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## Notes and Comments

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS

## THE WESTERN CANADIAN URBAN HISTORY CONFERENCE: A REPORT

Presented below are brief synopses of papers presented at the Western Canadian Urban History Conference, October 24-26, at the University of Winnipeg. Papers are listed according to the order they appeared in the program. Further information should be obtained by writing the authors. Publication of papers is under consideration. Preparation of these synopses is by the *Review* editors with the intention of providing readers with a more comprehensive description than indicated by titles alone. We apologize in advance for any errors, omissions, distortions or egregious misconstructions.

Alan Artibise, Cariboo College, Kamloops, "The Origins and Incorporation of Winnipeg": An account of the origins of Winnipeg from the Selkirk Settlement to the incorporated city of 1874, detailing the major determinants in the final siting of the city.

Max Foran, University of Calgary, "The Birth and Expansion of Calgary, 1875-1895": An account of the early development of Calgary with special emphasis on determinants apart from that of the recognized influence of the C.P.R.

Ed Rea, University of Manitoba, "How Winnipeg was Nearly Won": An investigation into the nearly successful attempt of William Mackenzie and Donald Mann to create a traction, electric power and gas monopoly in early twentieth century Winnipeg.

C.O. White, Campion College, University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus, "Moose Jaw Opts for Private over Municipal or Provincial Ownership of Its Electrical Utility": An account of the genesis in the 'twenties of private control of power in Saskatchewan cities, particularly Moose Jaw, and the difficulties such control created in the development of an integrated provincial system in the 'fifties and 'sixties.

Ramsay Cook, York University, "Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reform": A biographical essay on one of the lesser-known feminist figures in Winnipeg's reform circles in the period of the Great Transformation.

Patricia Roy, University of Victoria, "Protecting their Pocketbooks and Preserving their Race: White Merchants and Oriental Competition": A study of the relationship of vested economic interest and anti-oriental hostility among the merchants of Vancouver and Victoria in the early decades of the twentieth century.

L.D. McCann, University of British Columbia, "Urban Growth in British Columbia, 1886-1914: A Tale of Two Cities": A detailed statistical account and comparison of the development of Vancouver and Victoria at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Carl Betke, University of Victoria, "The Social Significance of Sport in the City: Edmonton in the 1920's": A discussion of sport in Edmonton in the early twentieth century and its role as a force for enhancing social pluralism or for creating civic unity.

John H. Taylor, Carleton University, "The Development of Public Welfare in the Urban West": The proposal of a dynamic model of the frontier-metropolitan dichotomy, the associated problems of institutional transmission and transformation, and the development of public welfare as a case study in this matrix of urban change.

John C. Weaver, McMaster University, "Elitism and the Corporate Ideal in Canadian Municipal Reform, 1890-1920": A study which demonstrates the close relationship of the corporate ideal in local reform and which questions the assumption of a relationship between local reform and local progress.

S. George Rich, University of Waterloo, "Metropolitan Winnipeg, 1943-1961": An investigation of the development of metropolitan government in Winnipeg. The importance of the need for both systematic and behavioural approaches is stressed in this and other studies of the evolution of local government.

P. Phillips, University of Manitoba, "Power Politics: The Mayoralty of S.J. Farmer": Politics in post-strike Winnipeg were dealt with in terms of the struggle for public ownership of hydro.

B. McKillop, University of Manitoba, "The Communist as Conscience: Jacob Penner and Winnipeg Civic Politics, 1934-1935": Treating the first two years of Penner's long term as alderman, the paper details some of a radical's concerns with a business dominated council and mayoralty and the timidity of social democrats in the face of the chaotic situation surrounding the problem of relief in Depression Winnipeg.

Donald Avery, University of Western Ontario, "Foreign Workers and Labour Radicalism in the Western Canadian Mining Industry, 1900-1919": A case study which questions the thesis of Gerald Rosenblum that the docility of the immigrant prevented the growth of an effective labour movement. The paper argues, rather, that the foreign worker in the Western Canadian mining industry played an important and effective role in unionization.

Gilbert Stelter, University of Guelph, "The Urban Frontier in Canadian History": A study of the common patterns of four centuries of community development in Canada in the context of the metropolitan concept, with particular emphasis on the urban frontier community.

The conference also included a demonstration of the National Museum of Man's "Visual History Series", a workshop on urban history presented by the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, a visual presentation on the mapping of Winnipeg by Ed Dahl and Alan Artibise, and, at a final luncheon gathering, "A Comment on the Conference" by J.M.S Careless, of the University of Toronto.

John H. Taylor

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#### HABITAT: THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Those interested in the urban field should be aware of "Habitat: The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements" scheduled for Vancouver in the summer of 1976.

"Habitat" is to some extent an offspring of the Stockholm conference on man and his environment and parallels and is on the scale of

recent international conferences such as the Bucharest conference on population and the Rome conference on food.

It is, in brief, an attempt to arouse a world consciousness of the urban crisis and to provide some solutions to it.

The conference is being held under the auspices of the United Nations and the host is the Canadian government. Some 140 member nations of the U.N. are expected to be involved.

In Canada, the Secretary of State for Urban Affairs has the chief managerial responsibilities, although all provinces and the City of Vancouver are directly involved, and most cities indirectly involved.

The conference might be seen to consist of three parts: the governmental, the non-governmental, and the "Urban Demonstration Projects".

Final determination of the themes and direction of the conference will most certainly be made by the United Nations and the governmental sector.

But parallel to and to some extent integrated with the governmental role will be a role for Non-Governmental Organizations, or NGOs as they are known. Such organizations have limited rights of participation at international conferences under the terms of the U.N. Charter.

The Canadian government, through the ministry of urban affair's "National Committee to Co-ordinate Canadian Public Participation in Habitat" organized, early in November, a first meeting of NGOs in Ottawa. The writer attended as an observer for the Canadian Historical Association.

Participants to this Ottawa conference were asked to consider and discuss possible themes for "Habitat" and also to suggest mechanisms for further involvement of NGOs in the Vancouver conference.

I understand that no government has involved NGOs at such an early stage of the planning, but the outcome of the deliberations of the first meeting in Ottawa remains to be seen. At the Ottawa meeting, NGOs were encouraged to inform their constituencies about and to arouse interest in "Habitat". To some extent this is the point of this missive.

But it is also to inform you of the "Urban Demonstration Projects", which in broad terms are supposed to be demonstrations of practical solutions to urban problems.

Information about these projects -- for example, the application process and funding -- is available in a booklet which may be obtained by writing:

Canadian Urban Demonstration Program,  
Ministry of State for Urban Affairs,  
Ottawa, Canada. K1A 0P6

Three Canadian projects (from among those applied for before the end of 1974) will be presented in audio-visual form at "Habitat", along with similar presentations from many of the world's nations.

Other projects (not subject to the 1974 deadline) will not get the audio-visual treatment, but will be visited by delegates en route to and from Vancouver. A fund of \$100 million, spread over five years, has been approved by parliament to support such projects.

Suggestions for CHA participation in "Habitat"---or the participation of "urbanologists" in general---can be voiced in future issues of the *Urban History Review*. The editors may also be used as a communications link to appropriate authorities.

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#### THE URBAN HISTORY YEARBOOK AND THE JOURNAL OF URBAN HISTORY

Subscriptions are now being taken for two new urban history publications. This spring the first edition of the *Urban History Yearbook* appeared in England and is now available. It is edited by Professor H.J. Dyos, and published by Leicester University Press. Scheduled this autumn is the first volume of the *Journal of Urban History*, published by Sage Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 776, Beverly Hills, California.

The *Yearbook* is a more formal and extensive elaboration of the *Urban History Newsletter*, begun more than a decade ago by Professor Dyos. It includes notes on urban history meetings, synopses of some current

experiments in urban history, reviews of books on the urban past, a large current bibliography, and a massive survey and register of research in progress. For the present the *Yearbook* is oriented to the British field, but Professor Dyos has expressed an intention to develop a battery of correspondents in other countries. Professor Gilbert Stelter, of the History Department, University of Guelph, in Guelph, Ontario, is to be the Canadian correspondent.

The *Journal* apparently will follow the pattern of the usual learned publication with its complement of scholarly articles, reviews and miscellanea. Among Canadians on the editorial board of the *Journal* is Professor Michael Katz, of York University, Downsview, Ontario.

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#### OTTAWA IN MAPS/OTTAWA PAR LES CARTES

The Diffusion Programme of the Public Archives of Canada, initiated nearly two years ago to bring to a wider audience the institution's holdings, has finally borne fruit for individuals interested in Canada's urban past. *Ottawa in Maps/Ottawa par les cartes* by Thomas L. Nagy reproduces thirty maps and several architectural plans for the period 1825 to 1973.

Among the items reproduced are general city maps, bird's eye views, maps detailing the history of planning in Ottawa, a sheet from an insurance atlas and several detailed maps of small portions of the city.

The text accompanying the maps selected relates each of the maps to some aspect of Ottawa's past and draws attention to significant features of each document. The construction of the Rideau Canal, the proposed fortifying of what is today Parliament Hill with a citadel, the construction of timber slides and channels to accommodate the lumber activity on the Ottawa River, and directions for "a motor drive through Ottawa's parks and driveways" in 1929 are some examples pointed out.

An appendix to the volume lists well over 300 maps of Ottawa held by the National Map Collection.

*Ottawa in Maps/Ottawa par les cartes* is available by mail from Information Canada, Ottawa K1A 0S9 and from Information Canada book stores in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver and from other booksellers. The price is \$2.50.

The second volume, *Winnipeg in Maps/Winnipeg par les cartes* by Alan F.J. Artibise and Edward H. Dahl is scheduled to appear in January 1975.

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#### UTILITIES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

With the help of a grant from the Canada Council Professors Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles of York University have recently embarked upon a research project that might be of some interest to urban historians. The following is a brief statement of their plans for the information of researchers in related fields.

Our ultimate goal is to produce a history of the promotion, finance and operations of Canadian public utilities. In the first stage of this work we will examine in detail the electric lighting and power companies, the telephone companies and traction enterprises, as well as the older utilities like water and gas, in the following Canadian cities: Halifax, St. John, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver. The major focus of this research will be upon the relationship between utilities entrepreneurship and the political process. The second stage will concentrate upon the activities of a group of Canadian promoters who established a network of utilities companies in Central and South America before WWI.

In the course of this study we hope to be able to identify a number of different patterns of utilities entrepreneurship. In some places, like Ottawa, the old elite grown rich on lumbering turned to these new forms of investment, while in other places, like Hamilton, a commercial-industrial elite planned and built the utilities. In Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg financiers with nation-wide interests like Sir William Mackenzie built integrated complexes. The British Columbia Electric Railway, by contrast, was a London-based firm which relied upon local



managers.

Preliminary investigation has already revealed some of the dimensions and very real limitations of the Canadian capital market before the First War, but much remains to be done in order to discover how the relatively large amount of investment required by such capital-intensive undertaking was mobilized. Canada has always been thought of as a recipient of foreign investment. Yet at a very early stage Canadian entrepreneurs interested themselves in numerous Central and South American undertakings in the field they had experienced such success with in Canada. What can explain the emergence of this international specialization in an advanced technological field? How important were the returns from this investment in this formative period of Canadian capitalist development?

Drawing upon the experience of the ten cities listed above and the South American ventures we hope to be able to answer some of the following questions: How were franchises obtained? What were the terms of the franchises? Who got franchises? How were the utilities financed? How were they turned into monopolies? How profitable were these public service monopolies? How were these companies structured internally and linked externally to one another? How did these companies respond to the organization of their labour force? What did the organization of labour contribute to the debate over public vs. private ownership? What were the political requirements of the utilities? Who were the municipal reformers who made the utilities question their issue and what were their interests? Who participated and in what roles did they participate in Canadian utilities promotions abroad? How did the operation of franchises abroad compare with similar operations at home?