

Blurred Vision: The Calgary Union Stockyard Issue, 1913–1914

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Article abstract

Calgary's historic association with the ranching industry and the increased volume of livestock from mixed farms led municipal leaders to explore the possibility of establishing a union stockyard in the city in 1913–1914. The measures taken to realize this ambition proved futile for several reasons. City leaders could not match their vision with coherence or direction. The result was inadequate consultation with stakeholders, internecine rivalries, and an almost comical sequence of policy changes in which the city's role in the proposed stockyards stance went from coordinator to partner to sole owner. City Council's well-meaning but ill-informed campaign reflected the random approach to civic policy-making that characterized municipal governments of the period.

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Abstract

Calgary's historic association with the ranching industry and the increased volume of livestock from mixed farms led municipal leaders to explore the possibility of establishing a union stockyards in the city in 1913–1914. The measures taken to realize this ambition proved futile for several reasons. City leaders could not match their vision with coherence or direction. The result was inadequate consultation with stakeholders, internecine rivalries, and an almost comical sequence of policy changes in which the city's role in the proposed stockyards stance went from coordinator to partner to sole owner. City Council's well-meaning but ill-informed campaign reflected the random approach to civic policy-making that characterized municipal governments of the period.

Résumé

L'association historique de Calgary avec l'industrie d'élevage, de même que l'augmentation du bétail provenant de fermes mixtes ont amené les administrateurs municipaux à explorer la possibilité d'établir une union de parcs à bétail (union stockyards) dans la ville en 1913–1914. Les mesures prises pour réaliser ce projet ambitieux se sont montrées vaines pour plusieurs raisons. Les élus municipaux ne pouvaient faire coïncider cohérence ou direction avec leur vision. Il en est résulté une consultation inadéquate avec les parties intéressées, des rivalités internes et une succession presque comique de changements politiques au cours desquels le rôle de la ville, vis-à-vis de la proposition de parcs à bétail, est passé de coordinateur à partenaire, puis à propriétaire unique. La campagne bien intentionnée mais mal informée du conseil municipal reflète son approche aléatoire en matière d'élaboration des politiques communautaires qui caractérisait les administrations municipales de l'époque.

Introduction

Town and city promotion was an enduring feature in the western Canadian urban experience. Here, local governments with their greater access to scarce financial resources played the most pivotal role in pursuing growth policies. According to Alan Artibise, "Active promotion of growth was a prime concern of a municipal corporation."¹ This view is echoed by Paul Voisey who argues that a city's success was linked to the foresight and ambition of its local government.² John Mollenkompf and Maurice Careless both stress how elitist city councils were willing to join with other interest groups in furthering urban growth.³ City councils in early Calgary reflected all of the above. From the outset, both before and after the establishment of a Board of Trade, booster-minded city councils acted on the belief that the road to "big city" status could be shortened by proactive corporate policies. These policies took two forms. The first was an enthusiastic and uncritical reception to any initiative involving capital expenditure. For example, in the 1890s, City Council involved itself in promoting additional railway connections, a

federal experimental farm, a horse-training facility for the British cavalry, and a tuberculosis treatment centre.⁴ City officials were also not adverse to direct civic involvement in economic activities, should the opportunity present itself. However, the lack of reliable information and an established well-trained executive, meant that city councils were ill-equipped to deal with the complexities associated with long-range business ventures. As a result, civic policy-making was marked by enthusiasm and optimism more than forethought or deliberation. In Calgary, the stockyards issue that emerged in 1903–4 and played itself out in 1913–14 provides an excellent example of this two-pronged approach to civic economic development. At another level, it allows some observations on the historic evolution of Calgary's western or "cowtown" image.

Early Stockyard Activity in Calgary

The ranching industry provided Alberta with its first important commercial activity. The leasehold system instituted in 1881 enabled a profitable open-range cattle industry resulting in approximately a quarter of a million head on over 4 million leasehold acres in southern Alberta by 1887. With the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, Calgary replaced Fort Macleod as the urban centre of the new industry. The CPR's first priority in Calgary following the establishment of regular transcontinental service in 1886 was the provision of stockyards to replace the rudimentary operations erected in 1884 by T. C. Power and Brothers. Following negotiations between the town and the Dominion government, 40 acres were removed from school-based lands east of the corporate limits and leased to the CPR for stockyards purposes.⁵ The opening of the CPR stockyards in 1887 made the first statement about Calgary's position as a livestock centre. From Calgary, cattle were shipped west to British Columbia, east to the big markets in Winnipeg and Montreal, and increasingly in the 1890s to the lucrative urban markets in Great Britain. These export cattle to London's Smithfield market often netted a profit of as high as \$50 per head. In 1895 the importance of the British market was reflected in improved facilities at the stockyards. Yet while the completion of four-way rail traffic by the mid-1890s enhanced Calgary's position as a distributing centre, it also enabled smaller places to become shipping points for live cattle.

The difficulty with the CPR stockyards in Calgary lay in their limited function. They were not marketing centres but gathering points for shipment. Cattle were usually sold on the ranch or farm to a buyer, or shipped on consignment to major marketing centres in eastern Canada and Great Britain. Stockmen were thus disinclined to ship their cattle to Calgary when they could be moved from more convenient loading points like Cochrane, Cayley, or Claresholm. In 1902, over fifty thousand head were exported from 40 points in the Northwest Territories. Less than fifteen hundred originated in Calgary.⁶ Its 12th position, well behind urban rivals like Medicine Hat and Lethbridge, or ranching centres like Fort Macleod and Maple Creek, indicated that Calgary had not consolidated a marketing position within the livestock industry.

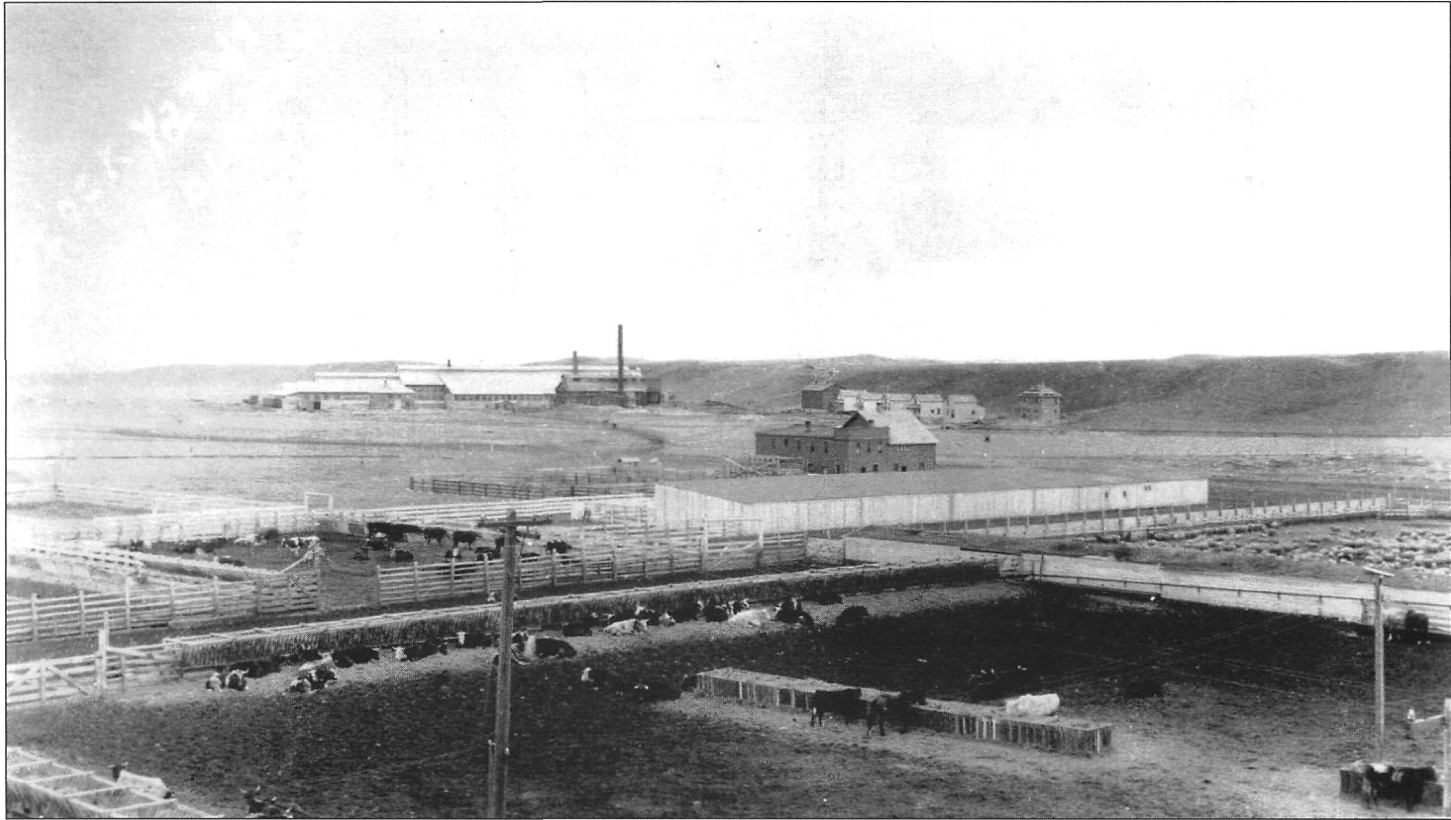


Figure 1: Stockyards the the turn of the century. Note Pat Burns packing plant in background.

The Alberta Stockyards Company

The impetus for change in the early 1900s came from two directions. Extensive civic advertising on the investment potential associated with intensive agriculture in the West attracted a group of Montreal businessmen with stockyards experience.⁷ They felt that commercial stockyards catering to the rising demand for horsepower and farming livestock, and providing an open market for range stock, would be profitable in a growing city like Calgary. Second was the presence in the city of a rising entrepreneurial giant. Since his arrival in Calgary in 1890, Pat Burns had consolidated the meat-packing and related enterprises that already had him on his way to becoming the city's first millionaire. An astute and no-nonsense businessman, Burns saw the benefits of a stockyards company in private hands, preferably his own. As for the CPR, it did not care who operated the stockyards as long as its right of access was not jeopardized.

In October 1902, City Council rejected a request from the CPR for additional land for stockyard purposes.⁸ The reason became clear a week later when a local lawyer, John Hall, representing the Montreal group (and in all likelihood, Pat Burns), presented Council with an offer to buy land from the city for the purposes of operating a private stockyards company.⁹ In February 1903, Hall's proposal was approved by Council.¹⁰ Under Bylaw 492 dated 6 April 1903, the city sold 19.8 acres of land adjacent to Pat Burns's operations to the proposed Alberta Stockyards Company for \$990, or \$50 per acre. Construction of the stock-

yards was to commence within three months, with \$6,000 worth of improvements to be completed within a year. These were to include fences, pens, sheds, barns, office buildings, and a boarding house. More significant, the city was to collect a share of the revenues on a per animal basis.¹¹ Capitalized at \$200,000, the Alberta Stockyards Company was incorporated in May 1903. Its first officers and Board of Directors read like a Who's Who of Calgary and ranching interests. The first president was Robert Hutchings of the Great West Saddlery Company.¹² Charles W. Peterson, later the long-time editor of the *Farm and Ranch Review*, was vice-president. Board members were soon to include Senator James A. Lougheed, Richard Bedford Bennett, Pat Burns, William Pearce, and Dan Riley.

To Council, it seemed like a match made in heaven. The city had an added revenue source at no cost. The company enjoyed a privileged position endorsed by the city's elite. To business interests, the infusion of Montreal money indicated Calgary's investment appeal. For civic officials, the new arrangement enhanced Calgary's position as a livestock centre. In opening the company's first sale in March 1904, Calgary mayor Silas Ramsay stressed the importance of an open market to the city and drew parallels to Chicago and to other major cattle-marketing centres in the United States.¹³ The press was equally enthusiastic. The *Calgary Herald* referred to the stockyards as "centralizing the livestock industry in Calgary," and enabling the emergence of the city as "the great centre of the North-West."¹⁴

The deal, however, was not all it seemed. In its eagerness to accommodate new investment, Council had thrown caution to the winds. First was the exclusive and transferable franchise granted to the company. Under its terms, no other organization or individual could buy and sell livestock in the city for 25 years. No thought was given to monopoly implications, to whether the terms of the franchise could be adequately enforced, or to whether it was even legal. Since some of the land in question was outside the city limits, the agreement was *ultra vires* of Council and needed an amendment to the city charter by the North-West Territories Assembly.¹⁵ Although a few aldermen questioned the franchise and the lack of public input, they were easily outvoted by those who saw the proposal as a good bargain and a free revenue source.¹⁶ Finally, Council should have been aware of the reality of Calgary's livestock marketing situation. Aldermen believed they had initiated an open market for the exchange of all types of livestock. To them the keen competition associated with an open market would result in volume animal numbers and healthy business opportunities. The point is not so much that Council was wrong, but rather that it might have known better.

The monopoly enjoyed by Pat Burns neutralized the ability of stockmen to promote the stockyards. Competitive buyers and commission men were dissuaded by Burns who was described in 1907 by Clay Robinson, a major Chicago cattle dealer, as "a one man power operation." In referring to Burns as "half Sphinx, half oracle," Robinson equated his monopoly with that of Chicago's infamous "Big Four" meat packers.¹⁷ Invariably, the cattle buyer who visited ranches and farms worked for Burns. Thus, many producers found it easier to sell directly to him rather than move their cattle to the stockyards, pay yardage fees, and then see their cattle going to a Burns buyer at the same price. There was also the catastrophic winter of 1906–7 that bankrupted many ranchers and sent the cattle industry into steep decline. Dozens of ranchers went out of business and into grain farming. Not only was wheat a better investment than cattle, it was safer.¹⁸ Furthermore, the live cattle export market that had been the mainstay of the ranching industry collapsed during these years. The rise of Argentina with its abundant cheap chilled beef virtually destroyed the British market for Canadian export cattle.

Predictably, the stockyards could not maintain its exclusive position. Animals were bought and sold with impunity elsewhere in the city. In trying to respond to the several complaints from stockyards management, civic officials were brought face to face with the practical and legal implications of what they had done. The activity at the stockyards between 1904 and 1906 tells its own story. In 1905 only 1,166 head of cattle were actually sold at the stockyards. A year later, while over six thousand head of cattle moved through the yards, actual sales were considerably under those of 1905. Horses continued to be the most popular animals.¹⁹ In 1911, a civic official described the stockyards as "an institution which we cannot claim has been a very decided success on the part of the city."²⁰ Two years later when business was brisk, the city estimated collection of only \$800 in stockyard fees.²¹

The city had no say in the turn of events between 1907 and 1910. The absentee Montreal investors were ready to sell by late 1906. Evidence suggests that several local buyers were initially involved. According to S. Bellow, manager of the stockyards in 1907, "This new element proposes to adopt a vigorous development policy in order to establish an open market for livestock in Calgary."²² His further comment that this was "a task of no small proportion" probably explained why Pat Burns soon emerged as the major stockholder. According to one source he paid \$50,000 for a controlling interest—half the price the Montrealers had originally paid.²³ Doubtless he felt that owning another stockyards adjacent to his own was worth it if one had a 25-year monopoly.

Burns's acquisition of a second stockyards made sense for other reasons. He had the money and the staying power to capitalize on the 14-year cattle cycle that had reached its low point in 1902, and correctly foresaw that the current obsession with straight grain farming would not last, that cattle prices would soon rise, and that livestock would have a place in the new mixed-farming creed. Unlike the distant Montreal investors, he doubtless took note of the experiment in 1907 when a group of venturesome Red Deer cattlemen successfully tested the tariff-protected American market with their prime animals.

Rising livestock prices, as well as the prospect of reciprocity with the United States, was enough to bring the CPR back to the table in 1911. In September, Burns sold his shares in the Alberta Stockyards Company to the Canadian Pacific Railway for over \$59,000.²⁴ Doubtless Burns believed that the sale was worth it. On the one hand, his canny business instincts weighed the advantage of unloading high-priced city property against the continuation of the current real-estate boom. Equally important, he saw no problem in transferring a monopoly to a company with much wider interests than cattle and with whom he had always enjoyed a compatible relationship. According to Leonard Friesen in his book on the Alberta Stockyards Company, a toss of the coin often decided whether a Burns or CPR buyer got first bid on cattle for sale by commission firms.²⁵ As for the CPR, it had acquired a paying proposition, and an exclusive franchise in a time of rising livestock prices.

The CPR had little reason to regret its purchase. In 1912, a record 2,708 cars of livestock passed through the stockyards, an increase of 728 over the preceding year, and a far cry from the 407 recorded in 1907. By 1913, the future seemed even brighter. Numbers at the yards threatened to more than double those of the previous year.²⁶ The CPR was making money, and with the news of an impending open market for cattle in the United States, the stockyards were thriving. The only loser was the city. The value of the land it had once leased to the CPR had now increased by 8000 per cent. Moreover, not only did the railway company now own the land, but it also had inherited the exclusive franchise.

The Union Stockyards Issue

The stockyards became an issue again in 1913. The impending arrival in the city of the two new transcontinental railroads, the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern, were fuelling

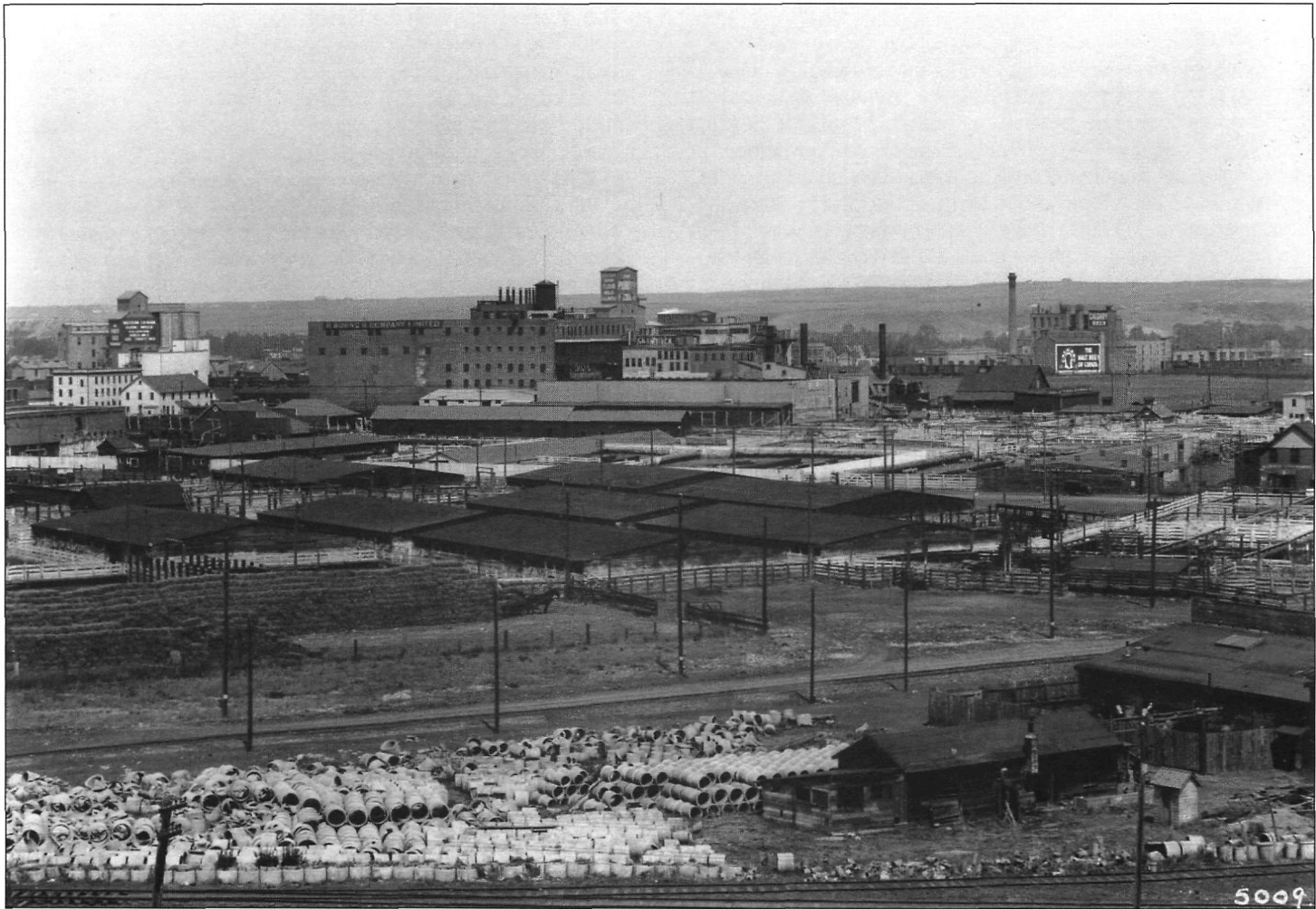


Figure 2: Calgary Stockyards 1910. Note considerable expansion since 1900. Burns plant is flanked by brewery and flour mill.

optimism and a speculative frenzy in urban and rural lands. The renewed interest in the stockyards was a logical response to this prosperity, and more specifically to the new gospel of mixed farming. Following the first setbacks in the new wheat economy in 1911 and 1912, the federal government and the CPR began encouraging farmers to incorporate livestock into their operations. The favoured animals were hogs, not cattle. Cheaper, more prolific, and better suited to intensive farming methods than cattle, hogs were dominating livestock markets in Alberta by 1913. In 1906, the Alberta Stockyards Company handled only 278 hogs. In 1913, the figure was over 35,000. In the same year, Pat Burns received three times as many hogs as cattle, bringing the total number marketed in Calgary to over 130,000.²⁷

As in 1903, the dramatic shift in civic attitude toward the stockyards did not originate with City Council, which had, in fact, been proceeding cautiously with livestock matters. Throughout the first five months of 1913, Council's only activity involved the possibility of establishing a municipally operated abattoir to put teeth into its 1911 bylaw that required proper inspection of

all meat products sold in the city.²⁸ The potential for risk-taking was there, however. The entrepreneurial 1913 Council contained an investment-minded mayor, several prominent businessmen, and five aldermen in the real estate business.

The individual focus for change on Council was provided by William John Tregillus, whose successful brick company and widespread community involvement had made him one of the city's most respected citizens. Tregillus was also an influential voice in agriculture and farm politics. His Holstein dairy herd was considered the finest in the province. He was also the current president of both the United Farmers of Alberta and the Alberta Farmers Co-operative Elevator Company. A practical visionary, Tregillus was one of the first to realize that Alberta's optimum land-use potential was tied to feed grains and therefore to mixed farming. He thus equated Calgary's future prosperity with the strength of its rural hinterland.

In mid-June 1913, E. J. Fream, the secretary treasurer of the Canadian Council of Agriculture, sent a long letter to Tregillus recommending that the city take significant action on the stock-



ND 24-119 Courtesy Glenbow Archives, Calgary

Figure 3: Calgary Stockyards circa 1911. Office is brick building in middle background.

yards. Fream referred to the growing importance of mixed farming and of Calgary's opportunity to gain from it. He advocated the formation of a union stockyards on the model already existing in Winnipeg.²⁹ Under this arrangement, a union company would be formed consisting of the major railroads and related livestock enterprises, with the city occupying a position on the Board of Directors. Stressing the current livestock marketing inequities in Calgary, Fream urged the necessity of "some public body to take the first step in building up independent marketing facilities if the farmers of Alberta are to be encouraged to stick to the livestock industry." He also suggested a meeting with the three railway companies as a first step.³⁰ Finally Fream recommended that the city purchase about 50 acres adjoining the present stockyards for a municipal abattoir, and to provide land for lease to commission houses, brokers, packers, and related livestock enterprises.

Tregillus, who was also president of the Alberta Farmers Co-operative Elevator Company, an organization of which Fream was secretary treasurer, acted immediately on the latter's suggestions. He presented the idea to Council on 18 June,

and subsequently headed the two-man committee struck to "interview the railway Company officials in the matter of Union Stock Yards for the City of Calgary."³¹ On 17 July, the committee recommended the preparation of a bylaw calling for the expenditure of \$350,000 to purchase land to establish a union stockyards. The same report also noted that an option had been secured to purchase 55 acres from three landholders at \$6,500 an acre.³² Council endorsed the proposals enthusiastically and sent the mayor and a city commissioner to the union stockyards in Chicago "to investigate conditions so that we may be started on right lines."³³ Four days later the proposed bylaw unanimously passed first and second reading.³⁴

As in 1903, Council had moved quickly and without forethought. In endorsing the proposal, the *Calgary Herald* freely admitted that the plan was being expedited without due discussion.³⁵ Months later, a newly elected alderman to the 1914 Council said the same thing but added that the city "had not really known what it was doing."³⁶ A major civic involvement had been approved without consulting stakeholders like the Western Stock Growers Association or individual producers. No mention was

made of the exclusive franchise held by the CPR. Indeed, the railway company had not been consulted before Council endorsed the scheme. The Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern did not even hear of the idea until August. There was no statement either in Council or publicly on the city's specific role in the new arrangement. Most significantly, no thought had been given to whether animals could be supplied with the volume or frequency necessary to sustain a union stockyards, or even if the railroads were willing to consider freight rate reductions for producers wanting to utilize them.

Nevertheless the idea of union stockyards in the city had an appeal that the entrepreneurial City Council of 1913 found hard to resist. Their presence offered immense potential for investment and job creation, while consolidating hinterland dominance. Union stockyards already existed in Toronto and Winnipeg, and in several U.S. cities. Based on the Chicago model, they were essentially large rail-based operations for the marketing and disposal of livestock.³⁷ Their size and scope attracted related packing and slaughtering enterprises in addition to commission houses, brokers, and the inevitable livestock exchange. Though owned by the railroads that serviced them, the operation of the yards themselves was kept at arm's length through the formation of a separate company. In Winnipeg, the model for the Calgary union stockyards, the city guarded the public interest through a position on the Board of Directors.

The bylaw initiating the union stockyards project through a municipal land purchase was approved by the ratepayers on 27 September 1913, easily securing the required two-thirds majority.³⁸ The result was not surprising. The purchase was seen as a "no lose" situation. According to the special stockyards committee, over a dozen commission firms and two packing houses were interested in locating on the land to be purchased.³⁹ Mayor Herbert Sinnott told a packed public meeting that livestock would soon account for 50 per cent of the city's total business, and that Edmonton was very interested in union stockyards should Calgary's enthusiasm falter.⁴⁰ To the *Labour Gazette*, the union stockyards meant "a larger field for employment than any or all of the other industries of Calgary combined."⁴¹ The *Calgary Herald* saw the passage of the bylaw as extending "the greatest industry this city can promote," and "uniting the cattle business in this province for the city."⁴² The *Morning Albertan* agreed, calling the bylaw "no philanthropic proposition" and a prerequisite to Calgary's becoming the livestock centre of Canada.⁴³

Following the passage of the bylaw, three complicating factors combined to thwart the progress of the union stockyards scheme. That all three should have received prior attention by Council simply indicates the haste with which the proposal had been approved. First, the land to be purchased did not have direct access to the existing stockyards. A spur line was needed across seven and a half acres owned by the Canada Cement Company. Seeing opportunity for profit, the company preferred to sell the land to the city for \$60,000 rather than grant an easement.⁴⁴ The city responded by refusing to execute the purchase of the 55 acres. The matter was still stalled when the 1914 City Council took office. On 2 January 1914, the city clerk informed

the impatient landholders that the city bonds would be in their possession as soon as the easement matter was concluded.⁴⁵ He was overly optimistic. By the middle of March, the easement issue was still not settled. As long as this land sale was held up, the stockyards proposal could not go ahead. Opponents of the scheme were quick to take advantage.

The second decision that Council should have been considered was the city's role in the proposed union stockyards. The CPR believed that the city was concerned only with securing land for a municipal abattoir and related enterprises, and was not interested in a major role in the proposed stockyards themselves.⁴⁶ Mayor Sinnott gave that impression at a public meeting just prior to the September plebiscite.⁴⁷ Yet, there is good reason to believe that the city was interested in direct involvement. As early as May 1913, the city clerk noted that "the city is inclined to look favourably on a municipally-owned abattoir and stockyards."⁴⁸ A report from the Special Stockyards Committee on 18 August 1913 directed the city clerk "to get the CPR, GTP and CNR together *with the City* so that the various companies who are interested in the formation of union stockyards in Calgary may draft an agreement providing for co-operation."⁴⁹ The September 1913 plebiscite asked ratepayers to approve "the raising of \$350,000 for the purchase of 55 acres *for the establishment of Union Stockyards*."⁵⁰ Sinnott later admitted that the phrase in the plebiscite *for the establishment of union stockyards* was an "add on to give the city more leeway."⁵¹ A draft for the 1914 *Municipal Manual* confused the issue further by containing a statement that the city was interested in the possibility of a municipally owned stockyards.⁵² This evidence seems to suggest that the city was hedging on its options, while explaining why its specific role was never discussed in Council.

The final point concerned the site of the proposed union stockyards. The Stockyards Committee wanted them located on the site occupied at the time by the Alberta Stockyards Company and near Pat Burns's operations. It had reached agreement with three landholders to purchase the 55 acres adjacent to the existing yards before the bylaw in question had even passed first reading in Council. The committee's determination was further reflected in the inflated price the city was prepared to pay for the land. The \$6,500 per acre was \$2,000 above its assessed value. Later, Mayor Sinnott exceeded his authority by personally authorizing a 25 per cent tax rebate to the three landholders on the grounds that the purchase agreement reached in July was tantamount to an actual sale.⁵³

The Stockyards Committee ought to have anticipated that its choice of site would be challenged. The thought of such a large enterprise being built on distant vacant land was enough to stir the hearts of dozens of real estate speculators.⁵⁴ The choice of the preferred "outside site" thus became the object of intense competition between several landholders and real estate interests. Led by Adoniram Samis, a long-time speculator and present city commissioner, and supported by the *Morning Albertan*, a strong campaign was initiated to marshal public opinion against the present site in favour of one outside the city limits. Elements in the City Planning Commission argued that the present site was incompatible with the City Beautiful

concept inherent in the recently released *Mawson Report*.⁵⁵ City medical officer, Dr Cecil Mahood, worried about public health problems associated with a large stockyards.⁵⁶ Women's and labour groups opposed the "inside site" on the same grounds, while several petitions protesting odour problems were received by city hall.⁵⁷

The rationale for an "outside site" had merit. The decision by the Stockyards Committee to locate the new union stockyards on their present site close to the city centre and residential districts ran counter to precedents followed in other cities. Given their size, scope, and odour, union stockyards were usually located well outside the city limits. Council had a letter on file from the manager of the Kansas City union stockyards advising that they should be two to three miles outside the city.⁵⁸ An "outside site" nullified the threat posed by the exclusive franchise, and allowed for unlimited growth. It was always argued that high land prices limited the ability of the inside site to meet future needs. Moreover, the selected site south of Ogden was suitable to railroad switching and other requirements.⁵⁹

Despite these arguments, the Stockyards Committee remained unmoved. Its standard argument was that expense factors justified the "inside site" and that surrounding businesses wanted and deserved the attendant advantages of such a large enterprise.⁶⁰ In all likelihood, these points were secondary. Mindset and politics played a big part.⁶¹ The committee believed that it was logical to build on a well-established site. This logic was reinforced by the knowledge that neither the CPR nor Burns was prepared to move from their present locations, leading critics to argue that a desire to accommodate Pat Burns was the real reason behind the Stockyards Committee's stance.⁶² In referring to advice given to the civic delegation by the manager of the union stockyards in Chicago, Mayor Sinnott told a public meeting that the yards "must be established alongside the Burns plant to ensure the greatest success."⁶³ Whatever its reasons, the Stockyards Committee still had to bring its recommendations to Council for approval. Given the highly contested nature of the site issue, the lack of debate in Council leaves a lot to the imagination.

The controversy over the site blurred the intent of the proposal and stifled progress. An aldermanic by-election was fought on the issue in March 1914. An injunction halting the purchase of the 55 acres further delayed progress.⁶⁴ Both sides were viewed with public suspicion. Those in favour of the outside site viewed the Stockyards Committee as a tool of vested interests. Proponents of the inside site associated the opposition with land speculators and greedy real estate opportunism.

On assuming office, the 1914 City Council found itself in a very difficult situation. It could not go ahead with construction of the stockyards because the necessary land transfer was being held up in the courts. A bitter debate was raging over the site. Finally, confusion reigned over the city's role. Yet despite these problems Council, through the Stockyards Committee, soon took "the bull by the horns."

One incentive was typical in that it demonstrated Council's

susceptibility to the words of others, especially when they were perceived as experts. On 5 January 1914, prominent stockman and ranching spokesman George Lane addressed a combined meeting of City Council and the Board of Trade on the subject of the stockyards. Lane, who was the current president of the Western Stock Growers Association, condemned the railways for their greed and insensitivity, and argued bluntly that they must not be allowed to control the stockyards. He supported his argument for business ownership by suggesting that both he and fellow Big Four member Archibald Maclean were prepared to invest in the stockyards but not if the railroads were in control. To Lane, the city's role was as an active but neutral participant.⁶⁵ This advice from a widely respected stockman had a profound impact on Council. Alienating the ranching community was not a step it wanted to take. If it entertained any doubts over the strength of Lane's words, they were dispelled a short time later when prominent rancher and citizen, Alfred Cross (and fellow Big Four member), declined an invitation to sit on a civic committee to advise on the organization of the union stockyards.

Another impetus for municipal involvement in the union stockyards came from an unlikely source. Soon after assuming office in 1914, Council asked City Solicitor Clinton Ford for a written opinion on the rights of the city to become involved in union stockyards either inside or outside the city limits. Ford advised that there was no problem outside the city limits but that the existing franchise meant that any civic involvement within the city necessitated an arrangement with the CPR. According to the city solicitor, the franchise gave the CPR "very large rights" and rendered the city "practically helpless to establish stockyards of its own within the city limits for the next seventeen years." This news was not surprising. It was Ford's closing remarks that gave the city the leeway it needed.

It must, however, always be kept in mind that the Provincial Legislature has full power notwithstanding the said agreement (the franchise), to incorporate a Union Stockyards Company with authority to operate within the city limits or anywhere else and to empower the City of Calgary to own shares in and have representatives on the Board of Directors of such Company.⁶⁶

Lane had raised the fears about railway control. Ford had told the city that ultimately the franchise did not matter. The answer to the first concern was civic participation. The implication of the second was that the city now had real bargaining power with the CPR. The "inside site" proponents (the Stockyards Committee) now had all the leverage they needed.

On 27 January 1914, Stockyards Committee Chairman Harold Riley announced startling plans for the union stockyards. Proposed was the formation of a company capitalized at around a million dollars to form union stockyards. Under the proposal, the city would participate in operating the stockyards as equal partners with the CPR, the other two railway companies, the provincial government, the United Farmers of Alberta, and the Western Stock Growers Association.⁶⁷ The announcement caught everyone by surprise, especially the CPR, which had anticipated a monopoly position for itself and a non-

role for the city. The railway company, however, backed off and supported the city's recommendations.⁶⁸

This was City Council at its random best. There had been no hint of this direction in Council meetings in early January. The decision was reached in a Stockyards Committee meeting on 23 January. The prospective partners had not been involved. In fact they had not even been approached. The Alberta Government, the UFA, and the WSGA registered their surprise in their speedy refusals to become involved.⁶⁹ As for the railway companies, the Grand Trunk Pacific was conspicuous by its silence, while the Canadian Northern was noncommittal. In a visit to the city in March, CNR General Manager M. H. Macleod was evasive and gave officials little assurance that his company was even interested.⁷⁰

The Stockyards Committee pressed on nonetheless, doubtless emboldened by the increasing patronage at the stockyards, and by the CPR's capitulation on the matter of monopoly control.⁷¹ On 24 February, it discussed for the first time the idea of the city actually controlling the union stockyards.⁷² Five days later, it recommended the formation of a stockyards company consisting of the city and interested railroads, with the city having a controlling vote on the board of directors.⁷³ Again, the CPR had no problem with this new twist, arguing that it was not overly intent on operating the stockyards on an independent basis if other arrangements could meet its needs. In a correspondence to the city, the company took the high moral ground by maintaining that it was irrelevant who controlled the stockyards as long as the livestock industry's interests were protected.⁷⁴ The other two railway companies, now beset with financial woes, failed to respond.

The CPR was openly surprised but not upset by the city's aggression. Originally it had been amenable to a union stockyards on the Winnipeg model, believing that its franchise justified a monopoly interest.⁷⁵ However, it had no choice but to co-operate, given Council's new knowledge about the vulnerability of its franchise. The possibility of a victory for the "outside site" doubtless contributed to an alliance with the Stockyards Committee. The CPR was also aware that the financial distress of the other two railway companies, neither of which had ever agreed to co-operate, was making the union stockyards very much a two-partner arrangement.⁷⁶ So without being too obvious, the CPR decided to cut its losses. In agreeing to the formation of a union stockyards along the lines proposed, the CPR suggested that the city buy it out completely and operate the yards as a municipal utility.⁷⁷ The CPR's rationale was clear. If its franchise was not iron-clad, then selling it was an attractive option. Without debate, Council agreed to the CPR's new proposal. By the end of March a draft agreement was reached between the city and the CPR covering the two options.⁷⁸ The public was to choose between the two in a plebiscite to be submitted at some undetermined future date.⁷⁹

Within three months, City Council had run an entire gamut. Without consultation or in-depth discussion, it had allowed an ad hoc committee to move the city's position on the union stockyards from initiator, to equal participant, to a control-

ling partner, to sole owner. Solid information was lacking on a host of fronts. The total cost to the city was unknown. The public was unaware that the CPR was not the sole owner of the Alberta Stockyards Company. The minor shareholders had to be bought out before the city could operate the yards as a municipal utility. Following the city's announcement that it was seeking majority control in the union stockyards, one of the original Montreal buyers who held about 8 per cent of the stock upped his price from \$20,000 to \$50,000.⁸⁰ These necessary expenditures were not written into the bylaw. The site was still not decided, and another injunction was holding up the sale of the 55 acres.⁸¹ It was not even clear if the city was interested in union stockyards at all or merely a municipally run enterprise. So muddled was the issue that Council was unsure about the nature and number of plebiscites necessary to carry the matter forward.⁸²

The roller-coaster ride took another turn in early May, when the CPR decided to withdraw from any joint ownership with the city. In contradicting its behaviour to date, the railway company stated that "for many years the policy of the CPR has been to steer clear of all and any combinations which might get it mixed up with municipal governments."⁸³ A few days later, the CPR applied the second option of the agreement reached in March when it offered to sell its shares in the Alberta Stockyards Company to the city for \$252,500.⁸⁴ Certainly, the idea of municipal control was not a daunting thought for a city that, according to Harold Riley, "led the cities of Canada in the municipalization of utilities."⁸⁵ Yet one might have expected some debate on the matter. Instead, Council immediately responded with a counter-offer of \$171,700, which the CPR flatly refused.⁸⁶ In Council's subsequent debate, the Stockyards Committee recommended acceptance of the CPR's asking price, and proposed the preparation of a \$350,000 bylaw to buy and improve the stockyards. In a rare break with the committee, Council rejected the recommendation and resubmitted its original offer.⁸⁷ It was obvious, however, that both sides wanted an agreement. The result was a compromise price of \$212,000. By the end of July both parties had endorsed the proposal. All that remained was ratepayer approval for the \$250,000 bylaw necessary to complete the purchase.⁸⁸

It was a dubious deal at best. The merits of municipal stockyards had not been considered. Nor did Council appear concerned that the original plan for a union stockyards had been abandoned. It was assumed that the yards would be profitable. According to George Lane, no municipality had made money from owning stockyards.⁸⁹ Proponents were quick to point out that the stockyards realized a good profit over the previous 13 months.⁹⁰ That this represented a return of less than 4 per cent on the money the city was prepared to spend was left unstated. Or, as was wisely noted, "the CPR never lets go of a good thing."⁹¹ The ultimate cost to the city was unknown. A \$350,000 bylaw was on the books; another one for \$250,000 was being proposed. Yet according to some estimates, the final figure was around \$2 million.⁹² The CPR's asking price was too high. The total assets of the stockyards company stood at less than \$60,000 in June 1914. At current assessment values, the land was worth another \$85,000, making a total value of

around \$145,000, or \$67,000 less than the city was prepared to pay.⁹³ One might have expected that with a \$350,000 bylaw already approved for stockyards, the city might have pressured the CPR for a lower price by dismissing the franchise as a lever. Indeed, a subsequent charter amendment secured the right to operate a union stockyards anywhere in the city. Yet civic leaders chose not to move in that direction. It was another example of Council following practice, and reacting to an external proposal without thought of need or merit. One can conclude only that its negotiations with the CPR were influenced by a traditional healthy respect for a company with a long memory, an honest belief in the merits of the inside location, and of course a desire not to antagonize the city's biggest businessman, Pat Burns.⁹⁴

There was little public interest in the new arrangement, and it was assumed that the enabling bylaw would pass with ease. The future of the stockyards was promising. The removal of the tariffs on cattle entering the United States had stimulated trade and enticed American cattle buyers to the stockyards. In fact, the Alberta cattle industry was about to enter its "second golden age."⁹⁵ Moreover, with livestock becoming more prominent in the provincial economy, the Alberta deputy minister of agriculture, and the livestock commissioner had expressed their interest in enhancing Edmonton as the centre of the livestock industry in the province.⁹⁶ Doubtless, this fact was not lost on civic policymakers and livestock interests in Calgary.

The plebiscite to approve expenditures to buy the stockyards from the CPR was held on 14 December 1914. In campaigning for its endorsement, Stockyards Committee Chairman Harold Riley commented on the rapid growth of the livestock industry, and expressed his confidence that a municipal stockyards "will no doubt be a profit making enterprise."⁹⁷ Both daily papers supported the bylaw. The *Herald* editorialized that "a vote for the stockyards was a vote for a greater Calgary."⁹⁸ To the *Morning Albertan* "the price was reasonable, the terms good," and a vote for the bylaw was necessary so that the city "could get control of the industry and free it from the domination of a railway corporation."⁹⁹ The bylaw, however, was defeated, not even receiving a plurality, let alone the required two-thirds majority.¹⁰⁰ Its defeat left little comment in its wake, being attributed solely to current financial climate. The *Herald* summed it up nicely with the comment that "the universal conditions inspired a solid vote against anything which might lead to the expenditure of more money even though future results might be most profitable."¹⁰¹ In all likelihood, it was correct. The second half of 1914 saw steadily worsening financial conditions. The city was financially unable to honour its commitment to undertake interchange construction within the city limits for the incoming transcontinental railroad.¹⁰² A week after the bylaw's defeat, City Council appropriated \$25,000 for poor relief. A month earlier, the Relief Committee of Council had reported on the alarming increase of begging and vagrancy in the city, and three months earlier the entire civic administration had rolled back their salaries 5 to 20 per cent.¹⁰³ At the end of 1914, unpaid taxes were up almost 500 per cent over the preceding year.¹⁰⁴

The stockyards issue died as suddenly as it had appeared. Yet

Council's subsequent loss of interest in the stockyards went beyond the defeat of the bylaw. It had been a protracted and exhaustive debate. With the sudden death of Alderman William Tregillus in November 1914, Council lost its most powerful influence. Council was also upset by the provincial government's decision in October on the land purchase authorized by the September 1913 plebiscite. The plebiscite had been challenged by "outside site" interests on the grounds that ratepayers had not been fully informed of the restrictive franchise when they voted. The provincial government allowed the city to purchase the land in question but only after it had been resubmitted in another plebiscite.¹⁰⁵ Finally, an unsympathetic mayor had been elected for 1915. As an alderman, William Costello was an opponent of municipal ownership of the stockyards. Thus the matter died. Even the original notion of a municipal abattoir, although temporarily considered in 1915, was allowed to lapse.

Conclusions

Throughout the entire stockyards issue, Council displayed a willingness to act on external initiatives. The idea for the original stockyards in 1903, the possibility of union stockyards in 1913, and finally the impetus to own them outright did not originate in Council. Finally, in its ready acceptance, Council did not (and arguably, could not) take the wider implications into account. It lacked the experience and expertise to assess realities. Its policy of delegating wide almost unilateral powers to a small ad hoc committee—in this instance the Stockyards Committee—was a blueprint for disaster. The Stockyards Committee was dominated by persuasive individuals with strong personal biases, and exercised its considerable power with little forethought. For example, it did not consult with local stock interests or other experts on a regular basis, if at all. It is amazing to consider that aside from the one correspondence inviting the provincial government to become a participant, no dialogue occurred with the agricultural experts in Edmonton. Possibly the latter's approach to the city of Edmonton on the issue of stockyards represented a reaction to a perceived snub.

On the other hand, the union stockyards issue showed that Calgary civic leaders were willing to take positive action to further livestock issues and consolidate the city's premier position within the industry. It was clear from the stockyards debate that City Council viewed the livestock industry as more than ranching. It saw a wider regional livestock economy based on sensible diversified farming and stock raising, and saw Calgary in a centralizing role. Finally, it could be argued that even taking into account its cavalier and haphazard practices, the city failed to achieve its goal primarily because others did not share its vision, and that it did all it could in a losing cause.

Would a union stockyards have worked in the city? If they had been constructed as proposed, they would have benefited from the surge in livestock production during the period 1915–20 when an open American market stimulated the export market and led to a substantial increase in packing plant construction. Even then they would not have received the numbers forecast by proponents. The yards were expected to receive at least 30,000 animals a week.¹⁰⁶ Pat Burns maintained that the union

stockyards should have a capacity to handle 50,000 head a week, a figure equal to that of Chicago.¹⁰⁷ The optimistic forecasts were not surprising. The current promotional campaign initiated in Saskatchewan to increase western Canada's population by 10 million in a decade certainly implied the market intensity to justify a large union stockyards.¹⁰⁸ When this did not materialize, and the Americans closed their markets in 1921, the livestock industry fell into a long decline that lasted into the Second World War period. In the 1930s, for example, the Calgary stockyards handled about 6,000 head a week and in the peak years in the 1940s, about 8,000 a week, a far cry from the 30,000 confidently forecast in 1914.¹⁰⁹ Rancher Rod McLeay told the 1934 Price Spreads Commission that an unexpected arrival of two carloads of cattle could break the Calgary cattle market. In short, the Calgary region did not have either the animal or human population to justify a union stockyards. Changes in the industry also worked against big urban stockyards. Direct-to-packer sales and the declining importance of railways had begun to make their impact felt on urban stockyards as early as the 1920s. As community auctions in feeder areas became more common, big central stockyards were bypassed in the beef-handling chain.¹¹⁰ As it was, the Calgary stockyards remained under CPR control for the next half-century. In retrospect, it was probably better for the city that way.

The union stockyards issue provides an excellent example of the dovetailing of public and private interests that characterized civic policy-making during this period. First, it involved two major economic forces in the city, both of which had received favourable treatment from earlier Councils. The public debate over the location of original stockyards lease in 1887 was ultimately resolved in the CPR's favour. Pat Burns received incentives from the city to locate there in the early 1890s. The Stockyards Committee's desire to accommodate them further on the site of the union stockyards was scarcely surprising, especially when both presented a united front by refusing to relocate. Also of interest is the fact that high-profile citizens, William Pearce and James Walker, owned most of the land under negotiation for the union stockyards. The interests of the Alberta Agricultural Federation and the Alberta Farmers Co-operative Elevator Company can be seen through the energetic efforts of Alderman William Tregillus, who was heavily involved in both organizations. The federation wanted a secure outlet for its members' diversified stock; the latter saw a potential market for its feed products. The proponents of the failed "outside" location represented a coalition of real estate interests spearheaded by a speculative city commissioner. The result for the public was misinformation, and ultimately a loss of interest.

Finally, can the union stockyards issue be seen as a historic example of the evolution of Calgary's western or "cowtown" image? Certainly, the strenuous efforts pursued to secure the stockyards would appear to imply a civic awareness of the city's unique position in the cattle industry, and of a conscious desire to cement this relationship permanently. Moreover, the holding of the first Stampede in 1912 and the fact that the term *cowtown* was already in use indicates that an urban western image was already in the making.¹¹¹ Yet it would be unwise to see the stockyards issue as mirroring any specific ambition for the

city's future and therefore as a historic precedent for a contemporary urban image. If anything, the city wanted to transcend its early reliance on the ranching industry, and the most persistent message preached by civic promoters had always concerned the need for the city to capitalize on diverse hinterland wealth.¹¹² The stockyards, like the lumber yards, the local sandstone quarries, or the proposed grain elevator was simply another example of this ambition. The failed university initiative was pursued with as much vigour. Finally, it could be argued that the grand designs behind the union stockyards did not perceive cattle as the major player. That distinction went to hogs. It was their spiralling numbers that were crowding the yards and offering visions of urban prosperity. On the wider agricultural stage, the stockyards issue simply reflected a civic dream of enhancing Calgary's premier position as a mixed farming centre. When searching for historic roots for Calgary's "Cowtown" image, scholars will find the union stockyards issue less fruitful than they might expect.

Notes

1. Alan F. J. Artibise, "Boosterism and the Development of Prairie Cities, 1871–1913," in *Town and City: Aspects of Western Canadian Urban Development*, ed. Alan F. J. Artibise (Regina: Canadian Great Plains Centre, 1981), 215.
2. Paul Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies 1871–1916," *Histoire sociale / Social History* 8, no. 15 (May 1975): 89.
3. See John H. Mollenkopf, "The Postwar Policies of Urban Development," in *Marxism and the Metropolis: New Perspectives in Urban Political Economy*, ed. William K. Tabb and Larry Sawers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); Maurice Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West, 1870–1914," in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History*, ed. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan Artibise (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited and The Institute of Canadian Studies, 1977), 125–41.
4. See Max Foran, "The Calgary Town Council, 1884–1895: A Study of Local Government in a Frontier Environment" (unpublished MA thesis, University of Calgary, 1970), 113–22.
5. Henry C. Klassen, *Eye on the Future: Business People in Calgary and the Bow Valley, 1879–1900* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2002), 149–50.
6. *Calgary Herald*, 11 April 1903.
7. In November 1902, the Calgary Board of Trade inserted an advertisement in eastern Canadian newspapers calling for manufacturers and wholesalers to locate in Calgary, which was described as "an important railway centre for distributing goods throughout this great country." See Glenbow Archives, Calgary Chamber of Commerce Papers 1890–1979, box 1, file folder 1.
8. City of Calgary Archives, City of Calgary Papers, box 2, file folder 19, City Council Minutes (hereafter cited as CCM), 2 October 1902.
9. CCM, 13 October 1902.
10. CCM, 19 February 1903.
11. These rates were 1.25 cents for every calf, swine, or sheep; 5 cents for every head of horned or hornless cattle; 10 cents for every horse, gelding, mare, or mule.
12. For good information, see Leonard Friesen, *Cows, Cowboys, Cattlemen and Characters: A History of the Calgary Stockyards, 1903–1989* (Airdrie: Friesen Cattle Company, 1995).
13. *Calgary Herald*, 23 March 1904.
14. *Calgary Herald*, 28 March 1904.
15. City of Calgary Archives, City Clerk's Correspondence 1887–1945 (hereafter cited as City Clerk Files), box 90, file folder 659, City Solicitor Clinton

Ford to City Clerk J. M. Miller, 26 February 1914.

16. CCM, 3 April 1903.
17. *Farm and Ranch Review*, September 1907; *Calgary Herald*, 6 September 1907. Clay believed that the entire western Canadian beef industry was controlled entirely by Burns and Winnipeg's Gordon, Ironsides, and Fares.
18. Market timing was more important in the cattle business. Wheat would store. During this period, cattle were marketed at their optimum marketing weight, primarily in the fall. Producers rarely received the advantage of seasonal price swings.
19. The first sales at the yards involved horses only. For statistical data on the stockyards, see City Clerk Files, box 71, file folder 551.
20. City of Calgary Archives, City of Calgary Papers, box 18, file folder 114, correspondence to city solicitor, 29 March 1911.
21. See "Estimates for the City of Calgary," 1913, in CCM, 13 June 1913.
22. City Clerk Files, box 71, file folder 551, S. Bellow to city clerk, 18 April 1907.
23. Friesen, *Cows, Cowboys, Cattlemen and Characters*, 13.
24. For examples, see Glenbow, The Pat Burns Papers, M160, "Accounts and Ledger Books."
25. Friesen, *Cows, Cowboys, Cattlemen and Characters*, 45.
26. See article by W. J. Tregillus, "Construction of Calgary Stockyards with Adequate Accommodation Solves the Problem of Lasting Prosperity," in *The 100,000 Manufacturing, Building and Wholesale Book Edition* (Calgary: *Morning Albertan*, 1914).
27. See City Clerk Files, box 64, file folder 508.
28. Under this bylaw (no. 1203) all meat sold in the city had to be inspected, then tagged and stamped. All meat products not slaughtered in Calgary had to be brought in with internal organs attached for inspection. See City Clerk Files, box 10, file folder 49, 2 October 1911.
29. City Clerk Files, box 63, file folder 502, E. J. Fream to W. J. Tregillus, 11 June 1913.
30. Though he did not mention names, Fream was doubtless referring to the livestock monopoly enjoyed by Pat Burns.
31. CCM, 18 June 1913.
32. CCM, 17 July 1913.
33. *Ibid.*
34. CCM, 21 July 1913.
35. *Calgary Herald*, 22 September 1913.
36. *Calgary Herald*, 23 September 1913, 7 March 1914.
37. Ian MacLachlan, *Kill and Chill: Restructuring Canada's Beef Commodity Chain* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 102–4.
38. The vote was 2329 for, 443 against.
39. See *Report of Special Council Committee to Council*, in CCM, 17 July 1913.
40. *Morning Albertan*, 25 September 1913.
41. *Labour Gazette*, August 1913, 143.
42. *Calgary Herald*, 22, 25 September 1913.
43. *Morning Albertan*, 24 September 1913.
44. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, correspondence dated 28 October 1913.
45. City Clerk Files, box 66, file folder 520, correspondence dated 2 January 1914.
46. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, correspondence from George Walker, CPR solicitor, Province of Alberta, to Harold Riley, Stockyards Committee chairman, 6 July 1914.
47. See *Morning Albertan*, 25 September 1913.
48. City Clerk Files, box 58, file folder 465, correspondence dated 14 May 1913.
49. City Clerk Files, box 66, file folder 520, *Report of Stockyards Committee*, 18 August 1913 (emphasis mine).
50. See City Clerk Files, box 66, file folder 520 (emphasis mine).
51. *Morning Albertan*, 25 February 1914. A day earlier Sinnott had told the *Calgary Herald* that the bylaw wording might have been "a blunder."
52. City Clerk Files, box 69, file folder 544, "Draft of Municipal Manual for 1914."
53. See *Calgary Herald*, 4 March 1914.
54. In February 1914, the manager of the Kansas City union stockyards had advised the city that they should be located at least two miles from the city centre. See *Calgary Herald*, 2 March 1914.
55. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, correspondence dated 20 February 1914.
56. CCM, 9, 21 March 1914.
57. *Calgary Herald*, 22 February 1914. For examples, City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, 16 February, 2 March 1914.
58. The letter was in response to advice sought by the city on aspects of union stockyards. See *Calgary Herald*, 2 March 1914.
59. Land was offered in at least three locations, one in the present suburb of Woodlands. The favoured site near Ogden just south of today's Glenmore Trail, while suitable for railway purposes, was also along the Bow River. Even in a time of less environmental sensitivity, one wonders about the reaction of downstream towns to what a huge union stockyards might do to their water quality. Predictably, they were never advised of the issue.
60. For a good summary of the Stockyards Committee's reasons, see Sinnott's special interview with the *Calgary Herald*, 5 March 1914.
61. Rivalries may have provided added incentive. It was common knowledge that Sinnott and Samis did not like each other.
62. *Calgary Herald*, 25 February 1914.
63. *Calgary Herald*, 25 September 1913.
64. This injunction was dismissed on procedural grounds, the plaintiffs having not given one month's notice in writing. See *Calgary Herald*, 2, 16, 18 March 1914.
65. Glenbow, Board of Trade Papers, box 1, file folder 2, "Address by George Lane at the Board of Trade—Calgary," 5 January 1914.
66. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, Clinton Ford, city solicitor, to J. M. Miller, city clerk, 26 February 1914. This was Ford's written opinion. He had discussed the matter with Mayor Sinnott in early January.
67. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, Stockyards Committee Chairman Harold Riley to William Tregillus, 27 January 1914.
68. See City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, CPR to Stockyards Committee Chairman Harold Riley, 2 February 1914.
69. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, correspondence from provincial minister of agriculture, 28 January 1914; the United Farmers of Alberta, 30 January 1914; the Western Stock Growers Association, 6 February 1914. The government declined on policy grounds; the other two gave financial reasons.
70. *Calgary Herald*, 3 March 1914.
71. Stockyards sales were expected to increase from \$6.8 million in 1913 to \$9.5 million in 1914, leading the *Herald* to announce that Calgary had replaced Winnipeg as western Canada's largest livestock centre. See *Calgary Herald*, 10 February 1914.
72. See *Calgary Herald*, 24 February 1914.
73. CCM, 10 March 1914.
74. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, correspondence from George Walker, CPR solicitor, Province of Alberta, to Stockyards Committee Chairman Harold Riley, 6 July 1914.

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75. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, G. A. Walker, CPR solicitor, to Stockyards Committee Chairman Harold Riley, 2 June 1914.
76. See *Calgary Herald*, 19 February, 21 April 1914. According to the *Herald*, over 20 letters to the Grand Trunk Pacific went unanswered.
77. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, correspondence dated 13 March 1914.
78. The first part of the agreement was for the CPR to sell its entire interest to the city. Alternatively the two parties agreed to form a union stockyards company capitalized at \$1 million. The CPR was to turn the franchise over to the new company in return for stock. The city was to turn over the land acquired under the \$350,000 bylaw to the new company also for stock. The other railway companies were to be given equal opportunity to buy shares or simply use the yards on a fee basis. The city was to retain a majority on the Board of Directors. Stakeholders like the UFA, WSGA, packing operations, and commission houses would be invited to sit on the Board of Directors in an advisory capacity only. See City Clerk Files, box 67, file folder 532.
79. *Calgary Herald*, 23 March 1914.
80. City Clerk Papers, box 90, file folder 659, James McDonnell to city clerk, 13 February 1914. McDonnell, a Montreal wholesale grain and export dealer, had written to Council in July 1913 offering to sell his 77 shares for \$20,000. City Clerk Files, box 63, file folder 502.
81. See City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, correspondence dated 20 April 1914. This injunction was later withdrawn, but was likely the reason behind the provincial government's decision in October 1914 to compel the city to hold another plebiscite to secure ratepayer approval for the \$350,000 bylaw originally endorsed by plebiscite in September 1913.
82. At one point it was suggested that a plebiscite be held to settle the site issue; another to decide whether the city should pursue union or municipal stockyards, and another to ask for additional money. See *Calgary Herald*, 21 April 1914; CCM, 3 August 1914.
83. *Calgary Herald*, 4 May 1914.
84. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 659, correspondence dated 19 May 1914.
85. *Calgary Herald*, 9 December 1914.
86. City Clerk Files, box 90, file folder 650, correspondence dated 19 May 1914.
87. City Clerk Files box 90, file folder 659, correspondence dated 2 June 1914; *Report of Stockyards Committee to Council*, 6 June 1914.
88. The amount was to be paid in 20-year city bonds at 5 per cent. See CCM, 26 October 1914.
89. *Calgary Herald*, 12 December 1914.
90. Harold Riley publicly stated this figure just prior to the 1914 plebiscite. See *Calgary Herald*, 9 December 1914.
91. *Morning Albertan*, 9 December 1914.
92. *Calgary Herald*, 28 February 1914.
93. City Clerk Files, box 71, file folder 551, "Alberta Stockyards Company Balance Sheet," 30 June 1914.
94. The sentiment was expressed on more than one occasion that the choice of the inside site was purely to satisfy Pat Burns. See *Calgary Herald*, 28 March 1914.
95. "Mixed Blessings: The Second 'Golden Age' of the Alberta Cattle Industry, 1914–20," *Alberta History* 46, no. 3 (1998): 10–19.
96. *Calgary Herald*, 28 April 1914.
97. *Calgary Herald*, 9 December 1914.
98. *Calgary Herald*, 12 December 1914.
99. *Morning Albertan*, 12 December 1914.
100. The bylaw was lost by 490 votes: 2165 for, 2655 against.
101. *Calgary Herald*, 15 December 1914.
102. CCM, 14 January 1915.
103. CCM, 18 December, 11 November, 10 August 1914.
104. CCM, *City Treasurer's Report*, 20 April 1915. The figures given were \$310,000 for 1914 and \$1,292,000 for 1914.
105. *Statutes of Alberta, 1914*, George V, Chapter 40, "An Act to Amend the Acts and Ordinances of the City of Calgary and to Validate Certain Bylaws of Said City."
106. *Calgary Herald*, 10 February 1914.
107. Ibid.
108. For details, see *Calgary Herald*, 11 March 1914.
109. Friesen, *Cows, Cowboys, Cattlemen and Characters*, 42.
110. MacLachlan, *Kill and Chill*, 107–8.
111. See *Calgary Herald*, 27 February 1913.
112. William Tregillus argued precisely this point in "Construction of Calgary Stockyards," 105.

In the city's first promotional publication in March 1885, *Calgary, Alberta, Her Industries and Resources*, the editor wrote, "The situation of the town on the mainline of the Canadian Pacific Railway, its central position in the district and its proximity to the mining regions of the Rockies and to the great stock district stretching north and south, indicate it as the great distributing centre extending north, west, south and let us hope, north east." (24).