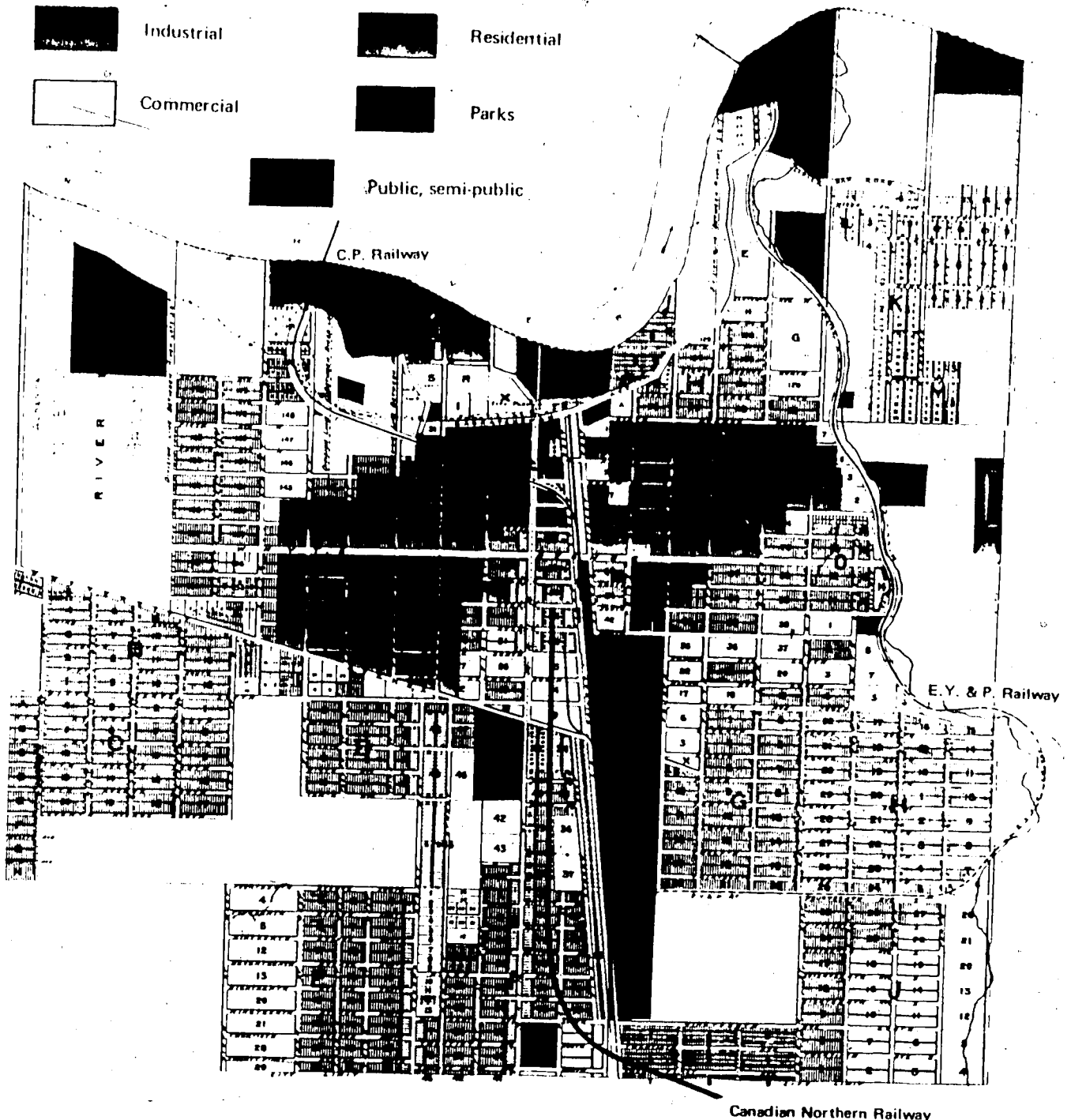
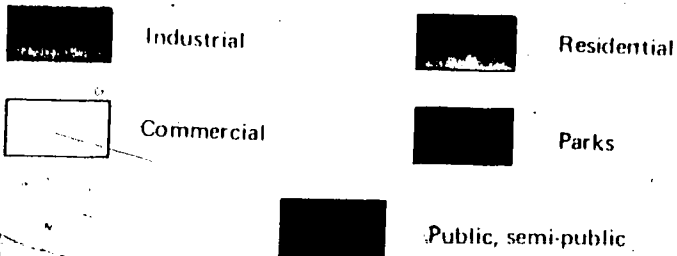
Other significant aspects of Strathcona's growth during this period include the extent to which many areas of open space within the built-up area were utilized and the extent to which the central business district grew in size and complexity. These changes in the central core involved primarily the construction of a number of three story brick blocks along Whyte Avenue which provided commercial, residential and professional office space. The complexity of the core area in terms of the services it provided was further increased by the construction of a number of municipal buildings such as the library, city hall and fire hall in an area of partially occupied land bounded by 83rd Avenue, 104th Street, 89th Avenue and 103rd Street.

The foregoing outline of Strathcona's physical growth has demonstrated how Strathcona developed a well-defined central business district focused on the C. P. R. station with residential growth taking place on both sides of the track. This concentric pattern was primarily the result of the original subdivision plan drawn up and implemented by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company and the site improvements undertaken by that Company.

Given the amount of physical growth experienced by Strathcona, geography did not play a significant role in modifying this concentric pattern. Geography did however play a significant role in fragmenting

# STRATHCONA LAND USE 1912

## KEY



## SCALE



areas of industrial land use. This particular role served to introduce various deviations from the basic pattern of Strathecona's growth. This fact is primarily evident in Walterdale where a lumberyard, brick plant and coal mine developed. This growth attracted some residential and commercial development. Thus Walterdale served as a secondary nuclei for development to that of the railway station.

The role of the Town/City Council was reduced to carrying through the development of the site within the parameters established by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. However, the Council was involved in the development of parks and boulevards which had not been taken into account by the Railway Company when it surveyed the townsite.

Footnotes

- 16 Edmonton Bulletin, 25 July 1891.
- 17 Edmonton Bulletin, 11 July 1891.
- 18 Edmonton Bulletin, 29 August 1891.
- 19 Edmonton Bulletin, 23 April 1892.
- 20 Edmonton Bulletin, 5 December 1892.
- 21 Edmonton Bulletin, 8 March 1894.
- 22 South Edmonton News, 19 September 1895.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Alberta Plaindealer, 15 June 1898.
- 25 Edmonton Bulletin, 3 August 1891.
- 26 South Edmonton News, 24 January 1895.
- 27 Strathcona Plaindealer, 25 January 1907.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Public Archives of Canada, Record Group 43, Series A2(a),  
Vol. 290.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Town of Strathcona Council Minutes, March 28, 1907, City  
Clerk's Office, Edmonton.



## Chapter Two

### The Social History of Strathcona

The foregoing chapter has demonstrated how the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Townsite was transformed from a subdivision plan into a physical entity with spatial dimensions which served to define it as an urban community. The process of urban growth which has been identified in Chapter One also entailed the establishment of a number of institutions organized around various religious, cultural, educational, and economic activities. The social history of Strathcona thus made an equally important contribution to Strathcona's sense of community.

The process of social growth was initiated very soon after the arrival of the railway with the establishment of a number of religious institutions. The churches established by Strathcona's first families included Metropolitan Methodist, First Baptist, Knox Presbyterian, Holy Trinity Anglican and St. Anthony's Roman Catholic.

The first church structure located on the north side of 83rd Avenue near 104th Street was a frame building erected in 1892 on land donated by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company. It was built primarily to serve the needs of Strathcona's Methodists but was also used by Presbyterians and Baptists prior to their procurement of separate structures.<sup>37</sup> Citizens of Strathcona who were involved in the establishment of this church included Robert McKernan, John Shields and Frank Wheatly. Rev. George Elmitt, who was the first resident minister for this congregation, was appointed in 1893. The frame structure built in 1892 was replaced by a brick building erected on the same site in 1907. This building, which was designed by the Strathcona architectural firm of Whiddington Bros., was built to hold 1,000 people. An important part of the life

of Metropolitan Methodist Church was the Society which was organized in October, 1895.<sup>38</sup> The activities of this organization included fund raising projects to defray the church debt.

The organization of Knox Presbyterian Church was undertaken in 1894 when a building committee composed of Messrs. R. Bissett, Cossar, Ferguson, Durand, McCulloch and J. J. MacKenzie was appointed.<sup>39</sup> By 1894 a building located on the northeast corner of 84th Avenue and 104th Street had been erected on land donated by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. "The minutes of the first annual meeting held in the church show that a Ladies Aid Society was in operation during 1894, the first year for the congregation in its own church."<sup>40</sup> These minutes also indicate that "much attention had been given to visiting strangers and helping newcomers feel at home."<sup>41</sup> From 1894 to 1898 Knox was part of the Home Mission field and thus received assistance from other congregations including First Presbyterian Church, Edmonton.

In 1899 Knox was placed on the Augmented list which allowed it to assume greater responsibility for its own development after "Dr. McQueen's explanation of the rather thin state to which the Home Mission fund was stretched in helping so many new communities."<sup>42</sup> In 1900 Knox agreed to go up to the self-sustaining status and assume full responsibility for the congregation and the right to call their own minister. Prior to 1900 the congregation of Knox Church was not served by a permanent minister resident in the community. In 1907 the building constructed in 1895 was replaced by a much more substantial brick structure located on the same site.

The organization of First Baptist Church was achieved in April, 1895, with nineteen charter members.<sup>43</sup> Of this number, six had been

charter members of First Baptist Church, Edmonton, which had been organized in 1893. These included Mrs. John Gainer, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ritchie and their three children. Upon the organization of the church, Rev. Alex McDonald, pastor of First Baptist Church, Edmonton, was requested to come over to be its pastor.<sup>44</sup> Pastor McDonald accepted the invitation and resigned from the Edmonton church. At this time a number of people had arrived in Strathcona who had known Mr. McDonald in Grafton, North Dakota.<sup>45</sup> In the same year that the organization was formally organized, the ladies of the Baptist Church organized a Women's Mission Circle. As noted earlier, the first structure used by the congregation was the Methodist church building constructed in 1892. The church later procured separate accommodation when it purchased the public school built in 1892. This building was replaced in 1904 by a brick structure located at the southwest corner of 84th Avenue and 104th Street.

The formal organization of the Parish of Holy Trinity Anglican was undertaken in 1893 when a structure was erected at the southwest corner of 31st Avenue and 101st Street on land provided by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company.<sup>46</sup> In June, 1895, Rev. Allen Gray, who had recently graduated from St. John's College, Winnipeg, was appointed as the first incumbent of this parish. The church building erected in 1893 was relocated to the northeast corner of 84th Avenue and 101st Street in 1900 on land donated by Mr. Sache.

Among the families included in the young congregation were those of Harry Wilson, Arthur McLean, Fred Sache, Merwyn MacKenzie, Arthur Meredith, W. J. Sharples, Joseph McDonald, John Diehl, Thos. Bennett, James Gregg, W. H. Stephens and James Inkster. Other individuals were W. L. Wilkin, Sergeant Kelly and Constable W. H. McMahon of the R.C.M.P., W. F. M. Hawkins, Dan Hawkins, Billy Sharples and Arthur Pierson. Another family soon to join the parish, . . . were the W. H. Sheppards.

The boundaries of the Parish initially included a portion of the rural district south and west of the town. In May, 1899, the parish of Holy Trinity was divided into parts under the care of separate clergymen: the Parish of Holy Trinity Church, Strathcona, and the missions of Leduc, Colchester and Conjuring Creek.<sup>48</sup>

The organization of St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Parish was not officially achieved until 1905 when the parish obtained its first resident priest.<sup>49</sup> The initial steps leading to the creation of the Parish had, however, been taken as early as 1895 when the Episcopal Corporation purchased land on the south side of 84th Avenue between 104th and 105th Streets.<sup>50</sup> Prior to 1905, when Father Nordmann took residence in Strathcona, the religious needs of the community were served by a succession of Oblate Fathers who crossed the river from St. Joachim's Church in Edmonton. The lay leadership in the Parish was provided by Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Duggan.<sup>51</sup> The first structure erected to serve the needs of the parish was a small frame building which served both as a school and a chapel. In 1901 this building was replaced by a separate church structure of wood frame construction which was later faced with brick.

The establishment of the churches noted above, all of which dated from the early 1890's, was followed during the 1900's by the organization of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran, a German Moravian Church, the Church of Christ Adventist and the Salvation Army Barracks. The establishment of the first two churches reflects changes in the ethnic composition of Strathcona which had occurred during the previous decade. These changes involved the growth of a resident German population within Strathcona. German settlers had been arriving in large numbers in the Strathcona district since the construction of the railway. Initially,

however, they had settled in communities adjacent to Strathcona such as Bruderheim and Bruderfeld. By the early 1900's, however, a sufficiently large resident German population in Strathcona had developed through emigration from the rural areas to warrant the establishment of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church and Strathcona Moravian Church.

On June 22, 1902, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church at the corner of 101st Street and 31st Avenue was dedicated with Rev. F. Beer of Winnipeg, Rev. T. Hensen of Ellerslie, Rev. G. Runge of Stony Plain, Rev. G. Lilge and Rev. Clement Hoyler, pastor of the Moravian Church at Bruderfeld present for the occasion.<sup>52</sup> The choir of the Moravian Church was also involved in the opening ceremonies. The congregation was formally organized on the following day with the following eight men signing the constitution: F. Buhrer, A. Schlender, Gottlieb Braun, Gottlieb Rinas, Ernst Tirpitz, Johann Koberstein, Albert Kalis and Wilhelm Vogel.<sup>53</sup> The building constructed was a 28' x 40' frame structure which was in use until 1914. Between June and October of 1902 the congregation was served by pastors from neighbouring churches. In October, 1902, Rev. E. Poensgen, a graduate of Rochester University, N. Y., and the Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia, arrived to serve the congregation as its first resident minister.<sup>54</sup> The activities of Mr. Poensgen included the establishment of a preaching mission in Edmonton which became St. John's Lutheran Church. This was one of the first examples of a Strathcona church assisting in the development of a church in Edmonton.

The establishment of the Strathcona Moravian Church was the outcome of a meeting on October 10, 1904, between Rev. Clement Hoyler, Pastor of the Bruderfeld Moravian Church, and Rev. A. Hoyer, Pastor of the German Baptist Church in Edmonton. At this meeting Rev. Hoyler:

was informed that the Baptist Church had decided to concentrate their work on the North Side and that they were willing to sell their property on the South Side to the Moravian Church. The property in question was a one-time pump factory on [81st Ave.] and had been renovated into a Chapel with humble living quarters.

55

Five days later the transfer was completed and on Sunday evening, October 16th, the first Moravian service was conducted in the building by Brother Henkelmann. On July 12th, 1908, the cornerstone was laid for a new church at 99th Street and 84th Avenue.

The establishment of a school system for Strathcona was initiated informally in January, 1892, when:

Owing to the long delay in permitting the organization of a school district on the South Side the people interested took up a subscription and engaged a teacher on their own account.

56

Formal steps leading to the creation of a school district were taken at a meeting of Strathcona ratepayers held one month later on February 11th, 1892. At this meeting "some argued that a school would be too great a burden, that the people could not afford to pay taxes; others that there were not enough pupils to warrant the venture."<sup>57</sup> The meeting concluded, however, that a school was necessary and elected John Walter, John MacKenzie and Joseph McDonald as the first trustees of the proposed district. On July 2nd, 1892, the North West Territories Gazette published the announcement concerning the creation of Strathcona School District No. 216 which was defined by the North Saskatchewan River, White Mud Creek, the Papachase Indian Reservation and the road allowance between sections fifteen, sixteen, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-eight and twenty-nine in Township fifty-two, Range twenty-five, West of the fifth meridian.

In August, 1892, the newly established school district requested

permission from the Territorial Government "to borrow the sum of \$800.00 for the purpose of purchasing a school site, erecting a school building and furnishing same."<sup>58</sup> This money was used to construct a one room frame school house 20 by 30 feet located on the northwest corner of Whyte Avenue and 105th Street. It was completed in the autumn of 1892. Prior to the completion of the school house a hotel called Ontario House and a private residence owned by Vic Anderson, both of which were located on Whyte Avenue near the railway station, were utilized as an interim measure.<sup>59</sup> These facilities provided space for an enrollment of fifteen to twenty students. Mr. Wilkie, a Presbyterian ministerial student, was engaged as Strathcona's first teacher. He was succeeded a few months later by William Douglas who taught school in Strathcona until December of 1892, at which time he left to open a store in Leduc.<sup>60</sup>

Little more than a year after the completion of Strathcona's first school, it proved to be inadequate to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding student population thus necessitating the use of the back portion of a building owned by Harry Wilson and the appointment of an additional teacher.<sup>61</sup> The need for additional space was met in 1894 by the construction of Niblock Street School which was located on the southwest corner of 105th Street and 84th Avenue. This was a four room brick structure built at a cost of \$4,000.00. Throughout 1895 the teaching staff, which consisted of Miss Clark and Miss Short, each taught a department in this new building.

In November, 1896, D. S. MacKenzie, a native of Bruce County, Ontario, was appointed principal.

During the first month he was in charge the average attendance of the school was 82. These were all the grades from the infant class to Standard VI (third class teachers' work), the latter grade having two pupils. 62

Between 1896 and 1901 the Strathcona School System continued to be subject to increased student enrollments and the need for more advanced educational opportunities. This situation was met by the addition of more teachers and the opening of new classes in advanced grades:

In 1897 Mr. W. B. Briggs joined the teaching staff and a class was started in Standard VII (second class teachers' work). In 1898 there was a class in Standard VIII (first class teachers' work) and another teacher, Mr. W. G. Richardson, was added to the staff. 63

By November of 1899 the problem of lack of space reappeared when:

It was found that the brick school could no longer accommodate the increased number of pupils. Accordingly a fifth teacher, Miss E. H. Smith, was appointed and taught on the ground floor of the building recently vacated by the "Plaindealer" . . . 64

In 1900 additional space was secured for a new department on the upper floor of the building occupied by J. M. Nettleton's candy factory. 65

The space problem as it existed in the summer of 1901 was solved by the construction of Grandin Street School (King Edward). It was Strathcona's second brick school and was located east of the railway tracks on 100th Street between 85th and 86th Avenues.

Between 1902 and 1905 additional departments in the higher grades were added and languages were taught in the High School for the first time, there being classes in Latin and German. 66 In 1902 the school system received a gift of money from Lord Strathcona which was used to provide laboratory equipment for the High School. In December of 1904 D. S. MacKenzie resigned the principalship of the schools to accept a position as chief clerk in the Department of Education in Regina. The end of this period was marked by the construction of Duggan Street School located between 106th Street and 107th Street on 78th Avenue. It was a six room brick structure erected at a cost of \$27,000.00. When the



Duggan Street School (Queen Alexandra) was opened in February, 1906, High School classes held in the Niblock Street School and Grandin Street School were transferred to the new building, and the Niblock Street School was demolished.

By April, 1906, the Strathcona School System employed a total of twelve teachers and had a student body of 1,000 which included approximately 40 students who were taking Standards VI, VII, VIII or third, second and first class teachers' courses. Standard VII was also accepted as university matriculation and Standard VIII as first year university work.<sup>67</sup>

The crowning achievement of the Strathcona School System was the Strathcona Collegiate Institute built in 1908. This building was constructed on the grounds formerly occupied by Niblock Street School. It was:

an imposing structure, three storeys high over a finished basement, and more than a hundred feet long. The exterior was of red pressed brick with long marble entrances. The windows were enormous, giving plenty of light for the large, high-ceilinged classrooms. In later years, the rooms sometimes held 60 students without appearing overcrowded. The interior finishing was imported dark oak, with green burpaw wainscoting. Wooden floors were laid over reinforced concrete. The heating system was thermostatically controlled, a feature that was really up-to-date at that time. Altogether it was a dignified, solidly constructed building, lending prestige to the purpose for which it was built.<sup>68</sup>

The building provided for a total of eight classrooms, a science laboratory, library and assembly hall.

With the completion of Strathcona Collegiate, the Strathcona School System had adequate space to meet its needs in addition to providing space on a temporary basis for the University of Alberta. The University of Alberta occupied the upper floor of Queen Alexandra from October to

December, 1908, and the upper floor of Strathcona Collegiate Institute from January, 1909, to December of 1911.

In 1894 a Roman Catholic Separate School District was established within the limits of "The Strathcona Public School District No. 216 under the corporate name of The St. Anthony Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 12 of the North West Territories".<sup>69</sup> Lawrence Garneau, Joseph Morgan and William Chisholm were elected as the first trustees of this division at a meeting held on November 24th, 1894.

The separate school division was not subject to the same pressures in terms of rapidly rising student enrollments. Prior to 1906 the chapel on 105th Street was used as a school. Two nuns, Mother Hannah O'Neil and Sister Julie Theresa Corlan of the Faithful Companions of Jesus resident in Edmonton served as the first teachers.

On July 20th, 1906, tenders were requested for the erection of a four room, two story solid brick school on 84th Avenue to be completed on or before October 1st.<sup>70</sup> No further construction was undertaken by the separate school board prior to 1912.

Another important part of Strathcona's social life which also dates from the early 1890's was the fraternal society. The first of these organizations to be created was Lodge 1654 of the Loyal Orange Order which was formed in September, 1894.<sup>71</sup> One of its active members was the editor of the South Edmonton News, R. P. Pettipiece. One of the principal activities of the lodge was organizing the celebration of the "Glorious Twelfth of July" which was initiated in 1895:

The 205th Anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, the 100th celebration of the Loyal Orange Lodge, and the first Orangeman's parade in Northern Alberta took place in this town on Friday, July 12th, last . . . . Some fifty or sixty members of the Lodge assembled at their hall on Main Street, south and

prepared for the march, at about 10 a.m. the Union Jack, accompanied by a "King William" flag, headed the procession. The drums and fifes livened up the citizens and country visitors as they walked down Whyte Ave., as far as S. F. W. Gainer's jewelry shop and returning in the same way to their grounds near Robt. McKernan's Lake . . . . After arriving at the grove music was given and boating, etc., indulged in until the free-to-all dinner given by Orangemen was partaken of. After this sumptuous dinner was served by the energetic ladies, the crowd retired to the seats provided for them, where Mr. Robt. McKernan, Worshipful Master of the South Edmonton L. O. L.; Mr. Alexander, Worshipful Master of the Calgary L. O. L. and Deputy Grand Master of the Right Worshipful Grand Orange Lodge of the North West Territories; Rev. H. A. Goodwin, Methodist Minister; Rev. B. A. Gray, Clergyman of the Holy Trinity Church, and others took the platform, and delivered some very clever speeches, the chair being occupied by Robt. McKernan, W. M. . . . At 6 p.m. the Orangemen which by this time had swelled to some two hundred, formed in line, as before and marched up through town and back to the corner of Main Street and Whyte Ave. where three grand cheers for the Queen and the glorious 12th were given . . . . 72

The 1896 celebration of the "Glorious Twelfth" followed the same format with a parade starting at 11:00 a.m. to the fair grounds where a picnic was held.

At 3 p.m. the steamer "Minnow" arrived from Fort Saskatchewan, bringing the Orange Lodge from that place. They were met on Whyte Ave., east, by the [Strathcona] lodge and brass band, and escorted to the grounds. 73

The speakers for the afternoon included: Rev. R. M. Hawkins, late vicar of Christ Church, Brighton, England; Frank Oliver; Rev. Joshua Dyke, the newly arrived Methodist minister, Edmonton; A. C. Rutherford; Rev. D. B. McQueen of Edmonton; M. McCauley of Edmonton; and Robert McKernan, W. M. of the Strathcona Orange Lodge. 74

In 1898 the Fort Saskatchewan Orange Lodge along "with people from every part of the district [came to Strathcona] bent on doing honour to William of Orange by celebration of the Battle of the Boyne

with a picnic at the grounds of the [Strathcona] Agricultural Society.<sup>75</sup> At the parade in the morning "the Fort Saskatchewan and Edmonton lodges appeared in full force led by a fife and drum corps and Mr. H. M. Quebec appeared in the capacity of King William".<sup>76</sup> As in the case of other celebrations, the program for 1898 included speeches by various local politicians and Protestant clergymen.

The most successful day for orangeism in Strathcona took place in 1904 when an estimated twenty-five hundred Orangemen assembled at Strathcona for their annual celebration thus giving the "grandest demonstration in the history of orangeism in the Territories".<sup>77</sup> The preparations for this event included the decoration of the town:

With a hearty response to the request of the Orange fraternity the businessmen, hotel men and citizens generally had their buildings, their show windows and residences decorated suitably for the occasion. Store windows were all beautifully dressed and wore quite a metropolitan air. Even the city fathers roused a little from their lethargy and had Whyte Ave. thoroughly cleaned from the depot to Main St. for the first time since the Queen's Jubilee. Flags flew gaily at every mast in town and thousands of small flags and a wealth of bunting was used in outside decorations.<sup>78</sup>

This meeting had been arranged at the 1903 meeting in Calgary where it had been decided "that all Orange lodges in Alberta would endeavour to make Strathcona the mecca of their pilgrimage [in 1904] for a grand provincial demonstration".<sup>79</sup> Many of the delegates arrived on a special train which:

left Calgary at 10 o'clock on the evening of the 11th bearing the Salvation Army Band of that city and over a hundred members of the Orange order from Calgary and points east, south and west. All night long as they sped on their journey north, recruits were added from every town on the C. & E., so by the time they reached Strathcona eight coaches were well filled . . . .<sup>80</sup>

These delegates were joined by "Orangemen from Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan; Agricola, Clearwater and in fact from all parts of the Edmonton and Strathcona districts . . . each lodge bringing its fife and drum corps and banners".<sup>81</sup>

The speakers for the occasion included: N. D. Mills of Strathcona, Provincial Grand Master of the Orange order in the North West Territories; Mayor MacKenzie of Strathcona; Rev. Mr. Jarrett of Calgary; A. C. Rutherford; and Rev. T. J. Johnston, M. A., B. D., the new pastor of the Methodist Church in Strathcona. The festivities concluded with a program of sports.

These types of celebrations gave Strathcona a more overtly Protestant character than Edmonton despite the fact that the proportion of Protestants to Catholics was about the same in both cities. The celebration of the "Glorious Twelfth" was generally undertaken with greater enthusiasm than other events including July 1st.

Other fraternal societies established in Strathcona included Acacia Lodge No. 11 of the Ancient Free & Accepted Masons organized in January, 1897; the Ancient Order of Foresters which were in operation as early as October, 1897; the Strathcona Tent of the Knights of the Maccabees organized in October, 1899; North Star Lodge No. 8 of the Knights of Pythias; Strathcona Lodge No. 9 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows; the Ancient Order of United Workmen; the Sons of England; and the St. Andrew's Society.

The above lodges generally shared the use of meeting rooms located in the upper stories of Strathcona's various commercial structures with two exceptions. In July, 1905, the Loyal Orange Lodge constructed a meeting hall of wood frame construction located between 83rd and 84th

Streets. In July, 1907, Odd Fellows built a three story brick temple for use by the Order at the corner of 80th Avenue and 105th Street.

The Strathcona Agricultural Society was another organization which was established early in the 1890's. The organizational meeting was held on March 24th, 1894, at which time the following officials were elected: President, R. McKernan; 1st Vice President, R. Dinwoodie; 2nd Vice President, T. Stewart; Secretary, H. Wilson; Treasurer, R. Ritchie; Directors, J. Jackson, F. H. Sache, F. Elliott, R. Tindale, T. Daly, W. Vogel, L. Fulton, W. Brunelle, C. Black, J. McGregor, A. McLeon, L. J. MacKenzie.<sup>82</sup> A number of the executive were local businessmen thus giving the organization the appearance of a Board of Trade. The role of town residents in the organization continued to be strong throughout its history. The need for the establishment of a separate south side agricultural society as explained in a letter which appeared in the April 16th, 1896, issue of the South Edmonton News was because the Edmonton Agricultural Society would not have the show fairs alternately in each place.<sup>83</sup>

This organization played an important role in promoting the agricultural interests of the district which were of obvious economic value to the town. Such a role is evident in a number of ways. At the first meeting held by the society a motion was raised which stated "that a resolution be forwarded to the minister of the interior reminding him of his promise to open up a direct route to Beaver Lake from the Edmonton Railway Station".<sup>84</sup> In 1895 they were also involved in the establishment of a cheese factory and creamery company. The Society in 1898 arranged for the importation of pure red fye seed

wheat.

Mr. Ritchie, manager of the Edmonton Milling Co., offered to get the desired quantity of wheat and handle it for the society, giving one bushel of the imported article for one bushel of No. 1 Alberta grown wheat, provided it could be brought in freight free, and if not to charge the cost of freight extra, the grading of the home grown wheat to be left to a committee of resident grain buyers. Only members of the society [were] permitted to share the advantages of this offer. 85

The Society also organized farmers' institute meetings. The speakers for the meeting organized in October, 1899, included the Commissioner of Agriculture for the Territories, Hon. G. H. V. Bulyea, Mr. MacKay of the Experimental Farm at Indian Head, Assiniboia, and Mr. Willing, the Weed Inspector. Throughout its history this organization was also involved in promoting the district through the sending of agricultural displays from the Strathcona district to regional, district and international agricultural shows such as the Paris Exhibition of 1899. The principal function of this Society was, however, confined to the organization of agricultural fairs and related activities in Strathcona. This role is evident in the second meeting of the Society held on April 7th, 1894, at which time it was resolved "that the society have a ploughing match on the 16th of June for breaking, two classes one 18 years and under and one over 18 years". 86

At the same meeting R. Ritchie and H. Wilson offered a special prize for the best collection of grain in straw of different varieties. At a subsequent meeting, October 3rd, 1894, was chosen as the date for the first fall fair to be organized by the society.

The Fall exhibition which "proved to be an undoubted success both in point of exhibitions and attendance" 87 included a display of a wide

range of agricultural products from Strathcona district farmers as well as town residents. Judging of all the entries in the various classes was undertaken. This fair became an annual event in the following years. The Society held this annual event in a twenty acre plot of land located south of University Avenue between 104th Street and 105th Street purchased in 1895. These fair grounds included a half mile track, agricultural hall and were surrounded by a six foot high close board fence.

In 1904 the assets and the various activities of the Strathcona Agricultural Society were taken over by the Strathcona Industrial Exhibition Association which was incorporated as a limited company in April of that year. The capital stock of the company was \$10,000.00 contained in 2,000 shares. The objectives of the company as stated in the Annual Report of the Territorial Secretary were "to encourage improvements in agricultural, horticulture, arboriculture, manufactures and the useful arts".<sup>88</sup> The shareholders of the company with few exceptions were all from Strathcona.

The citizens of Strathcona also did not ignore the cultural and recreational aspects of their community. In February, 1897, the Strathcona Literary Society was formed for the purpose of the "improvement of its members in public speaking, literary and musical culture and recreation having in view the establishment of a reading room and public library".<sup>89</sup> The debates organized by this society were widely attended.

The various athletic organizations created included football, hockey, tennis and cricket clubs. In 1897 the Strathcona Athletic Association was formed in order to provide for the overall direction



of these athletic activities.

Strathcona branches of a number of organizations concerned with the social issues of the period were also created. In August of 1894 a Lodge of the Royal Templars of Temperance was organized in Strathcona by D. H. Lent at which time the following officers were chosen: S. G., Rev. Mr. Goodwin; P. C., Miss M. Clark; V. C., Mrs. J. A. Gainer; Chap., T. Hiller; R. S., R. Bissette; F. S. and Treasurer, Miss A. Ritchie; Herald, Fred Ritchie; Guard, H. Horton. During his visit to the Strathcona district, D. H. Lent also organized a council at the Sturgeon River.<sup>90</sup>

In September, 1897, the Alberta Plaindealer noted the creation of a Strathcona branch of another important institution within the temperance movement:

On Friday afternoon last, Mrs. C. A. R. McDonald of Edmonton, superintendent of W. C. T. U. work in the Territories, met a number of ladies of South Edmonton Methodist Church and a branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union was organized. The following officers were elected: President, Mrs. F. Richards; vice-presidents, Mrs. H. B. McKenzie, Mrs. A. McDonald and Mrs. W. J. Suffel; recording secretary, Mrs. W. B. Chegwin; treasurer, Mrs. Wm. Fowler. The Union will be known as the "Victoria" Union. It is composed of enthusiastic temperance women who will make themselves felt in the community. 91

By 1903 a Strathcona Branch of the Lord's Day Alliance had also been established. At the annual meeting held in that year an address was presented by Rev. C. W. Finch, president of the organization and rector of Holy Trinity Church. His address was concerned with:

Those who are engaged in business and are tempted to carry their business into every day of the week [and] those who are tempted to convert the Lord's Day into a day of pleasure-seeking and amusement. 92

Other addresses were presented by Rev. G. H. Webb, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Rev. G. Poensgen, Pastor, German Lutheran, and Rev. D. Fleming, Pastor of Knox Presbyterian. The officers elected for 1904 included Rev. C. W. Finch, President, Rev. G. H. Webb, Rev. G. Poensgen, Rev. Father Nordmann and Rev. D. Fleming, Vice-Presidents. The meeting also discussed the question of Saturday night closing and passed a resolution:

recommending [to] the town council to pass a by-law providing for stores closing at 9 o'clock each evening except Saturday when 6 o'clock should be the hour, with a view to the welfare of clerks and the better observance of the Lord's Day. 93

An important aspect of Strathcona's social history is the appearance after the turn of the century of organizations which were distinctively urban in terms of their interests and membership. The existence of one such organization, namely, the Strathcona Industrial Exhibition Association, has already been noted. Other similar type organizations include the Strathcona Board of Trade, Labour Unions and the Strathcona Club.

The initial attempt to create a Board of Trade took place in March, 1894, when "a meeting was held in the junior school house, South Edmonton . . . for the purpose of taking the preliminary steps towards organizing a board of trade. F. H. Sache in the chair, W. Wilkie, secretary. Thirty members were enrolled and the following officials elected: President, F. H. Sache; vice-president, W. Ritchie; secretary, W. Wilkie; treasurer, H. Wilson".<sup>94</sup> This organization operated on an informal basis throughout the 1890's. The fact that Strathcona lacked an effective chartered Board of Trade was the subject of editorial comment by the South Edmonton News.

Although South Edmonton claims to have a Board of Trade, when one wishes to transact a public matter with the town it is difficult to know to whom to look. For some time past our citizens have been discussing this matter, and we also have been trying to impress upon the businessmen of the town the importance of forming a chartered Board of Trade . . . There are many matters of municipal interest which should be looked into, discussed and acted upon by all our businessmen jointly. We have now several industries here and their interests, being identical with the Town's, should be protected. Public matters are constantly being brought to our notice in which, if necessary, we could quote several instances where a chartered Board of Trade would be an invaluable institution. 95

The South Edmonton News plea was answered in May, 1900, at which time a meeting was held that led to the creation of a chartered Board of Trade in May, 1901. The activities of the Board of Trade as noted in its annual reports included attempts to interest industrialist and wholesale firms in Strathcona, attempts to improve roads leading to Strathcona and attempts to improve railway service to Strathcona.

The Board of Trade was also responsible for the preparation of a number of promotional brochures concerning the many "natural advantages" of the Strathcona District. The first such brochure was produced in 1903 and was entitled "Strathcona: Railway and Industrial Centre of Northern Alberta."

The executive committee of this organization from 1901 to 1912 included Strathcona's most active boosters. Foremost amongst this group was J. Hamilton MacDonald, Editor of the Strathcona Plaindealer, who served as president for 1905, and James Weir, Editor of the Strathcona Chronicle, who served as secretary for 1905 and vice-president in 1908 and 1909. A number of professional people were also involved including Dr. Wilbert MacIntyre, who served as president for

1903-04, and F. C. Jamieson, member of the law firm of Rutherford and Jamieson, who was vice-president in 1905. G. W. Marriott, manager of the Strathcona Branch of the Bank of Commerce, served as president in 1907. The first president of the Board who was also a significant independent businessman in the community, was J. M. Douglas, who held the office in 1908 and 1909 prior to his election to the House of Commons as a Liberal member.

The executive committee of the Board of Trade did not, however, include a number of Strathcona's leading businessmen such as John Walter, John Gainer, W. H. Sheppard and the Jackson Brothers.

Trade union activity in Strathcona included the creation of Local 1409 of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America in 1904 and Local 4 of the Bricklayers and Masons Union organized in 1907.

The maturity of Strathcona as a social unit is further evident after the turn of the century with the establishment of the Strathcona Club. It was incorporated by an Act of the Legislature of the Province of Alberta assented to May 9th, 1906. Founding members of the Club included Frederick Henry Sache, F. C. Jamieson, R. B. Douglas, A. G. Baalim, J. H. Tranter, G. F. Downes, H. F. Sandeman, W. H. Sheppard, Orlando Bush, Wilbert MacIntyre and W. H. Hill.

The material presented above has been concerned with exploring the extent to which the social growth of Strathcona was similar to other Western Canadian cities. The material which has been presented in order to define that relationship illustrates both strengths and weaknesses in Strathcona's social history in comparison to large scale

metropolitan communities in the Canadian west. Strathcona had a strong sense of community which can be defined in terms of a number of religious, cultural and educational institutions. Within the social structure of Strathcona, however, a well defined, aggressive commercial elite which functioned as a unit is not evident.

Footnotes

37 Northern Alberta Old Timers Association, Scrap Book, 'Provincial Archives of Alberta Acc. 74.1.

38 Ibid.

39 Knox Presbyterian Church, Knox Church, Edmonton South; Semi-Jubilee Anniversary Souvenir; An Historical Sketch, 1891-1932; On the Occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Present Ediface, (Edmonton: 1927), p. 8.

40 Ibid, p. 22.

41 Op. Cit.

42 Ibid, p. 10.

43 Strathcona Baptist Church, Strathcona Baptist Church Story, 1895-1970, (Edmonton: 1970), p. 9.

44 Ibid, p. 10.

45 Loc. cit.

46 Holy Trinity Church, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 75th Anniversary, (Edmonton: 1968), p. 2.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 St. Anthony's Roman Catholic Church, Golden Jubilee, St. Anthony's Parish, Edmonton, 1905-1955, (Edmonton: 1955), p. 4.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Alberta Plaindealer, 27 June 1902.

53 Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 60th Anniversary; Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church; 1902-1962, (Edmonton: 1962), p. 10.



54 Strathcona Plaindealer, 14 November 1902.

55 Edmonton Moravian Church, The Edmonton Moravian Church; 99th Street and 94th Avenue; 1905-1955; 50th Anniversary, (Edmonton: 1955), p. 4.

56 Edmonton Bulletin, 30 January 1892.

57 Strathcona Plaindealer, 6 April 1906.

- 58 North West Territories Gazette.
- 59 Strathcona Plaindealer, Special School Edition, 6 April 1906.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Duncan R. Innes, Strathcona High School; 1907-1967; In Retrospect, (Edmonton: Strathcona Home and School Association, 1967), p. 4.
- 69 North West Territories Gazette.
- 70 Strathcona Plaindealer, 20 July 1906.
- 71 Edmonton Bulletin, 1 October 1894.
- 72 South Edmonton News, 18 July 1895.
- 73 South Edmonton News, 16 July 1896.
- 74 Ibid.
- 75 South Edmonton News, 13 July 1898.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Strathcona Plaindealer, 15 July 1904.
- 78 Ibid.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Edmonton Bulletin, 9 April 1894.
- 83 South Edmonton News, 16 April 1896.

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- 84 Edmonton Bulletin, 9 April 1896.
- 85 Alberta Plaindealer, 24 February 1898.
- 86 Edmonton Bulletin, 29 March 1894.
- 87 Edmonton Bulletin, 4 October 1894.
- 88 Annual Report of the Territorial Secretary, 1904.
- 89 Alberta Plaindealer, 11 February 1897.
- 90 Edmonton Bulletin, 2 August 1894.
- 91 Alberta Plaindealer, 30 September 1897.
- 92 Alberta Plaindealer, 27 November 1903.
- 93 Alberta Plaindealer, 20 November 1903.
- 94 Edmonton Bulletin, 22 March 1894.
- 95 South Edmonton News, 8 November 1894.
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## Chapter Three

### Municipal Politics in Strathcona

In the foregoing discussion of Strathcona's social history, the appearance of identifiable urban institutions after 1900 has been noted. An important part of this process was the introduction of a system of local government in May, 1899. The creation of separate political institutions for Strathcona was the most important step towards its development as an identifiable community separate from Edmonton.

As in the case of the Board of Trade, incorporation was the subject of considerable debate dating back to the early 1890's. On November 15th, 1894, one of the first editorials of the South Edmonton News pointed out the value of having a town council:

Among the pressing matters which require attention by a corporate body is the protection of the town against fire, as in the present condition of affairs insurance rates are so exorbitant as to all but preclude the idea of insuring buildings and household effects . . . . Other matters which would come within the jurisdiction of such a body would be the maintenance of law and order, the arrest, conviction and incarceration of criminals; the letting of contracts for municipal improvements - such as street grading, light, etc. - and the passing of by-laws for the regulation of affairs generally. 96

The advantages of incorporation continued to be an important topic for editorial comment by the South Edmonton News which was an ardent supporter of such an undertaking. Numerous letters to the editor were also received on the subject. In July, 1895, it was pointed out to the Editor that:

We are now at a stage when delay may result in forever losing the prominence in the district as a commercial centre. Towns surrounding us are grasping for that foremost place, and some of them are well equipped for the battle being banded together

in societies, working with one common purpose to gain every possible addition in the furtherance of this object. While South Edmonton is placed naturally in a position commanding all the natural resources of the country, still without organization we will lose many of the advantages which belong of right to the leading market town of the district. 97

This note of urgency regarding the need to incorporate in order to protect Strathcona's interests was offset in the mind of at least one "resident ratepayer" who pointed out to the editor that:

Looked at from all sides and situated as South Edmonton is at present, without any systematic rule, no union for business or order, not even proper fire protection, it is remarkable that the interests of the town are so progressive; there must be a powerful latent and natural incentive in the location of the town to carry on the growth with so little seeming exertion on the part of the owners of the townsite, and without a board of trade, as has been recently stated. 98

Incorporation was also advocated on the grounds that it would make a significant contribution to Strathcona's sense of identity. This argument for incorporation was advanced in June, 1898, shortly before a railway link was to be established between the two communities:

It is now stated on reliable authority that work on Pugsley's railway [Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway] will be begun this summer and extended into Edmonton as soon as the bridge is completed. This makes it more necessary than ever that this town be incorporated with a name of its own independent of the town on the north side of the river. While South Edmonton has "Edmonton station" within its boundaries it reaps a benefit from the advertising which Edmonton has received, but when that town has a station of its own we will suffer by reason of a suburban name more than we do now and will not profit so much by the name "Edmonton", because we must have a name and an identity of our own. 99

Those arguing for incorporation were challenged by a number of

citizens who had equally strong opinions against incorporation which were based largely on the cost of such an undertaking. The arguments against incorporation as summarized in the South Edmonton News made the following points:

You have not considered that high taxes would be required to carry out the reform you suggest, and that the increase in taxation would more than counterbalance any good they would do. Let good enough alone. From low taxes we reap greater benefits than from all reforms that might be instituted. He cites the case of the town of Edmonton paying \$3,500 per year in salaries and current expenses alone, and ask if we have any assurance that it will cost any less to run this town when incorporated. We have 9 mills on the dollar to pay now for public school support and that burden is heavy enough. The question of expense is certainly the all absorbing one in this matter and forms the pivot on which public sentiment turns. 100

Opponents of incorporation reiterated that incorporation was premature and if carried on would wreck the future for the community. It was suggested that a policy of "leaving well enough alone" was more suitable.

We have men in South Edmonton who can name several towns who have been killed by incorporation, and we have been advised by others and whose experience and opinions should not be ignored to remain as we are if we know when we are well off. Once incorporated always incorporated be it ever so ruinous. 101

The incorporation debate continued unresolved until November, 1898, when the Territorial Government intervened under section three of the North West Territories Village Ordinance. The public notices of the Territorial Government's intention to intervene were received by Postmaster Wilson on November 18th. These notices, which were posted in conspicuous places in the community, stated that:

that unless a petition of objection, signed by two-thirds of the voters of the place, was received within 30 days after Nov. 20, 1898, South Edmonton would be proclaimed a village by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under the Village Ordinance of the North West Territories with the name of the post office within its limits. 102

Upon receipt of this notice "a few businessmen . . . took it upon themselves to call a meeting of ratepayers in Ross' Hall . . . to discuss the matter"<sup>103</sup> of the Village Ordinance and its implications. The meeting, which was chaired by A. C. Rutherford, began with an outline by him of the Village Ordinance which provided for the appointment of a village overseer "who would have the right to conduct all village business as he saw fit, subject, of course, to the will of the voters expressed at the annual meeting or at the special meeting called by requisition."<sup>104</sup> Other speakers included the most outspoken critic of incorporation. Thomas Anderson, who repeated the argument that incorporation was a premature action which "would precipitate high taxation and debt which would injure the future of the place".<sup>105</sup> T. W. Lines of the Brackman & Kerr Milling Co. expressed the view that village status:

would make the place a one-horse affair quite below the dignity of its real importance. He thought the proposition to form a village must have emanated from some local party looking for a job as overseer or something of that order. He would favor town incorporation that could be conducted economically. 106

A. McLean joined with Lines in arguing that despite the financial implications of incorporation, it was less undesirable than village status. Robert Ritchie of the Edmonton Milling Company had a more positive attitude. He "advocated incorporation as a town and believed that greater development would result with incorporation than without

it".<sup>107</sup> Ritchie was supported by other speakers who pointed out the practical advantages such as improved sanitary conditions which would result from such action.

Despite the variety of opinions both pro and con with respect to incorporation, all speakers expressed their opposition to what they regarded as the undemocratic nature of the government to be created under the Village Ordinance. Strathcona's total rejection of village status was embodied in a petition sent to Regina which was circulated at the meeting. This unanimity with respect to the undesirability of village status also produced unanimous agreement for the creation of a committee consisting of Messrs. R. Ritchie, A. C. Rutherford, A. Davies, H. Wilson, and J. H. McDonald to "circulate a petition necessary to incorporate, consider details as to area and name and to secure a list of names of persons who would be willing if elected to act in first council".<sup>108</sup>

The report of the committee which was presented to a meeting held one week later made the following recommendations:

that the name of the proposed town be "Minto";  
that the boundaries be as follows: Northerly boundary, the Saskatchewan River and the northern limit of Plan "I"; westerly boundary, the western boundary of the Roman Catholic Mission property; southerly, the southern limit of the registered Plan "I"; easterly, the eastern boundary of said Plan "I"; that necessary petitions be circulated and that a letter be written to the Commissioner of Public Works for the necessary information requisite for incorporation as a Town. 109

The discussion regarding the first recommendation resulted in the name Strathcona being adopted as the first choice because he "had for so many years been identified with the Northwest including this particular locality".<sup>110</sup> Minto was dropped because it was sug-

gested that the name had already been used by another community. The name "Minto" was, however, retained as the alternative if difficulty was encountered with respect to their first choice. The second clause was accepted without amendment after various suggestions for larger and smaller boundaries were discussed. The third recommendation was the subject of considerable debate with Thomas Anderson, Mr. Dowler, John Walter and Lawrence Garneau, warning the citizens of the dire consequences of such action. Despite this lack of enthusiasm for incorporation on the part of many speakers, Strathcona's political destiny was finally resolved when "overwhelming support" was given a motion that "the whole report of the committee be adopted as amended and that the committee be constituted to carry on correspondence with Regina re incorporation and to circulate the necessary petition".<sup>111</sup>

The success of the incorporation meetings held in November, 1898, can be attributed directly to the intervention of the Commissioner of Public Works who stated that "we took that course to force [Strathcona] to do something on the premises".<sup>112</sup> This intervention proved to be the catalyst necessary to resolve a situation which would have remained deadlocked for some time to come. Local government was thus thrust upon Strathcona rather than being the product of local initiative.

The opinions expressed at the incorporation meetings demonstrate that despite the existence of a well-developed sense of "civic pride", a consensus on the part of Strathcona's businessmen in favor of the establishment of political institutions which could be useful in the achievement of broader economic goals was lacking.

The incorporation committee established at the December 2nd meeting immediately took the necessary steps in preparation for the

spring, 1899, session of the Territorial Legislative Assembly.

On December 16th the notice of intention to seek incorporation was published for the first time in the Alberta Plain Dealer by A. C. Rutherford who was acting as the solicitor for the applicants. In this notice Minto was used as the name for this new town. The decision to revert back to Minto was the result of a meeting of townspeople held on December 10th, at which time the name of the town was reviewed:

Quite a number of names were proposed among them the inspiring name of "Paradise" but it seemed the general opinion that we wanted something better than that. When the time for proposals had ended there were four names before the meeting: Strathcona, Minto, South Edmonton and New Edmonton . . . . Voting by ballot was decided upon with the agreement that in each ballot the lowest should drop out.

113

The incorporation committee also undertook the preparation of a petition in support of their application. This petition contained a total of 149 signatures by people who represented Strathcona's merchant, industrialist and professional groups. Prominent industrialists represented included J. F. Pollard, John Pollard, William Vogel, John A. Jackson and Robert Ritchie. Strathcona's small but active professional groups were represented by A. C. Rutherford and Edward C. Dawson who was a surveyor and engineer. Local merchants who signed the petition included A. V. Richards, Wm. MacLaren, A. Davies and A. McDonald.

Commensurate with the activities of the incorporation committee, opponents of incorporation led by Thomas Anderson were actively engaged in the preparation of a counter petition. This document dated December 9th, 1898, contained a total of seventy-one signatures.

Those who signed this petition included a number of the original land

owners of the site such as F. H. Sache, Murdock McLeod and Joseph McDonald, as well as the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Townsite Company. The petition also included signatures by a number of industrialists and merchants. The industrialists represented included Robert Oshner of the Strathcona Brewing and Malting Co. and John Walter. The merchants included in the petition were R. Hulbert and Wm. Haliday. The basis of the objections of these people to incorporation as stated in the petition was that they would be subject to municipal taxation.<sup>114</sup>

On April 10th, 1899, the petitions for and against incorporation were presented to the Legislative Assembly by M. McCauley, Member for the constituency of Edmonton. On April 18th Mr. Gillis from the Standing Committee on Standing Orders reported that the petitioners had complied with the rule regarding notices of private bills and had paid the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly the necessary fee of one hundred dollars.

The committee also [found] that Rule No. 55 requiring the signatures of at least three Petitioners to be subscribed on the sheet containing the prayer of petition [had] not been complied with but recommended that the said Rule be suspended and that leave be given for the introduction of the Bill.<sup>115</sup>

Bill 22 to incorporate the Town of Minto was given its first reading on April 18th. Between the Second and Third reading, the Legislative Assembly having resolved itself in Committee of the Whole amended the Bill to read Strathcona rather than Minto since the name was already in use. Third reading of the Bill as amended took place April 28th.

On April 29th Lieutenant Governor Forget assented to the Ordinance to incorporate the Town of Strathcona. Section One of this Ordinance



outlined the boundaries of the Town of Strathcona which were unchanged from those requested in the petition presented to the Legislative Assembly. Section Two stated that "the provisions of the Municipal Ordinance and amendments thereto are hereby incorporated with and declared to form part of this ordinance".<sup>116</sup> The Municipal Ordinance defined the structure, powers and responsibilities of Strathcona's Municipal Government. This legislation provided for the nomination of candidates for mayor and council on the first Monday in December for the term commencing on the first day of January of the following year. Those declared elected:

As mayor for the ensuing year, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes;

As councillors, at the first election the three candidates in town municipalities . . . who have received the highest number of votes shall be declared elected for the two years ensuing and the three candidates in the municipalities . . . who have received the next highest number of votes shall be declared elected for the ensuing year and at each election thereafter the councillors receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected for a term of two years.

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Sections eighty-three to one hundred and one outlined the duties and powers of the six member council. These powers included the appointment of police and public health officers, the establishment of public markets, scales and pounds and the licensing of gaming tables, shows, places of amusement, business, porters, pawnshops and scavengers.

Section 102 and 105 defined the powers and responsibilities of the Mayor which included calling:

a public meeting of the ratepayers of the municipality for the discussion of municipal affairs and each meeting shall be held within the two weeks preceding the date fixed for holding the annual election of councillors.

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Other elements of Strathcona's local government prescribed by the Municipal Ordinance included the Secretary Treasurer and Auditor.

Section Three of Strathcona's Act of Incorporation provided for the introduction of municipal government by stating that:

This Ordinance shall come into force on proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor, on a date to be named therein; . . . and the Lieutenant Governor may therein appoint a returning officer to hold on a date subsequent to that fixed for the coming into force of this Ordinance the first election of the mayor and councillors for the Town of Strathcona aforesaid, and for the purpose of such election the provisions of the said Ordinance as to elections generally shall also apply and the persons so elected shall thereupon hold office for the remainder of the year 1899 and thereafter as though said election had been held for the term commencing on the first day of January 1900. 119

Lieutenant Governor Forget's proclamation of the Act which was made on the same day appointed "Alexander Cameron Rutherford of South Edmonton, Alberta, Returning Officer to hold on the Twentieth day of June, 1899, the first election of Mayor and Councillors of the Town of Strathcona . . ." 120

Those candidates running for election on that day presented their views at a public meeting held on June 13th. Those candidates for the position of mayor included Thomas Bennett, Strathcona immigration agent, Robert Ritchie of the Edmonton Milling Company, and Harry Wilson, merchant. In his presentation to the electorate, Thomas Bennett pointed out that:

he thought incorporation should have been delayed a couple of years. But since it had been practically forced on us it was necessary to face the situation. He did not believe in mushroom growth or sinking the town with heavy taxation. There were certain improvements exceedingly necessary: first, the business

streets needed fixing up and sidewalks put in order; second, an efficient system of fire protection he deemed necessary; third, the sanitary condition of the town needs immediate attention. He thought a piece of land for a dump ground should be purchased and used. It was necessary to give the town a good appearance to strangers coming in. He considered the townsite of Strathcona second to none in natural advantages and he hoped it might be as successful as the man for whom it was named. 121

The second candidate for the position, Robert Ritchie, was much more enthusiastic about the prospects of incorporation.

He believed that the Town was now ripe for incorporation. He thought there were many improvements needed that could not be attained without incorporation. He believed that it was of prime importance that all roads leading into the Town from the country should be put in first class condition so as to invite the surrounding farmers to trade here. A system of fire protection he deemed an immediate necessity. He was . . . in favor of anything . . . substantial and efficient enough to reduce the insurance rate. The town needs sanitary care badly and he would favor measures along that line. Certain public buildings were necessary. He felt that the government should be pressed to put up a proper and commodious immigration hall here, also that a customs office should be established here and a post office building should be provided. 122

The third candidate, H. Wilson, prefaced his comments to the meeting by stating that he had entered the race in order to make it more interesting. 123 He advocated a:

careful and economical conduct of the public affairs. As to the matter of improvements he was in favor of going slowly. 124

The choice was clearly between a mayor who viewed the role of the council as that of ameliorating the bad effects of incorporation and a mayor who viewed incorporation as a means through which the metropolitan interests of the town could be promoted.

A total of sixteen men had been nominated for the six council positions. Six of those nominated did not attend the meeting. Those nominated included W. H. Sheppard, J. J. Duggan, William Brunelle, Robert Bissett, Malcolm McIntyre, J. J. MacKenzie, F. H. Sache, A. McLean, J. T. Malone, W. E. Ross, R. A. Hulburt, John Walter, William McCauley, A. Davies, Frank Cowles and J. W. Blaine. These men with few exceptions were all merchants in the community.

The theme of the presentations made by these candidates was the need for various practical improvements to the site and fire protection, all of which would be procured through sound management of the town's financial affairs. The view that the operation of a town was like a business was stated by J. W. Blaine who pointed out that "the men who had shown themselves capable of managing their own business successfully and who at the same time were public spirited were the men who should be placed on the new council".<sup>125</sup>

The successful candidates after the election, in which a total of 700 votes were cast, were Thomas Bennett for mayor and J. J. Duggan, J. J. MacKenzie, M. McIntyre, W. H. Sheppard, R. A. Hulburt and John Walter for councillors. The first three councillors were elected for 2 1/2 years while the last three were elected for 1 1/2 years.

Thomas Bennett had had a considerable amount of experience in municipal affairs prior to his arrival in Strathcona. He had served eighteen years as councillor and six years as mayor in the municipality of Bury in the Province of Quebec and had also served for three years as warden of Compton County in the same province.<sup>126</sup> Bennett was one of the few people who served on Strathcona's Council or in the position of mayor who brought any experience to the position. Bennett was an

older man in comparison to other men who served as mayor or councillor. Thomas Bennett had arrived in Strathcona in 1895 to serve as immigration agent.

John Joseph Duggan was one of the first merchants to establish himself in Strathcona. He was a Catholic of Irish descent, who was born on May 16th, 1868, on a farm near the village of Fenelon Falls, Ontario.<sup>127</sup> In 1890 he came west to Beaver, British Columbia, where he worked in a sawmill operated by the Columbia River Milling Company. Both his uncle Cornelius J. Duggan and William MacKenzie had interests in this company.

In August, 1891, upon the completion of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, J. J. Duggan established a lumber yard in the new town created by the railway company. The lumber he marketed in the Strathcona district consisted of British Columbia douglas fir, spruce and cedar, all of which were supplied by the Columbia River Milling Company from its mill at Beaver, British Columbia. He also sold lath, shingles, sills, doors, sash and lime. He later expanded into the implement business. He later served as Mayor of Strathcona for 1902, 1903, 1909 and 1910.

J. J. MacKenzie had a very similar background to Duggan, having established a blacksmith business in Strathcona in the fall of 1891. Prior to 1891 he had been employed by John Walter as a ferry hand. By 1899 he was also established as an implement dealer. He later served on Council in 1902, 1903, 1906 and 1907.

Malcolm McIntyre had been employed by Sam Parrish to operate a general store located in Strathcona which had been established in 1891. By 1896, however, he had purchased the store from Parrish and operated it under his own name. He also served on Council in 1902.

W. H. Sheppard was a hotel proprietor who had arrived in Strathcona in 1894 to take charge of the Raymond Hotel. He later purchased the Strathcona Hotel. He was on the board of directors of the Edmonton Brewing and Malting Co. whose plant was located in Rosedale. He later served on Council in 1901, 1903, 1904, 1908, 1909, and as mayor in 1906.

R. A. Hulburt, who was born in 1861 in Lochaber, Nova Scotia, came west to Winnipeg in 1880. In the following year he emigrated to North Dakota where he spent several years engaged in wheat farming. In 1893 he moved to Strathcona where he engaged in a general merchandise business and real estate. He later served as a member of Council in 1907.

John Walter, who was a native of the Orkney Islands of Scotland, was one of Strathcona's first citizens as well as one of its most successful entrepreneurs. He had established himself on the south side of the river in the early 1870's after having fulfilled the terms of his contract with the Hudson's Bay Company. He was primarily involved in the timber trade. John Walter did not hold civic office in Strathcona again after the completion of his first term. He did, however, play an active role as a Trustee for the Strathcona School District.

The background of those people who participated in the election of 1899 was characteristic of those who were to be part of the political process over the next thirteen years.

The election of 1899 also brought out the issues which were to be a part of the political process in Strathcona during its thirteen years as a political entity. These issues were primarily concerned with the type of role that Strathcona's local political institutions should play in the development of the community. The point of view

most strongly expressed by such people as Thomas Bennett was that it was responsible for various public works and such services as fire protection. The predominance of this point of view was to characterize politics in Strathcona from 1899 to 1912.

The most important issue which was to emerge from this emphasis on practical improvements for the town was a concern for fire protection. The Council's efforts to provide fire protection were initiated on November 21st, 1899, when the fire, water and light committee were directed to procure information on fire fighting equipment. In May, 1900, this committee reported that \$12,000 would be required for the purchase of equipment. By-law 23 which was intended to provide the necessary funds was passed in June. In July the necessary bids for the purchase of equipment were called for and an agreement with the Waterous Engine Company for the purchase of a fire engine was negotiated. In 1901 a fire hall was constructed for the purpose of housing this equipment. The formal organization of a fire department was delayed until January of 1907 when By-law 170 entitled "A By-law to provide for the establishment and management of a Fire Department for the Town of Strathcona" was passed. The by-law provided for a fire department which would consist of:

"one Chief, one Deputy Chief and other officers and men in such numbers as the Council may deem necessary for the best and most efficient handling of the fire apparatus and for the full and proper formation of Hose, Hook, Chemical and Ladder Companies and a Salvage Corps". 128

The responsibilities of the chief included maintaining a Register of all those who were members of the department. He also had:

the power subject to the by-laws of the brigade to select the members of each company from

persons willing to serve therein and he shall also have the right to dismiss any or all members thereof for neglect of duty, insubordination or other good cause as hereinafter provided, and he shall have the care of all fire tanks, engines, hydrants, hose and other apparatus of the Fire Department and shall be held responsible for the efficiency of the Brigade and the preservation of the apparatus. The Chief shall have his sleeping apartment in the Fire Hall and shall remain at the Hall constantly during the night time and hold himself in readiness for alarm of fire. 129

The fire chief was the only full time member of the department throughout its history. The remaining members of the department were made up of volunteers who received an honorarium for the services provided.

Overall responsibility for fire protection in Strathcona was held by the Fire, Water and Light Standing Committee of Council. The responsibilities of council through resolution with respect to the fire department as stated in the by-law included providing for a reward or medal for the performance of gallant acts, compensating families for injuries to firemen and insuring firemen against injuries.

The by-law also contributed to the efficient operation of the department by allowing them to requisition the services of men or horses, demolish buildings or fences in order to arrest the progress of the fire and close off streets. The by-law also stated that "any person at or near any fire shall assist in extinguishing the same, and in removing furniture, goods or merchandise from any building on fire or in danger thereof or in guarding or securing the same or in demolishing any house or building when required do so by the chief or any other officer of the Department in command at such fire". 130

The by-law also provided for a fine not exceeding \$100 and costs or



imprisonment not exceeding thirty days for any person who destroyed property during a fire or tampered with fire department equipment including the fire alarm system.

In addition to organizing a fire department, Strathcona also provided for a police department. In October, 1899, W. H. Billock, a former member of the Royal North West Mounted Police, was appointed to the position of town constable. In January, 1905, the police force was increased to two when the Council authorized the appointment of a night constable. In November, 1908, a by-law was passed authorizing the appointment of a Chief of Police for the City of Strathcona. The town constable also served as the license inspector. The licenses established by the Council covered auctioneers, liquor, auction rooms and various occupations.

Other activities of the Town Council related to law and order included the passage of By-law 7 which was concerned with the regulation of the streets, sidewalks and thoroughfares of the town and for the preservation of order. In addition to prescribing the manner in which people were required to conduct themselves while using public thoroughfares, it also forbade any construction or use of these thoroughfares which interfered with their use by other citizens.<sup>131</sup> It also required the observance of Sunday as a day of rest and forbade the establishment of "houses of ill fame" or gambling houses. The Council also established a town pound in September of 1899 for the purpose of taking care of any stray animals. The town pound was concerned primarily with livestock owned by town residents and with livestock owned by farmers who operated within the incorporated boundaries of the town.

The public health of the community was safeguarded by the appointment of a medical health officer. Baldwin was appointed as Strathcona's first public health officer in September, 1899. Immediate steps were also taken soon after incorporation to create a nuisance ground.

The construction of a number of public works between 1899 and 1906 were also undertaken as noted in Chapter One. The undertaking of these public works necessitated a change in the Act to Incorporate the Town of Strathcona. In 1904 a petition which requested that "Part VI of the Municipal Ordinance insofar as the same refers to the Corporation of the Town of Strathcona be repealed, and other provisions be substituted therefore".<sup>132</sup> The request was embodied in Chapter 22 of the Statutes of 1904 entitled An Ordinance Respecting Certain Kinds of Contemplated Public Works for the Town of Strathcona. This legislation provided for a special frontage assessment and special local benefit assessment to cover the cost of these improvements.

The prime importance of issues concerning local improvement and the provision of services such as fire and police is evident in the types of standing committees created by the Council prior to 1906. The standing committees created by the first Council in July, 1899, included the following: By-law, Finance, Public Works, Fire, Water and Light, License, Health and Relief and Town Hall and Market. This list of committees remained unaltered with the exception of the Town Hall and Market Committee which had the added responsibility of the Police after 1902.

The second point of view as expressed by Robert Ritchie was that local government had a role to play in promoting the economic and metropolitan growth of the community. The manner in which a

number of prairie communities undertook this role of government was through providing bonuses. Strathcona's efforts with respect to bonusing were restricted entirely to the Calgary and Edmonton Railway bonus provided in May of 1906 as outlined in Chapter One. Similar bonus offers endorsed by the ratepayers were not made to the Canadian Northern Railway or the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. Other indications that the ratepayers of Strathcona were not prepared to undertake a large scale bonusing program can be found in the decision to reject By-laws 109 and 180. These by-laws provided for a bonus for the Strauss Piano Company and the Bailey Soap Company respectively. The rejection of By-law 180 was urged by the Strathcona Plaindealer who argued that:

We believe this city has reached a stage in its career when bonuses of the character asked by the Bailey are not justified. We have come to the conclusion that the loaning of money by the city for private enterprises is as a rule bad business and while there may be exceptions to the rule, Mr. Bailey's proposition is not one of them. . . . We believe in generous treatment of new industries but aside from bonuses altogether Strathcona has inducements to offer in the way of transportation facilities (actual and prospective), strategic position in the province, modern conveniences, cheap fuel, educational advantages and many other things that have brought, are bringing and will bring pay roll to this city. 133

The second half of Strathcona's history as a political entity began on March 15th, 1907, when the Lieutenant Governor assented to An Act to Incorporate the City of Strathcona. This change served only to make minor changes in the formal structure of Strathcona's political system while the process of politics in Strathcona remained the same.

As was the case in 1899, the decision to seek a city charter

was preceded by editorial comment on the subject. In September, 1906, the Strathcona Plaindealer pointed out that Strathcona's destiny as a significant metropolitan centre required this new status:

While these special powers might prove injurious to a town that has nothing but ambition to back it up in the race for big population still they are necessary to the town holding a favored position on the map in working its destiny of future greatness. <sup>134</sup>

One aspect of Strathcona's legal status as a town which was considered to be a handicap in its ability to ensure its future as a metropolis was the "fact that the financial discretion of the ratepayers under the present charter is not as large as it should be. An example in point is the fact that the town has no power to acquire a piece of property for industrial purposes."<sup>135</sup> The editorial concluded by urging the Board of Trade and the Town Council to take up the issue.

Four days later the Board of Trade responded to the editorial by passing a resolution "for submission to the town council" advising that in the opinion of the Board, the time is ripe for the securing of a city charter for Strathcona and requesting that initial steps in that matter be taken at once."<sup>136</sup> A delegation from the Board of Trade brought the matter of a city charter to the attention of the Council at their October 16th, 1906, meeting at which time Mayor Duggan promised that "the necessary action re city charter would be taken in good time".<sup>137</sup>

Action by the Council with respect to a city charter was initiated on November 18th, 1906, when a committee on preliminaries re city charter was appointed and requested to report as soon as possible. The report of the committee, which was presented December 28th, 1906, included the following recommendations:

1. That a committee be appointed with the solicitor to draw up details of charter afterward draft to be submitted to N. D. Beck, K. C., for revision and suggestion.

2. That present boundaries be retained: adjoining territory to be added by Lieut.-Governor by order in council upon petition of certain proportion of property owners and city council.

3. Commissioners system to be provided but the adoption of system to be first voted on by the ratepayers.

4. Present system of taxation to be retained but with power to adopt a single tax system (modified) if voted by ratepayers.

5. The system of "burgesses" having two or more votes according to assessment on all money by-laws to be adopted.

6. A general statement of powers of the city council such as that contained in the Edmonton charter to be asked for but to be followed by a detailed list of powers (not exhaustive general powers conferred by the general clause).

A. In particular, powers should be asked for re debentures for local improvements.

B. Power to buy land and hold for any purpose city may decide to use it for.

C. Power to fix a manufacturers' rate of assessment.

D. Large powers regarding health including power to inspect all dairies both in and out of the city operated by licenses.

E. Ward system to be optional.

7. The charter of the City of Edmonton, which has been copied largely in the charters of Medicine Hat and Lethbridge will serve as a useful model.

8. Your committee have been informed that it is the intention of the Alberta Government to introduce a municipal statute in the near future applicable to all municipalities.

This report served as the basis for action on the question of

a city charter by the new council which took office in January of 1907. By February 17th a draft charter ready for submission to the Legislature was presented to the council by the Town solicitor and adopted. The principal adviser in Strathcona's efforts to draft a charter as recommended in the initial report was Charles Beck, K. C., City of Edmonton solicitor. Changes in the political structure of Strathcona introduced by the charter included Commissioners, wards and a modified version of the single tax system of assessment.

The need for the introduction of commissioners to improve the efficiency of Strathcona's Council had been recognized by Mayor Mills who pointed out at the first meeting of the 1907 Strathcona Council that "the work of the council was becoming too heavy for the aldermanic board to handle with justice to the City".<sup>139</sup> The manner in which the commission system was to be implemented was referred to the finance committee for consideration. The report of this committee recommended that "applications to be asked for a man to fill the combined offices of commissioner and city engineer at a salary of \$1,800 per year and the Mayor be ex-officio a commissioner without salary".<sup>140</sup> The discussion of the report by Council pointed out that "the mayor and city engineer each had their hands full now and making them commissioners would not relieve the situation".<sup>141</sup> The Strathcona City Council were as much concerned about the cost of introducing the system as they were in improving the efficiency of the government.<sup>142</sup> After considerable discussion, the committee's report as presented to council was ratified.

The introduction of the modified system of the single tax for assessment purposes became effective upon the passage of the Act

despite the concern expressed by some members of council that a vote on the issue by the burgess be taken. Mayor Mills' view that "the satisfactory operation of the new plan in the City of Edmonton and the very unsatisfactory operation of the old plan in the Town of Strathcona warranted the embodiment of the new plan in the new Charter without special mandate from the burgesses".<sup>143</sup>

The introduction of the ward system was voted on and passed by the burgesses of the City of Strathcona on October 30th. The system was implemented during the civic election of 1908. The ward system as implemented provided for the division of the City into four wards divided by the centre lines of Whyte Avenue and Main Street.

During Strathcona's years as a City, standing committees continued to be an important part of the political process. Their primary function was to handle much of the administrative work involved in running the city. As indicated by the introduction of the commission system, Strathcona was reluctant to create a large civic bureaucracy. In the period 1907 to 1912, the standing committees structure included committees concerned with receptions and railways.

The interest group which was consistently involved in the political process in Strathcona was the Strathcona Board of Trade. This organization made frequent representations to council concerning the need for public works and action on other issues already noted. The extent to which the two organizations overlapped or worked in close co-operation was not as well established as in other communities.

In some cases the most active members of the Board of Trade executive committee were not on Council. The comments of Wilbert McIntyre, who was running for Mayor in 1905, illustrate this situation. Dr.

McIntyre in his presentation:

spoke up in behalf of the board of trade, a body which he believed had not received due recognition from the councils of the past. In many matters pertaining to the town's prosperity the initiative was bound to come from the Board of Trade and he thought the council should support it liberally and consider carefully its recommendations. The future of Strathcona depends largely upon our ability to reach capitalists with money for investment . . . He thought the railways should be dealt with generously and given all necessary inducements to establish themselves in Strathcona.

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Various social issues of the period were also brought to the attention of the Council. In February, 1906, a petition was presented to Council requesting that property adjoining the southern boundary of the Town be brought within the town limits in order to give the town jurisdiction to deal with a house of ill fame which was just outside the boundary. In July of the same year, the Reverend W. R. George and the Reverend Johnston presented a petition requesting the suppression of slot machines.

Chapter Three has been concerned with the structure, role and personnel involved in Strathcona's local government. The material presented illustrates how Strathcona was similar to other prairie cities in terms of its structure and personnel. Strathcona was, however, very different from other prairie cities in that its local government was instituted over the objections of the people rather than being the product of local initiative. The community had a well developed sense of civic pride but on the whole expected their government to keep costs down and provide some essential services such as fire protection and various public works. An aggressive role for local government in the economic growth of the community was consciously



rejected on the grounds that a City destined for greatness did not have to use the bonus system. Strathcona citizens were more concerned about keeping the cost of local government to a minimum. Thus the structure and process of politics in Strathcona despite its status as a city reflects a reluctance to create the necessary political super-structure to support such a status. Therefore continuity between Strathcona, the town, and Strathcona, the city, can be noted. This fact reflects a lack of a long term commitment to the idea of Strathcona as a separate political entity.

### Footnotes

- 96 South Edmonton News, 15 November 1894.
- 97 South Edmonton News, 11 July 1895.
- 98 South Edmonton News, 27 June 1895.
- 99 Alberta Plaindealer, 8 June 1898.
- 100 Alberta Plaindealer, 16 December 1897.
- 101 Alberta Plaindealer, 23 December 1897.
- 102 Alberta Plaindealer, 25 November 1898.
- 103 Ibid.
- 104 Ibid.
- 105 Ibid.
- 106 Ibid.
- 107 Ibid.
- 108 Ibid.
- 109 Alberta Plaindealer, 2 December 1898.
- 110 Ibid.
- 111 Ibid.
- 112 Alberta Plaindealer, 16 December 1898.
- 113 Alberta Plaindealer, 16 December 1898.
- 114 North West Territories Legislative Assembly, Sessional Papers, 1899, Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan - Regina.
- 115 North West Territories Legislative Assembly, Journals.
- 116 Ordinances of the North West Territories, 1899.
- 117 The Consolidated Ordinances of the North West Territories, 1898.
- 118 Ibid.
- 119 Ordinances of the North West Territories, 1899, Ch. 28 assented to April 29th, Entitled "An Ordinance to Incorporate the Town of Strathcona".

- 120 Provincial Archives of Alberta, Accession 69.199.
- 121 Alberta Plaindealer, 16 June 1899.
- 122 Ibid.
- 123 Ibid.
- 124 Ibid.
- 125 Ibid.
- 126 Ibid.
- 127 Northern Alberta Pioneers and Old Time Association Scrap Book, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Accession 4.1.
- 128 Griesbach Papers, City of Edmonton Archives.
- 129 Ibid.
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 Ibid.
- 132 Ordinances of the North West Territories, 1903, Ch. 32, assented to June 20th.
- 133 Strathcona Plaindealer, 3 May 1907.
- 134 Strathcona Plaindealer, 7 September 1906.
- 135 Strathcona Plaindealer, 10 October 1906.
- 136 Town of Strathcona Council Minutes, City of Edmonton Archives.
- 137 Strathcona Plaindealer, 1 January 1907.
- 138 Strathcona Plaindealer, 22 March 1907.
- 139 Strathcona Plaindealer, 12 April 1907.
- 140 Strathcona Plaindealer, 9 April 1907.
- 141 Ibid.
- 142 Ibid.
- 143 Strathcona Plaindealer, 8 December 1905.

## Chapter Four

### The Economic History of Strathcona

Between 1891 and 1912 Strathcona experienced a modest degree of industrial and commercial growth which provided it with an identifiable economic base. Its industrial development involved primarily the establishment of manufacturing industries which took advantage of the agricultural potential and the timber resources of the Strathcona region as well as the on-site deposits of clay and coal. Its growth as a commercial centre was also closely linked with the economic needs of the farming community which developed adjacent to the townsite over this twenty-one year period.

Strathcona's role as a market centre in which the district farmers both sold and purchased goods emerged immediately upon the completion of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. The construction of railway facilities provided for large scale agricultural exports from this region to markets in Eastern Canada, Southern Alberta and British Columbia. This change constituted an agricultural revolution for the farmers of the district who were now integrated into the developing wheat economy of the Canadian West. The initial economic activities associated with this new townsite on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River were therefore related to its role as a service centre on a newly established and rapidly expanding agricultural frontier.

Initially, the marketing services available at Strathcona were provided by independent businessmen who were either commission agents or merchants who accepted agricultural commodities in exchange for staples required by the farmers. Three individuals who fall into this category were Sam Parrish, W. J. G. Dickson and John Joseph Duggan.

Sam Parrish, who was the first commission agent to operate out of Strathcona, established a branch of his Calgary business at the new townsite in the spring of 1892. He initially operated out of the Strathcona Hotel during the construction of his first business block on the southwest corner of Whyte Avenue and 103rd Street. The property upon which this building was constructed had been purchased by Sam Parrish in August, 1891, along with other property when the townsite lots were first offered for sale by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Townsite Company. His business operations involved the purchase of timothy seed, oats, wheat, hay and potatoes. In return he sold or traded flour, feed, seed grain and apples. Parrish operated his Strathcona branch until February of 1893 when he sold a portion of it to Messrs. Dickson and Wilkie. By October, 1895, he had sold the remaining portion of his business interests with the exception of the real estate to Malcolm MacIntyre who had been employed since 1892 as his Strathcona manager.

W. J. G. Dickson started his business career in Strathcona in February, 1893, when he purchased, in partnership with William Wilkie, the general store of Sam Parrish. As the successors to S. Parrish at the corner store, they sold a variety of groceries and provisions which included eggs, creamery butter and winter apples. This partnership lasted until September, 1894, at which time Dickson embarked on a career lasting until 1899 as an independent Strathcona businessman. In his new role as an independent commission agent, Dickson dealt in a full line of agricultural products including livestock, produce and grain. Dickson's value to the economic life of Strathcona and his business methods were noted by the South Edmonton News.

Mr. W. J. G. Dickson is another of our young and enterprising pioneers, a Scotchman, with considerable experience of continental life . . . who has succeeded in erecting an interest in the products of this district, among outside dealers which bids fair to assume gigantic proportions in the future. His policy is based on district lines, each product must be offered in proper order, and although the business done the present season, may be lighter than could have been done, Mr. Dickson in taking the stand he does, is establishing a precedent which will result in giving Northern Alberta products a solid hold in the markets of the world for excellence. The farming and stockraising interest of the district, has now through Mr. Dickson's untiring patience, found a foothold which is of vast service to the whole industrial system of the community. 145

A significant market which Dickson helped develop was located on the West Coast. One company which he dealt with was the Brackman-Kerr Milling Co. which appointed him sole agent to supply milling oats. Shipments of oats to this company, which began in December of 1894, resulted in a request from this company "to ship all the grain you can buy at present prices". 146 The economic link established between this company and the Strathcona district through Dickson was a factor in the construction of the plant to be described later in this chapter.

In December of 1894 he was "also working for a market on the coast for beef, pork and poultry". 147 By January, 1895, it was reported that he had "secured a long worked for market for dressed hogs in Victoria, B. C.". 148

In addition to marketing produce, Dickson was also the agent for the town properties owned by Sache, Cameron and McLeod. He also sold fire insurance, scrip, improved and unimproved farms, loaned money, rented houses and "provided particulars of the town and country upon request". 149

The business career of John Joseph Duggan during the early 1890's serves to illustrate how various Strathcona merchants were also involved in the type of economic activity described above. As noted in Chapter Three, J. J. Duggan was a lumber merchant who sold lumber supplied by the Columbia River Milling Co. and the Calgary Door and Sash Factory. In exchange for these materials, Duggan accepted oats and hay which were shipped to Beaver, British Columbia, and cattle which were shipped to P. Burns & Company. A significant difference between Duggan's career in Strathcona and the careers of Parrish and Dickson was the fact that he remained in Strathcona to become involved in the social and political life of the community while many of the commission agents like Parrish and Dickson departed by the turn of the century to pursue business careers elsewhere.

The arrival in Strathcona of company agencies which provided the type of service outlined above with respect to grain began as early as 1898 when the Winnipeg based Dominion Milling Company constructed an elevator. The operation of their elevator in Strathcona was subsequently taken over by the Alberta Grain Company. The Alberta Grain Company Limited was incorporated under the Companies Ordinance of the North West Territories on October 23rd, 1902.<sup>150</sup> The registered office of the company was the Town of Strathcona. The subscribers to the memorandum of association were G. R. Rowe, S. P. Clark, N. Bawlf, P. Phillips, W. W. McMillan all of Winnipeg, and John J. McFarland of Strathcona. The objectives of the company involved the purchasing, erecting and owning of grain elevators and the purchasing, selling and storing of all other varieties of farm produce. This new company purchased all the elevators in Alberta belonging to the Dominion and

Northern Elevator Companies. John J. McFarland, formerly manager of the Dominion Elevator Company in Alberta for the Dominion Elevator Company, was general manager of the new company and continued to have his headquarters in Strathcona. The facilities provided by the companies to handle grain were more sophisticated than the flat warehouses and the loading platforms provided by the local grain buyers.

In the years after the arrival of the elevator companies and the establishment of local industries to process district agricultural products, some merchants continued to buy or trade agricultural produce as part of their business operations. By the turn of the century, however, independent businessmen resident in or operating through Strathcona no longer monopolized the vital function of linking the farmers of the district with regional, national or international markets.

In addition to serving as a middle man in the grain trade, Strathcona was also a centre for local industry which utilized this commodity. This type of economic growth was initiated in February of 1892 when Messrs. McKenzie, Ross, Holt, Mann and Nanton gave notice of their intention of applying for Letters Patent to incorporate the Edmonton Milling Company "for the purpose and with the power of conducting a milling business and of buying, selling and dealing in grain and produce in the Edmonton Settlement and throughout the Northwest Territories of Canada with its chief place of business at said Edmonton Settlement".<sup>151</sup> These individuals, with the exception of Augustus Meredith Nanton, were all provisional shareholders of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company.



This group of entrepreneurs, however, failed to follow through



with its stated intention and was replaced in May of the same year by John Ritchie, Robert Ritchie, and George Ritchie, all of the township of Bathurst, Ontario, Wm. Ritchie of Grafton, North Dakota, and Wm. J. Orsman of the City of London, England.<sup>152</sup> The name and objectives of the company which was capitalized at \$40,000 remained the same. The mill, which was located adjacent to the Calgary and Edmonton Railway right-of-way near the valley edge, turned out its first flour on March 9th; 1893.

The mill was a three story frame building, thirty-nine feet by forty-eight feet, with a basement.<sup>153</sup> The building, which was entirely encased with iron, rested on a stone foundation which was two feet thick and about ten feet in height. A stone addition to the main building housed the coal-fired seventy-five horse power steam engine. The sophisticated machinery housed in the main building included:

[a] "Cockle Machine" for removing chickweed, wild buckwheat, cockle and all kinds of seeds smaller than a grain of wheat . . . separators used for removing barley, oats, and other foreign substances from the wheat; 5 double sett [sic] of rollers 9 x 18, of the "Alis" make . . . 6 flour packers, 1 roller and 5 hand packers . . . 1 sett [sic] of Bu stones for making chop feed; 1 forty bushel hopper scale and 2 platform scales . . . 3 purifiers of the E. P. Smith pattern; 2 bran dusters and one shorts duster . . . 1 bran scalper; 6 double sett [sic] of reels or bolts for grading the flour . . . [a] smut or scouring machine "The Eureka" manufactured at Silver Creek, N. Y. 154

The most significant feature of the mill was its use of rollers to  wheat. Such a facility had been hitherto unavailable to  district farmers.

The production capacity of the mill as originally built in 1892 was seventy-five barrels per twenty-four hours or seventy-five bags

in twelve hours. The construction of an elevator outside the main building in 1895 and the installation of two additional sets of rollers in 1899 increased its production capacity to 150 barrels per twenty-four hours.<sup>155</sup> Upon its completion, it was patronized by farmers located north of the river at St. Albert and Belmont as well as farmers from as far south as Wetaskiwin. Stony Plain farmers also made use of the mill when ice on the North Saskatchewan River permitted. In 1895 a retail store was opened on the north side of the river for the convenience of its Edmonton customers. The products of the mill included four brands of flour as well as bran, shorts and chop feed. Robert Ritchie throughout the period from 1892 to 1912 remained as manager and a significant shareholder of the company.

In 1895 a second and equally sophisticated mill designed primarily to process oats was built by the Brackman-Kerr Company Limited at a point adjacent to the railway tracks south of the plant of the Edmonton Milling Company.<sup>156</sup> As noted earlier, this was a British Columbia based organization which had its head office in Victoria. The mill, which was constructed by Dilbert Bros. Mfg. Co. of San Francisco, California, was described by the South Edmonton News in 1895 as "the only oatmeal mill in the Northwest and is of the most modern type in every particular, being equally as good, if not better than their mills at Victoria and New Westminster".<sup>157</sup> The mill, which was driven by a coal-fired seventy-five horse power steam engine, included the latest in oat hullers, oatmeal grinders, roll chopping mills, dry kilns, elevators, cleaning machinery and dust collectors.<sup>158</sup> The mill in 1895 employed six men and had a production capacity of 100 barrels per twenty-four hours. Its labour force and production capacity had

been increased to twenty men and 150 barrels per twenty-four hours respectively by 1912.<sup>159</sup> The products of the plant included oatmeal, barley of the potted and pearl varieties, wheat flakes, rolled oats and other cereals. Soon after the completion of the mill, J. W. Lines was appointed to the position of local manager. He retired from this position in 1908 to be replaced by R. T. Purvis. The Strathcona office of the Brackman-Kerr Milling Co. Limited served as its headquarters in Alberta as agricultural settlement and the expansion of the railways permitted the construction of additional elevators in other Northern Alberta communities.

The livestock raised by district farmers when not exported also found its way to processing plants in this community. Strathcona companies involved in the meat packing industry were John Gainer & Company and the Vogel Meat & Packing Co. Limited. The firm of John Gainer & Company was established by the one Strathcona entrepreneur who built a business organization which survived for some time beyond the twenty-one years under study. John Gainer, who was born in St. Mary's, Ontario, in 1858, had spent some time in North Dakota and Pilot Mound, Manitoba, before arriving in Strathcona soon after the completion of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway.<sup>160</sup> Upon his arrival, he opened a meat market and bakery with a large feed stable attached in October, 1891. Initially his processing of Strathcona district livestock was done on a modest basis at a shop located on 103rd Street. By 1902, however, he had constructed a separate slaughterhouse near the railway station and a brick retail store located on Whyte Avenue. This first slaughterhouse was subsequently replaced by a packing plant built at Mill Creek, along the right-of-way of the Edmonton,

Yukon and Pacific Railway. By 1906 he had established retail meat markets and buying stations at Edmonton and Wetaskiwin. In 1911 Gainers Limited with John Gainer as President was incorporated.

The Vogel Meat and Packing Company was the outgrowth of the entrepreneurial talents of Wilhelm August Max Vogel. He emigrated to Canada from Germany in 1887 settling first in Manitoba before arriving in Edmonton in the spring of 1891.<sup>161</sup> In 1895 in partnership with Mr. Mellon he acquired the butchershop in Strathcona operated by Alfred Cover. This partnership endured until 1897 when Vogel became the sole proprietor of the shop. In December of 1901 his business interests shifted from the retail trade in meat to meat packing with the incorporation of the Vogel Meat and Packing Company Limited.<sup>162</sup> The construction of the plant, which was located in Mill Creek along the right-of-way of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway, was undertaken in 1903. The equipment installed in the plant included a Linde ice machine which was an ammonia refrigeration system manufactured by the Fred Wolf Co. of Chicago.<sup>163</sup> During the years that this company was in operation, it purchased cattle, hogs, calves, sheep, poultry and hides which were shipped live or processed in the plant. These facilities were utilized by the company until 1910 when Wm. Vogel retired from business. In March, 1911, the plant was leased by the P. Burns & Co. on a temporary basis.

Three additional meat processing plants which were established by Edmonton and Calgary based entrepreneurs also operated in Strathcona. The two Edmonton firms were the Gallagher-Hull Meat & Packing Company Limited and the Edmonton Meat Market, J. Hehsdoerfer, proprietor, both of which had plants on the Cloverdale Flats. The firm of P. Burns &

Co. also constructed a packing plant at the south end of the railway yards in 1906.

Another company whose operations were linked in part to the agricultural resources of the Strathcona district was the tannery of F. Beddard who was an American from St. Paul, Minnesota. This tannery had commenced operations as early as October, 1897, when they advertised that they were "prepared to tan first class style fur of all kinds, hides for robes, moccasin leather, shoepack leather, upper harness and lace leather".<sup>164</sup> Initially the tannery operations were conducted in two log buildings located at the northwest corner of Whyte Avenue and 110th Street. In June, 1898, the tannery was relocated in Walterdale west of John Walter's sawmill where a more substantial building was erected. By 1902 the extent of the business conducted by this firm had grown significantly:

Most of the product of the tannery is shipped to Calgary and to Vancouver to the leather trade. Mr. Beddard has a standing order of 50 hides per month of lattigo leather from one firm in Calgary and 100 sheep skins tanned with the wool on for the lining of saddles. At the present time he has in process of tanning 100 sides of beef, 150 of sheep and 30 cow robes. Over 800 sheep skins have been tanned and shipped in the last year. Considerable custom work is done for the farmers, especially in the making of robes and rugs and business of this sort comes from the country as far south as Lacombe as well as from the far north. Many musk ox hides from the Barren Lands of the MacKenzie find their way into the vats of the tannery and come out elegant robes for the swell equipages of the eastern cities.<sup>165</sup>

In addition to agricultural commodities, the surrounding district also provided timber resources which were to play a role in the industrial development of Strathcona. One Strathcona company that was involved on a large scale in the timber trade was John Walter, Limited.

Walter's initial venture into the timber trade was his acquisition of a portable sawmill which he had in operation by the fall of 1894.<sup>166</sup>

In 1895 he joined in a partnership with William Humberstone in order to establish a permanent operation.<sup>167</sup> This partnership endured until November, 1901. In February, 1905, John Walter, Limited, was incorporated under the Companies Ordinance of the Northwest Territories.<sup>168</sup>

The timber leases operated by this firm were located 125 miles up river from Strathcona.<sup>169</sup> The timber, which consisted mainly of spruce and tamarac, was cut by crews working through the winter and stockpiled in order to be floated down river in the spring for processing at Strathcona during the summer. The amount of timber cut each winter and the size of the plant which was established in Strathcona to receive the logs each spring increased progressively during the period from 1895

to 1912. In December, 1903, the Strathcona Plaindealer gave the following description of the mill:

The mill proper has a floor space of about 20,000 square feet . . . the power is obtained from 50 h. p. boilers and three engines have a combined capacity of 175 h. p. Before the winter is over Mr. Walter expects to have another 50 h. p. boiler installed which will be used exclusively to generate power for the steam feed of the log carriages . . . There are two large circular saws and a forty inch gang saw. There are three planers for dressing lumber as it comes from the saw and a fourth will be installed shortly. A machine for cutting slabs and edgings into uniform stove lengths and having a capacity of 75 loads per day was put in last spring. There is a lath machine with a capacity of 12,000 laths per day of ten hours. 170

In 1903 the mill, which employed 100 men, processed 6,000,000 feet of timber.<sup>171</sup> By 1911 the combined capacity of the Strathcona mill and the Edmonton mill, which had been built in 1906, was between 135 and 140,000 feet per day.<sup>172</sup> The products of the two mills in-

cluded rough and dressed lumber, sash, doors, mouldings, lath and railway ties. At the Strathcona mill a portion of the output was utilized in a carriage and sleigh works as well as a boat building yard. This yard built a variety of river craft including the "City of Edmonton" which was launched in August, 1909. It was acclaimed as the steamboat which has "eclipsed anything in the line of river boats that has ever been seen on the Saskatchewan".<sup>173</sup> It was used as a pleasure craft and in Walter's sawmill operations in the Edmonton area.

A second company involved in the timber trade was the Edmonton Lumber Company which operated a mill on the Cloverdale Flats. This was an Edmonton based organization which had been incorporated in 1905.<sup>174</sup> The president of this company was William H. Clark and A. West was secretary-treasurer.

Their operation was similar to that conducted by John Walter, Limited, but on a reduced scale. In 1911 their mill had a capacity of 35,000 feet a day and produced on an average of three and a half million feet of lumber per year.<sup>175</sup> The company employed forty men at the mill and 100 to 120 men in the woods each winter.<sup>176</sup>

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In addition to these companies which were directly involved in harvesting the forest resources, Strathcona also had other companies which were involved in the secondary industries associated with the timber trade such as the door and sash factory operated by R. B. Bissett between 1898 and 1910. The products of the mill included doors, sash, mouldings, brackets and general millwork.

Strathcona was also fortunate with respect to the availability of on-site resources which could support industrial growth. The resources that were in ready supply included clay suitable for the

manufacture of brick, and coal deposits. The first brick yard was established by C. A. Irwin in May, 1895, on the northeast corner of the farm of Mr. James McKernan about a mile and a quarter from the station.<sup>177</sup> This operation did not, however, remain as a permanent part of the economy of Strathcona.

By the turn of the century, however, two additional plants had been established by the Pollard Brothers and the Edmonton Press Brick Co. Limited. The plant operated by the Pollard Brothers was initially located a short distance south of town on land purchased from Thomas Anderson. By July, 1899, the operations of the company had been re-located on the Flats near Walter's mill. The product of this plant which found:

a ready market not only in Strathcona and Edmonton but in Calgary and other towns along the C. & E. . . . [was] a very substantial stiff mud red brick suitable for rough or fine building purposes. 178

By 1902 eighteen men were employed at the plant in order to produce 1,000,000 bricks.<sup>179</sup> In 1903 a press brick machine was added to the plant in order "to supply the increasing demand for ornamental and plain press brick".<sup>180</sup>

The Edmonton Press Brick Co. Limited established their operations in 1900 on the Cloverdale Flats. The promoters of this company were Peter Anderson and James Ross of Ross Brothers Limited hardware merchants, Edmonton. The plant owned by the Company housed a machine for stiff mud brick and another for dry press brick suitable for the facings of structures.<sup>181</sup> The output during the first year of operation was approximately 300,000 bricks. Its output in 1908 was anticipated to be over twelve million.<sup>182</sup> In 1900 about twenty men were



engaged at the plant. By 1908 this number had grown to over a hundred. The products of the factory included red pressed, common, ornamental and fire brick, sewer brick, as well as drain tile and terra cotta. The brick produced in this plant was used to build a number of buildings in both Edmonton and Strathcona including John McDougall's brick residence, McDougall & Secord's brick block, Queen's Avenue School, Holy Trinity and Presbyterian Churches and a large number of private residences.

The second natural resource which occurred within the townsite was coal. The two significant coal mines which were developed to exploit this resource were operated by the Strathcona Coal Company and the Twin City Coal Company Limited. The Strathcona Coal Company was another venture involving the enterprising John Walter. In 1905 he joined with W. E. Ross, the Strathcona hardware merchant, and A. C. Rutherford for the purpose of developing the coal deposits located on his property. The pit head of the mine was located behind Walter's sawmill near the top of the valley. The Strathcona Plaindealer noted that the mine made:

"an advance in coal mining in Northern Alberta in that it is the first mine to be operated with a perpendicular shaft. Hitherto all mines in this part of the world have been drift mines run into the river and creek banks on the level of the coal seams worked". 183

By February of 1906 the company employed seventeen men who were mining coal at the rate of twenty-two to twenty-five tons per day of ten hours and three teams which were making six trips into Strathcona and five trips into Edmonton per day. 184 One Strathcona customer was the City of Strathcona's power plant located at the east end of

Walterdale Flats. This mine was in production from 1905 to 1911 during which time a total of 78,485 tons of coal were produced.<sup>185</sup>

The Twin City Coal Company Limited was a Toronto based organization whose president was R. L. McIntyre of Messrs. McGregor and McIntyre. This mine was developed in 1908 and continued to operate until 1921. During this period of operation it produced a total of 506,586 tons of coal.<sup>186</sup> The pit head of this mine was located at the northern end of Mill Creek Ravine along the right-of-way of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway. The local promoter of this company was J. B. Brenton of Edmonton who was the proprietor of the City Coal Company mine on Rat Creek north of Edmonton.

A number of other coal mines were in operation within the immediate vicinity of Strathcona during the period 1891 to 1912. Strathcona did not, however, play a significant role in the operation or ownership of these mines.

A second type of mining operation which was carried on in the immediate vicinity of Strathcona and which had a significance with respect to the economic development of this community was gold dredging. The dredges used in these operations had been constructed in many cases in John Walter's boat yard. One Strathcona based company which was engaged in this activity was the Star Mining Company. This company was incorporated under Letters Patent dated August 9th, 1897.<sup>187</sup> Its provisional directors were James Tait McLaren, Robert Ritchie, William Henry Sheppard, William Jackson and Alexander Cameron Rutherford, all of Strathcona. The company operated a dredge for a period of three years on the North Saskatchewan in the vicinity of Strathcona prior to its dissolution on July 2nd, 1902.

The economic base of Strathcona was further diversified by the plants operated by the Jackson Brothers, Strathcona Brewing and Malting Company and J. M. Nettleton.

The Jackson Brothers prior to their arrival in Strathcona in 1894 had worked as machinists in the Canadian Pacific Railway shops in Toronto.<sup>188</sup> Initially they established a small machine shop on Whyte Avenue where repairs to steam engines could be made. They were also called upon to install and maintain the steam engines operated by the Edmonton Milling Company, Brackman-Kerr Milling Co. and John Walter's sawmill. The steam engines operated by district farmers frequently found their way to the Jackson Brothers shop for repairs.

By 1899 they had constructed a foundry which manufactured a variety of iron cast items including heaters and "casting for machinery in all parts of Northern Alberta as well as for mills at Peace River and steamers on the Mackenzie".<sup>189</sup> By 1902 the plant had grown to include:

three lathes . . . a huge iron planer . . .  
 having capacity for work 24 x 24 inches . . .  
 drill press bolt machine, emery wheels and a  
 full complement of machinist tools also a large  
 stock of brass goods. 190

The foundry, which had a capacity of 40,000 pounds of casting per week, and the machine shop employed eight to ten machinists, moulders and boiler makers.

In 1903 machinery for the manufacture of bolts and burrs as well as machinery for the grinding and corrugating of mill rolls was installed. The significance of the latter addition was noted in the Strathcona Plaindealer as follows:

This is the only machine of its kind in Western Canada. Heretofore all the flour and oatmeal mills in the west had to send their

rolls to Minneapolis or elsewhere on the American side of the line to be ground and corrugated at a great cost of time and money. Henceforth this work can all come to Strathcona.

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The Strathcona Brewing and Malting Company Limited owed its beginning to Robert Oschner who organized the South Edmonton Lager Beer Brewing Company and built a plant in the spring of 1895.<sup>192</sup> This was not the first brewing establishment in this community. In September of 1894 a brewery operated by Hall, Gibson and Flynn opened for business.<sup>193</sup> This brewery, which was located near the Low Level Bridge, ceased operations soon after completion of the brewery operated by Robert Oschner. The products of the Oschner Brewery included porter and ales as well as lager beer. In 1902 Robert Oschner made major renovations to the plant which included the construction of additional buildings as well as the introduction of automatic bottling equipment having a capacity of 50,000 bottles per day.<sup>194</sup> In addition to the main plant in Strathcona, Robert Oschner also owned a small brewery in Edmonton formerly owned by Kelly and Omand. The South Edmonton Brewing Company also had agents at Fort Saskatchewan, St. Albert and Edmonton who sold lager and porter.

In October, 1903, the concern was taken over by a new company of Strathcona and Edmonton businessmen known as the Alberta Brewing and Malting Co. Ltd. Mr. Oschner, who retained an interest in the business, was appointed manager. The Strathcona Plaindealer noted that it was "the purpose of the new company to push business and make extensive enlargements of the plant".<sup>195</sup>

In December, 1906, a second change of ownership took place which resulted in its head office being moved to Waskiwin.<sup>196</sup> The officers of this new company were J. P. Cross, President, who resided at Wetaskiwin.

kiwin; Alex Dow, General Manager; A. Schmid, Secretary-Treasurer; and Fred Geisler, Plant Manager. These new owners also made an investment in new plant facilities.

J. M. Nettleton established his candy factory in Strathcona in October, 1903. Prior to embarking on a career in the west, he had spent thirty-five years in the employ of Abbot, Grant & Co., manufacturers of biscuits and confectionery at Brockville, Ontario.<sup>197</sup> The products of his factory included peanut toffy, clove apples, all-day suckers, bon-ton chews, hoathound sticks, vanilla and strawberry creams, assorted sticks, butter cups, walnut, peanut and almond nut bars, mixed candy canes and bulk molasses stick, lemon rock and Italian creams.

The foregoing description of Strathcona's industrial and commercial development has outlined how both investment capital for plants and handling facilities as well as embryonic captains of industry, whose own entrepreneurial talents allowed them to build significant economic organizations, were attracted to the townsite. The attraction of capital to this new townsite and the success achieved by Strathcona's own entrepreneurs reflects the economic opportunities and changes initiated by the construction of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway.

These same economic opportunities also attracted and provided a livelihood for a number of individuals who establish retail businesses where merchandise imported from the industrial centres of Eastern Canada and the United States was made available to town residents and district farmers. The growth of the Strathcona merchant community entailed the establishment of a number of general stores

which sold a full line of merchandise ranging from groceries to clothing. A number of stores were also established which specialized in hardware, harness, medicine, clothing and furniture. The development of this sector of Strathcona's economy did not, however, continue to grow to the same degree in size or complexity as has been noted with respect to its industrial development. By 1900 the type and number of the retail businesses operating in Strathcona had stabilized. Despite this stability, Strathcona's merchant community was frequently changing as individual merchants sold out in order to engage in other types of economic activities in Strathcona or move on to other communities. In selling out, these individuals would vacate their premises and sell the remaining portion of their inventory to a new tenant wishing to continue the same type of business under a new name. Merchants who established themselves in Strathcona for a significant length of time and who played a role in the social and political life of the community included McLaren & Co., Arthur Davies, Douglas Brothers, Frank Cowles and W. E. Ross. The firm of McLaren & Co. consisted of Messrs. William and James T. McLaren who resided in Strathcona and their cousin Don McLaren, who resided in Ottawa. They first established themselves as general merchants in Strathcona in November, 1894, when they "purchased the stock and goodwill of Mr. Harry Wilson, of the well and favourably known Post Office Store . . .".<sup>198</sup> The merchandise available at the store operated by this company included clothing, home furnishings and groceries. The company was in operation until 1903 when the death of Don McLaren necessitated the dissolution of the partnership. The stock of McLaren & Co. was acquired by C. Sugerman & Co. via J. H. Morris & Co. of Edmonton. The senior member of the

firm, Mr. C. Sugerman, had been in business in Berlin and Toronto, Ontario, for twenty-five years before he took advantage of this opportunity to establish himself in business in the west.<sup>199</sup>

Arthur Davies was a native of Wales, born in Llandewy in September, 1868.<sup>200</sup> During his youth Mr. Davies attended the public schools and the University of Aberystwith, Wales, completing his education in South Kensington Science and Art Schools at London. Upon the completion of his education, he entered the wholesale and retail grocery trade in Wales. In 1895 he emigrated to Canada and set up a general store in Strathcona which he operated until 1904. In that year he entered the real estate and financial investment business. A significant difference between the operations of Arthur Davies and the other merchants of Strathcona was his involvement in the wholesale trade for points north of Edmonton.

The Douglas Brothers, who were natives of Lanark County, Ontario, established their business in Strathcona in September, 1899:

This concern has been identified with Strathcona from the days when it first began to be heard of. Practically it was in its swaddling clothes when the business of Douglas Bros. was founded and the enterprise in its infancy corresponded to the youthfulness of the community, inasmuch as the stock was small, the store occupying little space and very few assistants being needed. But from September, 1899, to September, 1911, there have been more progressive steps, the store has been enlarged four times, each department has been given more space and heavier stock, up-to-date equipment has been installed and more staff comprising sixteen people, while three teams are also kept in commission.

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The transition of this business operation from a general store to a department store reflects the greater role which urban residents were playing in the business operations of Strathcona's merchant community.

The first drug store in Strathcona was established in February, 1893, when Frank Cowles arrived from Ontario. He remained in business throughout the period under study. At this store he prepared prescriptions as well as sold patent medicines, sick room supplies, confectionery, stationery, novelties and "the numerous small and fancy goods which are generally to be found in a first class family drug store".<sup>202</sup>

W. E. Ross began his business career in Strathcona in 1894 when he built one of the first brick business blocks on Whyte Avenue.<sup>203</sup> In 1897 he purchased the hardware business of John J. Fergusson which he continued until his retirement from business. At this store a variety of hardware items including household items such as stoves, as well as blacksmith tools, farm implements such as drills and sporting equipment were available.

The third component of Strathcona's economic growth during the period 1891 to 1912 concerns those individuals and companies whose function was providing services to the immediate urban community and the surrounding district rather than the utilization, export and/or import of commodities. The role of Strathcona as a service centre has already been noted with respect to the Jackson Brothers machine shop and foundry. In addition to the Jackson Brothers, the various professions and building trades were also represented. Dr. Baldwin, Strathcona's first resident physician, arrived in January, 1893, at which time he established a temporary office and residence in the Hotel Edmonton. He remained in Strathcona until 1897. The doctor most identified with this community was Wilbert McIntyre who settled in Strathcona in 1902. He was a native of Victoria County, Ontario,



where he had been born in 1867. He graduated from the University of Toronto Medical School in the class of 1898. Before entering medical school, he had spent a winter teaching in the Indian Mission School at White Fish Lake seventy-five miles northeast of Strathcona; a season on a ranch near Calgary; and had taught at the Winnipeg Business College. After graduation he initially started a medical practice in the east before moving to Strathcona. In 1906 he was elected as a Liberal in the by-election for the Federal constituency of Strathcona. He represented Strathcona until his sudden death in 1909. The medical assistance available also included the services of dentists such as Dr. Donald Marion who established his practice in the community in 1903. Dr. Marion, who was a graduate of the Chicago College of Dentistry, made periodic professional visits to Leduc when he first established his practice in Strathcona.

The most notable representative of the legal profession was Alexander Cameron Rutherford. Born to Scottish immigrant parents on their farm near Ottawa, Rutherford was educated in the public schools of Ontario and at Woodstock College and McGill University (B. A., B. C. L.). He was admitted to the Ontario bar in 1885. In June, 1895, he came west with his wife and two children and established a law practice in Strathcona. In July, 1899, he formed a partnership with F. C. Jamieson which was to later include A. T. Mode and Charles R. Grant. In 1902 he was elected to the Territorial Legislature which he served as Deputy Speaker. Elected first leader of the Alberta Liberal Association in 1905, Rutherford was called to form the first government when Alberta became a province.

The surveyor and land guide services of Captain Edward C. Dawson

were also available to the many incoming settlers. Strathcona's resident veterinarian from March, 1906, to 1911 was J. C. Wainwright. The firm of Wilson and Herrold, architects and structural engineers, was established in Strathcona in 1907. Among the works carried out from designs and under the supervision of Wilson and Herrold were the fire hall, City Hall, the City Library, the residence of the Hon. A. C. Rutherford, and Strathcona Hospital. Arthur G. Wilson who was a licentiate of the Royal Institute of British Architects, articulated with J. Murray Robertson, F.R.I.B.A., at Dundee, Scotland, before coming to Canada. D. Easton Herrold gained his professional training in Edinburgh, Scotland, in the offices of J. Graham Fairley, F.R.I.B.A., before emigrating to Canada.

Building trades such as painters, carpenters, electricians and plumbers were also represented in Strathcona. Additional services were provided by financial agents, real estate agents and auctioneers. One firm that provided all three services was J. G. Tipton and Sons. J. G. Tipton was an American who had been a lawyer in the States of Illinois, Iowa and Nebraska before coming to Strathcona in 1897. In 1903 he was admitted to the Law Society of the Northwest Territories and permitted to continue his legal practice. In addition to his legal business, he also served in association with his sons as an insurance and financial agent as well as an auctioneer. The firm of J. G. Tipton & Sons also had extensive real estate interests in Strathcona and district.

The hotels of Strathcona were also an important part of the services available in this community. These hotels served a variety of functions such as: providing a temporary residence for newly arrived residents of Strathcona while permanent accommodation was located;

providing temporary office space for various professional people while they sought a permanent location for their offices; providing temporary accommodation for people who were travelling to Edmonton but who were prevented temporarily from crossing the river. The hotel business thrived in the spring and the fall when break-up and freeze-up prevented the ice bridge or the ferry from being used. The hotels also provided accommodation for commercial travellers and individuals looking over the land for possible settlement. The hotels with the exception of the temperance establishments also operated bars. Two notable hotels built in Strathcona were the Edmonton House and the Raymond. The Edmonton House, which was the first hotel built on the site, was constructed by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company. It was leased to W. J. Sharples upon its completion and finally sold to W. H. Sheppard in 1904. The Raymond Hotel was built in 1893 by Erskine N. Raymond, "an English gentleman of means who on visiting the district was much impressed with the character of the country and the prospects of substantial growth".<sup>204</sup> This hotel offered:

The first Dining Saloon in Northern Alberta especially suited for dances and concerts. The best brands of Wines, Liquors and Cigars obtainable, to be had at the bar. First class cuisine. Full size English Billiard Table by S. May & Co. Free bus to and from all trains. First class livery in connection.

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The economic growth described above has indicated that the railway served as the catalyst in this process. Between 1891 and 1906, however, the railway did not contribute significantly to the economic base of Strathcona through investment in terminal facilities with the exception of the structure erected in August of 1891. The manner in which the Canadian Pacific Railway operated the Calgary and Edmonton line also

did not result in a large number of railway employees being resident in the community.

In 1906, however, the C. P. R. undertook a re-organization of its Edmonton to Calgary operation with the result that Strathcona was significantly upgraded in order to serve as its Northern Alberta terminus. This upgrading involved an agreement negotiated in June, 1906, between the Town of Strathcona and the Canadian Pacific Railway. The terms of this agreement called for the Town to give the C. P. R. up to seventy acres of land exempt from taxation for fifteen years.<sup>206</sup> "In return for this consideration the company [agreed] to make Strathcona their chief divisional point in Northern Alberta and to locate their terminals here for their northwestern lines via Saskatoon and Wetaskiwin."<sup>207</sup>

The immediate economic impact of this agreement as estimated by Superintendent Jamieson of the C. P. R. entailed an appropriation of \$50,000 for yard extensions, a twelve stall roundhouse and a new coal shed. Between 1906 and 1912 Strathcona also benefited from the construction of additional buildings and a rise in the number of C. P. R. employees stationed at Strathcona because of its new role as a divisional point.

The foregoing material has outlined how Strathcona achieved steady economic growth after its establishment as a Calgary and Edmonton Railway townsite in 1891. Strathcona's economic growth during the 1890's was, however, characterized by the problem of a limited hinterland. Limiting factors included geographical features and other urban centres which could compete effectively for control of the region. Geography played a role through the Beaver Hills which created problems for road construction to the east and the North Saskatchewan River which presented problems of establishing transportation linkages to a

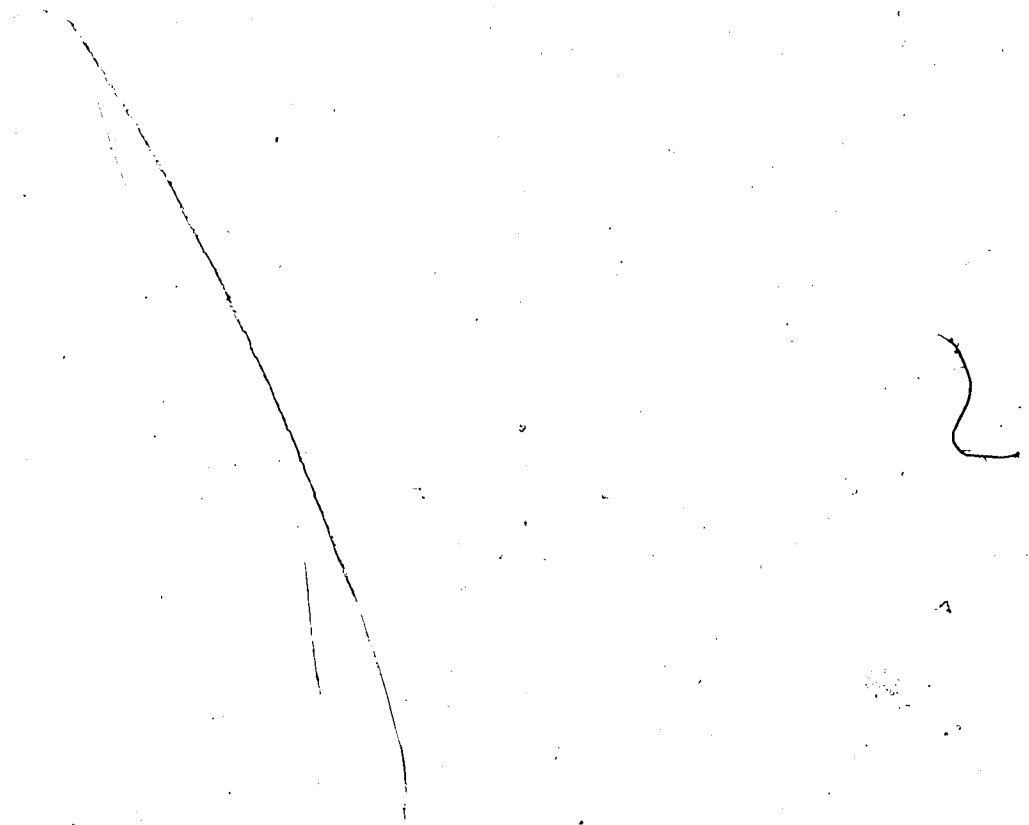
potential hinterland to the north and west.

The need for more adequate transportation facilities was recognized as early as 1894 by Thomas Anderson, Crown Timber Agent, who indicated in his Annual Report of that year that there was a need for a direct road from the station at Strathcona to the region east of Strathcona. This deficiency affected the ability of Strathcona merchants to expand and the attractiveness of Strathcona as a place for investment by wholesale firms. In addition to the constraints imposed by geography, Strathcona was also competing for influence within the region with Edmonton and Wetaskiwin. Wetaskiwin played the role of fragmenting a potential hinterland to the south. Edmonton as shall be noted in Chapter Five, was actively engaged in a program to ensure its metropolitan destiny.

Strathcona's economic problem of limited access to a hinterland was not helped by the fact that the Calgary and Edmonton Railway failed to make a sustained effort to serve as the patron of Strathcona in the 1890's. The Canadian Pacific Railway was reluctant to assume that position until 1906 when a terminal agreement as noted earlier was negotiated. Prior to 1903 when the Canadian Pacific Railway took control of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, it followed a policy of deliberate neglect. The reasons for such an attitude were noted in Thomas Shaughnessy's reply to a request for fences along the Calgary and Edmonton Railway dated May 4th, 1892:

Some time ago you wrote me on the subject of fencing on the Calgary & Edmonton Road, enclosing this letter from Mr. Gilmer. You understand that we are operating this railway and the Regina & Long Lake under short leases, and we should not expend one unnecessary penny in permanent improvements while there is a possibility of the roads

passing out of our hands at the end of three or four years. It will be cheaper to take our chances on paying for an occasional cow killed, than expend considerable sums in fencing lines over which our control may be so shortlived. 208



Footnotes

- 145 South Edmonton News, 7 February 1895.
- 146 South Edmonton News, 27 December 1894.
- 147 South Edmonton News, 27 December 1894.
- 148 South Edmonton News, 24 January 1895.
- 149 South Edmonton News, 8 November 1894.
- 150 Annual Report of the Territorial Secretary, 1902.
- 151 Edmonton Bulletin, 20 February 1892.
- 152 Edmonton Bulletin, 30 May 1892.
- 153 South Edmonton News, 24 January 1895.
- 154 Ibid.
- 155 Charles E. Goad, Insurance Map Strathcona, 1899, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Accession 71.364.
- 156 South Edmonton News, 7 November 1895.
- 157 Ibid.
- 158 Ibid.
- 159 Charles E. Goad, Insurance Map Edmonton, Vol. II, 1913, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Accession 71.764.
- 160 The Alberta Story, Information File, City of Edmonton Archives.
- 161 Souvenir of Alberta: Being a General Resume of the Province, With Portraits, Engravings and Biographies of a Number of the Men Who have Helped to Build this Great New Province of the West, (Winnipeg: Salesman Publishing Co., 1906), p. 74.
- 162 Annual Report of the Territorial Secretary, 1901.
- 163 Strathcona Plaindealer, 10 July 1903.
- 164 South Edmonton News, 28 October 1897.
- 165 Strathcona Plaindealer, 12 December 1902.
- 166 South Edmonton News, 8 November 1894.
- 167 William Humberstone was an Edmonton entrepreneur who operated a brickyard and a coal mine in addition to his business interests with John Walter.

- 168 Annual Report of the Territorial Secretary, 1905, p. 95.
- 169 Edmonton Bulletin, Greater Edmonton Number, 1911.
- 170 Strathcona Plaindealer, December 1903.
- 171 Ibid.
- 172 Edmonton Bulletin, Greater Edmonton Number, 1911.
- 173 Edmonton Bulletin, 19 August 1909.
- 174 Edmonton Bulletin, Greater Edmonton Number, 1911.
- 175 Ibid.
- 176 Ibid.
- 177 South Edmonton News, 2 May 1895.
- 178 Alberta Plaindealer, 22 August 1902.
- 179 Ibid.
- 180 Strathcona Plaindealer, 24 July 1903.
- 181 Strathcona Plaindealer, 22 July 1904.
- 182 Edmonton Bulletin, 4 April 1908.
- 183 Alberta Plaindealer, 9 February 1906.
- 184 Ibid.
- 185 R. S. Taylor, Atlas: Coal-mine workings of the Edmonton Area,  
(Edmonton: Spence Taylor and Associates Limited, 1971), p. 3.
- 186 Ibid., p. 15.
- 187 Annual Report of the Territorial Secretary, 1901, p. 38.
- 188 Strathcona Plaindealer, 7 November 1902.
- 189 Ibid.
- 190 Ibid.
- 191 Strathcona Plaindealer, 4 September 1903.
- 192 South Edmonton News, 25 April 1895.
- 193 South Edmonton News, 15 November 1894.



- 194 Alberta Plaindealer, 12 September 1902.
- 195 Strathcona Plaindealer, 2 October 1903.
- 196 Alberta Gazette, December 1906.
- 197 Alberta Plaindealer, 23 October 1903.
- 198 South Edmonton News, 22 November 1894.
- 199 Strathcona Plaindealer, 30 October 1903.
- 200 A. O. MacRae, History of the Province of Alberta, Vol. 2,  
(Calgary: The Western Canada History Co., 1912), p. 643.
- 201 Edmonton Bulletin, Greater Edmonton Number, 1911.
- 202 Ibid.
- 203 Edmonton Bulletin, 30 April 1894.
- 204 South Edmonton News, 7 March 1895.
- 205 South Edmonton News, 26 March 1894.
- 206 Strathcona Plaindealer, 7 June 1906.
- 207 Ibid.
- 208 Public Archives of Canada, Shaughnessy Letter Book Thirty-one,  
Page 89, Reel M3006.

## Chapter Five

### Metropolitan Dreams and Realities

Chapters One to Four have considered various aspects of Strathcona's internal development. References have been made in these chapters, however, to the types of external relationships which were established and more importantly were anticipated as this community developed in the future. It is important, therefore, to consider what was achieved in terms of metropolitan development and what was anticipated but which failed to materialize.

The metropolitan vision which served as the ideal towards which this community strived was an outgrowth of the circumstances under which the town had been created. As noted in the introduction, Strathcona had been established for the purpose of creating a new site for Edmonton. This objective was specifically stated in an article entitled "Edmonton's Progress" which appeared in a Winnipeg newspaper approximately one month after the completion in July, 1891, of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. This view of the destiny of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway's northern terminus was provided to the newspaper by "a prominent businessman of Winnipeg, who [had] just returned from a trip to Edmonton . . .". 209

The new town of Edmonton has been established by the Calgary & Edmonton Railway Company at its terminus on the south side of the Saskatchewan opposite the fort . . . . The banks of the Saskatchewan at that point are about two hundred and fifty feet high, and the river is about twice the width of the Red so that it has been found necessary to locate the new town permanently on the south side. The present location, however, gives the old settlement easy access to the terminus, and as soon as a traffic bridge, which is to be built, is ready the new place will, it is anticipated, make rapid progress and absorb the business of the district . . . .

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The prominent Winnipeg businessman who provided this information was probably Augustus Meredith Nanton or Charles S. Lott, both of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company. In addition to placing letters in the newspaper, the Calgary and Edmonton Railway through its agent Osler, Hammond and Nanton, corresponded with the Dominion Government with respect to the future of this new community. In a letter dated September 18th, 1891, A. M. Nanton wrote to the Hon. John Carling, Minister of Agriculture, on behalf of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway Company land department. In this letter he proposed that:

the new Emigration building, and the other Public Buildings which it is proposed to erect at [the] Edmonton Settlement should be erected on the Railway town plot . . . . Since the opening of the town plot, about a month ago, a considerable number of buildings have been erected upon sites which have been sold by the Trustees, and businessmen from different parts of the Edmonton Settlement including the portion of the settlement North of the River have located on the new Railway town plot, and a town is being rapidly built up at the place with every prospect of drawing to itself the business of the Settlement.

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Winnipeg's great expectations for and confidence in the future growth of its candidate for the position of dominant urban centre in the region was also shared by a number of citizens within the community. The local press and the Strathcona Board of Trade have already been identified as Strathcona's foremost boosters. Between 1894 and 1912 at least four newspapers were published in Strathcona. These included the Strathcona Chronicle and the Strathcona Plaindealer. The latter newspaper published over the longest period of time and thus was closely identified with Strathcona as a separate community.

The name Strathcona Plaindealer was adopted in 1900 prior to which

it had been published under the names South Edmonton News for the period 1894 to 1896 and the Alberta Plaindealer for the period 1896 to 1900.

The position of editor was held by R. P. Pettiepiece between 1894 and 1896 and by J. Hamilton McDonald between 1896 and 1912. The primary function of the newspaper as stated in the first edition was to promote the interests of the town:

We are desirous of letting outside people know of our excellent farm lands, of what kind of grain, vegetables, etc., can be produced, and of the many advantages the farmers in this district have over those in other parts . . . . We are here in the interests of this town and the people of the district . . . .

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By the end of the first year of publication, the Strathcona Plaindealer was a staunch guardian of and spokesman for Strathcona's civic pride. Having assumed this responsibility, subscriptions were solicited from the citizens on the grounds that it would be contributing to the welfare and promotion of their town.

When we cast our lot with this town some thirteen months ago, a good deal of confidence in the place was required as here seemingly was no room for a newspaper. But as before stated in these columns a newspaper does a great deal to promote a town's interests . . . . And by keeping your local newspaper up to the standard you create a feeling to the outside public that you are a progressive and busy people.

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Throughout the history of this newspaper, it consistently promoted the idea of Strathcona as a separate metropolitan community whose best interests would be served by remaining independent of Edmonton. The function of Strathcona within the region as viewed by the Strathcona Plaindealer was that of an entrepot for Northern Alberta which controlled the trade into and out of this region. In order to ensure that

such development would come about, the Strathcona Plaindealer continually reminded the citizens of their great responsibility and urged them to take the necessary steps to meet the challenge. The newspaper's frequent calls for the creation of a chartered Board of Trade and incorporation which reflected this interest have already been noted in previous chapters. An integral part of the metropolitan theme as presented by the Strathcona Plaindealer was the idea that Strathcona had possibilities for future growth based on its many "natural advantages" which would serve as a magnet for investment capital. In discussing metropolitan growth, the Strathcona Plaindealer frequently confused its future expectations of metropolitan status for Strathcona with the idea that Strathcona had already made great progress towards that goal.

The second group of boosters was the Board of Trade. As noted earlier, the members of the local press played an active part in this organization. The metropolitan vision which it promoted contained many of the same ideas noted above. Its commitment to this idea did not, however, lead it to ignore the realities of Strathcona's development as was the case with the Strathcona Plaindealer. The promotional activities of this organization included the preparation of a number of pamphlets. In 1903 the first booklet was published entitled Strathcona: The Railway Town and Manufacturing Centre of Northern Alberta. The introduction to the pamphlet pointed out that:

We have here on the south bank of the great Saskatchewan River in Northern Alberta as yet only the foundations of [a] monumental city, but the foundations are broad and deep and a great structure will be built upon them. The materials are at hand and the builders are at work.

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These foundations included the fact that it was the northern

terminus of the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific and was "a strategical point on the projected transcontinental line of the Grand Trunk Pacific and on the C. P. R.'s proposed north-western line".<sup>215</sup> With these foundations Strathcona was able to function as the shipping point for "all the grain, cattle, hogs, coal and manufactured products of the far-famed Edmonton and Strathcona districts".<sup>216</sup> These foundations also resulted in the fact that "here are located most of the mills, packing houses and other industrial enterprises of this great region".<sup>217</sup>

This introduction in which its glowing present and future were outlined was followed by an historical sketch of how it had arrived at this position. This sketch stressed its rapid growth from a mere collection of three or four log cabins to the most significant industrial town in the North West Territories.

This historical sketch was followed by an outline of Strathcona's many "natural advantages". These included a site that was high and level with ample supplies of water which were "pure, sparkling, healthful and inviting to the taste".<sup>218</sup> In addition to an abundance of water, Strathcona had an abundance of cheap fuel in the form of lignite coal. In the list of natural advantages it was also pointed out that "everything points to this town becoming a chief divisional point of more than one of the projected railways of the future".<sup>219</sup> Other advantages included the mild climate, the agricultural potential of the region and the abundance of timber and coal resources.

The description of Strathcona's natural advantages was followed by an outline of its public utilities and institutions, manufacturers and various business openings. These openings included a pulp and paper mill, soap factory, sugar beet factory, wholesale grocery and

provision house, cold storage warehouse, sash and door factory and a biscuit factory.

The pamphlet concluded by considering Strathcona's future. This discussion serves to demonstrate the extent to which Strathcona's faith in its own future was an essential part of its character during this period.

An eastern town of 2500 inhabitants has nothing to hope for but existence in the same old rut. The charm of life in a western town having a strategical position in the commerce of a grand blooming district is the assurance of future greatness. It is the morning of life, and we see just ahead the glory of the sun in his might. 220

During its twenty-one years as a separate community, Strathcona was both a failure and a success in terms of the achievement of these metropolitan ambitions. Its most significant success was in its role as the home of the Provincial University. The Provincial Government's intention to create a university was announced during the first session of the first legislature of the Province of Alberta held in the Spring of 1906. The creation of a university for the Province of Alberta was largely the work of Alberta's first Premier, A. C. Rutherford, who also served as the Minister of Education and the M. L. A. from the constituency of Strathcona. The announcement by A. C. Rutherford in the Spring of 1906 that it was the intention of his government to create a university not include a statement concerning the location of such an institution. Many communities, including Strathcona, considered themselves worthy of such an honour and duly made representations to the Premier in this regard. In a letter dated January 31st, 1907, Mayor Mills of Strathcona pointed out to the Premier that "a short time ago the Council appointed a committee to wait on your

Government in connection with the proposed University site".<sup>221</sup> He also pointed out that:

to avoid the noise of deputations which will cause some trouble through others waiting on you for the same purpose. I have therefore suggested to the committee that it will be best to await on you privately on this side of the river at such time you may find it convenient to meet the committee. 222

Some time prior to receiving the letter, however, Premier Rutherford had opened negotiations for the purchase of River lot five of the Edmonton Settlement for use as a university site thus ensuring that Strathcona's metropolitan interests would be served.<sup>223</sup>

Even the Edmonton Bulletin was prepared to acknowledge that the minor victory of Strathcona was in the best interests of the Province:

So far as Edmonton is concerned, she is quite content to see her sister city secure the university, as in its location across the river it is not any farther removed from the capital than if in some outside location in this city. Strathcona is as near the geographical centre of the province as it is possible to locate this important institution, and besides it is in the centre of a district that will be densely populated in a few years, and which now contains a very large agricultural population, as shown by recent census. And the kind of agricultural population around Strathcona is the kind from which in other parts of Canada a large proportion of successful students have been drawn. 224

In addition to being Alberta's University City, Strathcona also played a significant political role in the Territorial, Federal and Provincial constituencies in which it was located. These constituencies were created in 1902, 1904 and 1905 respectively. Strathcona not only supplied the people who represented the constituency but played an important role in the constituency associations which were established.



The achievements noted above made a contribution to Strathcona's realization of its metropolitan ambitions. Success in these endeavours did not, however, diminish the extent to which Strathcona had built its hopes for metropolitan status on economic control of its adjacent regions through railway construction. The recognition of Strathcona of the key role to be played by railways in its future and a description of how this development would take place is provided in the following quote from the 1903 Board of Trade promotional pamphlet:

The climate is all right, the soil is rich; there is immense mineral wealth; but their value to the individual is dependent upon transportation facilities. We grant you that Strathcona or any other town is very much at the mercy of the railways. We have the Calgary and Edmonton line and we have the Canadian Northern. The C. P. R. has recently acquired the C & E line and has decided to span the Saskatchewan River here with a high level from high bank in Strathcona to high bank in Edmonton. They propose construction in the near future of a line from point in Assiniboia on their main line in north-westerly direction to Strathcona which is bound to be the chief divisional point. The Grand Trunk Pacific surveys are but begun hence we cannot determine positively where their line will cross the Saskatchewan on route to Peace River or to the Yellow Head Pass. All projections and the preliminary surveys now in progress show the cross to be at Strathcona; which appears possesses the most feasible and practical site. 225

The key element in Strathcona's design for future metropolitan growth was its argument that it had the best site for the crossing of the North Saskatchewan River. Strathcona had been promoting this idea since the Fall of 1904 when a delegation made up of representatives from the Town Council and the Board of Trade was sent east to meet with the various railway interests.

The proposal that a High Level Bridge be built at Strathcona for use by one or more of the projected transcontinental railways was

designed to solve Strathcona's principal problem of a limited hinterland. Solving this problem depended upon playing a role in one or both of the transcontinental railways and the Canadian Pacific Railway's projected line from Assiniboia.

The events which were to resolve this issue were initiated in 1901 when Mackenzie, Mann & Co., the Hudson's Bay Company, and the City of Edmonton joined together to purchase a tract of land which was to be developed as a terminal and a shipping centre.<sup>226</sup> No evidence exists to suggest that Strathcona was considered as a possible location for the Canadian Northern Railway's terminal facilities or that the Town of Strathcona made any effort to obtain them prior to 1904.

Four years after negotiating the terminal agreement, the mainline of the Canadian Northern was completed into Edmonton. The mainline of the C. N. R. was located to the north of the Beaver Hills and crossed the North Saskatchewan River at Fort Saskatchewan. By crossing at this location the Canadian Northern Railway could take advantage of a bonus offer from Fort Saskatchewan and still have convenient access to Edmonton. The location of this railway served to further integrate the area east of Edmonton into its urban field. This trend had been evident since the construction of the South Victoria Trail in the early 1890's. Following the completion of the mainline to Edmonton, the Canadian Northern undertook the construction of two branchlines north and west from Edmonton. By Spring, 1907, the lines to Morinville and Stony Plain had been completed and were in operation.

The construction activities of the Canadian Northern Railway between 1905 and 1907 had effectively eliminated Strathcona from any role in its mainline operations thus compromising its already questionable.

position as an entrepot for Northern Alberta. The boosters of Strathcona such as the Editor of the Strathcona Plaindealer, failed to recognize the implications of the Canadian Northern Railway's activities north of the river. Strathcona seemed to be content with the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific which had been completed between Edmonton and Strathcona by the C. N. R. in 1902.

The contributions of the Canadian Northern to the economic development of Strathcona may have been greater had Mackenzie and Mann's original plan succeeded of acquiring the Calgary and Edmonton Railway and connecting it with their proposed short Edmonton mileage and ultimately with the Manitoba system.<sup>227</sup> By the turn of the century, however, the C. P. R. were prepared to outbid Mackenzie and Mann for control of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway.

Strathcona's lack of initiative with respect to the Canadian Northern can be explained in part by its trust in the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway as the instrument of its rise to metropolitan status. The activities of various G. T. P. survey parties had provided some justification for the view that the crossing of the North Saskatchewan River would be made at Strathcona. The route of the G. T. P. mainline through Edmonton as filed by the Company with the Department of Railways and Canals in the Fall of 1905, however, indicated that the crossing was to be made at Clover Bar thus eliminating Strathcona. The possibility that Strathcona was to be eliminated from the mainline of the G. T. P. struck at the cornerstone of its plan for metropolitan development. Strathcona's immediate response was a letter from the Board of Trade to the Dominion Government which discussed the implications of this decision and requested Federal Government intervention

on its behalf.

This letter began with a description of three proposed locations of the mainline of the G. T. P. through Edmonton. The first route outlined ran "from the south end of Beaver Lake, passing east of Cooking Lake proper and through the Narrows to Clover Bar and crossing the Saskatchewan at a point about 10 miles North East of the Town".<sup>228</sup> Such a route "while a suitable one has no advantage that can be seen by the ordinary observer and would necessitate the building of a branch-line into Strathcona and the installation of a special service to give us any railway accommodation".<sup>229</sup> The second route noted was a "line passing south of Cooking Lake and turning due north west to a point about 3 miles east of the Town of Strathcona where it crosses the river at a point near the mouth of Rat Creek".<sup>230</sup> This route was criticized because "it has no apparent crossing advantages, and appears to make sudden turns simply to ignore this town. To have the mainline so close and be served by a branchline would seem ridiculous to anyone interested."<sup>231</sup> The third route noted was "a line passing south of Cooking Lake and in a north west direction to a point west of the present C & E Railway tracks, crossing said tracks a mile or so south of the town, then due north through the town to the river".<sup>232</sup> This route was strongly recommended for a number of reasons:

this would give direct connection to the C. P. R. high level bridge and easy access to the C. N. R. and C. P. R. depots in Edmonton. If the company contemplates building of a bridge of its own, this crossing appears to be an excellent site. This route would be about 37 1/2 miles in length from a common point south of Beaver Lake as in distinction to the distance of [the first proposed location which was] 40 miles. This line would cross directly over the site promised by this town as a grant for yard facilities and if terminals be located here all the land required for

such purposes can be conveniently located along this line. 233

Following this outline of the various options available to the G. T. P., the letter noted that "to have Edmonton as our nearest station will hamper materially the residential and industrial interests of this town . . . owing to the heavy grades [which will increase] the distance, difficulty and expense of freight transportation between the business centre of this town and that of Edmonton . . .".<sup>234</sup> The industrial interests of the town as noted in the letter included a number of shipping industries which were listed in detail. The letter also suggested "the possibility of arranging with the C. P. R. Co. for running rights over the C. P. R. high level bridge now definitely located at this point, thus obviating the necessity of a new bridge across the Saskatchewan".<sup>235</sup>

The Strathcona Board of Trade's request for consideration was supported by Peter Talbot, M. P. for Strathcona, in a letter to Sir Wilfrid Laurier dated November 20th, 1905. Laurier's reply was that he had seen "the Grand Trunk people about the location of the line. The matter is now under advice. I can make no promises but I shall give the matter my best efforts."<sup>236</sup> A letter from A. C. Rutherford to Sir Wilfrid Laurier on Strathcona's behalf also received an equally encouraging response:

I feel very strongly as you do that Strathcona should not be overlooked. The matter is now engaging our attention. 237

Laurier's concerns for Strathcona's interests were apparently shared by the Minister of the Department of Railways and Canals, the Hon. Henry R. Emmerson, and Collingwood Schreiber, General Consulting

Engineer for the Government. In November, 1905, both officials inspected the country between Edmonton and Clover Bar on the south side of the river. The results of their inspection were communicated to the G. T. P. on November 27th, 1905.

The minister and I having taken a bird's eye view of the country for some distance east of Strathcona, are under the impression that the most feasible line to be had, approaching Edmonton by passing over a high level bridge crossing the Saskatchewan River at Strathcona, would be to strike off from the line shown on your route map near Vermillion River, thence passing near "Northern", thence south of Cooking Lake, striking to the south of Mill Creek to the south of the proposed high level bridge. 238

Collingwood Schreiber in his correspondence with Frank Morse, Vice-President and General Manager of the G. T. P., also indicated that final approval of the route through Edmonton would not be forthcoming until a new survey of the southern route through Strathcona was undertaken:

I desire to say the Minister of Railways and Canals attaches some importance to this survey being made, as promised by you, to satisfy him and the citizens of Strathcona either that a feasible line can or cannot be obtained on that route, and that until such a survey is made and the information is placed before the Government the route cannot be decided upon, as explained to you the Government are very desirous that the road pass through Strathcona to Edmonton, if an equally favourable location both as regards distance, gradients, and curvature can be obtained. 239

The G. T. P. response to this request was to insist that "owing to the topography of the country, it will not be possible to maintain our grades and follow the line suggested"<sup>240</sup> rather than undertaking a new survey. The topography referred to was that at the Beaver Hills. The Federal Government was thus prepared to support Strathcona's idea that

a bridge across the North Saskatchewan should be built jointly by the C. P. R. and the G. T. P. The problems associated with such a proposal were pointed out to the Dominion Government in January, 1906, by Charles

Melville Hays:

it would be to the advantage of both the Grand Trunk Pacific and Canadian Pacific to have a joint bridge across the South [sic] Saskatchewan River between the two points, and with that idea I had, early last summer, taken the matter up with President Shaughnessy, who, while showing some interest in the matter, had never committed himself to a sufficient extent to warrant our going ahead and determining on taking that route . . . [thus having failed] to receive any definite decision from the Canadian Pacific on the matter, we went ahead with our surveys and found that by far the most practical and desirable entrance, both from the standpoint of convenience of operation and cost of construction, could be found via the Clover Bar crossing, and we, therefore, adopted that as our line. 241

Hays concluded his letter by accusing the C. P. R. of influencing:

the Government in requiring us to change our route, after the indifference shown on their part and failure to act with us, when we first had the matter up for discussion, especially when, as I have been advised, they are now negotiating with the Canadian Northern for use of their existing bridge between Strathcona and Edmonton. 242

Confirmation of the fact that discussions had taken place concerning the joint construction of a bridge at Strathcona and a denial of C. P. R. pressure to force the G. T. P. to change their route at this time was provided by Collingwood Schreiber in a reply dated January 19th, 1906:

I stated to Mr. Morse that both you and Sir Thomas Shaughnessy were agreed that the most sensible arrangement would be that the bridge over the Saskatchewan River between Strathcona and Edmonton should be owned jointly by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, each to own

a half interest, and each to pay one-half of the cost of the construction of the bridge, and I now repeat that both you and Sir Thomas Shaughnessy expressed those views to me upon the occasion of my visiting you both at your respective offices in Montreal some weeks ago, since which the subject has not been broached to me by Sir Thomas Shaughnessy, nor so far as I am aware, has he addressed the Government in the matter. 243

On April 18th, 1906, the G. T. P. having failed to convince the Department that the topography of the land to the east of Strathcona was unsuitable for railway construction, supplied the Federal Government with what it described as a survey through Strathcona. Collingwood Schreiber immediately despatched William McCarthy, Government Inspection Engineer, to do a field inspection of the work. McCarthy reported that:

After carefully examining the plan and profile . . . I made an effort to look over the ground covered by them, but to my surprise I discovered that they merely represented a line that was apparently projected in the office, but which had not been run out on the ground, and later on I further discovered that this line was projected from very insufficient data, the levels being so very wrong that the profile was misleading in the extreme, and instead of assisting me was a detriment . . . . 244

McCarthy, after having satisfied himself "that very little if any dependence was to be placed on the Grand Trunk Pacific projected line . . . decided to run an entirely independent line . . .". 245 The results of this survey and his analysis of the data provided by the G. T. P. were submitted to the Government on May 12th, 1906.

Soon after McCarthy submitted his report, Schreiber's attempts to obtain reliable survey data from the G. T. P. finally met with success as a result of information obtained from a resident of Strathcona who informed him that "a careful survey had been made by the company on the south bank of the river". 246 After frequent requests to the



G. T. P. to turn over the results of this survey, the survey was obtained. Given this information the Government felt that a decision concerning the route could be made.

McCarthy's route was rejected on the grounds that:

it is longer than the direct line on the north side of the river, and is not as favourable as regards alignment as that shown on the survey plan and profile of the Company along the south bank of the river. 247

The final decision became a choice between the north or the south route as surveyed by G. T. P.

A final decision approving the Clover Bar Crossing was made on July 23rd, 1906, based on the following reasons:

That, from the facts submitted it appears, in the first place, a line entering at Strathcona would not only entail very considerable cost of construction in excess of that by the Clover Bar route, but owing to the difficult configuration of the country, would render access to the railway yards at Edmonton impracticable, except by a long detour, passing the City and then returning, a system which would be absolutely destructive to the economical, convenient and expeditious handling of the traffic; and, consequently, inasmuch as this is a vital point in the successful operation of a railway, this feature must, in itself, be regarded as sufficient to take the Strathcona route out of consideration, as a feasible scheme. 248

The failure to achieve any agreement concerning the joint construction of a bridge and the preference given to the metropolitan interests of Edmonton ensured that Strathcona's future expectation had proven to be unjustified.

With respect to this controversy it is important to note that no evidence was found to suggest that the Federal Government made an attempt to force the C. P. R. to co-operate with the G. T. P. with respect to the construction of a joint High Level Bridge. Strathcona's

bridge plan was thus partially wrecked by the failure of the C..P. R. to co-operate and its interest in protecting its own position which did not benefit Strathcona.

Concurrent with the efforts of the Department of Railways and Canals to obtain reliable survey information, the Strathcona Town Council had made a last minute effort to influence the course of events. In March a delegation consisting of representatives from the Council and the Board of Trade travelled to Ottawa in order to meet with the Department of Railways and Canals. The Strathcona Town Council also passed a resolution authorizing the expenditure of sufficient money to make a G. T. P. survey into the Town. The Council also made an offer of land for terminal facilities to the G. T. P. The activities of the Council in the Spring of 1906 proved, however, to be a case of too little too late. The issue had already been settled by the failure of the railway companies to co-operate. The activities of the Town Council were thus largely irrelevant to the interplay of the railway interests.

Strathcona's bitter resentment of the impending outcome of the dispute was expressed to the Laurier Government in May, 1906. In the letter, George F. Downes, Secretary-Treasurer of the Town of Strathcona, reviewed the promise of the Federal Government "that this railway should enter via Strathcona, provided a suitable grade could be found . . . [and] that the matter of increased cost or slightly increased mileage was not material provided the grade was satisfactory".<sup>249</sup> He then pointed out that such a grade had been provided by the McCarthy survey, and that the errors found by McCarthy in the G. T. P. survey supplied to the Government on April 18th demonstrated the total lack of effort on the part of the G. T. P. to consider Strathcona. Given this apparent

betrayal on the part of the Federal Government. Jones proceeded to question the integrity of the government:

In the face of the Minister's statements above referred to and these facts are we to take that the word of a Minister of the Crown is of no moment; that the word of a man holding such an office is to be lightly used throughout the Dominion of Canada as a mere decoy for catching votes? If so, then we respectfully submit that your Government must be sadly lacking in honest support when such means are used to delude an electorate. 250

The letter concluded by drawing attention to Strathcona's long history of support for the Liberal Party and requested intervention on the basis of this record:

In conclusion we would respectfully call your attention to the fact that this town has always, in the face of many rebuffs, been a loyal supporter of your government and not that it is in your power to do that which will benefit us without injuring any rival constituency, we ask you to consider these various points and grant the request of your humble petitioners, that the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway's main line may pass through the municipality of the Town of Strathcona in its approach to the City of Edmonton. 251

Strathcona's third opportunity to expand its role in the railway transportation network of the Canadian West was provided by the Canadian Pacific Railway which had planned the construction of a railway from Assiniboia. The projected western terminus of this line was to be Strathcona. The Canadian Pacific's promise to "make Strathcona" had been delivered in person by Vice-President Whyte during a visit to the community in 1907. The bonus which Strathcona provided the C. P. R. in 1906 had been made in order to ensure that these benefits would be received. Despite the C. P. R.'s good intentions, construction of the line to Strathcona was never completed. The terminal facilities which were constructed did not improve Strathcona's ability to function as a

metropolitan centre. It is also important to note that prior to the establishment of the Strathcona terminals, the C. P. R. had endeavoured to make a deal with the City of Edmonton. The Strathcona terminal facilities therefore reflect Edmonton's position as a metropolitan centre.

The railway construction undertaken in the Edmonton area thus left the railway's situation for Strathcona virtually unchanged from 1891. The only improvements were the two Canadian Northern branchlines noted in Chapter One.

The foregoing description of the railway history of the Edmonton area between 1901 and 1906 has demonstrated how it worked to the advantage of Edmonton and to the disadvantage of Strathcona in the development of these two communities as metropolitan centres. The success achieved by Edmonton in regard to these railways reflects in part a far more aggressive approach by Edmontonians to the question of their metropolitan growth.

A conscious effort by Edmontonians to protect and expand their economic development dates back to 1889 at which time the Edmonton Board of Trade was established, a full thirteen years before a similar institution was established in Strathcona. The creation of this institution by Edmonton businessmen represented the birth of a commercial elite whose interests were clearly identified with the growth and development of the north side townsite.

Throughout the 1880's Edmonton businessmen had looked forward to the day when a railway link would be established. It had thus been anticipated that the construction of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway would terminate in Edmonton. As noted in the introduction, the railway

promoters opted for the establishment of a new town on the south side of the river which developed into the City of Strathcona. Strathcona was thus a direct challenge to the interests of Edmonton and its commercial elite. Frank Oliver's editorial comment of July 18th, 1891, that "the only jealousy that need be shown on the part of the citizens of Edmonton towards the new town is the jealousy to excel in everything that makes a town attractive as a place of business, a place of residence or a place of investment"<sup>252</sup> demonstrated that Edmonton had accepted the challenge and would respond accordingly.

The first indication by the citizens of Edmonton of their determination to remain on the north side of the river came a matter of days after the announcement concerning the location of the terminus when a meeting to discuss incorporation was called. The discussions at the meeting clearly indicated that the south side was to be deliberately excluded from the new community. By 1892, Edmonton had thus created the two institutions which were to be of prime significance in its rise as a metropolitan centre. This development took place a full seven years before Strathcona reluctantly sought incorporation as a town to make a few improvements to the townsite. The location of the terminus on the south side of the river had clearly demonstrated to Edmontonians that any reliance on "natural advantages" without aggressive action would not automatically lead to economic growth.

The most celebrated incident in Edmonton's fight to survive was the so-called "land office steal" of June, 1892. The issue involved in this incident concerned the location of the Federal Government land and timber permit office. Prior to June, 1892, all settlers seeking land had to deal with the land titles office which was located on the

north side of the river. The number of settlers arriving on the south side of the river via the Calgary and Edmonton Railway had resulted in a number of requests that provision be made for the establishment of a land office on the south side of the river. This request was supported by a number of new arrivals in Strathcona as well as the Calgary and Edmonton Townsite Company.

The government responded by requesting that Thomas Anderson, the Dominion Land Agent and Crown Timber Agent, move a portion of the records to the south side. On the day appointed for the transfer, the citizens of Edmonton physically prevented it from taking place until such time as a promise was obtained from the Federal Government indicating that this did not mean a permanent change. The north side view of the incident as outlined in the Edmonton Bulletin was that "Dirty Dewdney" and the promoters of the townsite had collaborated to steal the land office. The issue was permanently resolved with regards to the location of the land office when a new Federal building was constructed in 1893 in Edmonton to house the land office.

In addition to protecting the political aspects of its metropolitan growth, Edmontonians also organized themselves in such a way as to benefit from the construction of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. This included the establishment of cartage companies and the extension of the telephone system to the Calgary and Edmonton Railway station.

The most significant area in which Edmonton demonstrated its superiority with respect to promoting its own growth is evident in its dealings with the railways. As noted earlier, Edmonton negotiated an agreement with the Canadian Northern in 1901, four years before the tracks arrived, for terminal facilities. Edmonton pursued the same

policy with the Grand Trunk Pacific. In February, 1905, By-law No. 7 of the City of Edmonton was passed by the burgesses of the City. This by-law provided for a bonus of \$100,000 as well as exemption of railway land. Edmonton's ability to protect its position as the entrepot of Northern Alberta through the agreements noted above is clearly evident in the growth of warehouse facilities in Edmonton. These kinds of facilities were non-existent in Strathcona.

This chapter has considered the Strathcona boosters' desire for metropolitan status for this community and the High Level Bridge plan which was to bring it to fruition. Both lack of co-operation from the railways and geography intervened to destroy any real basis for these metropolitan ambitions. With the G. T. P. crossing at Clover Bar, the idea of Strathcona as a future metropolitan centre lost all credibility.

In this chapter two approaches to the same problem or situation have been presented. Strathcona's approach based on a relatively passive reliance on its "natural advantages" and reliance on government intervention can be contrasted with Edmonton's more aggressive approach of bonus offers made directly to the railways. This chapter has demonstrated that metropolitan centres were not built on faith, hope and charity from the C. P. R.

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## Chapter Six

### Amalgamation

Chapter Five was concerned with the idea of Strathcona as a metropolitan centre. In this chapter it was noted that the anticipated trend of Strathcona's future growth, given this idea, was that of a self-reliant south side community which shared only the banks of the North Saskatchewan with Edmonton. It was to be a community with its own economic interests, commercial elite and future. Between 1891 and 1912, however, a number of developments can be cited which suggest that integration with Edmonton is a more accurate description of the basic trend evident in Strathcona's history.

The integration of the two communities took place through the construction of bridges, railways and a telephone system which overcame the geographic division between the two communities created by the North Saskatchewan River. Significant economic ties also developed between Edmonton and Strathcona which served to complement this integration process.

The installation of an amalgamated telephone system was begun in October, 1900, when an agreement with the Edmonton District Telephone Company was ratified by the ratepayers of Strathcona by virtue of the passage of By-law 29. By virtue of this agreement, the Strathcona and Edmonton telephone system was organized under one Edmonton based company.

The installation of the telephone system was followed two years later by the construction of the first bridge across the North Saskatchewan at Edmonton. The construction of the bridge permitted the inauguration of railway service between the two communities which was

provided by the Edmonton, Yukon and Pacific Railway. The Low Level Bridge had been built by the Dominion Government after ten years of pressure from the City of Edmonton.

The Low Level Bridge also allowed for the establishment of a street railway system between Edmonton and Strathcona. Initially the Strathcona street railway system was to be built by the Strathcona Radial Tramway Company Limited which was incorporated in October, 1904.<sup>253</sup> The shareholders of the Company as stated in the Act of Incorporation, were A. E. Jackson, R. Lee, W. I. Crafts, A. M. McDonald, John Cameron and R. J. Armstrong all of the town of Edmonton; John Moran of Fort Saskatchewan and R. Ritchie, John Walter and F. C. Jamieson of the town of Strathcona. The original intention of the Company was to build a single or double track tramway from Strathcona to various district points including Fort Saskatchewan and Morinville. By 1907, however, the interests of the company had shifted to the operation of a street railway system in Strathcona. In September, 1907, the Strathcona Radial Tramway Company made a specific offer to the Strathcona Council in this regard.<sup>254</sup> The question of a street railway franchise was then referred to the burgesses of the City of Strathcona by the City Council. By-law 225 to authorize the granting of a street railway franchise to the Strathcona Radial Tramway Company was to be voted on October 30th, 1907.

The fact that the City of Strathcona was actively considering the granting of a street railway franchise was of some concern to Edmonton at that time. Edmonton was considering the sale of its street railway system to British interests and was therefore concerned that this decision by the Strathcona Council would jeopardize its success.

Edmonton felt that it would be uneconomical for separate companies to operate on each side of the river. In an effort to prevent the passage of By-law 225, Mayor Griesbach of Edmonton called a public meeting in Strathcona in order to present a counter proposal. Despite these efforts by Edmonton, the citizens of Strathcona voted strongly in favour of the by-law.

In July, 1908, however, the City of Edmonton was successful in achieving its goal of having one company operate the street railway systems in both cities. At its August 4th, 1908, meeting, the Edmonton City Council gave first, second and third reading to By-law 184 which authorized the execution of an agreement between the Strathcona Radial Tramway Company Limited, the City of Edmonton, John Walter and other directors.<sup>255</sup> At the same meeting By-law 185 was passed in order to provide for the necessary funds to complete the arrangement. Mayor McDougall of Edmonton publicly announced at the same time the agreement was negotiated that the interurban line between Edmonton and Strathcona would be in operation by November of 1909.<sup>256</sup>

The most significant development in facilitating movement between the two communities was the construction of the High Level Bridge. The bridge, which was viewed as the vital link in Strathcona's separate development as a metropolitan centre, emerged as one of the most significant factors in the integration of the two communities. The construction of this bridge had been under consideration since 1903 when Canadian Pacific Railway engineers made preliminary surveys in order to provide for the C. P. R.'s long awaited entry into Edmonton. One issue associated with the construction of this bridge was the question of the addition of a street railway and a traffic deck for automobiles.

Strathcona was very concerned that such an addition be incorporated into the design of the bridge. In 1909 the citizens petitioned the council to provide a grant of \$37,000 to the C. P. R. towards the construction of this bridge.<sup>257</sup> This sum was raised to \$50,000 in 1910. The City of Strathcona also facilitated the construction of the bridge as noted in Chapter One by permitting the C. P. R. to build the southern approach through an existing built-up residential area.

The establishment of these transportation facilities played a significant role in changing Strathcona's attitude towards amalgamation. Prior to their creation, Strathcona felt that its interests would not be adequately dealt with by a north side government. These points are evident in Mayor Duggan's reply to a letter from the Mayor of Edmonton concerning the question of amalgamation:

With our present inadequate facilities in the way of bridges, of direct communication between the north and south of the river union would mean but little more than a name and we would hesitate to submit a by-law to the burgesses for ratification because we do not believe it would carry.

Upon the completion and operation of the tram line and the building of the high level bridge and a traffic bridge located near the centre of the two cities, the matter can be taken up with a fair chance of success. 258

A second aspect of the process of integration as noted earlier concerns the types of economic relationships which developed between Edmonton and Strathcona. As discussed in Chapter Five, Strathcona's economic goals were identical with those of Edmonton, thus giving it two options for their achievement. It could continue as an independent community or become a part of Edmonton. The choice between the two would depend on which side emerged victorious as the dominant urban.

centre in the area. It has been outlined in Chapter Five how the railway history in the Edmonton area between 1901 and 1906 combined with the aggressive action of Edmonton destroyed the possibility of the first option being achieved, thus making amalgamation a reasonable alternative. Amalgamation thus emerged as a means of achieving its original goal of metropolitan status.

The economic interdependence of the two communities was further increased by Edmonton's role as a major market for Strathcona products. The building boom associated with Edmonton's rise as a metropolitan centre created a demand for construction materials. This demand was partially satisfied by the brick yards and lumber yards located in Strathcona.

A number of examples can also be found of inter-relationships between the commercial elite on both sides of the river. W. H. Sheppard, who lived in Strathcona and owned the Strathcona Hotel, was also part owner and manager of the Edmonton Brewing and Malting Company. John Walter owned mills located in Rosedale as well as Walterdale. The industrial growth of Cloverdale was largely the result of Edmonton based entrepreneurs. The business communities on both sides of the river also co-operated in the construction of a street railway system in Strathcona. These types of inter-relationships tended to blur the distinction between the respective business communities on the north and south sides of the river. These types of associations suggest that the businessmen on both sides of the river were to a certain extent part of one entity.

The physical and economic integration of Edmonton and Strathcona as described above served as the background for the amalgamation of

these two communities which, as noted earlier, was discussed officially as early as 1908. Strathcona's reply at that time clearly indicated that amalgamation was regarded as a reasonable alternative to its present status as an independent community.

This official enquiry from Edmonton to Strathcona regarding amalgamation was followed by the growth of a popular movement with wide community support on both sides of the river. In 1909 a Municipal Improvement League was established in Edmonton which had as one of its objectives the amalgamation of Edmonton and Strathcona.<sup>259</sup> The efforts of the League were matched in Strathcona the same year by the circulation of a petition supporting amalgamation.

It was introduced by a delegation composed of J. M. Douglas, President of the board of trade, F. H. Sache, Harry Wilson and John Mellon, who presented a petition signed by about 200 rate-payers asking that the council take the matter of amalgamation up with the City of Edmonton in order to ascertain the basis upon which union could be consummated.<sup>260</sup>

The Council dealt with the issue by arranging a "conference between the Council and the promoters of that petition [at which time] it was agreed that the matter should be allowed to rest for a year".<sup>261</sup>

The fact that J. M. Douglas was involved in this first presentation indicates that even the Strathcona Board of Trade was prepared to abandon the goal of establishing Strathcona as an independent metropolitan centre.

By 1910, however, the popularity of the idea had increased significantly. In that year the Civic Improvement League actively promoted the idea as an issue during the Edmonton civic election held in December of that year. In Strathcona a second petition was circulated requesting:

Council to secure at the next session of the Provincial Legislature such legislation as will permit of this City being amalgamated with the City of Edmonton by an Order-in-Council at any time when terms are agreed upon. 262

The Strathcona Plaindealer in its coverage of this "clearly defined outbreak of the amalgamation infection"<sup>263</sup> noted the increasing popularity of amalgamation but was convinced that it represented a minority opinion:

As a matter of fact the amalgamation bug is very active. Likewise it cannot be denied that some few of those merchants who last spring talked very convincingly against the idea of affiliation with the lusty rival on the north bank, are now ardently in favour of throwing in our lot with that self same rival, for better or for worse. This number is undoubtedly still in the minority in the city, but it is worthy of note that the said minority is not so small as it was twelve months ago. 264

The Edmonton Bulletin, however, noted that "great success has attended the circulation in Strathcona of the copies of the petition to be presented to the council of that City, asking that steps be taken to secure legislation which will amalgamation of Edmonton and Strathcona possible . . .".<sup>265</sup> In the same article it was also noted that "a similar petition is also in course of circulation in Edmonton among people in this city who are property owners across the river".<sup>266</sup> The most enthusiastic Edmonton residents were those "who have holdings in the west end of Strathcona and propose residing in the vicinity of the university upon completion of the high-level bridge".<sup>267</sup>

One of the principal organizers of the Strathcona petition was W. E. Rankin who commented to the Edmonton Bulletin that "more than three hundred names have been secured, all owners of property in the City of Strathcona".<sup>268</sup> The petition when presented to City Council



on November 15th, 1910, contained a total of three hundred names representing Strathcona's major land owners. This petition clearly indicated the support among property owners for the idea of amalgamation. The willingness of the property owners to support amalgamation in 1910 can be contrasted with a general lack of interest in Strathcona's overall political development which is indicated by Chapter Four. It can also be noted that Strathcona undertook amalgamation with much more enthusiasm and interest than they undertook incorporation in 1899. It is also significant to note that amalgamation unlike incorporation and Strathcona's rise to city status were not preceded by Strathcona, Plainealer editorial comment strongly in favour of such action. A clear separation between the interests of the people and the boosterism of the local press had been reached.

Upon receipt of the petition by the City of Strathcona Council, it was referred to the Committee on Charter amendments. The report of this committee proposed that a two-thirds majority should be required in favour of amalgamation before any changes could become law, and that only resident ratepayers should be allowed to vote on it.<sup>269</sup> The decision of the committee to make recommendations which would serve to make amalgamation more difficult to achieve resulted in a deputation of citizens being present at the Council meeting of November 20th, 1910. Members of this pro-amalgamation delegation included J. Daly, W. A. D. Passmore and R. W. McIntyre, all of whom thought that the Council was acting in a very arbitrary manner in order to thwart the will of the people.<sup>270</sup> Ald. Tipton also spoke in favour of this point of view. The meeting also heard from the editor of the Strathcona, Plainealer, J. H. McDonald, who stated the view that this petition

was not an expression of the will of the people.<sup>271</sup>

Despite the severe criticism, the Council proceeded to take the necessary steps to obtain a Charter amendment whereby Edmonton holders of property would be prevented from voting on the amalgamation question. This failure of Council to take appropriate action from the point of view of the petitioners resulted in the creation on December 1st of the Strathcona Ratepayers Association. This was the first such organization in the history of Strathcona thus further demonstrating how amalgamation was the one issue in the history of Strathcona in which the greatest degree of initiative on the part of the citizens was shown. Concurrent with the events surrounding the formation of the Strathcona Ratepayers Association, was the civic election of 1910. The issue of amalgamation and this association both played a dominant role in the election.

The first meeting of the Association was held in the offices of Arthur Davies at which time a central committee was chosen which, with ward committees, was to look after the general business of the organization. At the same meeting "candidates who [were] standing on the "Progressive" ticket enunciated their policies, receiving the unanimous endorsement of the ratepayers present".<sup>272</sup> The progressives were those candidates prepared to support amalgamation under suitable terms.

The first regular meeting of the association was held on November 29th, 1910, at which time a resolution disapproving of the action of City Council in disenfranchising non-resident ratepayers was passed unanimously. The decision was also made at this meeting to send a delegation to the Legislature in order to present their point of view. It was also made clear by comments of the Chairman, Dr. Fuller,

that the Association intended to make amalgamation an issue in the upcoming election.

He felt that amalgamation would be beneficial to Strathcona but it would be the work of the association to see that full information is gathered on the proposition from outside sources after which if it was shown that it be unwise the association would repudiate it. We need a Council which will discuss the issue. 273

The 1910 civic election in Strathcona was held on December 12th. On November 23rd, Arthur Davies, a founding member of the Strathcona Ratepayers Association, declared himself to be a candidate for the position of Mayor. He was unopposed in that position. Davies' stand on the principal issue in the election was noted by the Edmonton Bulletin:

With the amalgamation question looming up prominently before the ratepayers of both cities, Mr. Davies is regarded by many as the man to conduct the negotiations. He is in favor of amalgamation along well considered lines but is not in favor of rushing the proposal until it has been fully investigated. 274

Other "Progressives" included Wm. Vogel who ran unopposed in Ward One, W. E. Rankin in Ward Two, A. P. Loughlin in Ward Three and John T. Radford in Ward Four. They were opposed by R. J. McDonald, Arthur McLean and A. L. Brick in Wards Two, Three and Four respectively. The issue of amalgamation had in the words of the Strathcona Plaindealer "now insured the liveliest election in years". 275 Election Day 1910 proved to be a complete triumph for the progressives who joined other supporters of amalgamation on Council such as J. P. Tipton.

The election results meant that the Strathcona Ratepayers Association had succeeded in achieving its first objective. The second objective was achieved on December 8th when members of the association

met with members of the municipal committee of the Legislature to object to the following change in Strathcona's City Charter:

The Lieutenant governor in council may, if upon a vote of the resident burgesses being taken, two-thirds of the votes cast shall be in favor of annexation to the City of Edmonton, proclaim that on such date and on such terms and conditions as the lieutenant governor in council may think fit the City of Strathcona shall become part of the City of Edmonton. 276

The Committee of Strathcona Ratepayers included John Walter, W. E. Rankin, Dr. L. L. Fuller, Wm. Vogel, N. D. Mills, Mr. McIntyre, Mayor Elect Davies, Ald. Tipton and John Mellon. Mayor Duggan, City Solicitor Jamieson, City Assessor Foster and Dr. Rutherford represented the Council's point of view.

N. D. Mills, speaking on behalf of the ratepayers:

contended that [the clause] was . . .

taxation without representation in principle repudiated many years ago . . . Mayor Duggan replied that there was no taxation involved in the amalgamation vote, but members of the committee replied that if Strathcona should unite with Edmonton she would have to assume part of the larger city's burden. 277

The Municipal Affairs Committee agreed with the contention and "were unanimous in the opinion that all property owners shall be entitled to vote and the word "resident" was struck out". 278 After further discussion, the entire clause was struck out on the grounds that "the city could take a plebiscite without any legislation . . .". 279 Other changes to the Strathcona City Charter including a clause providing that women owning property should be entitled to vote were endorsed.

Having achieved the elimination of this clause, the new Strathcona Council elected in 1910 could obtain a verdict on the question of amal-

gamation on the basis of a simple majority. The course of events which would follow this victory was noted by the Edmonton Bulletin:

It is certain that the plebiscite of the rate-payers will be taken, as the majority of the citizens have urged, because the new council promises to be almost entirely composed of "progressives" or those who have protested against the arbitrary action of the present board. 280

The new council shortly after taking office, initiated the necessary steps towards amalgamation. At the second meeting of the Council, held January 10th, Alderman Rankin moved that:

the following gentlemen be appointed a special Committee to take up the question, making a thorough investigation of every detail safeguarding the interests of Strathcona as far as possible by securing all the information they can as to how the amalgamation has affected other small towns by joining with larger Cities, and also after they have gone into the matter fully with the City of Edmonton, how they think it will affect us if we were to amalgamate, and that this Committee present their report to the Council of the City of Strathcona at as early a date as they deem advisable.

Mayor Davies, Ex-Mayor Duggan, Hon. A. C. Rutherford, 281  
Tory, John Walter, W. H. Sheppard, R. A. Hulbert.

The first meeting of this committee was held on April 4th, 1911. The membership was slightly altered because of the fact that a number of the original appointees were unavailable. The additional members included R. H. Christie and J. M. Douglas for the Board of Trade, and J. G. Tipton and W. E. Rankin for the Council. At this first meeting Mayor Davies was elected Chairman and A. A. Campbell was elected permanent secretary. The decision was also reached to meet every Monday evening. Additional machinery necessary for the resolution of the amalgamation issue was set up by this Committee on April 24th, 1911, when a committee was appointed to interview Mayor Armstrong for

the purpose of arranging for a joint meeting of the Amalgamation Committees of the two Cities and to deal with any other matter on the question of amalgamation". 282

At the second meeting of the Strathcona Amalgamation Committee, various recommendations were considered dealing with the matter of amalgamation. This list of recommendations represented the initial bargaining position of Strathcona with respect to the amalgamation with Edmonton.

The recommendations provided for both the total integration of Strathcona into the affairs of Edmonton and the protection of Strathcona's interests within such a union.

The first meeting of the Joint Edmonton and Strathcona Amalgamation Committees was held on May 4th, 1911, for the purpose of dealing with the recommendations.

By August 8th, A. A. Campbell was able to report that:

Your Committee appointed to go into the question of the Amalgamation of the Cities of Edmonton and Strathcona beg to report that a form of agreement has been arrived at and is submitted herewith. This agreement is signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Joint Committee and approved by the Solicitors of the two Cities. 283

A decision on the report was made at a Special Meeting of Council held on August 21st, 1911. At this meeting the following motion regarding the Council's action with respect to the report was carried:

Now therefore be it resolved that this council receive the said report of the said committee and instruct the City attorney to prepare a by-law to be submitted to the rate payers of this City to be voted on at a time to be fixed by the said council in the said by-law. 284

At the same meeting it was also moved and carried that:

Mayor Davies, Ald. Tipton, Pollard and Radford  
be a Committee appointed to confer with the  
Edmonton Committee on Charter and By-law Amendments. 285

The terms of By-law 417 represented complete success in terms of the objectives which Strathcona hoped to achieve through amalgamation. The by-law provided for a south side office and improved transportation links between the two communities. On September 26th, 1911, a total of 518 votes were cast for the by-law while 178 votes were cast against.

At the first meeting of Council following the passage of By-law 417 on motion of Ald. Tipton, seconded by Ald. Rankin, it was resolved:

that the City Solicitor be and is hereby instructed to confer with the City Solicitor of the City of Edmonton and take such steps, conjointly as may be necessary, for the advertising and placing in proper legal form, all and any matters, that may be required to be presented to the Legislative Assembly the bill for the Amalgamation of the Cities of Edmonton and Strathcona in pursuance of the plebiscite taken on the 26th of September, 1911. 286

The necessary amendments were made to the Edmonton Charter which resulted in the amalgamation of Edmonton and Strathcona to take effect on February 1st, 1912. Mayor Davies of Strathcona, who played such an important role in the amalgamation of the two cities, was appropriately called the father of Greater Edmonton.

# Footnotes

- 253 Ordinances of the North West Territories, 1904, 22. 34.
- 254 Edmonton Bulletin, 18 September 1907.
- 255 City of Edmonton Council Minutes, 8 October 1907.
- 256 Edmonton Bulletin, 4 August 1908.
- 257 City of Strathcona Council Minutes, 9 September 1909, City of Edmonton Archives.
- 258 Strathcona Plaindealer, 15 September 1908.
- 259 Edmonton Bulletin, 14 November 1909.
- 260 Edmonton Bulletin, 7 July 1909.
- 261 Strathcona Plaindealer, 25 November 1910.
- 262 Griesbach Papers, City of Edmonton Archives.
- 263 Strathcona Plaindealer, 8 November 1910.
- 264 Loc. cit.
- 265 Edmonton Bulletin, 11 November 1910.
- 266 Loc. cit.
- 267 Loc. cit.
- 268 Loc. cit.
- 269 Strathcona Plaindealer, 25 November 1910.
- 270 Loc. cit.
- 271 Loc. cit.
- 272 Strathcona Plaindealer, 29 November 1910.
- 273 Loc. cit.
- 274 Edmonton Bulletin, 24 November 1910.
- 275 Strathcona Plaindealer, 25 November 1910.
- 276 Edmonton Bulletin, 8 December 1910.
- 277 Loc. cit.



278 Loc. cit.

279 Loc. cit.

280 Loc. cit.

281 City of Strathcona Council Minutes, 10 January 1911, City Clerk's Office, Edmonton.

282 Strathcona Amalgamation Committee Minutes, City of Edmonton Archives, Record Group 100.1.

283 City of Strathcona Council Minutes, 8 August 1910, City Clerk's Office, Edmonton.

284 City of Strathcona Council Minutes, 21 August 1910, City Clerk's Office, Edmonton.

285 Ibid.

286 Strathcona Council Minutes, 27 September 1911, City Clerk's Office, Edmonton.

## Conclusion

This thesis has focused primarily on Strathcona's spatial, social, political and economic growth from a railway townsite to a city. It has examined both internal and external aspects of this development with particular reference to one grandiose view of its future role in the Edmonton region. This examination of Strathcona has placed it in a regional and national context by discussing its relationship to Edmonton and its relationship to the various railway interests.

Based on the data presented in this examination, it can be concluded that Strathcona's existence as a separate city was more apparent than real. Strathcona was a city built on boosterism and thus it stands as a monument to the spirit of the Canadian West in the years before the First World War. The rhetoric of the boosters which stressed hope and faith in Strathcona's "natural advantages" as a potential basis for metropolitan growth was contradicted by the reality of its limited opportunities for such development. These limited opportunities for economic development combined with the lack of a cohesive commercial elite to provide effective leadership produced a sequence of events which moved Strathcona inevitably towards amalgamation.

Strathcona's failure to develop even the embryonic elements of a metropolis is evident in most aspects of its development. Strathcona's most fundamental deficiency has been outlined in Chapters Two and Three which demonstrate that Strathcona failed to develop a well organized, self-conscious commercial elite which was prepared to organize a Board of Trade and dominate the political structure in order to promote the development of their own economic interests. These chapters demonstrate that the development of the Board of Trade and

political institutions reflect the interests of the boosters. This group was not drawn from the most significant businessmen in the community. The metropolitan idea in the context of Strathcona thus lacked the kind of social development that is evident in Edmonton and Winnipeg.

The failure of Strathcona citizens to support the idea of Strathcona as a separate metropolitan community was matched by the failure of the boosters to appreciate the need for economic investment rather than reliance on Strathcona's so-called "natural advantages". The boosters also failed to develop a realistic concept of Strathcona's role as a metropolitan centre. The boosters had originally envisaged the complete disappearance of Edmonton as a force in the region but eventually had to acknowledge that such would not be the case. From this situation, the idea of twin cities with clearly defined economic interests emerged. The twin cities of Edmonton and Strathcona were to be the Minneapolis and St. Paul of the Canadian West. The economic role of Strathcona as seen by the boosters, however, continued to be that of "entrepot of the north". Edmonton was, however, still around to successfully compete for the title. Strathcona boosters thus failed to define Strathcona in such a way as to give it a unique role in the region, therefore distinguishing it from Edmonton. The boosters thus failed to develop a realistic approach to the overall question of Strathcona's growth.

Considering the aforementioned interpretation of Strathcona's development, it can be concluded that it did not present a meaningful threat to Edmonton in the long run. Strathcona's ability to seriously challenge the urban settlement pattern in the area was compromised by its failure to receive the active patronage of the railway interests

and by its own failure to take the necessary steps to protect its own future.

Despite Strathcona's ultimate failure to develop the social, spatial and economic attributes of a metropolitan centre, an identifiable community within Edmonton did emerge. Despite this community's rejection of metropolitan status, it was prepared to protect its own identity and interest in a larger community dominated by the north side. This idea has been demonstrated by the delay to undertake amalgamation and in the amalgamation.

In retrospect, therefore, Strathcona can be judged to be a small town with big city ideas. This is an historical judgement which does not negate the fact that in the early 1890's Strathcona did appear to present a very real threat to Edmonton's position. The fact that Strathcona appeared to present a threat to Edmonton was sufficient to strengthen or stimulate the embryonic elements of metropolitan urban growth then developing on the north side of the river. Thus the Calgary and Edmonton Railway's objective of developing a metropolitan centre at its northern terminus did prove to be successful. This development, however, took place on the north side of the river. The interest of Strathcona in amalgamation derived from its interest in participating in this development. Strathcona could not beat Edmonton; therefore, it decided to join it.

In outlining the sequence of events surrounding the origin and decline of Strathcona as an independent community, the role of geography and the railways can be identified as of paramount importance. The Calgary and Edmonton Railway brought Strathcona into existence while the C. N., G. T. P. and the C. P. R. pursued policies which

were detrimental to its future development as a metropolitan centre. Geography also played a positive and negative role in the sequence of events outlined. Initially the North Saskatchewan River and its associated valley constituted a barrier between the two communities, thus forcing Strathcona to provide for its own growth until this barrier could be overcome. The development of these institutions constituted a practical solution to Strathcona's physical separation from Edmonton. Geography, however, played a negative role by creating construction problems for the G. T. P.

The variety of roles played by geography and the railways thus demonstrates that Strathcona was the outgrowth of a particular set of economic and geographic circumstances which represented a temporary phase in the development of the region. These circumstances produced great expectations typical of many urban centres in the Canadian West during the period. Strathcona's basic mistake was its failure to recognize the fragile nature of the circumstances that had brought it into existence.

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Group 30, Vol. 1436, 1437.

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Record Group 30, Vol. 1209, 1210.

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Appendix AMap 1 Land Ownership 1891

This map was prepared from a study of various Certificates of Ownership covering the period 1888-1894 which are listed below. The various titles registered between 1891 and 1894 indicate the distribution of land ownership on Plan I as based on the distribution agreement of 1891.

Certificate of Title 330	14 October 1888
Certificate of Title 378	5 June 1889
Certificate of Title 391	15 July 1889
Certificate of Title 543	4 November 1890
Certificate of Title 598	9 April 1891
Certificate of Title 718	14 October 1891
Certificate of Title 722	23 October 1891
Certificate of Title 733	18 November 1891
Certificate of Title 741	11 December 1891
Certificate of Title 118F	17 October 1893
Certificate of Title 134F	30 October 1893
Certificate of Title 226F	11 January 1894
Certificate of Title 227F	11 January 1894
Certificate of Title 239F	25 January 1894
Certificate of Title 188H	24 September 1894

Map 5 Strathcona 1891-1912

This map was prepared from the following sources:

Plan I 17 December 1891

Strathcona 1899 Surveyed by E. C. Dawson, Provincial Archives of  
Alberta Accession 71.364/3

The North West Territories, Ordinances, 1903, An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 28 of the Ordinances of 1899, entitled "An Ordinance to Incorporate the Town of Strathcona", Ch. 32.

City of Strathcona 1907, Provincial Archives of Alberta Accession 70.317.

Maps 6, 7, 9, 10 - Spatial Growth of Strathcona 1891-1912

These maps have been prepared to illustrate general trends in the physical growth and land use development of Strathcona. They have been based upon a variety of maps and photographs available at the Provincial Archives of Alberta and the City of Edmonton Archives. These sources involved a number of problems with respect to their use in this thesis. In the case of both the maps and the photographs, major gaps in their coverage of the area over the twenty-one years under study were evident. Given the nature of the data, estimates of Strathcona's growth pattern were necessary. The most significant sources in the preparation of these maps were the insurance maps prepared by Charles E. Goad. Other maps and the principal photographic collections are listed in the bibliography.

Map 8 - Strathcona Fire Limit Zones 1907-1912

This map was prepared from the original By-law No. 167 which created these zones. In the wording of the original by-law, however, the first and second class fire limit zones overlapped in lots 27, 28 and 29 of block 69. For the purposes of this thesis, these lots have been placed in the first class fire limit zone.



Appendix BPopulation Statistics

<u>Year</u>	<u>Strathcona</u>	<u>Edmonton</u>	<u>Source</u>
1892	Unavailable	700	Town Census
1895	505	1,165	N.W.M.P. Census
1896	650	Unavailable	Henderson's Directory
1898	900	Unavailable	Henderson's Directory
1899	1,156	Unavailable	Town Census
1901	1,550	2,626	Dominion Census
1905	3,000	8,400	Henderson's Directory
1906	2,921	11,167	Dominion Census
1907	3,500	Unavailable	City Census
1908	4,500	18,500	Henderson's Directory
1911	5,579	24,900	Dominion Census