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THE HISTORY OF ROSETOWN

1904 - 1939.

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

For The

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UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN.

By

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Like most western towns and villages, the town of Rosetown grew out of the surrounding community. In most aspects of its life there was nothing unusual. It started late, mushroomed quickly and passed through the usual vicissitudes of frost, drought and depression common to prairie settlements. Yet it differed from many less fortunately placed towns, in that it suffered no serious setbacks from its infancy to its maturity. Crop conditions varied, war took its toll, depressions occurred, but Rosetown was able to emerge from each ordeal not entirely unscarred, but stronger and with a characteristic spirit which has made the town known throughout the province. We shall see that two factors seem to have been instrumental in this development; one was the accident of good wheat growing land, the other was the initiative and community spirit of the first settlers and business men.

Prior to 1900, the settlement of Saskatchewan had proceeded very slowly. Certain areas around Moosomin, Broadview, Regina, Prince Albert and Battleford could boast of some progress but generally this vast prairie land was unvalued and unsought. Drought and early frost had proven to be most formidable enemies of the settler. Consequently the plains did not come into their own until Angus McKay of the Dominion Experimental Farm at Indian Head introduced methods of dry farming and earlier maturing varieties of wheat. By the turn of the century these, coupled with the extensive propaganda of Clifford Sifton's immigration policy, caused immigrants to take a more active interest in this new west.

1. Clifford Sifton was Minister of the Interior in the Dominion Government and was in charge of Government land and responsible for immigration policies.
The decade 1901 to 1911 saw an amazingly quick transformation. Immigrants poured in from Eastern Canada, United States and Great Britain, with lesser numbers from various European countries. The magnitude of this influx is shown by the census; the population of the area now known as Saskatchewan was 91,279 in 1901; in 1911 it was 492,432, a gain of 530%.

An increase in population called for an increase in railways and these were built on an extensive scale. The Canadian Pacific, the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern all were busy pushing their lines to frontier settlements or traversing vast areas which had potentialities for settlement if suitable encouragement was given to the immigrant.

By 1904, there were few areas which were neither in the process of being settled nor under consideration. In the northeast in the Kamsack area, the Canadian Northern was being built and settlers were pouring in. The same company was connecting Prince Albert with Hudson Bay Junction. Further south of the main line of the Canadian Northern, the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Pacific were each constructing lines from the Manitoba border to the Saskatoon area. At the same time, the hitherto neglected country between Regina and Saskatoon was gradually filling up, as a result of the large scale enterprises of Senator E.J. Meilicke at Dundurn and Colonel A.D. Davidson in the district which now bears his name. These two men each obtained an extensive tract of land and brought in a large number of American farmers experienced in dry farming. The success of these projects showed as well as anything that, with proper methods, the prairie land could be transformed into good

2. Ibid., p.126.
wheat growing land.

West of Saskatoon, due to a lack of railways, settlement progressed more slowly, and it was not until 1908 when railway facilities were provided by the Canadian Northern and the Canadian Pacific that the vast area between the two branches of the Saskatchewan river really began to open up on a large scale. Four years before the railway advance, however, at least one section of this country was receiving slight attention. This was the Goose Lake district, a stretch of land extending in a southwesterly direction from Saskatoon. Some settlers had begun to move westward down what was known as the Old Bone Trail, and by late 1904 at least three had filed on homesteads within eleven miles of the present site of Rosetown.

It was not difficult for the early land seekers to recognize that the first part of the Bone Trail passed through relatively light land, but as they approached the present site of Zealandia, about seventy miles from Saskatoon, a change was apparent. Here, and over a large area westward, the light, almost sandy soil gave way to a heavy-textured clay. This type of prairie land extended for miles unbroken except for some low hills, known as the Bad Hills, on the west and Eagle Creek meandering down from the northwest. But even Eagle Creek was no great barrier, and across it lay equally fertile land stretching to the north and northwest.


2. Rosetown lies in an area known as Regina Association. It consists of heavy textured soils developed on clay which was deposited in the beds of former glacial lakes. These soils are highly productive and exhibit exceptional resistance to drought. The smooth topography, high percentage of arable land and absence of stones favor the production of grain under a system of large-scale power farming. See J. Mitchell, Soil Survey Report No. 12, Saskatoon, 1944. pp. 98-100.
There were three chief means of entry into this district known later as Rosetown. One was the Old Bone Trail, so called because it had been used in the past by the Indians and half breeds to haul the buffalo bones to Saskatoon. At a later date, when it was being used by the settlers, one could still see bones which had been dropped by the way. Starting from Saskatoon the Old Bone Trail moved in a south-westerly direction, almost parallel to the present Canadian National line which passes through Vanscoy, Delisle, Laura, Tessier, Harris and Zealandia and thence to Rosetown and beyond. As late as 1904 there were no organized settlements along this trail but just stopping places such as Suttons', Carl's, Delisle Brothers', Mrs. Stafford's (Laura), Dr. Tessier's and Mr. Harris's. These and others, gave the early settler and his animals a place to rest. Further along by Zealandia, the Old Bone Trail kept south of the creek and crossed the Battleford Trail a little west of the present town of Rosetown. A branch of the Old Bone Trail extended across the creek from Zealandia and passed through what is known today as the Marriott, Cleland and Oliver districts.

The second route was westward from Hanley, across the river at 1 Rudy Ferry, on towards the present site of Ardath, and from there breaking up into not too well defined trails in westerly and south westerly directions. Viewing the Rosetown area from this route one land seeker recalling many years later his first impressions of the Rosetown district in 1905 wrote:

There were one or two homesteaders hidden away in the immensity of this region, but otherwise the country was as primeval as when it came from the hands of God. The buffalo skeletons were lying in

1. Located just a little north of the present site of Outlook.
heaps as they had fallen and in places were so thick they 'cumbered the plains'. As we advanced, herds of graceful antelope could be seen surveying us from an eminence or flitting away before our advances like spirits of the wild. To any one familiar with the land, the country that opened up before us was a delight to the eyes. There were great stretches of level prairie with a soil of splendid texture, where a plow might run for a ten mile stretch and never meet a stone or other obstruction. To the south a range of low hills was discernible in the distance, but to the north and west the level plain stretched away until it was lost in the haze of the distance. We felt that we had found a new and noble country and were eager to possess as much of it as we were able.

The third route into the Rosetown area was the Old Battleford Trail which connected Swift Current and Battleford. It passed just a little west of the present site of Rosetown. As a route of entry it was not important, since most settlers came into this territory from the east, coming at least as far as Saskatoon or Hanley by train. Nonetheless the trail did serve to a certain extent for the movement of settlers in a northerly or southerly direction.

By the end of 1906 settlement around the Rosetown area had grown apace. Settlers were moving in north of the creek, R.D. Bartlett being one of the earliest. South of the creek, yet north of the present site of Rosetown, could be found J. Rose, J. Clarke, R. Clarke, W. Clarke, the Heartwells, R. Stobbart, R.W. Segrave, R.J. Morrison, R.A. Buchanan, W. Doak, R. Morris, to mention only a few. To the west and south of the present town site were McDougald, Bennett, Boule, Empey

1. Possibly the Coteau Hills south of Dinsmore and Wiseton.


3. Township General Register.
and Anderson. Eastward there were the Carsses, Crawfords, W.B. Brookbank, O. Boberg, C. Phillips, Brennans, Aitchesons and Paquettes to mention only a few. While the list of names filed in the homestead register did not necessarily represent permanent holders, yet in this area a large number of settlers who had put in their application remained.

The two years following 1904 showed tremendous alterations in the countryside. Sod houses, sod barns and even a few frame buildings of very modest proportions were being built. Here and there land was slowly being broken by oxen and in small fields crops were to be seen. Adapting their methods of farming to this new type of soil was a slow process. However, it was the price that had to be paid by the settlers for their new homes. The sod was heavy and the farmers often found that after the land was broken the machinery they were familiar with was not effective.

Busy as the settlers were in summer, in winter they were no less so. It was important that a good supply of fuel and food was kept ever at hand. For the former those settlers immediately south and those north of the creek usually made the long cold haul to Sixty Mile Bush, which lay just north of the present site of Biggar, approximately thirty miles north of Eagle Creek. Other supplies of fuel could be obtained near Harris, or along the Saskatchewan River banks. No matter which

1. This fact is known from personal knowledge.

2. Mr. Rose had ten acres broken in 1905 and seeded this to wheat in 1906. He had to thresh this crop by flail in the fall. Interview with R.C. Clarke - July 1948.

3. The ordinary mouldboard plow would not scour efficiently. Mr. Huck had brought two walking plows but found them of little use. He then used sulky plows with rods instead of mouldboards. Interview with G. Huck - May 1948.

4. So called because it was sixty miles from North Battleford.
point was chosen it was a long and tedious journey and obviously, at that time of year, fraught with danger for the unwary traveller.

Getting supplies was no less arduous, for until some local stores were set up, Saskatoon was the closest point where all the needs of the settler could be obtained. On these trips sufficient supplies were brought out to last several families a good part of the winter, for it was not a trip one wished to make often. The Old Bone Trail therefore saw a good many settlers making for Saskatoon, returning a few days later heavily laden. Besides food supplies, in the early days mail was also brought out and eagerly awaited by the homesteader. The trip meant an absence of at least a week and the few women in the district at this time kept an anxious vigil until their husbands returned.

Some improvement was made in 1906 when T. Gale opened a store in Oliver and J. Paquette also opened one just a little north and east of the present townsite of Rosetown. These little stores carried staple goods but were scarcely large enough to carry all the requirements of the pioneers. Hence the settlers still had to make the long journey to Saskatoon occasionally.

In any pioneer community a postal service is one of the first requirements. By the spring of 1906 a post office was established in Zealandia. Some of the settlers obtained their mail from there while others got theirs at the post office established at Oliver, which was opened on the 1st of October, 1906. This saved the people north of the creek the long trip to Zealandia but it soon became evident that it was

1. See map.
essential to have a post office south of the creek. In the spring of
1906 a group of homesteaders had held a meeting for the purpose of
getting a stone crossing over Eagle Creek, to make it easier to get to
Oliver. During the meeting other matters arose, including the passing
of a resolution to petition the government to establish a post office
south of Eagle Creek. It was agreed that it should be called Rosetown
after Mr. Rose, who was one of the earlier settlers and also the oldest
member of the community. Other settlers later had ideas about naming
the post office, some wanting to call it New Melbourne after Melbourne,
Ontario and others who came from Brigden wishing to call it after their
Ontario home. The first suggestion was finally agreed upon and Rosetown
became the name for the new post office. Application was then
made to Ottawa in the spring. Tenders were called for the carrying of
mail from Zealandia and this contract was awarded to the Heartwell
brothers. The official opening of the Rosetown post office was Septem­
ber 1, 1907 at the Heartwell home on Section 22, Township 30, Range
15 about three and one-half miles north and west of the present town­
site. Mrs. Heartwell, mother of the three Heartwell brothers, was the
first postmistress and this position she retained for a good many years.

1. Some of these were W and A. McLeod, W. Doak, F. Morris, H. Fraser,
   R. Stobbard, R. Mitcheson, J. Rose, J. Clarke, W. McAull, W. Cheeseman,
   W. Reid. - Interview with R. Clarke - July 1948.

2. Reported in an interview with R. Clarke and others, July 1948.

   The Rosetown Eagle, 10 January, 1924.


5. According to J.W. Heartwell the first letter to be addressed
   to the new post office and which arrived before the post office
   was opened was to: Hon. Jas. Rose, Rosetown, Sask. Mr. Rose
   prized this letter for many years. "Pioneer Days in the Rosetown
   District", The Rosetown Eagle, 10 January, 1924.
The years 1907 and 1908 added to the number of settlers reaching the Rosetown district. The majority who arrived were from Ontario, the United States and various districts of southern Saskatchewan, particularly from the Soo line. It is interesting to note that practically no continental Europeans came to this area although elsewhere in Saskatchewan there had been considerable influx. By now, of course, much of the better land had been filed upon, but the incoming settler was always on the lookout for homesteads which had been given up or land which might still be bought. Those who did not find what they wanted in the immediate vicinity of Rosetown moved further north west in the direction of the present villages of Herschel and Stranraer, west towards the present towns of Esten and Kindersley, or south towards the river. Nor must one underestimate the land speculating business, for, ever in the van of settlement could be found the land agent, eager to be first in what would obviously be a lucrative venture.

As settlers moved in, community life manifested itself. One of the important community enterprises in any pioneer settlement is the church. As early as 1906 Dr. J.A. Carmichael of Winnipeg, Superintendent of the Western Missions of the Presbyterian Church, called in the district and spoke of organizing services. The Clarkes offered their home but nothing came of this. In 1907, a Methodist student, Mr. Reynolds, who was conducting services in the Oliver and Wiggins districts, commenced services at the Heartwell home. These were held

1. The C.N.R. was granted the odd numbered sections in the townships and these were soon put on the market.

2. Interview with R. Clarke, July 1948. See also The Acts and Proceedings of the Thirty Fourth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, pp. 31 and 594. (Shortt Library University of Saskatchewan).

3. See map.

4. Interview with R. Clarke, The information is also found in J.W. Heartwell's "Pioneer Days in the Rosetown District", The Rosetown Eagle, 10 January, 1924.
THE ROSETOWN DISTRICT - 1910

Scale: 1 in. = 6 miles

Post offices & Flag stop

The Rosetown District - 1910

Department of the Interior
Topographical Surveys Branch
Sectional Maps

Section 167 - Bad Hills Sheet - 12 July 1910
Section 168 - The Elbow Sheet - 3 September 1910
on Sunday mornings during the summer and fall months and apparently were well attended. Services were also held at the home of Mr. James Coulter. Further south east some of the settlers used to drive as far as Haddington, although later services were held at the home of Mr. T. Gardner.

Community services of any denomination enabled the pioneers to get together not just for religious purposes, but also to stave off some measure of the loneliness. Thus the homes had to serve for churches, except for the Roman Catholic church which was built about this time near the farm of O. Bechard, six miles east of the present townsite.

Pioneer life was not all work. Sometimes the settlers would take time off to enjoy themselves. In the winters of these early years large social gatherings were not too frequent. However, on Christmas Day of 1907 a celebration was held at the Heartwell home for the settlers in the North District, while a similar festivity was held at the Coulter home for the south district. Every one who attended contributed something, such as cake, milk, butter or other food, whilst those who were not in a position to do this donated the sum of thirty-five cents. After the huge dinner dancing, cards and the spinning of yarns went on all through the night, with the result that most of the guests did not go home until the next day.

1. Interview with Mrs. J.G. Graham June 1948. Mrs. Graham is a daughter of Mr. J. Coulter.

2. Interview with G. Huck, May 1948.

3. History of the Glamis Church - compiled by a committee of the church and in the custody of Rev. C.Brandow - United Church minister of Sovenign and Glamis.

4. This church was moved into Rosetown in 1914. The Rosetown Eagle, 22 January, 1914. It was used as a church for some years but in later years has been used as a parish hall.

5. For this information I am indebted to R.Clarke who was present at the Heartwell celebration and also to the article by J.W. Heartwell "Pioneer Days in the Rosetown District", The Rosetown Eagle, 31 January, 1924.
In June 1908, the Rosetown district held its first picnic, and settlers for miles, including Zealandia and Oliver attended. It was held on the Heartwell farm. The usual sports were engaged in, including baseball and football and the evening was devoted to dancing. Dancing was always a popular entertainment but in a pioneer settlement with a preponderance of men, it had its limitations.

The year 1908 was auspicious for the Rosetown settlement. Already the Canadian Northern Railway had reached Zealandia and this was its terminus for the year. The long treks which settlers had had to make to Saskatoon were now over. This was welcome, not only because of the long trips that had been made but also because the country was now growing more and more wheat and a market was badly needed. Any surplus grain previous to the advent of the railway had to be hauled to Saskatoon. Most of it was sold to Mr. Archie McNab, later Lt. Governor of Saskatchewan, and as he practically had a monopoly on wheat buying, the amounts he paid frequently did not come up to the expectations of the farmers.

Construction on the railway continued that year, and by October Mrs. Rose could see from her house one of the work trains at Pym. She was an elderly lady and had never been back even as far as Saskatoon since she had come out on the Old Bone Trail three years before.

1. My sources for the picnic are the same as the Christmas party.
2. Mr. McNab owned and operated the Saskatoon Milling Company.
3. Interviews with T. Fitzgerald, R. Clarke, H. Greenwood and others, summer, 1948.
4. Pym is a siding half way between Zealandia and Rosetown.
see a train so near was a thrill for her as it was for many a one but she never saw it reach the community. She died in November, 1908.

It was clear that the location of a townsite for the settlements would not be selected by the pioneers but would be ordained by the Canadian Northern Railway. The policy of the railway was to select townsites at intervals convenient to themselves and none of the post offices of Oliver, Rosetown or Haddington fell in the pathway of the railroad. As early as August 1907 the surveyors had anticipated where the townsite would be and consequently the railway purchased for $2000.00 the homestead rights of Wilrod Belair, who had only spent three nights in a tent on his claim. Thus the S.E. quarter, Section 12, Township 30, Range 15 was especially earmarked, although a year and a half passed before any cognizance of this was taken by the settlers.

By late 1908, although Zealandia was still the terminus both for passengers and freight, construction was well advanced towards the present Rosetown site. As yet the railway company had not surveyed the village site, but by the New Year (1909) it was generally known where it would be. On January 1, 1909, W.G. King arrived in Zealandia, and being informed by Mr. B. Colwell of the possibility of a new settlement further west, hired a team of horses and drove towards Rosetown. He reached J. Paquette's by dinner time, had a New Year's dinner, and was then shown the future town site by his host. The prospect pleased him so much that in this same month he had Mr. H. Morrison draw lumber

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1. Township General Register.
2. Mr. King had owned and operated a general store in Lanigan.
3. Mr. B. Colwell had established a lumber yard in Zealandia and later built in Rosetown.
for him from Zealandia to Rosetown. Mr. King then obtained the services of a carpenter, Mr. J. Coulter, and by February a one ply building, 24 feet by 30 feet, was erected, facing south on what is now Railway Avenue. The Store was opened in March and was the first business in what is now Rosetown.

By April, three more business places had been erected, all facing the same direction. These included G.H. Irvine’s hardware, J. Maguire’s 2 boarding house and A. Koussaya’s general store. At about the same time J. Torry borrowed some horse tents from Mr. Colwell at Zealandia and set up a livery stable. The horse tents housed about eight horses, and with land seekers moving in constantly a business such as this was a considerable success.

The settlement was by this time becoming known. C.E. Oonlin and Mr. Sanderson started up a harness shop. Other businesses followed such as B.L. Colwell’s lumber yard, L.F. Heartwell’s hardware and furniture store, N.B. Douglas’s implement agency for the John Deere and Rumely, T.A. Sheffield’s McCormick-Deering agency, C.B. Mark’s drug store and the Union Bank under the managementship of R. Gordon.

It was evident that the new settlement was receiving considerable attention, not only from settlers nearby but also from those north of the creek. The latter were quite prepared to give their business to

1. Interview with W.G. King - August 1948.


4. Mr. Douglas had the first carload of implements shipped by train to Rosetown. Interview with W.G. King August 1948.
Rosetown but lacked a satisfactory crossing over Eagle Creek. Hence a few of them informed the Rosetown business men that unless they had a bridge they would be forced to give their business to Zealandia as heretofore. Mr. King, Mr. Conlin, Mr. Irvine and Mr. Colwell sent out $150.00 worth of planks. The bridge was built by the settlers themselves and because of it Rosetown obtained a good share of the northern trade. This was perhaps one of the first co-operative efforts for the good of the village.

By June 1909, Rosetown had shown some little growth but most of the buildings were temporary, squatting here and there in the utmost confusion. It was not until July that surveyed lots were put up for sale, and the business men scrambled for points of advantage on which to erect more permanent buildings. L.F. Heartwell, W.G. King and G.H. Irvine took lots on the west of Main Street, whilst Maguire, C.E. Conlin, C.B. Mark and the Union Bank took their position on the east side. Other business men such as N.B. Douglas, B.L. Colwell and others built premises on First Avenue. One particularly important addition at this time was the livery barn erected by Mr. J. Torry, in place of the old horse tents which had been used up to this time.

Within a short while more business places sprang up. Among these we find Chas. Arnold's barber shop and pool room, H. Wagner's General Store, W.R. Ferguson's Pioneer Implement House, John McLure's livery, feed and sale stable, J.R. Fletcher's boarding house, G.R. Middleton's

1. Interview with W.G. King - August 1948.

2. Mr. King said that his lot cost $250.00, the second one to the corner approximately $600.00 whilst the corner lot was considerable higher. Mr. L.F. Heartwell was so anxious to get the corner lot that he started digging a cellar before the price was set. He thus established his claim. Interview with W.G. King - August 1948.
Flour and Feed and others. From this point on it becomes increasingly difficult to place the new citizens in a chronological order of opening businesses. As yet the settlement was still very much in the frontier stage of development. The post office had been moved in from the Heartwell home to L.F. Heartwell's hardware, but it was too early to expect such amenities as schools or churches. However, as early as May the two daughters of Mr. T.A. Sheffield came to Rosetown and since they were of school age some provision had to be made for them. The only school in the vicinity of Rosetown was Hillside, and this was five miles east. The teacher, Mr. Wilson Angus, homesteaded two miles west and one mile south of the village site, and it was arranged that he should pick the two girls up on his way to school and bring them back at night.

This was a good arrangement for a short while, but Rosetown was growing rapidly and by the middle of the summer there were probably as many as a dozen children. In the meantime, railroad construction was speeding ahead and when they were working within the neighborhood an epidemic of typhoid broke out among the construction workers. This brought the first doctor to Rosetown in the person of Dr. A.M. Stewart. Mrs. Stewart, his young bride, realized the danger of allowing the children of the village to grow up without any benefit of school training.

1. All the information regarding these early businesses was obtained from interviews with early pioneers such as Mr. King, Mr. N. Douglas, Mr. C.W. Holmes, Mr. J.H. Smith, Mr. J. Torry, Mr. and Mrs. W. Staples and others. Also The Rosetown Eagle, 2 December, 1909.


Accordingly, she undertook to establish in her one-roomed home a school for the Rosetown children. At the most she probably had no more than eight pupils, none of whom were above Grade Five. Regular school hours were kept, and a monthly charge of about $4.00 per pupil was made. Thus the first school was a private one, and was undertaken not as a means of profit but to give the children something which a frontier settlement did not have time to provide.

It was the same spirit that manifested itself in religious matters. In the summer Mrs. C.B. Mark held Sunday School in the back yard of the drug store until an Anglican minister took over the duties. The Sunday School then shifted to King's Hall. The problem of denominations played no part in the early history of Rosetown; that which was available was accepted.

By the summer of 1909 the expansion of the settlement was such that it was considered expedient to petition the Municipal Commission for Saskatchewan for the power to form a village. Accordingly, on the 19th of July a group of thirteen citizens under the auspices of the Rosetown Board of Trade made formal application to Regina for village status for


2. King's Hall was located over the new store which W.G. King built after the town was surveyed.

3. For information on this see Viva Evans "Pioneer School Days", The Rosetown Eagle, Dec. 12, 1929.


5. This application was signed by E.E. Bellamy as Secretary of the Rosetown Board of Trade which presupposes that a Board of Trade had been formed earlier in the summer.
Rosetown. In a letter dated July 27 the Department gave notification that the matter would be considered and on August 24 official approval was given. The official announcement read in part:

..... Legal subdivision 13, 14 and 15 of Section 11; legal subdivision 16 of section 2; legal subdivision 1, 8 and 9 of section 11; the southwest quarter and legal subdivision 2, 7, 10, 11 and 12; all in township 30, range 15, west of the third meridian to be erected a village under the Village Act and do assign to the same the name of the Village of Rosetown.

On August 31 the announcement appeared in the Saskatchewan Gazette. The date fixed for the nomination of candidates for the council was October 16 and E.E. Bellamy was made responsible for posting such notices as were required by law.

It was evident that there was little competition for office, for only three names were proposed. These were W.G. King, W.R. Ferguson and N.B. Douglas, and they were duly elected by acclamation. The first council meeting was held at 10 A.M. September 27 and arrangements were made to meet again at 8 P.M. that evening to appoint an overseer and a secretary-treasurer. On September 28 C.B. Mark who had been returning officer for the election reported to the Municipal Commission as follows:

   As returning officer for the first election of councillors for the Village of Rosetown, I beg to report as follows:
   W.G. King ... merchant
   N.B. Douglas ... agent
   W.R. Ferguson ... agent

1. Rosetown File No. 1657.
were elected as councillors, there being no other nomination. At the first meeting, W.G. King was elected overseer and C.B. Mark secretary-treasurer...

The elected council realized that there were matters calling for immediate attention. The first actual business meeting was held October 7 in a room adjoining C.B. Mark's store, and a bylaw was drafted to license the use of drays. Whether or not the draying problem was acute is not recorded but it was not until the next meeting held on October 21 that the more elementary and essential business, such as the adoption of a common seal, the regulations governing the proceedings of the Council, and the fixing of the salary of the Secretary-Treasurer were decided upon. It is apparent however, that the village was suffering from a plague of stray animals, either from nearby farms or from owners within the village limits, since a bylaw providing for a village pound and poundkeeper was drafted. A bylaw regulating hawkers and peddlers protected the pioneer citizen of Rosetown from more subtle but equally unwelcome visitors.

Local improvements also received a share of the Council's attention. Authority was given for the overseer and secretary-treasurer to borrow a sum of money not exceeding $1000.00 on behalf of the Council for current expenditure from November 1, 1909 to November 1, 1910. The Secretary was also authorized to advertise for tenders for the construction of a


2. Village Minutes October 7, 1909. 2 horse drays: (First team $15.00  (Second team $10.00  (Additional $5.00
1 horse drays: (First $10.00  (Additional $5.00

3. Salary for the Sec.Treas. was fixed at $150.00 per annum. Village Minutes October 21, 1909.
good plank sidewalk on both sides of Main Street from Railroad Avenue to First Avenue, and a street crossing over Railway Avenue and over Main Street on the south side of First Avenue.

By November King's Hall was completed sufficiently enough to enable the Council to hold their meetings there. Some results of the Council's work were apparent, when on the 18th of November they paid an account of $476.00 to W. Betts for work done on sidewalks. At the same meeting they donated $35.00 to the Board of Trade with the proviso that this money should be used for advertising the town. Even at this stage the booster spirit prevailed. This spirit has been one of the more noticeable features of the town and one which has made it widely known.

Two matters common to every village next demanded attention. One was fire protection and the other was the provision of a nuisance ground. The beginning of a fire department was made when the Secretary-Treasurer was authorized to communicate with G.H. Irvine and L.F. Heartwell, requesting the supply of two 40 ft. extension fire ladders and 36 water buckets. As for the matter of refuse disposal, instructions were given to the parties entrusted with sewage disposal, to convey such refuse to the location on Section 11 which had been selected by the Board of Trade earlier in the year. This was to be the nuisance ground until the Council could arrange a more permanent location.

The period from August to December of 1909 witnessed one of the busiest periods for the village. The long awaited railway arrived, and

2. Village Minutes, November 18, 1909.
3. Ibid., December 2, 1909.
4. Ibid., December 16, 1909.
on the 15th of October the first passenger train made its appearance. This was a gala day for Rosetown, for it gave a new independence to the community.

It was on this train that C.W. Holmes arrived to establish a newspaper in the town. He had been in Rosetown in July to investigate the possibilities of getting support for this venture. The community welcomed the idea of a paper, and in October Mr. Holmes bought a lot and started to build. By November, he, in partnership with Mr. Cave, was doing job printing. On December 2, 1909, 3,500 copies of the first edition of a twelve page weekly newspaper were published. The paper was called The Rosetown Eagle, the name being taken from the great fertile plains of the Eagle Creek district. There was a purpose behind the name. The editor felt that such a name would cause the reader to think of Rosetown as the focal point for the whole area.

Rosetown was now the railway terminus and each train that came brought in numbers of people, either land seekers who would make this their jumping off point for areas further on, or business men who saw in the boom excellent opportunities. There was good reason to consider this area the "Last Best West", for the harvest had yielded extraordinarily fine crops. Wheat averaged 28 bushels to the acre, flax 20-25 bushels and oats 70-100 bushels. Besides this, the price of

1. Interview with C.W. Holmes, E. Wickett and others. May and June 1948. According to the "Daily Record" of E. Wickett, linesman, the telegraph connection was not made until 7 December, 1909. The station agent, Mr. McGammon arrived 7 December, 1909.

2. The Rosetown Eagle, 2 December, 1909.

3. A term used in the prospectus of the North West Land Co. published 24 January, 1911.

4. Some of the crop yields were particularly high e.g. O. Boberg had wheat yielding 40 bushels per acre, W. McDougald 38, F.R. Boules 38, THE Rosetown Eagle, 2 December, 1909.
wheat had risen to $1.09 per bushel for No.1 Northern. Prior to the
coming of the railway, of course, shipping facilities had been non­
existent, but by late fall three grain elevators had been constructed,
and by December these were filled to capacity.

The appearance of the village was changing almost daily. By
October 6, the Rosetown Hotel under the proprietorship of W.P. Kennedy,
was open for roomers, although it was not yet completed. The lack of
accommodation was still felt and often travellers had to spend the night
on the train, sleeping in the seats as best they could. In addition to
Maguire's, J.R. Fletcher and C.J. Newton had each opened small restau­
rants. Towards the end of the year, in addition to those businesses al­
ready mentioned, the town boasted seven real estate and insurance agents,
two tinsmiths, two flour and feed dealers, three lumber companies, three
wood and coal dealers, five implement agents, one blacksmith and one baker.

One of the problems that confronted early prairie villages was the
securing of an adequate water supply. In early days Rosetown did not
seem to consider that this would be of major concern. While the village
was in its first stage of development, in the spring of 1909, water was
obtained from a small dug-out along the C.N.R. tracks. It was a public
watering place and a swimming pool, and track laborers used it for washing

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 2 December, 1909.
2. Ibid., 9 December, 1909.
3. Interviews with H.B. Myers, Mrs. V. Evans, 1948.
4. The Rosetown Eagle, 2 December 1909.
5. An adequate water supply has been a really major problem and
   in 1948 it is still unsolved. The Rosetown Eagle, 14 October, 1948.
their clothes. The only substitute for those who were more fastidious was soft water from the roofs of shacks. Since most of the shacks had tar paper roofing this alternative was not all that could be desired.

Throughout this period of growth the spiritual needs of the village were not neglected. So far, no church had been erected, and services were held wherever an available building could be found. Apparently too, in the village as in the country, it was of little consequence whether the preacher for the day was Anglican, Methodist or Presbyterian. In the autumn however, the Ladies Aid of the Methodist Church was organized and the first meeting was held on September 2. At this meeting the following officers were elected; Mrs. C.B. Mark, President; Mrs. L.F. Heartwell, Vice President; Mrs. A. King, Treasurer; Mrs. A.M. Stewart, Secretary. At this meeting it was arranged to rent a room from Mrs. Evans for the clergyman when he stayed in the village and the members of the Aid would take turns in giving him his breakfast. By December, the Methodist congregation was showing signs of greater organization. At a meeting of adherents on December 13 it was decided to proceed with the erection of a church 30 feet by 40 feet inclusive of the entry. The plans submitted by Mr. F. Rose were chosen. Estimates of the cost were about $1500.00 and building was to start as soon as negotiations were completed for the purchase of a lot.

2. One service was held in the Massey Harris Implement Building and was nearly broken up by the mosquitoes. Interview with R.C. Clarke, July 1948.
4. Ibid., Other members included Mrs. Ells, Mrs. Irvine, Miss Smith, Misses Alyce and Nellie Maguire and Mrs. Grandy.
5. The Rosetown Eagle, 16 December, 1909.
A few days prior to this however, on December 9 a movement was on foot to establish a union church in the village. The union church was to comprise the Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist sects. A subscription list was circulated and eight hundred and fifty dollars was subscribed in two days. The plan was to engage a minister at a salary of $1000.00 per year and hold services for a time in the hall to test the working of the idea. If this proved a success further plans would be made to build a church. All this was certainly in the pioneer tradition, but Rosetown was emerging from the frontier phase, for, when a meeting was held on December 21, church union was turned down by a majority vote of 18.

Other forms of social life were not lacking, for by December the Rosetown Social Club had been organized. The club was ambitious and the level of its entertainment was on a fairly high plane. On December 7, for example a debate was held and the following report (in part) was made:

The debate.... Resolved: That it would be in the best interests of the Dominion to not issue patents to homesteaders who are not married, brought out a lively discussion....... the literary evenings of the Social club are attracting a large attendance and are productive of much good, being of an educational force and tending to develop the powers of public address of those who take part... The debate of Tuesday December 21 will be on the subject; Resolved: That the franchise be extended to women....

The activities of the society ensured some variety for, in addition to debating, they took an interest in music, and a Glee Club was in the


2. The actual vote was 10 for and 28 against. The Rosetown Eagle, 6 January, 1910.

3. Ibid., 9 December, 1909.
formative stage by the end of December, under the direction of S.B. Robinson.

Very little evidence can be found of other organized social activities, except for the appearance of an organizer for the Modern Woodmen of America. He was about the village for several days and succeeded in obtaining a number of applications. No lodge was formed in 1909, but here was an indication at least, of the practice which most rural centres followed, for the formation of, and membership in lodges has been an integral part of village life.

Within less than a year the village of Rosetown was a well established community with nearly every phase of village life represented. The rapidity of its growth, however, was not in any sense phenomenal; it was symptomatic of what had been and still was occurring in numerous other parts of the province. Even the spirit of optimism, which was high, was perhaps no more evident here than in any other community.

Nonetheless, Rosetown's position by the end of the year gave its citizens considerable satisfaction. Above all, the land was fulfilling the expectations of the pioneers. The bountiful crops had been a particularly good advertisement, and this had brought settlers from Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, several American states and from various points in Saskatchewan. This resulted in a considerable fillip to the trade of the small community. In the light of this expansion The Rosetown Eagle

2. Ibid., 9 December, 1909.
3. The Rosetown Eagle certainly reflected this spirit. See in particular the first edition, 2 December, 1909.
4. Particularly the Milestone area.
felt justified in expressing its unbounded faith in the future.

It [Rosetown] is now the terminal of the passenger service of the Goose Lake line and it is the stopping point of land seekers and travellers for many miles north south and as far west as settlement and good lands are found, far into Alberta, a distance of one hundred miles. Rosetown is the point through which all supplies, stock, machinery etc. must go to supply the needs of the rapid march of settlement in these directions. It is destined to be the pivotal point from which enormous quantities of supplies will be distributed. No less than five lines of railways are expected to converge here.¹

Again, the survey of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Moose Jaw had been drawn through Rosetown and, as The Rosetown Eagle suggested, this line from the south would also connect with the American lines and thus provide a direct route for the expected inflow of American settlers. The position thus accorded Rosetown by the railways gave many citizens the hope that before long the village would become a large distributing centre for the whole of the area between the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers.

The material progress that had been made was justification for pride. A large area which but six years before had been virgin prairie was now scattered with homesteads. Within one year a village had been established; a civic administration formed and a Board of Trade organized to further the interests of the settlement. In a limited way it was Rosetown's year and to the citizen of the small community the future was bright. "The Last Best West" lay at his doorstep.

¹. The Rosetown Eagle, 2 December, 1909.
². Ibid.
³. Ibid.
Railways in operation, under construction and proposed, centreing in Rosetown ——— the Rosetown Eagle, May 1910.
CHAPTER TWO

EXPANSION, 1910-1918.

The phenomenal growth of Rosetown in the period 1910 to 1918 is attributable to two things—good land and a zealous promoting spirit. The period was one of substantial prosperity, growth and progress. Settlement of the land continued; business within the town boomed and civic services were extended regardless of cost.

In 1910 there were many indications of people pouring in. Farmers and business men felt the stimulus of the "Last Best West" as they read and heard of the opening of this vast fertile area. News came in January that a special freight of twenty-six cars was to convey the effects of the settlers from Milestone to the district; in the same month it appeared that Dr. Cook of Milestone was to bring up a gasoline ploughing outfit in the spring. In March news came that fourteen carloads of settlers were arriving from Carnduff and it was reported that O.O. Winters of Minneapolis was going to put three gasoline ploughing outfits on his land south of the town. In this same month Superintendent Foley of the Canadian Northern Railway paid a visit to Rosetown and made it known that the railway company expected a thousand cars of settlers effects to pass down the Goose Lake line before July—three hundred and fifty were for the Rosetown district. All these activities were reported, perhaps with amplification by The Rosetown

2. Ibid., 20 January, 1910.
3. Ibid., 10 March, 1910.
Eagle which faithfully carried out its task of promoting the village and district.

These and other activities bore fruit as is evidenced by the number of enquiries received by the Board of Trade about business opportunities in the village. By spring the rush to the area was a reality.

The spring rush has begun but what is seen each night the train arrives is merely a small evidence of the greater numbers that will surely follow. The hotel and lodging houses are filled and many remain in the train overnight, and daily the numbers about give to the town that bustling appearance of a thrifty centre. Commercial men and travellers generally bespeak things for Rosetown.

This was the story in March. By April, things were moving faster, still with the encouragement and appreciation of The Rosetown Eagle.

The number of settlers arriving these days reminds one of when a circus comes to town. The side track and spur are scenes which impress one with the eagerness with which the tiller of the soil is pushing into the district, but what is most encouraging is the fine class of people that are arriving and the large quantities of effects and splendid stock they bring, indicating the class of settlers are thrifty and enterprising.

All this resulted in a tremendous business activity in the town. Several hundred horses were brought in and disposed of in a few weeks. Perkins and Bellamy, real estate agents were doing a good business in the sale of lots in the new subdivision of Rosedale which lay in the northern part of the village. In a matter of a few weeks for example, they had sold sixty-four lots. This was legitimate expansion and not

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 10 March, 1910.
2. Ibid., 10 March, 1910.
3. Ibid., 14 April, 1910.
4. Ibid., 3 March, 1910.
a real estate bubble as was evidenced by building following quickly after the sale of lots.

The citizen taking his walk through the town would note a considerable change from six months previous. Across the railroad track the Continental Oil Company of Winnipeg had erected an oil distributing warehouse -- a remarkable advance for so young a settlement, indicating as it does that power farming methods were just beginning to supplant horses and oxen. In the town at least thirty or forty buildings had been erected and additions made to others. On the corner of Main Street and Railway Avenue on the east side the Traders' Bank had opened its doors for business in April with Mr. M. McVicar as manager. Next door the Northwest Land Company which had been incorporated in May completed its building. Further down, on the west side of Main Street the Geddes Block had been constructed. On First Avenue which runs east and west parallel to Railway Avenue, a second livery was being operated by McDougald and Cobban. The Palace Cafe of Myers, Burnett and Everett was now open for business and advertising the excellencies of its wares in The Rosetown Eagle. Besides these businesses one would note such new names as Richards and McKay, Real estate; Dr. Paine, veterinary; Robertson, Grandy and McMurty, livery and feed stables; A. Nasbeth, implement agent; Mrs. E.L. Bowen, music studio; Ferguson and Mathews, automobile livery; Smith and Smith, general merchants and Kirby's blacksmith shop.

3. A business directory was published in the special edition of *The Rosetown Eagle*, May 1910. Much of this information was obtained from this as well as from advertisements found in various editions from January, 1910 to May, 1910.
All walks naturally end at the Post Office at mail time. The post office had been moved in 1909 from the country to L.F. Heartwell's Hardware store but by January, due to the increase in business it was considered necessary to have a separate building. The speed with which the carpenters worked in those days can be gathered from the fact that the lumber was placed on the corner lot of Second Avenue and Main Street on January 27 and the office opened for business on February 7. This location it retained until the early thirties. Outside the post office and along each side of the street were tying posts put there by the village council for the convenience of the farmers. The array of "rigs," ranging from the heavy farm wagon to the elegant top buggy added to the picture of a pushing prairie town and served as a sign and symbol of Rose-town's prosperity.

Immediately opposite the post office stood a new unpainted frame building recently erected—the first church in the village. Up until this time the spiritual needs of the community had been satisfied by visiting Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian ministers. It is difficult to determine the number of adherents to each sect but the Methodists were apparently the most numerous for as early as January they had purchased the lot on the north corner of Second Avenue and Main Street for $500.00. On March 24 the corner stone of the first Methodist church on the Goose Lake line was laid by the Honorable J.A. Calder. The Rosetown Eagle reported:

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 10 February, 1910.
2. Ibid., 3 February, 1910.
A box was placed in the cornerstone. It contained a Bible, a Methodist hymn book, a photograph of the Reverend D. Grant Porteous (incumbent minister), a copy of the first minutes of the trustees of the Rosetown church and the autograph of its members, a short history of the Union Sabbath Schools by Mrs. (Dr.) Stewart, a short history of the circuit by the Rev. D. Grant Porteous, some coins of the realm, a copy of the first issue of The Rosetown Eagle and numerous other articles.\(^1\)

The Rosetown Eagle or its informant must somewhat have exaggerated the tale of buried treasure both spiritual and temporal for in 1948 the church was moved, the box was opened and all that could be identified was part of a water stained Bible and one ten cent piece. The church was formally opened and dedicated in May with the Reverend W.W. Abbott, B.A., B.D., of Saskatoon occupying the pulpit. By September carpenters were at work on the manse.\(^2\)

Building continued though less rapidly through 1911-12. In January, 1911, the Town Hall was erected on the corner east of the Methodist church. Near the Geddes Block the Assaly Brothers had established a grocery store and the Graham Brothers had bought out the hardware of G.H. Irvine. In addition, Isbister and Wilson had started an implement agency. The Quebec Bank had moved into a building next to the Rosetown Hotel and Dr. Myers had built a private hospital with a ten bed capacity. The gaps on Main Street were slowly filling up. In 1912 the Union Bank moved into substantial brick quarters on the corner of First Avenue and Main Street and on the opposite side directly across from L.F. Heartwell's

\(\text{\footnotesize 1. The Rosetown Eagle, 31 March, 1910.}\)
\(\text{\footnotesize 2. The box was seen by the author shortly after it had been opened.}\)
\(\text{\footnotesize 3. The Rosetown Eagle, 19 May, 1910.}\)
\(\text{\footnotesize 4. Ibid., 1 September, 1910.}\)
\(\text{\footnotesize 5. Ibid., 5 January, 1911.}\)
\(\text{\footnotesize 6. Ibid., 17 August, 1912.}\)
Hardware stood the Royal Bank. Early in the same year the Albion Hotel containing about forty-five rooms was built by T.J. Miles and P. Gilbert. In November, St. Andrew's Anglican Church was completed. Perhaps the most ambitious of all was the Flax Decorticating Company's plant. This building was located on the north east edge of the town and was intended by its founder, Mr. Van Allen, to be equipped with machinery so that it could be used for linen manufacture. A good many citizens invested money in the project and although frequent attempts were made to get the industry started between 1912 and 1922, nothing much resulted and the building finally became the electric power house.

In 1913, in spite of a minor province wide depression the Council arranged for the construction of a hospital to replace the one operated by Dr. Myers, a $7,500.00 rink was built, and according to the building inspector's report sixty-seven building permits were issued—the cost of such buildings running to $72,350.00. Early in January, 1914, the Roman Catholics moved their country church into the town locating it on Second Avenue opposite the public school.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 2 May, 1912.
3. Interview with C.W. Holmes, H. Greenwood and others, June, 1948.
4. Minutes of the Town of Rosetown (hereafter cited as Town Minutes) 1 December, 1912.
5. Ibid., 11 July, 1913.
7. Ibid., 22 January, 1914.

Dwellings (27) - $24,100.00
Additions (12) - $5,625.00
Business places (5) - $16,200.00
Stables etc. (4) - $2,525.00
Municipal buildings (5) - $23,300.00
Buildings moved (14) - $600.00
The peak had been reached and with the outbreak of the war relative stagnation set in. A Nurses' Home was erected in 1915; and in 1917 a temporary frame building was erected to serve as a much needed addition to the school; the Imperial Oil Company built a 100,000 gallon depot in 1918 and there were two grain elevators built to bring the total number in the town to seven. In this last year, the Presbyterian congregation at a cost of $5,000.00 erected a church. In June, the Rev. J.L. Nicol, pastor of St. Thomas Presbyterian Church, Saskatoon conducted the opening service. Considering that this church was dedicated in 1915, according to The Rosetown Eagle, before the plans were even in existence, the final achievement was no doubt looked upon with some satisfaction.

Needless to say, Rosetown like other prairie communities, depended for growth if not for existence on the railways. The Canadian Northern service opened in 1909, was decidedly haphazard at first. Cars were few and crews were careless. Inhabitants bitterly remarked that goods consigned to Rosetown might arrive and might not and were as likely to be dropped somewhere else along the line. However, by the end of January, a tri-weekly freight service from Saskatoon was operating with tolerable

1. Hospital Board Minutes, 9 September, 1915.
2. The Rosetown Eagle, 10 May, 1917.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., 6 May, 1915.
Since 1909, however, the Rosetown citizen had been counting on the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Moose Jaw to elevate the town from the rank of a single track town to that of a railway junction. A line survey had been made late in 1909 and the grading outfit arrived in April, 1910. To the dismay of the townspeople the survey indicated that the proposed railway would not pass through the village, but instead, three-quarters of a mile to the north. The Board of Trade sent an anxious delegation to interview Mr. W. Whyte, vice-president of the C.P.R.. They carried with them a petition signed by people from the town and district. Even so Mr. Whyte was not much impressed but agreed to think it over and write in ten days. In less than ten days he wrote to the Board of Trade:

..... I have gone into the subject matter of the petition that you left with me and it has been decided that we will locate a station as near as we can to Rosetown. An engineer is being sent out to arrange a location and I am hopeful that the location which is decided upon will be satisfactory to the residents of the Rosetown district...

An ambitious little town seeking a prize is not likely to be satisfied with a mere honorable mention, but there was no remedy. The siding of North Rosetown, three-quarters of a mile away, although better than

2. Ibid., 24 March, 1910.
3. Ibid., 12 May, 1910.
4. Ibid., 14 April, 1910.
5. Interview with Mr. C.W. Holmes, June, 1948. Mr. Holmes had been one of the delegates.
nothing remained for twenty-one years an irritating reminder of what
might have been.

There is every evidence to indicate that business activity between
1910 and 1913 was particularly brisk. The building boom indicates this
in 1910 and 1911. In 1912 figures show that lumber sold amounted
to $352,000.00; implements $500,000.00; Bank clearings to November
$1,250,867.00; post office returns $60,663.00; passengers in and out
via C.N.R. 151,000; grain shipped 1,250,000 bushels. For the rest of
the period no accurate estimate can be made. Certainly the depression
of 1913 caused some concern and The Rosetown Eagle felt that it was duty
bound to boost morale:

   It affords the townspeople much satisfaction
to see such building activity going on and
the cry of "bad times" is not very evident
in Rosetown where so much is being expended
on the building of houses. 

In 1914 the crop prospects were poor but the serious consequences
of this to the town were forgotten for a short/week in August when it
was rumored that a strike in minerals had been made sixteen miles to
the north. The Rosetown Eagle could not get accurate information but
it was thought that rubies had been found. Although the Saskatoon
papers made light of the discovery the Rosetown residents did not, and
within a short space of time fifty claims had been staked. It was a

1. That station was moved into the town and a spur built in 1931. See The Rosetown Eagle, 26 November, 1931.
2. This information was obtained from a letter head evidently used by the town during 1912. It was another method used to advertise the town. See Rosetown File, No. 1657.
4. Ibid., 30 July, 1914.
5. Ibid., 6 August, 1914.
will-of-the-wisp but sufficient to stir the district's imagination with visions of easily won wealth.

The depression was short lived and a certain buoyancy, caused no doubt, by the promises of rising prices due to the outbreak of war, was apparent in the spring of 1915:

Business has been of a much brisker order in town recently. Travellers, farmers, land seekers and various sorts of visitors have made one think of the good old times. One of our implement men informs us that his sales thus far this season equal his last year's business up to the fall. ¹

The land had not failed the town for the crop in the autumn was a "bumper"—wheat averaged 35–40 bushels and oats averaged 80–160. ²

War conditions between 1915 and 1918 maintained a fairly high level of prosperity in the town. True, the hopes of attracting large industry to the district had not materialized. We note that as early as 1911 the Council had invited the Quaker Oats Company of Peterboro to establish a mill within the Town and later plans for encouraging firms to locate a furniture factory, planing mill, a machine shop and foundry were all considered. All these came to naught as did the experiments of the Flax Decorticating Company. It is clear that with all its optimism and ambitions the newly fledged prairie town could scarcely compete with the larger community of Saskatoon on the Saskatchewan River with its cheaper power and better railway facilities.

The highlight of the civic administration for the period occurred ³

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1. The Rosetown Eagle, 8 April, 1915.
2. Ibid., 23 September, 1915.
3. Town Minutes, 24 August, 1911.
when Rosetown was elevated from village to town status. There is no
evidence from available sources why the citizens were so anxious to ob­
tain incorporation as a town. It is true of course that town status
does give greater flexibility in local administration besides granting
wider borrowing powers. Since Rosetown was an expanding community
eager to become the main centre of a large area, the latter considera­
tion may have been the all important factor.

It was in August 1911 that the Council, deciding village status
was no longer adequate for the needs or possibly for the dignity of
Rosetown, authorized J.L. French to conduct a census. Surprisingly
enough the result showed a population of 520, although the Dominion
census officials had in this same year reported only 311. With the
latest statistics, an application was made to the Lieutenant Governor
in Council for the incorporation of the village into a town. On
October 31 the Executive Council advised His Excellency to grant the
petition and on November 13 the Village Council learned that Rosetown
was really a town. The first Town Council elected in 1912 consisted
of Mayor C.B. Mark, and Councillors D.H. Evans, Roy Gordon, A.E. Perkins,
W.H.E. Graham, C.E. Conlin and W.G. King.

1. See The Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1909, Regina, 1911.
   Chapters 85 and 86.

2. Village Minutes, 31 August, 1911.

3. Canada, Bureau of Statistics, Census of Saskatchewan, Population
   and Agriculture, Ottawa, 1938, p.414 (hereafter cited as Census
   of Saskatchewan).

4. Village Minutes, 31 August, 1911.

5. Rosetown File No. 1657.


7. Town Minutes, 12 January, 1912.
Routine civic activities of both the village and later the town councils followed a fairly normal pattern as regards services provided. By the end of the period 1910-1918 we find Rosetown provided with such services as: adequate sidewalks in the main business and residential areas; street lighting; fire department complete with fire engine and volunteer fire brigade; a village health officer and a set of bylaws in accordance with the Provincial Health regulations; a scavenging system and a nuisance ground; a cemetery just outside the town limits and a one man police force. These improvements had been costly for they were all fundamental services which once provided, necessitated continual maintenance and extension with town growth.

Town planning and development had made rapid strides. One utility continually bedevilled the Town Fathers—the lack of good water. In 1910 the Town Council provided a well to supplement private supplies.

2. Town Minutes, 10 December, 1912.
4. Ibid., 29 July, 1910.
5. Ibid., 20 January, 1910.
6. Ibid., 21 April, 1910.
7. Ibid., 6 February, 1911.
8. Ibid., 20 March, 1911.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., 26 July, 1910.
and two years later four more were added. Their troubles began again in 1916 when several wells were condemned as a result of analyses by the University of Saskatchewan. By 1918 water had to be brought in from the country and a bylaw was passed standardizing its sale at forty-eight gallons for one dollar. It began to appear that future plans for Rosetown would have to take the poor water supply into consideration.

Less of a routine nature but necessary was the building of the Town Hall in 1910. Current revenue was insufficient to meet this extra expenditure and after due deliberation the Council decided to borrow $7,000.00 by an issue of debentures. This, it was considered, would cover the cost of the hall and other immediate expenditure connected with civic improvement. The necessary bylaw was passed in July, and received the sanction of the Department of Municipal Affairs on August 10.

In September the contract was awarded to Mr. G. Briese for the sum of $3,250.00. The plans called for a building 30 feet by 30 feet which was to house fire hall, council chambers, clerk's office, police barracks and a hall upstairs for entertainment purposes. By the end of the year the hall was built and ready for use.

Early next year the trouble started. The new Council was far from

1. Town Minutes, 21 October, 1912.
2. Ibid., 7 September, 1916.
3. Ibid., 10 January, 1918.
5. See letter: J.N. Bayne, Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs to A.I. Turnbull, Secretary-Treasurer of the Village of Rosetown, Rosetown File No. 1657.
8. Mr. W. McDougald overseer, Councillors C.B. Mark, C.E. Conlin--Village Minutes, 3 January, 1911.
satisfied, though the cause of their dissatisfaction escapes the reader in the windings of their somewhat breathless protest:

..... It is of the opinion that the condition of the new town hall as we find it on inspection is very unsatisfactory and that this council places itself on record as not approving of same as we find it and desire that immediate steps be taken to ascertain that interests of ratepayers are duly protected to which end it is desired that a consultation with a supervisor of building be arranged by the Secretary-Treasurer with this Council at the earliest date.¹

Perhaps an elegant way of saying that the former Council had wasted public funds. Unfortunately, no evidence is available of the decision reached by the building inspector.

The general health of the town had been protected as far as possible by the enforcement of the appropriate bylaws. In addition, in 1911 Dr. E.T. Myers had provided a ten-bed hospital. By 1912, however, the Council had considered this inadequate, and the next year, in spite of the warning signals of a depression, decided to build a municipal hospital. The general contract for this was let to E.E. Poole of Rouleau at a price of $11,219.00. The plumbing and heating contract was let to the Frost Brothers of Moose Jaw for $3,265.00.

It was a heavy price to pay at this particular time. The only economical phase of the hospital was the arrangement for a nursing staff. The following letter signed by Henry W. Knight, Head of the Anglican Railway Mission to the Town Council is self explanatory:

... On behalf of the Railway Mission, I herewith offer to provide two nurses for the proposed hospital at Rosetown and to pay their stipends for two years from the date of opening such

¹. Village Minutes, 3 January, 1911.

². Town Minutes, 31 March, 1913.
hospital on condition that the Priest in charge of the Anglican Church be a member of the Board of Management.

... It is understood that the nurses shall be fully qualified and subject to the Board of Management.¹

The hospital was built but the paying for it caused the Council some uneasy moments. In May, 1914, Mr. Poole requested full payment. The Council reminded him that he had agreed to await the money due him until fall if the circumstances warranted such a delay and told him highhandedly he must abide by this agreement or do as he thought necessary. Mr. Poole saw fit to take the matter to court. Late in November the town made representation to the Local Government Board and to the premier, Walter Scott, to use influence to have legal action postponed in order that settlement of the account could be made in the proper manner. The suit was withdrawn but Mr. Poole was not paid until December. This settlement did not end the hospital difficulties for in 1915 repairs had to be made to the new building and a nurses' residence built. The heavy expense involved in the operation of this public institution was finally considered too much for the town and in 1917, with four rural municipalities besides Rosetown sharing the cost it became a Union Hospital.

The important service of providing education, although under a separate governing body, is linked closely with the civic administration.

¹. Town Minutes, 27 June, 1913.
². Ibid., 26 May, 1914.
³. Ibid., 23 November, 1914.
⁴. Ibid., 6 December, 1914.
⁵. Hospital Board Minutes, 9 September, 1915.
By late 1909, with the increased population, the citizens considered that Mrs. Stewart's school was inadequate. A meeting was held on December 7 for the purpose of organizing a Rosetown School District and in January 1910, the first school board consisting of Mr. James Coulter, Mr. G.H. Irvine and Mr. W.R. Ferguson was elected. Whereas places of business went up almost overnight, the building of a school was not done hastily. In May a school site had been selected and it was not until 1911 that a four roomed brick building was erected. During this period of decision school had been conducted first in King's Hall, and later in the Council Chambers of the new Town Hall. Mr. Crawford was the first teacher and Mr. B. Coyne succeeded him.

The School Board had shown some foresight in building a larger school than was required. At first one room met the requirements of the village, but by 1912 two rooms were necessary to accommodate the children. By 1916, all four rooms were in operation. No provision had been made for future expansion so, by 1917, with the school filled to capacity it was found necessary to erect a frame building.

1. The school district was officially organized 24 February, 1910. See Saskatchewan Gazette, Vol.6, 5 March, 1910. The district included a part of the nearby rural area. Thus it was not purely a town service.


4. Interview with Miss N. Stewart who joined the teaching staff in 1912.

5. The Rosetown Eagle, 7 July, 1910. Mr. Crawford died during the summer holidays.

6. The Rosetown Eagle, 8 September, 1910.

7. The first teacher in the new school was Miss P. Macleod.

8. Interview with Miss N. Stewart, 1948.

9. Ibid.

10. The Rosetown Eagle, 10 May, 1917.
In spite of the inconvenience of overcrowding and temporary buildings, the educational standard was apparently high. Premier Martin paid a visit to the school in June, 1917. He expressed considerable satisfaction with the work of the school and the equipment also drew favorable comment. There was justification for this view for the Rosetown people have always felt that their institutions of learning have amply served their needs.

Some consideration was given by the Town Council during this period to recreation, town beautification and cultural activities. Provision was made for a skating rink, the planting of trees and a town band. The latter two were of minor importance—trees were planted in 1912, and in 1913, $300.00 was granted to the Board of Trade for the organization of a band.

Providing a skating rink was a different problem. In 1910, J.R. Johnstone announced his intention of building a private rink. The Town Council was anxious to give some support to this enterprise and granted $500.00 of their $7,000.00 debenture issue to aid in the construction of this project. This transaction came to the knowledge of the Department of Municipal Affairs. The grant was not approved and the new council elected in 1911 had to ask Mr. Johnstone to return the money. No doubt

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 14 June, 1917.
2. Interview with Miss N. Stewart. This opinion was also expressed by Mr. W.P. Sexsmith, B.A., B.Ed. who was inspector of schools in this area from 1929 to 1947.
3. The Rosetown Eagle, 2 May, 1912.
4. Ibid., 27 October, 1913.
6. See letter: Department of Municipal Affairs to Village of Rosetown dated 3 April, 1911. Rosetown File No. 1657.
7. Village Minutes, 7 April, 1911.
it was a matter of embarrassment to all parties concerned. Nothing more was done in this regard by the Council until 1913 when, in the face of economic warning signals, caution was thrown aside and $7,500.00 was authorized to be expended on a skating rink.

During the whole period 1910 to 1918 the administration of the town left much to be desired. It appears that the boom period in the first three years of civic administration had coloured the Council's viewpoint into believing this condition would last forever. The $7,000.00 debenture loan of 1910 was but the beginning of heavier and heavier dependency on outside credit. Current revenue could not take care of routine services as is evidenced in 1911 when authorization was given to the overseer and secretary-treasurer to borrow $1,500.00 in February for a period of eight months and another of $2,000.00 in August for four months. There is no record to show that these amounts were actually borrowed but it is an indication that the Council was prepared to spend extra monies if necessary. By 1913, while Rosetown had prospered there was, on the larger economic sphere, a general tightening of credit. The town had not planned for a recession and in spite of the fact that the mill rate had been increased from 12 mills in 1910 to 20 mills some of the debenture loans could not be met. As a result further loans were sought from England.

1. Town Minutes, 14 July, 1913.
2. Village Minutes, 6 February, 1911.
3. Ibid., 17 August, 1911.
4. Ibid., 22 September, 1910.
5. Mr. Powell was making a trip to England and was authorized to negotiate a sale of bonds there. See Town Minutes, 6 January, 1913.
from the banks and from the Society of Chosen Friends. Regardless of the situation and with the knowledge that money was required for routine improvements, the town embarked on a spending spree of almost $25,000.00 for a rink, hospital and a new fire engine.

By 1914 the financial situation had further deteriorated. The hospital had to be paid for and there were mounting costs for street lighting, sidewalks and also interest on loans and debentures. The plight of the town was communicated to the Department of Municipal Affairs. Scant comfort was to be found in the following statement from the Deputy Minister:

... It is a matter of extreme regret that your council board so financed that you are now facing a serious situation. Present conditions may injure for a long time the reputation of Rosetown... 

Rosetown was paying a price for desiring to eclipse its neighbors.

The "bumper" crop of 1915 did alleviate the situation to a degree. The Town Council took advantage of the better times and raised the mill rate to 24. Before old debts were paid, however, new ones such as the building of the nurses' home, extension of the sidewalks and the re-equipping of the fire department arose. As a result the mill rate for 1916 was increased to 29 mills and by 1917 to 30.

1. Town Minutes, 8 January, 1913.
2. Ibid., 29 January, 1913.
3. See letter: Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs to A. Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer of the town of Rosetown, dated 15 April, 1914. Rosetown File No. 1657.
5. Ibid., 22 May, 1916.
6. Ibid., 30 April, 1917.
In 1917, although the Council performed its duties with the same zeal as if it were solvent, the town's credit did not stand very high with the Department of Municipal Affairs. In a letter to the town the Deputy Minister cautioned that, because of the financial difficulties, Rosetown would have to curtail expenditure for many years. Other towns were in a much worse plight though, if The Rosetown Eagle's report on the Town Clerk's visit to the convention of Saskatchewan municipalities was true.

... he had met officials from quite a number of the leading towns of the province, and upon comparing assessment values, he found the Rosetown property assessment a little lower on some businesses and our improvement assessment in particular used by all towns except two. Our tax rate is on the average lower, our per capita debt with the exception of one town is much lower than the considerable number of towns he mentioned. The average town has a per capita debt of $75.00 whereas Rosetown's per capita debt is less than $50.00...

The census report for 1916 was 731 and at the rate given above the total debt of the town was approximately $37,000.00. Whether this is considered high or low it would take careful administration to put Rosetown on a firm financial foundation.

Throughout the period, Rosetown's community activities were many and varied. Sport, fraternal organizations, cultural interests all played a part in the development of the town's personality.

Sport provided a particularly good outlet for the exponents of boom and boost. During 1910, lacrosse, hockey, football and basketball

1. See letter: Department of Municipal Affairs to J.A. Heartwell, Town Clerk, 14 April, 1917. Rosetown File No. 1657.


were played. In lacrosse, Rosetown received prominence by winning the 1 championship of Northern Saskatchewan. Baseball was played on a professional basis and the team under the guidance of Mr. W.G. King gave 2 a good account of itself. Boxing and wrestling bouts held in King's Hall were well attended. Interest in these latter may have been stimulated by the fact that Rosetown had a local champion in the person of George Bigelow.

Rosetown sport appeared to operate most successfully when on a professional basis and in the winter of 1912-1913 hockey, under the sponsorship of Dr. E.T. Myers, received considerable publicity. The team was purely professional being supported by the contributions of the townspeople and if these were insufficient, debits were absorbed by the few main sponsors. The club won the Goose Lake League Championship and received considerable local support. It appeared from the fluctuation of sport publicity that the town was willing to pay for winning teams. Baseball, in the summer of 1913, also received prominence. The Rosetown team was professional and it was clear that many towns either through lack of sufficient money or a genuine dislike of professionalism in local sport, protested. The Rosetown Eagle staunchly defended the town's attitude:

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 1 September, 1910. Teams from Prince Albert and Saskatoon entered this competition.
2. Ibid., 18 August, 1910.
3. Ibid., 24 April, 1910.
4. Ibid., 6 October, 1910.
5. The team had one local man - W. Aseltine.
6. Interview with Dr. E.T. Myers.
There are quite a lot of towns trying to knock professional baseball this year and the following clipping from The Davidson Leader shows that the bunch of "sports" in that town hate to part with the "long green". All these towns that are knocking have too many cheap sports in them to support a good team and therefore take every opportunity to try and kill the sport by barring a fast team from their tournaments. Of course, every knock is a boost and we would like to see all these papers write us up every week.

(Clipping) We would suggest that in future local sports add the words "Professional barred" on their sports announcements. The way those two hundred one dollar bills slipped into the clutches of Rosetown was most painful. The public did not even see a good exhibition of their skill in ball playing as there was not a team in their class on hand to work it out of them.

This attitude was not healthy for while it did give the town the publicity upon which the citizens thrived, it gave little opportunity for spontaneous local sport. Indeed, there is little indication that leadership was given to train the youth of the community in this direction. Sport was a business venture. Amateur sports could not entirely be neglected; football was played in 1913; a bowling league was formed; a Rosetown Gun Club was organized. The innocuous game of horseshoes received a mild rebuke on moral grounds from The Rosetown Eagle:

The ancient game of horseshoes has become very popular in town among the male element. In fact, some of the more enthusiastic players have taken to playing on Sunday. It is hoped that this practise will be stopped before it is brought to the attention of the town fathers.

2. From available records the highlights of sport in Rosetown were, with a few exceptions, of a professional nature.
4. Ibid., January, 1913.
5. Ibid., 29 May, 1913.
6. Ibid., 8 August, 1913.
Money was not so plentiful in 1914 and with the outbreak of war in the autumn sport activities were curtailed. The emphasis during the war years was placed on curling. In December, 1914, sixteen curling rinks were formed, and the first annual bonspiel was held in the town in January, 1916. The game was popular for in 1917, thirty-two rinks participated in the 'spiel.

During this period, 1910-1918, there was ample outlet for those interested in fraternal societies. The Orange Lodge and Odd Fellows Lodge were organized in 1910, the Masons and Knights of Pythias in 1912. The formation of these lodges was ordinary for the pattern was the same as in any prairie town. The town did possess a unique organization in the unchartered single ladies club known as the S.D.B. It was formed purely for social reasons in 1913 by Mrs. W.G. King and Mrs. Van Allen but as the years passed, its activities were extended. By the end of the war it had developed into one of the major benevolent organizations of the town.

The spiritual and moral life of the town was guided by the four main denominations, Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Roman Catholic.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 16 December, 1914.
2. Ibid., 13 January, 1916.
3. Ibid., 31 March, 1910.
4. Ibid., 13 October, 1912.
5. Interview with Dr. E.T. Myers.
6. Register Book of the Knights of Pythias in the Rosetown Hall. This organization had a very short life for no further record of it appears.
7. The actual name is known only to members and ex-members. Marriage disqualifies a member from participation.
Prior to 1914, two of these, the Methodists and Presbyterians had worked together fairly closely by maintaining a Union Sunday School. In December, 1914, at a meeting of the Presbyterian congregation the church leaders expressed dissatisfaction with the Union. They felt that better work could be done if each provided their own school. The last tie of denominational co-operation so apparent in the frontier days was severed.

A matter of considerable concern to the churches by 1914 was the amount of alcoholic beverages being consumed in the town. In the frontier days people were usually too busy to take cognizance of such things, although the editor of The Rosetown Eagle, in January 1910, was perhaps a little sanguine when he commented:

A very noticeable and pleasing feature of our town since the issuance of licenses and one that speaks well for the hotel is the absence of drunks on the street, not a single case having made its appearance. 2

It is possible that this excellent state of affairs deteriorated for in May 1914 a "Banish the Bar" meeting was held in the town hall with the Reverend Assitor, field secretary for the movement, as guest speaker. Little progress was made during the year but early in 1915 several prominent citizens including W.M. Aseltine, O.C. Hamilton, A. Wilson, C.E. Conlin, and D.H. Evans formed a local organization. The Methodists and Presbyterians threw their weight behind the movement.

Petitions were drawn up urging the Dominion Government to suspend all

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1. The Rosetown Eagle, 10 December, 1914.
2. Ibid., 6 January, 1910.
3. Ibid., 21 May, 1914.
4. Ibid., 11 February, 1915.
licenses for the manufacture of alcoholic beverages for the duration of the war and the Provincial Government to suspend all bar licenses for the same period. The "Banish the Bar" movement won a partial victory for in June 1915, all bars, except at certain points, were closed. Rosetown was not one of these points and the citizens showed their approval by voting 222 against, with only 26 for the selling of liquor locally.

The cultural attainments of Rosetown between 1910 and 1918 were mainly musical. A fairly high standard was obtained by the three church choirs: the Anglican under Mrs. E. Jones; the Methodist under Mrs. W.H.E. Graham and the Presbyterian under Mrs. N. McVicar. Rosetown was fortunate in having these musicians, for by their work, a foundation was being laid which was to give the town a name for music in the next decade. Since 1913, too, when Mrs. Bowen opened up a music studio the town was not without one or more music teachers.

Concerts of a very high level, performed by local and visiting artists were well received by the Rosetown residents. From 1912 on, the Toronto Ladies Quartette made several visits, and in 1917 the Chautauqua made its appearance. For lighter entertainment, the Rex Theatre owned by Mr. French, provided moving pictures and travelling shows. When such plays as Peg O' My Heart, Charlie's Aunt and Uncle Tom's Cabin came to town, a packed house was the usual result. Motion pictures were also well attended and these took the place of the wrestling and boxing

2. Ibid., 1 July, 1915.
3. Ibid., 14 December, 1916.
4. Interview with Mrs. W.H.E. Graham who is a talented violinist.
5. The Rex was built in 1911 or 1912 and located on the east side of Main Street north of Second Avenue. It burnt in 1918.
matches which were considered high entertainment prior to 1912.

It is extremely difficult to assess the extent of the war upon the Rosetown community. After all, to a wheat growing district it meant prosperity, and although some citizens may have been gravely concerned, a large number, no doubt, took a detached interest in "England's war". Yet, two weeks after the declaration of war, nineteen men enlisted. It was an occasion for some excitement and The Rosetown Eagle reported:

To the strains of "God Save the King" and three rousing cheers for the King, Rosetown's offering in the shape of nineteen men, the Motherland's call for volunteers for active service in Europe, left for Saskatoon on the afternoon train on Monday. Never in the history of the town had such a crowd been seen at the depot, it being estimated that there were fully 500 people to see the boys off.

When it was known Saturday that the boys would have to leave Monday, arrangements were made by the citizens to have all of them insured for $1000.00 and some of the local real estate men were busy on Saturday writing up the policies. 2

Lieutenant A. Wilson was for awhile the recruiting officer, and between the years 1914 and 1917 the number of enlistments appears quite high. A few figures are given in The Rosetown Eagle but no estimate of the number from the actual town can be conclusive since recruits came from a wide area. Also it is very possible that many Rosetown men joined up at larger centres such as Saskatoon and Regina. From the reports of the newspaper, from the rolls of honour in the churches and from the verbal opinions of the citizens, Rosetown's contribution in men was probably equal to that of any town of its size.

The citizens, too, gave of their time and money to further the war effort. Certain organizations such as the I.O.D.E., the S.D.B., and

1. Information on plays and moving pictures was obtained from various copies of The Rosetown Eagle between 1912 and 1917.

2. The Rosetown Eagle, 20 August, 1914.

The Red Cross did particularly fine work. These were mainly interested in providing the usual comforts for the service men, making up relief parcels for war destituted countries and similar humane causes. The catalogue of contributions is too long to go into detail but a few causes for which help was given include the Belgian Relief Fund, Prisoner of War Fund, French Wounded Emergency Fund and Canada’s own Victory Loan. One exceptional donation, a quarter section of land which realized $2000.00, was given by Mr. Jacob Michael to the Red Cross.

The war had, however, brought prosperity. By 1917, with good crops and high prices, automobile dealers could scarcely keep up with the demand. In the next year, the Victory Loan was over subscribed to the amount of $108,000.00 and the citizens were advised that the subscription for the subdivision exceeded any other except the cities. The Town Council, too, realized that it was an opportune moment to relieve the town of some of its debt and accordingly, raised the mill rate to 35.

The traveller returning to Rosetown after an absence of eight years would have been aware of a considerable change in the appearance of the town. Business places now occupied almost all of the lots on Main Street, Railway Avenue and First and Second Avenues. The struggling settlement of 1910 with its new and unpainted buildings was now an orderly, compact,

3. Ibid., 5 April, 1917.
5. Town Minutes, 20 May, 1918. This was five mills higher than 1917.
well painted town. There was an air of prosperity. Automobiles were parked on the streets and the old tie posts for horses had been removed. Old friends from both town and country would greet him. They had done well. In speaking of the town they would admit it had not become a second Saskatoon but if they could get water, it would expand. Anyhow, it was the best little town in the west.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROSPEROUS YEARS, 1919-1930.

The period of the twenties was one of unbroken prosperity and optimism. Except for 1919 when the Rosetown district suffered from hail there was no real crop failure and the average wheat price on all grades for the twelve years 1919 to 1930 was $1.08 per bushel. The town continued to live on agriculture. In the years between 1919 and 1925 when crops were fair or average, material progress was only moderate but between 1926 and 1930 when crops were good and prices high, there was a real boom.

Business within the town during 1919 and 1920 was dull and routine but in 1921 there was a more cheering sign of revival when the Ford Motor Company chose Rosetown as its convention centre. The next year the Cockshutt Implement Company viewing the railway connections and fertile land belt with approval made it a transfer point. Again, relative dullness crept into the town's material progress but the extra good crops in 1923 caused money to circulate with greater freedom. This condition was particularly well reflected in the considerable speculation by the Rosetown district in oil, gold and implement stocks.

1. This is computed from the average farm wheat price compiled by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The high for the period was in 1919 when the average farm price was $2.32 per bushel and the low was in 1930 when it sank to $.47. See Dominion Bureau of Statistics Publication, 1946 in the office of the Dominion Economic Division, University of Saskatchewan.

2. The Rosetown Eagle, 7 July, 1921.

3. Ibid., 20 April, 1922.

4. Ibid., 1 May, 1924.
All these events were duly reported with appropriate comments by the faithful organ of this ambitious little town. In 1920 a lame apology for the post war boom that did not happen:

The shortage of houses in Rosetown is responsible for the loss of quite a large number of citizens and prospective ones. Inquiry after inquiry for housing accommodation finds nothing available. Few care to undertake building with the prevailing high cost of construction.¹

In 1921 the Ford convention is accepted as a sign that big business has discovered Rosetown:

Rosetown is continually becoming more and more a convention centre. The convenience of railway and hotel accommodation makes it the best for a large area and consequently means quite a saving of time and expense to the majority of those attending these important gatherings. The convention of some forty to fifty Ford dealers to be held here on Monday, July 18, is the latest addition and is a big business recognition of our town as a convenient convention centre.²

Next year the Cockshutt Company is welcomed as the first of many more to follow:

Cockshutt firm to distribute from here... Rosetown as a distributing point is coming more and more into recognition. It has been under consideration by many concerns for several years. Crops and other conditions have been adverse to that development in railroad construction that would at once settle the matter in the minds of those who have had their eyes fixed on Rosetown and have hesitated.³

And in 1924 Rosetown's investors are urged to put their money in the best and safest place:

We have received from reliable sources, information regarding the amount of stock sold in the Rosetown

2. Ibid., 7 July, 1921.
3. Ibid., 20 April, 1922.
district during the past few weeks and it seems hardly credible that over $25,000.00 has gone out from here in the Canadian Farm Implement Co. and into oil and gold stock... Watch your dollars, we need them to promote the biggest company to us in Canada, Rosetown and Company, Unlimited."

Assuredly, The Rosetown Eagle had a peculiar faculty for conveying complacency without contentment in the face of prosperity.

Building expansion in the town, following the pattern set by business, was necessarily limited in this six year period. A few important additions however were made: the Veteran's Hall on First Avenue, and the Unique Theatre on Main Street in 1919; W.E. Innise's confectionary and bakeshop on Second Avenue next door to the Royal Bank, 1921; the much needed four-room addition to the brick school, 1922, and the Bank of Toronto in 1925. This latter was not in the real sense an addition because it replaced the Union Bank which had been absorbed by the Royal in this year.

Particularly good crops in 1925 and 1926 produced something like the real "boom" confidently expected ever since the war. The effect of this was felt early in 1927 when nine train carloads totalling thirty-eight McCormick-Deering tractors shipped directly from the factory at Milwaukee were sold immediately on arrival. The district did not buy as many tractors as people were led to believe however. The total shipment had

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 1 May, 1924.
3. Interview with A. Wilson, Proprietor of the Unique Theatre from 1919 to 1946 - May 1948 - The Rex Theatre had burnt down in 1918.
4. The Rosetown Eagle, 8 September, 1921.
5. Ibid., 4 May, 1922.
6. Ibid., 20 August, 1925.
been thirty-one cars and on each of these were large streamers bearing the words "Rosetown District, Saskatchewan". One can surmise that points such as Kindersley, Brock, Stranraer and others, where many of the remaining tractors were shipped, might feel that Rosetown was receiving credit for a good many machines she had not purchased.

Land prices rose to inflationary levels. In July 1927 certain school lands were put up for auction. The competition was keen. Louis Montreuil purchased the S.E.1 11-50-15 for $76.00 per acre. According to the Rosetown paper, this was the highest price paid anywhere in Saskatchewan for such lands. Still others were purchased at prices ranging from $45.00 to $60.00 per acre.

The boom was not only in land. Oil offered a more exciting but decidedly more precarious field for investment. Early in the summer, J.O. Williams, a geologist and oil engineer from Edmonton had made a survey in the vicinity of Herschel and Anglia. Assured that oil in large quantities lay in this area, he convinced several Rosetown citizens of the possibilities. The Rosetown Leaseholding and Development Company was formed and 7740 acres were leased. Actual drilling began in November. This enterprise brought large hopes of quick returns and enthusiasm continued well into 1928. In September, the Rosetown Eagle reported:

The drillers have reached a depth of 1545 feet at the Rosetown Leaseholding and Development well near Herschel and are passing through Benton shale.

2. Ibid., 21 July, 1927.
3. Ibid., 28 July, 1927. The Company was first known as the Rosetown Oil and Gas Syndicate.
4. Ibid., 3 November, 1927.
strata of sand. J.O. Williams is optimistic. Dr. Olson, practical oil and mineral locator of Minneapolis... predicts a strike of 1000 barrels a day at a depth of 2000 or 2300 feet....

In October, the Forbes Oil Review, a Wall Street publication commented that the Herschel development was the largest and brightest prospect in oil fields in Western Canada. The promoters were less hopeful, for by now the drillers had reached over 2000 feet with no substantial evidence of oil. Hopes dwindled and by 1929 operations were suspended. It appeared that for Rosetown the real wealth lay in the wheat.

There was yet more evidence that money was plentiful and Rosetown business men alert. In 1927, J.R.R. Moffatt won the prize offered annually by the Vice-President of the Monarch Life Assurance Company for the largest sale by any one Dominion agent. The Rosetown Eagle in announcing this fact and drawing the moral harped on its favorite string:

... His [J.R.R. Moffatt] feat will attract widespread attention to the Rosetown district as one whose people are thrifty and prosperous and many will investigate the reasons and be convinced that this is a good place in which to live and apply one's vocation.

During 1928 and 1929 Rosetown showed increasing signs of prosperity and wealth. In February 1928, Milwaukee once more sent a large assignment of 192 tractors direct to Rosetown. There is no indication of the number purchased in the immediate district but this time the streamers bore the legend "Another trainload of tractors for the Rosetown District". As an appropriate gesture, the train was met on its arrival by Mayor Neil

2. Ibid., 25 October, 1928.
3. Ibid., 19 December, 1929.
4. Ibid., 10 January, 1928.
McVicar, President of the Board of Trade, D.N. Geddes, Local agent C.E. Conlin and many prominent business men, citizens and farmers. The town and district gloried in the outward manifestations of its wealth. In February, 1929 more school lands were offered at a sale attended by over 1,000 people who paid as high as $67.00 per acre. This was said to be the highest paid for school lands in the province in this year. In this year also, the Regal Motors Limited were winners of the Regina Branch shield for the month of August, an award made to the Ford dealer delivering the largest number of cars in the province.

This general prosperity of the district was as usual reflected in town building. By May 1926, six residences were under construction and by the end of the year the total value of all building additions totalled over $140,000.00. Part of this to the value of $20,000.00 was the huge Community Hall built under the auspices of the Rosetown Elks Lodge. In 1927, the Northern Oil Company erected a distributing warehouse; a new telephone exchange was built; a tourist camp was placed on the fair grounds and a new Masonic Hall erected on Main Street near Fourth Avenue.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 16 February, 1928.
2. Ibid., 4 April, 1929.
3. Ibid., 22 September, 1929.
4. Ibid., 27 May, 1926.
5. Ibid., 16 December, 1926.
6. Ibid., 4 November, 1926.
7. Ibid., 28 April, 1927.
8. Ibid., 5 May, 1927.
9. Ibid.
and dedicated by former Premier Martin. In addition the Mid-West
Utilities (later the Canadian Utilities) bought out the Rosetown Electric
Light and Power Company for approximately $50,000.00 and erected a new
building next to the old plant. By December, it was estimated that the
building program was nearly $200,000.00 and included thirty-two new resi-
dences, six business places, an addition to the Community Hall (as well
as those buildings separately mentioned).

The building boom continued into 1928 and 1929. Early in 1928 the
Little Flower School District No. 24 laid plans for the building of a
$60,000.00 convent. The blessing and laying of the corner stone was
performed by the Rev. Father Felion, S.G., delegate of the Archbishop.
On January 9, 1929 the Convent of Adoration was opened. A banquet was
held after the dedication ceremonies and The Rosetown Eagle commented:

> The array of those of the Protestant faith
> on the platform and in the banquet hall is
> worthy of note as manifesting that spirit
> that means so much to the well being of a
> community and is a fitting example to those
> of any faith Catholic or Protestant.

The convent was a considerable addition to the town for the early plans
had been modified and $125,000.00 had been expended.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 10 November, 1927. The old Masonic Hall be-
came the Anglican Parish Hall.

2. Ibid., 21 July, 1927. The Rosetown Electric Power and Light plant
was the one founded by Mr. W. Van Aalen in 1912 with the approval
and supervision of the Town Council.


5. Ibid., 9 August, 1928.

6. Ibid., 10 January, 1929.

7. Ibid., 23 August, 1928.
Other additions to the town in this year included: W.J. Scott's jewellery store, located next to Assaly's; an O.K. Economy Store, on the east side of Main street opposite the original Methodist church; the Myers Block on Main street, a little south of C.E. Conlin's. The total value of new building for 1928 was estimated at about $280,500.00.

In 1929 an addition was made to the hospital costing $62,000.00; a Rosetown Company called the Regal Motors Ltd. with a capitalization of $50,000.00, constructed a garage and show room; the De Luxe cafe near the Rosetown Hotel opened for business and the Safeway Stores moved into the property owned by W.E. Innis. Besides these, twenty new residences were built. Altogether $181,000.00 had been expended.

The Wall street depression in the autumn of 1929 in no way appeared to curtail the expansion of Rosetown in 1930. A four-room high school was built at a cost of $35,000.00; the T. Eaton Company leased the property of D.M. Geddes; the Rosetown Oil Company erected a warehouse on the C.N.R. right of way; and J.A. Stewart constructed a substantial

2. Ibid., 18 October, 1928.
3. Ibid., 13 December, 1928.
4. Ibid., 2 July, 1929.
5. Ibid., 18 April, 1929.
6. Ibid., 22 August, 1929.
7. Ibid., 18 April, 1929.
8. Ibid., 18 July, 1929.
11. Ibid., 15 May, 1930.
building for bowling and billiards on First Avenue. The amount spent in 1930 was roughly $238,000.00 which exceeded any year of the period except 1928.

Inevitably in this prairie wheat town, business and building expansion depended upon transportation facilities. Good connections both by rail and road, enhanced its value as a distributing, convention and shopping centre. Rosetown citizens were well aware of this and this period was therefore marked by an earnest endeavour on the part of The Rosetown Eagle, the Board of Trade and the Town Council to have these facilities improved.

Considerable satisfaction was felt by the citizens in 1924 when it was rumored that the Canadian Pacific Railway had let a contract for the grading of a branch line from Gunworth to Rosetown. Could it be that the company was prepared to make the town a railway centre? The Board of Trade thought so and consequently made representation to have the North Rosetown station brought into the town.

The C.P.R. was cautious. The Gunworth line project remained a matter for conjecture. In 1925 the Board of Trade appealed to the Company to construct a branch line north east of the town to Keppel. Once again there was silence but in January of 1928 the town was informed that the Board of Railway Commissioners had approved of the Rosetown-Perdue route (formerly Rosetown-Keppel). By August the steel had been laid to Valley

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 10 June, 1930.
2. Ibid., 11 December, 1930.
3. Ibid., 3 April, 1924.
4. Ibid., 22 May, 1924.
5. Ibid., 11 June, 1925. This would connect Rosetown to the Saskatoon-Biggar line.
6. Ibid., 5 January, 1928.
Centre. The C.P.R. seemed finally convinced of the importance of the Rosetown district. The next year the Rosetown-Gunworth line was under construction.

Highway construction during this period was also of concern to Rosetown. With the increase in the use of the automobile it was not enough to have good railway connections. A start had been made with the highway to Harris in 1921 but in spite of appeals by the Board of Trade to the Provincial Government nothing of any importance was done until 1927. In this year the Government made known its intention to construct a highway between Rosetown and Biggar. To a town which thrived on "boom and boost", road construction seemed slow. In December 1929, the Board of Trade had another idea. A delegation consisting of W.H.E. Graham, W. Aseltine and R. Morrison met the Hon. A.C. Stewart, Minister of Highways in Regina to discuss the building of an all-weather road which would run through Outlook, Rosetown, Alsask, Calgary, Banff and then to the coast. The minister was polite and with perhaps something of political expediency agreed that this was the logical route and the one the Government intended to build. At least, Premier Anderson's Government was road conscious for in 1930 it announced that Rosetown was to be on two trunk highways, No. 4 from Swift Current to Biggar and No. 7 from Saskatoon to Alsask. Further, No. 4 was to be placed on the year's gravel surfacing program. By October, gravelling had been completed from Biggar to within eighteen miles of Rosetown.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 16 August, 1928.
2. Ibid., 22 September, 1927.
3. Ibid., 5 December, 1929.
4. Ibid., 27 March, 1930.
5. Ibid., 16 October, 1930.
The Board of Trade, by the end of the period could look with some satisfaction on its achievement. Its aim to make Rosetown the centre for a large area had by and large been fulfilled. By 1930 railways built or definitely planned, branched out in six directions and highways in four.

During this period, the town provided all essential services yet maintained its financial position on a sound foundation. The policy of spending far in excess of what could be paid for was abandoned. This prudent course was, however, made possible by the fact that essential services - lighting system, hospital - and even a rink! - had been provided in the lavish past. Also the expansion was now steadier over a considerable period and this gave the town fathers an opportunity to provide the essential requirements at a more uniform rate.

Routine municipal services such as sanitation and fire departments requirements were expanded in direct proportion to the town's growth. Two exceptions to this were sidewalks and the lighting system. In 1924, $8,000.00 was set aside for new cement sidewalks to replace the old wooden ones. By June, 3,376 feet had been completed. The lighting system was vastly improved in 1928 when the Canadian Utilities expended nearly $30,000.00 on the power plant which included the installation of a new 200 horse power engine.

How to secure an adequate water supply was the Town Council's chronic problem. Early in 1919, this question came to the fore and a meeting of citizens was called to discuss the digging of a deep well. Money,

1. Town Minutes, 7 January, 1924.
2. The Rosetown Eagle, 19 June, 1924.
3. Ibid., 30 August, 1928.
4. Town Minutes, 21 April, 1919.
unfortunately, was scarcer than water and it was not until the summer of 1920 that the contract for digging was awarded. The results were disappointing for although operations were carried on for several months the project was finally abandoned. For six years existing supplies had to suffice. However, in 1927 interest was re-awakened when J.O. Williams, in his search for oil, traced two underground streams of water to Rosetown. In September, J.O. Maines struck a big flow of water on his property on Railway Avenue East at a depth of 600 feet. The Town Council saw in this an end to their worries and proposed to Mr. Maines that the town would build a cistern near the well and charge him a rental of $55.00 per year if he would supply water at the rate of twenty pails for a dollar. An agreement was reached but scarcely a year had passed when the citizens protested against the use of this water at the annual rate-payers meeting. A recommendation was accordingly passed that the incoming Council for 1929 take necessary steps to locate a better supply, the funds for which were to come out of current revenue.

Water, like wheat, was good business in this prairie town and in July 1929 before the Council had taken any action, Mr. Maines struck another big flow at a depth of 840 feet. His monopoly was unchallenged. The Council made an investigation into the possibilities of providing a

2. Ibid., 31 March, 1921.
3. Ibid., 28 August, 1927.
4. Ibid., 15 September, 1927.
5. Town Minutes, 3 October, 1927.
6. Ibid., 26 November, 1928.
waterworks and sewage system and found the cost prohibitive. It was clear that the town was not prepared to mortgage its future on costly public utilities as it had done in the period 1912 to 1917.

Great improvements were made in health services. In 1927 the Hospital Board had recommended to the municipal councils an extension to the Union Hospital but nothing had materialized. One year later, a plebiscite was taken on the matter and 1,177 voted for the improvement while only 106 voted against it. An approximate cost for the increase to the building was set at $60,000.00 and debentures were sold to Clifton, Cross and Company. The contract was let to Bird, Woodall and Simpson, and when construction was finally completed the expense to the municipalities was $62,385.00. Later a sun room was added costing $2,500.00. The cost was considerable but there was a difference here from the debt contracted in 1913. Then, the whole cost had been borne by Rosetown; now it was shared by the surrounding country. The town had perhaps learned the hard way that large scale ventures could only operate with support from the surrounding territory.

In yet other ways the municipal administration showed good ordinary common sense. An Agricultural Society was organized in 1921, and the Town Council, anxious to support this new venture, decided to sell forty acres of what was formerly the Christianson and Clare subdivision

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 18 November, 1929.
2. Rosetown Union Hospital Board Minutes (hereafter cited as Hospital Minutes) 9 August, 1927.
3. The Rosetown Eagle, 16 August, 1928.
4. Hospital Minutes, 8 January, 1929.
5. Ibid., 2 July, 1929.
6. Ibid., 6 August, 1929.
for a fairground. A proviso was added to the effect that if the Society did not use the land, it would revert to the town. The offer was accepted, the grounds fenced, a racetrack built and by December arrangements were completed to hold a two day fair in 1922. In 1923 the balance of this subdivision was rented to the newly organized golf club at a rental of $80.00 per year for term of three years. The disposal of this large area was good business for it was apparent that the town would not expand in this direction for a considerable time. In the meanwhile, without any expense to Rosetown the property had become an asset. The Town Council continued to show a prudent awareness of the dependence of the town on country business.

In the latter years, during the summer, people came thirty or forty miles to do their shopping, and on Saturday nights, especially, both sides of Main Street, and First and Second Avenues were lined with parked cars, fender to fender. In the winter, due to roads being blocked, this traffic slackened and business in the town depended in the main upon the few who could journey by train, and the district farmers. The latter required stabling for their horses. With the ascendancy of the automobile, the livery business had slackened and with the disappearance of Kennedy's barn in October 1928, the town lost an essential but unprofitable business. The needs of the district had to be met and in September 1929 the Council authorized the construction of a Community Barn. By the end

1. This lies north of the town on the N.E. 1/4 of Section 12-1/4 miles south of the C.P.R.
2. Town Minutes, 21 March, 1921.
3. The Rosetown Eagle, 22 December, 1921.
4. Town Minutes, 25 September, 1925.
5. The Rosetown Eagle, 4 October, 1928.
6. Town Minutes, 16 September, 1929.
of November a building was erected, 48 feet by 24 feet, having accom-
modation for twenty horses.

By early 1930 in spite of deteriorating economic conditions through-
out the country Rosetown was still prosperous. Crop yields in 1929 had
averaged 30 bushels per acre, and there was nothing to indicate that
there would be a prolonged depression. Accordingly, those responsible
for various phases of civic administration still spent freely and because
of the growth of the town most of the expenditure was justified. The
School Board issued debentures to the value of $35,000.00 for an already
long overdue high school; the Hospital Board expended $1,330.00 for the
digging of a 475 foot well which provided as much sand as water, and the
Town Council was authorized by the Local Government Board to issue deben-
tures amounting to $8,000.00 for fire fighting equipment and $6,305.09
for the construction of cement sidewalks.

Yet by autumn Rosetown had to face the economic depression. The
average farm price of wheat, the basic product upon which Rosetown had
been built, was 47 cents per bushel. The effect was felt in the town.
The Board of Trade's plan for a $5,000.00 war memorial was deferred;
the Hospital Board reduced the salaries of the staff and the Elks Lodge
started a "Relief at Home" fund. Of greater significance was the

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 28 November, 1929.
2. Ibid., 26 September, 1929.
3. School Minutes, 10 April, 1930.
4. Hospital Minutes, 8 July, 1930.
5. Rosetown File No. 1657.
6. This is according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics publication
on farm prices, 1946.
8. Hospital Minutes, 4 November, 1930
deputation of men who called at the Town Hall in December to find out if any steps were being taken to provide work for the unemployed. The Council, unprepared, could only promise to register them and think the problem over. The depression had finally reached the town.

Town services require money and as already implied the financial condition of the town from 1919 to 1930 was sound. Figures are not available for the period 1919 to 1923 but there is no evidence to indicate extravagance. It seems safe to presume that the major part of the monies collected in these five years was used to continue essential services and to overcome the deficits incurred in the previous decade. From 1924 until 1930 the total revenue increased from $28,706.06 to $36,606.15 and total expenditures rose from $23,102.80 to $37,956.51. These increases were normal, for the population had risen appreciably in the eleven year period. In 1921, the official census revealed the population to be 865, in 1926 it was 1142 and in 1931 it had increased to 1553. The mill rate did not vary to any great degree. In 1920 when the finances of the town were not too sound, fifty mills was levied and in 1929 toward the end of the period and at the height of prosperity the rate was fixed at forty-two. The evenness of the costs of administration between 1924 and 1930 can be noted in a consideration of amounts paid for essential services. Street lighting showed a variation from

1. Town Minutes, 8 December, 1930
2. Town Financial Statement.
3. This was only 134 over the 1916 population figures.
4. Census of Sask., 1936 Table 6, P.414.
5. Town Minutes, 10 May, 1920.
6. Ibid., 22 April, 1929.
$2,027.65 to $2,442.18; salaries (presumably Town Clerk) from $1,800.00 to $2,355.00; fire department (not including new equipment bought by debenture issue) $303.05 to $805.40. Some services such as street repairing where extra maintenance was required at intervals showed greater variation. The same applied to the scavenging department where the costs were in direct proportion to the population. This latter, for example, rose from $1,999.80 in 1924 to $3,409.60 in 1930. Similarly the police department expenses rose, for in 1929 the increased size of the town warranted a full time permanent police staff. Hence the figures for this expenditure in 1924 were only $303.50 but by 1930 they stood at $2,303.00.

There was some reason for complacency in 1929 when the Deputy Minister of the Department of Municipal Affairs paid the following compliment to the Mayor, Mr. N. McVicar:

I am pleased to note the inspector reports that the town affairs are being well administered by yourself and Council and that it is now in the best financial position it has ever been.2

With this in mind, there was some justification for the heavy expenditure in 1930. The town needed better fire protection and better sidewalks and the time to provide these was when it was in a good financial position.

The School Board likewise gave sound financial administration. In 1920, the school mill rate was 14 and in 1930 it was 17½. Between these years the Board had built a four room addition to the public

1. All figures quoted are from the Town Financial Statement, 1924-29.
2. See Letter: Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs to Mayor N. McVicar, 22 November, 1929 - Rosetown File No. 1657.
3. Town Minutes, 10 May, 1910.
4. Ibid., 14 April, 1930.
school (1922) and a four room high school (1930). Salaries paid the teachers, however, were not excessively high—the highest paid the principal at any time during the period was $2,800.00 in 1929. Truly, the School Board could never be accused of extravagance either in payment of salaries or in providing adequate accommodation. When one considers that, from 1925 until 1930, frame buildings were used as extra classrooms, it seems a pity there was not more of the "boosting" spirit in educational expansion. The issue of $35,000.00 in debentures in 1930 was not a reflection on the financial administration for the need for a high school was great. Unfortunately the length of the depression could not be foretold and there was a possibility this heavy expenditure might undermine the cautious planning of the previous years.

The prosperity and optimism of this period was reflected not only in the material aspects of the town but also in the community activities of sport, social organization and music. Each in their own way helped to promote the community.

Sport was still an integral part of the town's life. The amateur sports of curling, golf and tennis revealed a very healthy interest, but the real hope for the town "boosters" lay as before, in hockey and baseball which could be professionalized. As in the previous decade, a good team in either of these latter sports was good business.

The town's aspirations in hockey received an early check. In the winter of 1921-1922 the hockey club, more or less dormant since 1914, was reorganized and entered in the Goose Lake League. The team had a

2. The Rosetown Eagle, 5 January, 1922.
most successful season. By March it had won the Northern Saskatchewan Intermediate Championship and the right to meet Cupar for the Provincial Championship and the Henderson Cup. This was justification for pride—for beyond the championship perhaps lay other honors. It came as something of a shock when the Saskatchewan Amateur Hockey Association denied Rosetown the privilege of competing in this last series of games on the charge that the team was guilty of professionalism. The charge was sustained and the championship forfeited. The hopes of Rosetown for a name in hockey did not recover from the blow in the remainder of the period.

Baseball had a more substantial career. A club had been organized in 1922 but it was not until 1924 that it was established on the same basis as the team of 1913. The importance that the town attached to good baseball and the "Babbit" flavour of its outlook can be gathered from the following news item which in spite of dubious syntax carries the old familiar refrain:

A meeting has been arranged for Tuesday, April 29 in the Town Hall to take steps for the organizing of a first class baseball team for Rosetown this summer. Those who are sponsoring this movement feel that we are now important and large enough to have a baseball team to enter the league for this district and are out to put this across. The public are all invited to attend and help, by their suggestion, this organization. It is a known fact that the famous team a few years ago was a real business getter and town advertiser and there is no reason excepting lack of interest which should come between us having the best team of our history this year. We all want the name of Rosetown to be

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 16 March, 1922.

2. Ibid., 23 March, 1922.

3. Ibid., 1 June, 1922.
known from Greenland's icy mountain to India's coral strand and "We've gotta get going and step" if we are not going to be like the pig's tail—wizened up and always behind. The nobody-gives-a-whoop spirit may be alright for the town flying crepe flags, but it will not do for Rosetown, and providing it is our desire (and it is) to live, grow and achieve, we will have to watch our every opportunity to do something that is going to help R-O-S-E-T-O-W-N letters of the alphabet... Come all ye faithful and get behind this organization and wonders will never cease.1

The above announcement must have had the desired effect for Rosetown had a most successful baseball year. By July, Rosetown had the only undefeated tournament team in the west:

... the name of Rosetown has appeared in most every paper of account throughout the country and the Rosetown nine are the most talked of team in this province, it being the standard of greatness to hand them defeat. Montreal papers called them the Rosetown Invincibles.... Edmonton is clamoring for a chance to defeat them...2

Rosetown's highest dreams in sport had been attained. For the next two years baseball continued to be a major attraction but it was not until 1927 that another high peak was reached. In this year the team won several local tournaments, defeated the Edmonton Selkirks, and was first in the Saskatoon tournament. Further it reached the provincial play-offs but was defeated by a Regina club.

From 1928 to 1930 there was a gradual slackening of interest in sport except perhaps for curling and tennis. In 1930 with the beginning

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1. The Rosetown Eagle, 24 April, 1924.
2. This was according to The Rosetown Eagle, 31 July, 1924.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., July and August, 1927.
5. Ibid., 18 August, 1927.
of the depression, baseball was dropped and softball took its place. The introduction of this game failed to move The Rosetown Eagle to break out in the panegyric which had accompanied the reorganization of baseball in 1924. It appears that in the major sports, Rosetown was not content to develop local talent and, with the limitation imposed by economic conditions, baseball and hockey were shelved for the time being.

It is not uncommon that during periods of relative prosperity various social organizations and institutions arise in considerable profusion. In Rosetown, the period 1925 to 1930 was no exception to this rule. The Elks Lodge was established in 1925, the Rosetown Eastern Star Chapter in 1926, the Army and Navy Veterans affiliated with the British Empire Service League in 1927, the Knights of Columbus in 1929, and the Rebekah Lodge in 1930. In addition to these most of the older organizations such as the Masons and Odd Fellows were still functioning.

Besides the fraternal lodges, two other organization deserve mention—the S.D.B. and the Boy Scouts. The former continued its work of benevolence and support for community enterprises such as the hospital, the Red Cross, the public library, Community Hall and, where necessary, relief. Considering that the club had no ties with outside organizations and considering the flimsy foundations upon which it had been founded in 1913,

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 8 May, 1930.
2. Ibid., 17 December, 1925.
3. Ibid., 6 May, 1926.
4. Charter, Rosetown Branch, No. 66. This charter is in the Legion Hall.
5. The Rosetown Eagle, 31 October, 1929.
6. Ibid., 11 September, 1930.
its work as an benevolent organization was highly creditable.

Scouting in Rosetown suffered from lack of adult leadership until 1927. As early as 1916 the boys of the town had made known their desire to form a Scout troop but nothing had been done. In 1924 and 1925, the Provincial Scouting Headquarters had organized the movement for the citizens but, except for the boys, enthusiasm was totally lacking. In 1927, Mr. H. Parrott took the matter in hand, formed a troop and established the Rosetown Boy Scouts on a firm foundation. In 1930, this good work was taken over by Mr. J.K. Horne. Although this organization is usually recognized as an addition to any town, the Rosetown citizens generally had shown indifference. It was not until 1930, when the boys started the Rosetown Toy Shop where old toys were repaired and given to needy children, that the real value of the movement was brought home. The citizens scarcely deserved the publicity which the town subsequently received in the next decade from this young people's organization.

As we have seen, the religious life of the town was, by 1917, firmly established in the hands of the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist churches. Each in its own way contributed to the moral tone of the community and there seemed little reason to believe that this pleasant state of affairs would not continue.

In 1921, however, the Presbyterians and the Methodists were faced with the perplexing problem of union. It was not peculiar to Rosetown for this movement was being discussed widely throughout the country.

1. See The Rosetown Eagle, 1919-1930 for the projects backed by the S.D.B.
3. For information on scouting see The Rosetown Eagle, 8 December, 1932 and 12 December, 1935.
In July, a committee of three from the Presbyterian congregation met a similar committee of Methodists and it was decided that a vote of the congregations should be taken upon this matter. There is no record of the Methodist vote but there was little doubt about the view of the Presbyterians when 122 voted for union and only 42 against. On August 18, a Presbyterian meeting of elders and managers was held and regardless of the congregational vote, it was agreed that union was not desirable.

The union question remained dormant until 1924 when a series of meetings advocating church union were held. The vote was again taken in January 1925 and although the Presbyterians showed a reduced majority (due, no doubt, to the fact they had just completed the payments on their fine church) union of the two churches was agreed upon. The inaugural service was conducted in the original Methodist church on June 10, 1925. Shortly after, the properties of the two congregations were merged and, since the Presbyterian building was the larger and newer, this became the Rosetown United Church.

All this was not accomplished without some bitterness. A remnant of the Presbyterian congregation would have no part in a United Church. Consequently when the Reverend W.A. Cameron, synodical organizer for the Presbyterian Church came to Rosetown in July of 1925, he received some support for the opening of another church. In November of the next year,

1. Session Book of the Presbyterian Church, Rosetown, 25 July, 1921.
2. Ibid., 17 August, 1921.
3. Ibid., 18 August, 1921.
4. Ibid., 11 January, 1925.
5. The Rosetown Eagle, 6 June, 1925.
6. Ibid., 16 July, 1925.
the proposal was voted upon and carried. Since they now had no building in which to hold services, the old Methodist church was purchased. Union had accomplished very little, for two churches still existed where many had hoped one would suffice.

Except for the period, 1928 to 1930, Rosetown was not greatly stirred by political campaigns. It has one characteristic, however, that in six elections (Federal and Provincial), the town voted consistently Conservative. Only twice—1929 (Provincial) and 1930 (Dominion)—did the centre vote with the constituency. The dependency of Rosetown upon the large area which it served was not reflected in its political philosophy.

Some colour was added to the political scene in 1928 when a new element, the Ku Klux Klan, made its appearance. The Rosetown Eagle on March 22 reported as follows:

Huge crowds attended the meeting in the Unique Theatre on Thursday afternoon and night of last week. People were present from surrounding town and country. In the evening all who sought admission could not get in, the place being packed to its utmost capacity. Mr. J.J. Maloney is a clever orator, gave masterful addresses and received courteous hearings. Prior to Mr. Maloney's address, W.C. Coutts who officiated as chairman introduced A.J. Balfour who gave a short talk on the Ku Klux Klan. On Monday night in the Orange Hall a meeting in the interests of the Klan was addressed by Dr. J.H. Hawkins. The hall could not nearly accommodate the crowd. Dr. Hawkins proved to be a very fluent speaker.

The role of the Klan in politics was not clear cut and the mysterious nature of it caused the editor of the Rosetown paper to publish

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 11 November, 1926.
2. Interview with W.G. King, W.B. Brookbank and Mrs. J. Burt.
3. The Rosetown Eagle, 6 June, 1929, and 31 July, 1930.
the following comment:

It (The Rosetown Eagle) will report on political meetings of all kinds but refuses to do likewise with the meetings of the Ku Klux Klan. Mention only will be made of Klan meetings.¹

The third week in June, Premier J.G. Gardiner spoke at Rosetown and during the meeting was frequently interrupted by the Klan organizer, Dr. Hawkins. The latter challenged the Premier to a debate at Balcarres.

Mr. Gardiner's reply as reported by The Rosetown Eagle follows:

Mr. Gardiner did not see any reason why a full bred Briton, born on Canadian soil should have any fear of meeting an American Tory in "this my own country."²

The Klan's activities continued into 1929. In spite of the policy laid down by The Rosetown Eagle a report was made on a meeting held in February. R.C. Snelgrove addressed a large audience in the Unique Theatre on "The Aims and Principles of the Klan". He contended that the organization was not opposed to any religious sect but was opposed to anything wrong. Regardless of this statement the real purpose of the Klan remained obscure. Some felt it was formed to prevent the building of the Roman Catholic convent in the town whilst others felt it was a machine of the Conservative party. All was conjecture and for this reason its influence upon the election in either 1929 or 1930 cannot be evaluated.

Small communities on the prairies have generally very little opportunity to contribute to the cultural life of the country. True, there are always the schools and these do an extremely valuable work. However, in the fields of music, art and drama the small centres, with few

2. Ibid., 21 June, 1928.
3. Ibid., 14 February, 1929.
exceptions, lack qualified men and women who can give leadership to any budding talent.

In the field of music Rosetown excelled for she was fortunate in having qualified musicians. Chief among these were Mrs. W.H.E. Graham, Mrs. N. McVicar and Mr. W.H. Sanderson. It was not only that these were qualified but that they were willing to give their time to activities for which there was little or no remuneration.

The first eight years of the period was the development stage. H.W. Sanderson had taken over the band in 1919 and gave capable leadership to those with talent in the form of musical expression. Mrs. Graham and others were training students in violin and piano. Some of the outstanding musicians who won high honours in Toronto Conservatory music examinations were B. Card, Marjorie Moyer and Marion Bowles. Besides honour students there were a considerable number who showed more than average ability.

In 1927, an organization known as the Rosetown Concert Orchestra was formed. Mr. Sanderson was President, Mrs. Graham director, and Miss Marjorie Moyer concert mistress. The twenty-member orchestra was comprised of string, wood wind, brass and percussion instruments. The reception accorded the opening concert on April 27 was encouraging, The Rosetown Eagle suggesting it was one of the outstanding events in the musical history of the town. The praise was merited, for at the musical festival held at Kerrobert both the Concert Orchestra and the School Orchestra won high acclaim. Mr. Wilde, the adjudicator, was reported as

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 7 April, 1927.

2. Ibid., 28 April, 1927.
saying:

This orchestra was almost the equal of any of the big symphony orchestras he had heard, and he wished to see it become the symphony orchestra of Rosetown.¹

In 1928 at the festival held in Biggar the Concert Orchestra, the Teen Age Orchestra and the String Quartette were all winners of honour firsts. At the Provincial Festival held at Moose Jaw similar high honours were won. These achievements were duplicated in 1929 and again in 1930. The commentary of the town's weekly paper was:

This speaks volumes for Rosetown and it is no wonder that the adjudicator spoke of Rosetown as the "Garden of Music".⁴

Rosetown had done extremely well, for besides the orchestras, there were the numerous individual artists and the choirs who took honours at local and provincial festivals. The winning of the Grand Shield for three years in succession is evidence enough that the town and district were making a substantial contribution to musical development in the province. If the history of Rosetown in general is a pattern of many another aspiring community, in this phase of community life it had not conformed.

In the strictly intellectual sense, the community had made little progress. For a town which prided itself on its achievements, the lack of a library was a serious omission. It was not until September 1928,

¹. The Rosetown Eagle, 12 May, 1927.
². The Teen Age orchestra was the former school orchestra.
³. The Rosetown Eagle, 24 May, 1928.
⁴. Ibid., 30 May, 1929.
⁵. Ibid., 29 May, 1930.
that an attempt was made to correct this condition. A meeting of citizens was called and it was agreed that the town should be canvassed for books and donations of money. The results were not encouraging, but a library organization was formed the next month. In December, with 518 books donated and 100 more on order, a library was opened with Mrs. Sweeney in charge. The following September, the Town Council ruled that in accordance with the Provincial Library Act the local institution should be governed by a Board of Trustees and it set aside one hundred dollars yearly to assist in its maintenance. With this accomplished the civic authorities were now prepared to give it their full official blessing and in March 1930 the grant was increased to three hundred dollars with the additional donation of a free building with fuel and light charged to the public accounts. It was a small and tardy beginning but typical of the prairie settlement, where material achievements ranked first and intellectual interests were a poor second.

The eleven years 1919 to 1930 were ones of prosperity for Rosetown. Business had grown, population had nearly doubled and the additional railway and highway facilities had ensured her advantage as a distributing point. But responsible for this prosperity was the heavy rich clay of the surrounding farming country. This it was that had made

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 13 September, 1928.
2. Ibid., 18 October, 1928.
3. Ibid., 6 December, 1928.
4. Town Minutes, 30 September, 1929.
5. Town Minutes, 24 March, 1930.
Rosetown the most thriving community on the Goose Lake line and for that matter in the whole Saskatchewan area lying between the two branches of the Saskatchewan river. This position gave her good reason to face the effects of a depression with confidence.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE DEPRESSION, 1931-1939.

In spite of relief problems and a slight decrease in population, Rosetown survived the depression of the thirties remarkably well. The reasons for this happy state of affairs are not hard to discover. In 1930 she was well equipped and in a good financial position, and throughout the period although crops were frequently light, the only real crop failure was in 1937. Low prices affected both town and district, wheat dropped to 61 cents a bushel. Yet Rosetown was more fortunate than most other wheat districts and in 1939 she emerged not unscarred but certainly not seriously injured.

Although business slowed down greatly, there were some new ventures. In July 1931, Mr. Frank Lampman built a flour mill about which The Rosetown Eagle made the following kindly comment:

This week we paid a visit to the plant of the Rosetown Milling Co. and were very pleased with its capabilities, its cleanliness, storage capacity and quality production. New machinery has recently been installed, by means of which, colour quality has been brought to equal standard of the big concerns in the Dominion. The Rosetown Mill has frequently proven itself as a valued business in drawing business (sic) from a wide area. Only this last week customers came from a distance of seventy miles and besides the gristing, left over $90.00 in money in our local stores.4


3. The Rosetown Eagle, 2 July, 1931.

4. Ibid., 6 October, 1932.
In 1932, the Rosetown Grain Stock and Bond Company was formed, and the Tower Filling station opened and the Searle grain elevator moved from North Rosetown to the town proper. At the end of the year a note of satisfaction was sounded by the Town's paper:

In times like the present any town in Western Canada does remarkably well to near hold its own and not to have a great array of vacant houses and business property. There have been some changes it is true, but almost the same number of business places are still occupied as at this time a year ago and the same applies to dwellings. Building activities have not been a blank as in almost every place in the west, though the building program has been small.

A surprisingly ambitious project was started in 1933 when a group of citizens from both town and district decided to erect a refinery to be known as the Rosetown Hi-Way Refineries Ltd. By April, the plant was operating and from 150 to 200 barrels of oil were refined daily.

In September of the next year, the Company was doing so well that additional storage tanks were erected to increase its capacity by 100,000 gallons. The returns may not have been so great, but there was money in the district seeking investment, and in a power farming area this would be a fairly safe enterprise.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 18 February, 1932.
2. Ibid., 16 June, 1932.
3. Ibid., 12 October, 1932.
4. Ibid., 8 December, 1932.
5. Ibid., 2 February, 1933.
6. Ibid., 27 April, 1933.
7. Ibid., 20 September, 1934.
A good crop in 1935 and some improvement in world markets affected business in 1936. The J.I. Case Company selected Rosetown as a distributing point, and the large firm of Macleod's hardware opened up a branch store. Indeed, implement dealers reported the greatest demand for new machinery in many years. The Rosetown Eagle hailed a new era in an article headed characteristically, "Rosetown Defeats the Depression":

The depression of the last few years which has taken its toll of the citizens of this country and left in its wake suffering and distress, seems to be nearing its end and we are thankful to note that this town and district have met face to face each condition as it arose and again are forging ahead as in past years. During the year which is now drawing to a close, the town has shown marked business activity throughout the entire year. Carpenters and builders have been fully employed, all available help being absorbed. Several important new business premises are occupied, with a demand for more, several desiring to locate here, being unable to do so. In general, Rosetown and district should be a happy, pleased and encouraged lot. With sustained improved conditions, Rosetown is destined to move ahead. The railroad arteries in six different directions and highways in six directions ... are bound to build Rosetown to a much larger centre.

The depression was not so easily defeated for although in the spring, implement dealers could not meet the demand for new implements, 1937 was a year of disaster and disappointment. In June, a fire started in the North Star Oil Company property and spread to that of the Canadian Oil Company. The loss was estimated at $75,000.00. By late summer it

2. Ibid., 19 March, 1936.
3. Ibid., 23 April, 1936.
4. Ibid., 10 December, 1936.
5. Ibid., 15 April, 1937.
6. Ibid., 3 June, 1937.
was obvious that the crop would be the poorest on record. A flurry of hope did come in September when oil drilling operations were started on the farm of Charles Squires, just east of town, by a gas and oil company with headquarters at Moose Jaw. By the end of the month drilling operations had reached 400 feet but although the formations were supposed to be favourable, oil was not located and the project was abandoned. In this same month, crop conditions made it clear to many farmers that they could not possibly winter their cattle for want of feed, and buyers appointed by the government were sent to make arrangements for the purchase of this stock.

The Rosetown Eagle, never downhearted, rose to the occasion with a burst of generalities:

It is just 28 years last spring, since the Town of Rosetown was founded and its making has been on a good sound basis, and today is recognized as one of the best centres in Western Canada. It has the appearance of a smart and thrifty young city and gains the praise of all our visitors.

The epithet "smart" was at least justified; the buildings of the town were well painted and well kept. Only those familiar with the typical Saskatchewan village of grey-brown, tumble down shacks can fully appreciate the brilliance of this achievement. Paint on the prairies is generally a luxury, not a necessity.

The erection of a milk pasteurization plant in 1938 was balanced

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 23 September, 1937.
2. Ibid., 30 September, 1937.
3. Ibid., 9 September, 1937.
4. Ibid., 9 December, 1937.
5. Town Minutes, 12 December, 1938.
by the destruction by fire of Lampman's mill which had won such high
praise from The Rosetown Eagle in 1932. A fairly good crop in the fall
prepared for the real return of prosperity in 1939. In that year the
Standard Mineral Water Works was established on Railway Avenue and a
commodious service station built on the corner of First Avenue and First
Street West by the Imperial Oil Company. By the autumn with crops yield­
ing as high as 58 bushels to the acre and averaging approximately 30,
business within the town almost paralleled the hey-day of 1929. The
Rosetown Eagle rejoiced, with its usual policy of "boom and boost":

This district will rank as one of the banner yielding areas in the west this year, but in
total volume will be tops as practically every acre is under cultivation. This big crop is
naturally reflected in the great volume of busi­ness increase done here and at nearby points.
However, Rosetown is a little city, the centre of an area ranging from twenty to fifty miles,
and almost every day the streets are packed with parked cars for several blocks, and it is
hardly probable that there is any other town in Western Canada that can make such a show of auto­
mobile values and numbers parked on its business streets. Our merchants have been alive to the
advantage of having bright and attractive pre­mises, good service and excellent varieties of
stock to choose from that makes shopping attrac­tive here, and all branches of business are gen­
erally known as being right there when it comes
to giving good service....

2. See Stutt op.cit. p.31. The average yield for St. Andrew's
  municipality in which Rosetown is located was 17 bushels per acre.
3. The Rosetown Eagle, 2 March, 1939.
4. Ibid., 7 December, 1939.
5. See Stutt, op.cit. p.31.
6. The Rosetown Eagle, 7 December, 1939.
The depression was over for Dame Fortune in the form of rolling acres of wheat land, never forgetful but sometimes absent minded, had smiled upon the Rosetown district once again. The citizens had reason to be grateful to the fertile soil which had seen their town through a difficult period.

The prosperous years had seen a very full development of transportation facilities. Naturally, nothing of importance was done on railways and highways during the bad years except a little unfinished business in 1931. In January of that year, Mayor Aseltine received a wire from the Canadian Pacific Railway Company informing him that it was the railway's decision to build a station in the heart of the town. The twenty year ambition was finally becoming a reality; by August the steel from North Rosetown was being laid, and in November the station was completed. The first passenger train pulled into the new station on First Avenue on November 23 and was met by the Mayor and a number of members of the Board of Trade. In addition, the Company began the long awaited and long promised construction of the branch line from Rosetown to Gunworth. Mail service on this latter line, however, was not immediately instituted and it was not until June 1933, through the efforts of the Board of Trade that this service was given. This accomplishment of the local organization was not of tremendous importance but did show a proper interest in projects pertaining to the large area which Rosetown served. It also

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 8 January, 1931.
2. Ibid., 6 August, 1931.
3. Ibid., 26 November, 1931.
4. Ibid., 9 April, 1931.
5. Ibid., 15 June, 1933.
rounded out the railway connections to and from Rosetown.

In highway construction, some satisfaction was felt in 1931 when further graveling was done on No. 4 connecting Rosetown to Biggar in May, and when in September, construction of Highway No. 15 to Outlook was started. With small additions made from time to time in the next eight years, Rosetown could boast in 1939 of being on a very adequate network of highways: No. 4 all-weather north and south; No. 7 Saskatoon to Calgary; No. 15 east to Outlook and No. 31 northwest to Kerrobert.

It seems true to say that both the provincial government in respect to highways and the railway companies had provided Rosetown with transportation facilities second to none in the Goose Lake area.

In the administration of routine civic services, the Town Council, in spite of some financial difficulties, was able to continue the sound policy of the twenties. Such services as policing, fire department, street lighting, sidewalks, street maintenance and scavenging, all received steady maintenance with additions made at suitable intervals. This was, however, but commonsense for the town did not expand appreciably during the eight years and all ordinary essential services had been provided in the past years.

The problem of an adequate water supply was still unsolved and caused much grief both to the Town Council and the Hospital Board.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 7 May, 1931.
2. Ibid., 17 September, 1931.
3. See Board of Trade Pamphlet, Town of Rosetown, 1939.
4. See Town Financial Statement. In most of the municipal departments, the costs were fairly uniform.
Late in 1936, the latter had had a well dug at a cost of $2,271.82. Water was obtained but, by April 1938, an analysis showed that it had developed a high mineral content and was thus condemned for drinking purposes. In the town a peculiar situation had arisen. Water selling was now competitive, the business being divided between Mr. J.C. Maines and Mr. W. Cowie. In January 1938, a verbal agreement had been made by both with the Town Council on the rates that should be charged. A few days later, Mr. Maines made it clear that he wanted exclusive rights to sell water and that the proposed agreement on rates was entirely unsatisfactory. The Council were not to be intimidated in this fashion and told Mr. Maines that the town could manage without his supply. This was not an idle threat for the Canadian National Railway agent had advised that the railway would haul water into the town at $36.00 per 6,000 gallons, a price about the same as the existing town rates. Apparently Mr. Maines was convinced that the town could not be bluffed and before the end of January he informed the Council he would be willing to continue business at the agreed prices.

Little more was done to change the system of water supply until 1939. Conditions by this time were improving and in July of that year the Council approached the Local Government Board to see if a loan could

1. Hospital Minutes, 10 November, 1936.
2. Ibid., 12 April, 1938.
3. Town Minutes, 12 January, 1938.
4. Town Minutes, 17 January, 1938. Town rates were 350 gallons for $2.00. The C.N.R. rate on this basis would be 350 gallons for $2.10. The latter would be more costly because the Town would have to build some type of cistern for storage purposes.
5. Ibid., 17 January, 1938.
be obtained under the provisions of the Municipal Improvement Assistance Act, for a waterworks and sewage system. Although $125,000.00 was requested the Board refused to recommend more than $65,000.00, an amount only sufficient for running water. In October, the Deputy Minister pointed out that the proposed construction of a water works system might be carried out providing the plan met with the Department's approval. There was certainly no easy road to better sanitation for in November the Deputy Minister of Finance, Ottawa, advised the Council that he would require further detailed information regarding the use to which the $65,000.00 loan would be put. The information was provided and there the matter ended—by the end of the year the town was no closer its objective than it had been before. In fact, up until the end of 1948 the town was still without a water and sewage system.

In health service, Rosetown ranked high. This was apparent in 1932 when Councillor Paine informed the ratepayers that the town held second place in the province in health standing. During the period this standard was fairly well maintained, in 1936 the rating given by the Department of Health was 86, the third place in the province. In spite of the depression the hospital was operated efficiently although drastic reductions were made in the salaries of the staff in 1931 and

1. Town Minutes, 31 July, 1939.
2. Ibid., 28 August, 1939.
3. Ibid., 30 October, 1939.
4. Ibid., 20 November, 1939.
5. Personal knowledge of the author.
7. Ibid., 21 December, 1936.
1933. The hospital board could certainly argue the necessity for this because in January of the latter year it had written off $7,210.00 in bad debts together with $565.00 in current ones. Financial problems, however, were not really so great, and the rating of the institution increased. In 1939, a Dr. Montaine of the United States Federal Bureau of Health paid a visit to the town to inspect the Union Hospital as part of his study of the union system of hospitalization. He complimented the Board on the type of work being done. Later, the authorities received the welcome news that the Hospital Standardization Conference of the American College of Surgeons had placed the Rosetown Union Hospital on the approved list. Since this is the official body in North America authorized to survey hospitals, the standard of equipment, and their service to patients, the citizens could feel some justification for pride.

The educational standard too, was maintained at a high level. Several graduates of the High School became distinguished students at the University of Saskatchewan and the Normal School at Saskatoon. Moreover, in 1934 William Gordon won the Governor General's medal awarded to outstanding Grade XII students, and in 1936 this feat was repeated by Louis Assaly and Lorna Sansom. These successes were a credit to

1. Hospital Minutes, 10 January, 1933. The matron was paid $85.00 per month. At one time her salary had been $120.00.

2. Ibid., 10 January, 1933.


4. Ibid., 19 October, 1939.


6. The Rosetown Eagle, 18 May, 1933. Some of these were N.B. Hutcheon and L. Hutcheon, Kathleen and Laura Powell, G. Graham, W. Paine, L. Crossman.

7. Town Minutes, 5 November, 1934.

both teachers and students. The part played by the School Board was economical but less praiseworthy. In two years, between 1931 and 1933, four drastic reductions in teachers' salaries were made. By August, 1933 the principal, Miss Olive Ferguson, received a yearly salary of $1,000.00 and the lowest paid teacher received $570.00. The janitor was paid $1,020.00. In June 1933 the School Board informed all the teachers that it was not possible to decide how many would be retained; in addition to salary reduction teachers suffered the exasperating strain of insecurity of tenure. Rosetown could find money for other things, boast of houses painted and bask in the reflected glory of Governor General's medals but apparently could not make much of a sacrifice for things intellectual. This attitude had a definite effect upon the teaching profession for it was not only low salaries that forced teachers into other work but the fact that these low salaries were paid in districts where there was money for almost everything else.

There were, of course, a few within the town who recognized the needs of the younger generation. In November, 1933 with unemployment a major problem, and few opportunities for young people graduating from the High School, it was suggested by Rev. J.A. Munro of the Presbyterian Church that continuation classes should be inaugurated. It was hoped that this would give the youth of the community something more than the High School offered, while they awaited employment. The scheme was highly successful. 

2. Ibid., 15 August, 1933.
3. The Rosetown Eagle, 30 November, 1933.
4. Ibid., 5 April, 1934.
Classes were discontinued for the summer of 1934 but commenced once again in November. The school did not operate after the spring of 1935 but it had provided something of a stop gap. The plan succeeded because there were a few public spirited citizens who placed a value on non-material accomplishments and were prepared to give of their time for the betterment of the town.

Although these years exacted economies in expenditure, relief projects were essential and some of these were devoted to tree planting and other plans for improving the appearance of the town. In 1932 under the direction of Councillor Frank Lovett a tree planting campaign was undertaken, and by May the small park in the northern part of the town contained over 1,600 trees of different varieties. The next year, Mr. Lovett was able to report that 9,000 trees and seedlings had been planted in the park, the fair grounds and the cemetery. Nothing was done in 1934 but in 1935 over 11,000 cuttings and trees had been added to various parts of the town. Mr. Lovett had done a fine work and when he died early in 1937 the Town responded by naming the park after him. His work was carried on and by the end of 1939 there were trees on all principal streets and avenues, in Lovett's Park and in an additional playground and park. The approaching visitor during the days of dust and drought saw the town as a green and fertile oasis. He would not have guessed that the inhabitants had to buy their water by the pail.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 1 November, 1934.
2. Ibid., 19 May, 1932.
3. Town Minutes, 22 May, 1933.
4. Ibid., 12 November, 1935.
The main problem of the Town Fathers, however, was not the maintenance of essential services, the supply of water or town beautification but rather the extraordinary matter of unemployment and relief. The reputation for prosperity that Rosetown had won and openly vaunted in the previous decade was by 1931, a cause for some embarrassment for, by April, large numbers were coming from distant outside points on the understanding that work was available in the district. So great was this influx that the Town Council became alarmed and had notices circulated at Unemployment Camps and centres warning that no workmen were needed as there were sufficient home unemployed to meet all requirements.

The administration of relief fell heavily upon the provincial government for neither rural nor urban municipalities could shoulder this cost without aid. It is true that some of the money spent by the province came from the Dominion Government but this was technically a loan since the B.N.A. Act indirectly stipulates relief to be a provincial matter. In addition to grants made for direct relief, special loans were made to municipalities by the province for approved public work projects which were intended to absorb unemployed.

The prospect of a difficult winter for the unemployed was recognized and in September a delegation consisting of the Mayor and two councillors went to Regina to find what aid could be obtained for town relief projects. They expressed the view that from 80 to 100 families as well as from 40 to 60 single men needed work. The government informed them that with this number Rosetown would be entitled to about $12,000.00 and that, of the proposed projects, the water works project was considered sound. Of this amount $7,000.00 was granted and, since this was

1. See The British North America Act, 1867, 30 Victoria, Chapter 3, Section 92, subsections 2 and 7.
2. The Rosetown Eagle, 24 September, 1931.
insufficient, permission was obtained to use the money on less ambitious projects such as street improvements, fire cisterns and drains.

In the meanwhile, a large measure of direct relief was subscribed by the various social organizations banded together within the town. This was apparently of some assistance to the Town Council because with this aid the total expenditure of the town for relief from current revenue was less that $3,000.00. Additional reasons for this low figure can be attributed to the employment demands of the C.P.R. for construction of the Gunworth line and the government construction of Highway No.15.

By late summer of 1932 the situation had not improved and the town was besieged by transients looking for work. They had no money, there was no work, and it was estimated that in a period of about a month 3,500 men were fed by the town. On one day in August alone, 290 were given rations. The winter prospects were not bright and in preparation the Town Council purchased 500 bushels of wheat from the Rosetown Milling Company. Further, the town clerk arranged a meeting of the different churches and social organizations to operate their relief aid as in the previous winter. Twenty-one different agencies co-operated in this fine work. For extra assistance the Town Council appealed to the Provincial Government. This was over and above the amount of $4,000.00 already granted to the town. The following reply from the government Relief

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 3 December, 1931.
2. Ibid., 29 October, 1931.
3. Town Financial Statement.
5. Town Minutes, 3 October, 1932.
6. Ibid., 10 November, 1932.
7. Ibid., 14 November, 1932. To the $4000.00 grant the town added $2700.00 from current revenue to cover relief costs.
Committee was received:

The application from the town of Rosetown for participation in the Federal-Provincial scheme for unemployment relief for the winter of 1932-1933 has been considered by the Relief Committee of the Cabinet.

I am directed by the committee to inform you that your application reveals that the town is in a position to handle the situation insofar as relief is concerned.

Because of the tremendous drain on provincial resources for relief the province can grant assistance only to those places where help is absolutely necessary to prevent actual want....

The letter, in effect, put the Rosetown situation in a true light in respect to other less favoured parts of the province.

Yet the Council was naturally perturbed about relief costs and, in April of 1933, granted land for garden plots to those unemployed who would be willing to increase their food supply by their own efforts.

Apparantly in order to awaken some zeal in the gardening project, the following warning was issued:

... All citizens of the Town of Rosetown are hereby notified that owing to the difficulty of financing Relief measures, no relief of any kind will be furnished by the Town Council during the coming winter. All citizens are urged to lay aside money and supplies during the summer and fall months for the purpose of creating a reserve to supply the winter with necessities....

The problem of relief and unemployment was rendered more acute by the large numbers of people moving in from the country and small villages to Rosetown where there seemed greater opportunity to obtain assistance. This movement caused the Council some concern and advice

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 1 December, 1932.
2. Ibid., 23 April, 1933. These lots were located across the highway in the area between the convent and the cemetery.
3. Ibid., 22 May, 1933.
was sought from the Department of Public Affairs as follows:

The Town of Rosetown has had considerable difficulty with people moving small shacks and other buildings such as granaries into the town. They then make these into dwelling places of all kinds and descriptions and of all conceivable designs. Sometimes these buildings are placed right along side of a fine residence.

In most cases, the owners are indigents, and their chief object in moving to town is to get on relief and in many cases also to get free hospital treatment...1

The concluding part of the letter revealed that the mayor wished to know if the town could pass a bylaw prohibiting the erection of any dwelling houses of less value than $500.00. The Deputy Minister ruled against the suggestion. There was smugness in the letter for which the town could scarcely be forgiven except for the fact that many coming to the town undoubtedly did so with the idea that they could get assistance more comfortably than in their own rural area.

Rosetown was not indifferent to human suffering. The Rosetown Eagle made this fact clear:

Almost daily one or more families and belongings are seen on No. 4 Highway on their way to or from the Meadow Lake district or some other district in the north country. The sight of these travellers is very pitiful. They are in most destitute condition with animals thin and worn, a few old implements and household belongings and themselves ragged and often gaunt from under nourishment and hardship. In many cases sympathetic hearts have been touched and by these a great deal of help has been given to these unfortunate poor folk who generally have a family with small children.3

But when the indigents needed, not a simple handout but a permanent

1. Rosetown File, No. 1657.
2. Ibid...
3. The Rosetown Eagle, 3 August, 1933.
home, the attitude was less sympathetic:

There will be more than plenty of farm labour for the light harvest that is approaching. Daily, homes are visited by the unfortunate seeking a handout for meals. Some and probably most of them are really deserving, but there is no doubt that there are those among them who would not accept or try to hold a job if one were offered.1

In November, 1933 the Relief Committee was reorganized. During the winter unemployment and relief were the chief items on the agenda of the Town Council. One scheme that bore some promise was the Back-to-the-Land movement sponsored by the Provincial Government. Under this plan, resident unemployed could make application to obtain re-establishment on land in the northern part of the province. The cost of this was to be shared by the province and the municipality concerned. By April 1934, more than twelve applications had been received by the town. The Council was not too enthusiastic especially when it found it would be obliged to sign agreements creating a total liability of $3,000.00. The following resolution shelved the project:

Be it resolved that in the opinion of the Council nothing can be done at the present time to assist any applicant without treating all in the same manner - no steps be taken until the town is in a better financial position to give assistance.3

Direct relief still had to be administered, although by July, the Provincial Government informed the town that the present agreement on the grant for this purpose would be terminated. In November, the Town Clerk interviewed the Provincial Relief Commissioner on this matter.

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 21 September, 1933.
2. Town Minutes, 20 November, 1933.
3. Ibid., 2 April, 1934.
4. Ibid., 2 July, 1934.
5. Ibid., 5 November, 1934.
There is no record of any agreement being reached but since no further mention was made either in the Town Council Minutes or *The Rosetown Eagle* it seems safe to conclude that further aid was received. Relief costs for the town had risen although the sum did not exceed $4,800.00. Once again in November, the Citizens Relief Committee was organized.

The winter of 1934-1935 showed little alleviation of the employment problem. The Town Council did what it could to plan for public works and ruled that people on relief should receive thirty cents per hour for this type of work. By summer the problem had lessened somewhat since the government had let the contract for the Outlook bridge and this provided work for some of the men in the town. However, four years of depression had made it difficult for many of the residents to pay their taxes and the Council felt that its finances were not adequate to handle further direct relief. As a result in the autumn a strongly worded resolution was sent to the Government asking for aid to take care of the many demands for food and fuel. Regardless of the woeful story recited in the Council Chambers there was a lessening of the depression, the net relief granted by the town dropped to a little over $3,000.00 and there is no evidence that the Citizens' Relief Committee was formed. The worst appeared to be over, in January 1936, the Town Clerk reported to the

1. Town Financial Statement.

2. Town Minutes, 1 April, 1935.

3. *The Rosetown Eagle*, 7 February, 1935. Work on this was not started until the summer.


5. Ibid., 4 November, 1935.

Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs:

At the meeting considerable business was done and motions were passed raising the salaries of practically all town employees. These salaries have been reduced some three years ago for the reason that the money was not to be had, while now things are a great deal improved.\(^1\)

There was still some unemployment in 1936 but the situation was vastly improved. It was not until the poor crop of 1937 that a real pinch was felt. The town applied for extra aid and the provincial government agreed to pay thirty percent of the fuel and food costs. Late in October the Dominion Government informed the Council that Rosetown was in the Federal Relief Area and that food would be shipped to the district in the near future. Within two weeks several carloads of food, chiefly fish, cheese, apples and vegetables arrived for approximately 3,055 people in the town and district.

Aid was continued by the Provincial Government for the first three months of the year 1938; for the remainder of the summer the Council agreed that heads of families could only receive half relief if physically fit. By September a change of mind had occurred on the back-to-the-land movement and the Town was now prepared to do something towards the scheme:

\[\ldots\text{the Council of the Town of Rosetown is prepared to pay all transportation costs of successful applicants from the town to their new location under the Northern Settlers Re-establishment scheme. The town also agrees to supply two years relief to the above applicants providing they are not self supporting}\]

\(^1\) Letter: Town Clerk to Deputy Minister, 22 January, 1936. Rosetown File No. 1657.

\(^2\) The Rosetown Eagle, 23 September, 1937.

\(^3\) Town Minutes, November, 1937.

\(^4\) The Rosetown Eagle, 11 November, 1937.

\(^5\) Ibid., 24 March, 1938.
at an earlier date, and also providing the Provincial Government contributes 80% of such relief. The Town also agrees to pay hospitalization costs for a two year period for successful applicants.¹

There is no evidence of the number that took advantage of the scheme and it is presumed that there were very few, if any. Idleness, however, was not permitted; in October, the Council ruled that no coal orders would be issued for the time being, and that all able-bodied unemployed would be required to work on relief projects with remuneration at forty cents per hour.

It was clear, that with the improved crop yields of 1938 the relief and unemployment problem, while still existing, was in no way acute. Indeed, the point had been reached where Rosetown could share its bounty with others. In response to an appeal by the Provincial Government for aid for distressed areas the Rosetown district was able to contribute a carload of vegetables. The acknowledgement of the donation follows:

We, the voluntary relief committee wish to express the communities' appreciation of the car of potatoes which was sent to Griffin by the people of Rosetown. Most families in this municipality had very few potatoes and the grasshoppers cleared up much of the gardens so the people are very thankful for receiving these vegetables.²

By 1939 Rosetown was well able to attend to its own relief problem, but the transient needy, here as elsewhere, created difficulty and resentment.

The siege of unemployed transients has again hit Rosetown and it is common to be hit up, "Please could you help me get something to eat".

¹. Town Minutes, 3 October, 1938.
². Ibid.
³. Ibid., 7 November, 1938.
One does not like to turn down a worthy, needy case but to our mind we are bothered with a lot of transient bums who float in at times when there is no work to be had and should stay where they are properly entitled to receive relief, until harvest or spring work is due to start. We have plenty of our own townsfolk on relief and these chaps impose themselves as an additional burden and this should be discouraged.¹

The town had little need to worry; if the good crop of 1939 was not sufficient to remedy the situation the outbreak of war in September was. As in a previous decade good crops and a war were a sure cure for an economic depression.

In spite of the depression with all its concomitant evils of relief, tax defaults and unemployed transients the financial position of Rosetown by the end of the period was excellent. Credit must be given for careful administration but as the Financial Statement of the town indicates, the district had not suffered in any way as much as many other districts. A glance at the Town Financial Statement shows that the total revenue remained fairly constant varying from $29,000.00 to $34,500.00 whilst total expenditures varied from $26,800.00 to $34,700.00. These figures correspond very closely to the last years of the previous decade and since the population had remained fairly constant—the 1936 census gave the number as 1,520, a reduction of 33 from 1931—the monies collected and expended did not reflect abnormal times. Nor, in spite of cries for Provincial assistance, did the net relief for any one year exceed $4,800.00. In 1938 it was only $2,000.00. Special relief works

¹ The Rosetown Eagle, 27 July, 1939.
² Ibid., 7 December, 1939.
³ Census of Sask., 1936, p.414.
were not, of course, included in this, and on occasion these called for extra monies as in 1937 and 1938 when over $10,000.00 was spent on street repairs. It is probable that the Provincial Government gave some aid, but exact information on this matter is not available. The town was fortunate. It had provided all the essential services, it had taken care of its unemployed and it was, after eight years of depression relatively free from debt.

Community activities during these years followed the vigorous pattern of the previous decade. The depression did, in some cases, alter the direction but not the enthusiasm. This could be expected for in more difficult times the people of a community tend to draw somewhat closer together.

Achievements in sport were not as sensational as in the twenties but there were some successes. Due to the changed economic conditions there was less emphasis on professionalism and possibly a greater emphasis on community participation. As The Rosetown Eagle reported:

> Although business is perhaps on the quiet side, the same cannot be said of our sporting and social activities. Between curling, skating, hockey, badminton, bridge, checkers, dancing and other sources of amusement, the majority of residents find it difficult to save the odd night for the radio.¹

Between 1931 and 1935 the town produced only two champions—W. Esson won the Goose Lake Golf Championship and J.C. Beaton won provincial honors in checkers. In major sports the junior baseball team reached the provincial semi-finals in 1932 and at various times softball and

¹. The Rosetown Eagle, 18 February, 1932.
². Ibid., 7 July, 1932.
³. Ibid., 17 March, 1932.
hockey teams tried with less success to make a name for themselves. Although the town was not obtaining the publicity of an earlier day, sport was varied, vigorous and well-supported.

Between 1935 and 1939 the emphasis was on hockey and golf. Hockey had a particularly good season in 1936-37, when the Rosetown Redwings Club was organized. Although the team was supposedly on an amateur basis, most of the players were from outside points, an indication perhaps that it was still more important to the town to have a winning team than to train home talent. By the third week in January, the team was at the top of the Goose Lake League and by February it had won the League Championship. The club then entered the provincial intermediate play-offs and after four successive victories annexed the championship title. The inter-provincial championship was lost to Lethbridge. The town had however, achieved a goal that it had not contended for since the early twenties. At the end of the season, the team was disbanded, many of the players sought greener pastures, and hockey fell into relative oblivion.

Golf, to Rosetown, meant Margaret Esson. In 1936, when but fifteen years old, she had won the Ladies' Provincial Championship. Due to some technicality, she was unable to enter the Dominion competition but was promised an opportunity in 1937. In this year, she lost in the provincial finals but was still entitled to play for the Dominion title. In

2. Ibid., 21 January, 1937.
3. Ibid., 9 February, 1937.
4. Ibid., 4 March, 1937.
5. Ibid., 20 August, 1936.
6. Ibid., 17 September, 1936.
7. Ibid., 19 August, 1937.
the Dominion competition she was defeated in the quarter finals. None-
theless, it was a fine achievement and The Rosetown Eagle quoted a com-
ment from the Saskatoon Star Phoenix:

Miss Esson, Rosetown miss, who was runner-up
for the Saskatchewan C.L.G.U. title, and who
made an excellent showing in the Canadian
Ladies' Closed Tournament at Winnipeg, deserves
the nod as the province's outstanding lady
athlete. Although Mrs. R.S. Ridout of Regina
won the Provincial title, she failed to make
as good a showing in the Dominion competition
as the Rosetown girl and consequently is given
second place.

Nor was this all, for in 1938 Miss Esson won the Provincial title and
was again the Saskatchewan representative in the Dominion Tournament at
2
Ottawa. Once again, she reached the quarter finals but was eliminated
3
by Mrs. J.B. Walker of Great Britain.

Closely associated with sport activities and bringing considerable
publicity to the town were Dr. Myers' race horses, winners at various
Western meets, and the large number of show dogs raised by several citi-
zens. Of the latter The Rosetown Eagle in 1935 spoke highly:

It will come as a surprise to many to know
that in the canine world Rosetown for the
past nine years has sent more high class dogs
to the various shows in Alberta, Saskatchewan
and Manitoba that any other city or town in
the province. In the same number of years no
town in the Dominion has come near to its
record... 4

Both these hobbies were an indication that the depression did not
seriously affect some business men in the town for prize winning horses

2. Ibid., 11 August, 1938.
3. Ibid., 6 October, 1938.
4. Ibid., 12 December, 1935.
and dogs cannot be raised and trained without considerable expense.

Most of the social organizations survived during the eight years, and did valuable work, not only in giving assistance to those needing relief, but also in aiding the hospital in various ways. These were the backbone of the Citizens' Relief Committee. One, the S.D.B. Club did particularly fine work. During the years when relief was most needed, the members conducted a house to house campaign for clothing, and donations of money were made annually to the town Council for relief purposes. In addition, regular grants were made to the library and assistance given for purposes of education. The activities of this club were not showy but no worthy community cause failed to get its support.

Another praiseworthy organization was the Rosetown Boy Scouts. In 1931 and again in 1932 under the direction of J.K. Horne the Rosetown troop was the winner of the Lynch flag and the title of the best boy scout troop in the province. Creditable as this achievement was, a yet more important contribution was the toy shop organized in 1930.

Between 1931 and 1938 the annual toy shop was a regular feature of scouting activities. Each autumn the boys collected broken or discarded toys and set to work to repair, paint and otherwise renovate them. In addition, simple toys were made. Under the technical direction of W.W. Oralle the scouts established a record in this type of work; in 1932 an estimated 502 children of the district were provided with toys; in 1933

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 4 June, 1931.
2. Ibid., 9 June, 1932.
3. See Chapter Three, p.75.
the figure was over 1,100; in 1934 nearly 800; in 1935, 796; in 1936, 825 and in 1937, 1,700. These toys were not just for the Rosetown district but for wherever the need was particularly great. Needless to say the work received wide publicity. In 1933, Dominion Scout Headquarters announced that the work undertaken by the Rosetown shop had no equal in the Dominion, and in 1934 it gained the distinction of having built more toys than any similar shops in Canada irrespective of size. This was the organization then which in its infancy had been largely ignored by the citizens of the town, yet, which under the guidance of able and sympathetic leaders had brought high credit to the town, to the boys and above all to the scouting movement.

As has been noted, most of the fraternal and social organizations within the town survived and in some measure were strengthened by the depression. One, however, suffered an early demise. Late in 1931, the Agricultural Society saw that it could not continue operations and transferred its property to the Town of Rosetown in accordance with the agreements made in the twenties. In addition all debts and insurance on buildings were taken over by the Council. The failure of this organization was not only due to the depression but also to the decreasing

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 14 December, 1933.
2. Ibid., 22 December, 1934.
3. Ibid., 2 January, 1936.
4. Ibid., 31 December, 1936.
5. Ibid., 6 January, 1938.
6. Ibid., 14 December, 1933.
8. See Chapter Three, p.67.
9. Town Minutes, 7 September, 1932.
interest being shown by the farmers in this area in animal husbandry. An Agricultural Society thrives in an area where quality and numbers of animals are raised. In the Rosetown district, power farming had displaced the horse and the resulting extensiveness of farm operation had caused wheat growing to supplant interest in other domestic animals such as cattle, swine and poultry. The heavy soil of the Rosetown district allowed the farmer for a time, at least, to concentrate on wheat exclusively without suffering the usual penalties of drifting.

The 1930's were years of political novelties but Rosetown citizens distrusted untrodden paths. The Ku Klux Klan, however, was still active in 1931 and on June 3 a huge fiery cross was burnt a few miles east of the town. This unusual demonstration naturally attracted a considerable number of people to the scene. The members of the Klan claimed that the cross was burnt at the request of the "Imperial Office" in commemoration of the King's birthday. The majority of the district, however, looked with suspicion upon the whole activities of the organization and lacking support it disappeared. Whether the Klan had political or religious motives still remains a matter for speculation.

The depression did coincide with a change in the provincial and federal politics. In the provincial elections of 1934, traditionally

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1. For example it is estimated that in St. Andrews Municipality in which Rosetown is located only 2% of all farmers used horses. See Canada, Department of Agriculture, The Pattern of Mechanization and Wartime Changes on Farms in the Elrose-Rosetown-Conquest area of Central and West Central Saskatchewan, 1944, by R.A. Stutt, Ottawa, 1948, p.2.

2. Ibid., p.21. The main type of farming in the heavy textured clay loam, clay and heavy clay soils such as found around Rosetown, Glamis and Elrose is the single enterprise wheat farm.

3. The Rosetown Eagle, 11 June, 1931. Presumably the Imperial Office was the headquarters of the Klan.
Conservative Rosetown gave a large majority to the Liberal candidate Neil McVicar, a local man who won the constituency. In the next year in the Federal election, W. Richardson, Liberal, received a majority support from the town of Rosetown, although M.J. Caldwell, C.C.P. won the seat. It was apparent that this was a protest vote on the part of the larger area which the Rosetown citizens did not feel called upon to share. By 1939 with the depression on the wane, Neil McVicar repeated his success of 1934. It is difficult to draw any conclusions from the election results except perhaps that Rosetown and the immediate district suffering less from the depression were not so prone to seek political palliatives.

As in the previous decade the cultural activities of the town centred on music. The depression had apparently affected this phase of community life for at the regional musical festival held at Biggar in 1931, the orchestras, the quartette and the choirs were missing from the Rosetown competitors. Yet with nine entries, five medals were won. In the next year, 1932, Rosetown won considerable honour through individual artists and special mention was given to the seven year old violinist Daphne Marshall. Referred to by the President of the Festival Association as the baby of the 1932 meeting she was presented with a necklace on behalf of the Saskatchewan Musical Association. In 1933 the musical reputation

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 28 June, 1934.
2. Ibid., 17 October, 1935.
3. Ibid., 16 June, 1939.
4. Ibid., 7 May, 1931.
5. Ibid., 12 May, 1932.
of Rosetown was upheld by Edmund Assaly, piano and Daphne Marshall, violin.

The musical festival for 1934 was held in Rosetown and the shield awarded to St. Andrew's Anglican Church choir. This performance was repeated at the Provincial festival held in Saskatoon. The Town Council, probably with an eye to business as well as from a love of the aesthetic extended an invitation to the Musical Association to have the regional festival for 1935 again at Rosetown, stating with truth that the location and accessibility of the town was a great convenience to all interested in the event. The invitation was accepted.

The year 1935 marks the peak for music in this period. In February, a Rosetown Musical Club was formed to provide an opportunity for those who loved music to study and improve their knowledge and appreciation. The next month the Rosetown Orchestra took a new lease on life and gave a concert in the Rosetown United Church. This was followed in May by a concert of sacred music given by St. Andrew's choir with assisting artists, Mrs. N. McVicar and Mr. Edmund Assaly. At the musical festival the Rosetown Orchestra was accorded high marks and invited by the executive of the Saskatchewan Musical Association to give a short program at the beginning of the provincial meeting to be held in Saskatoon. At

1. The Rosetown Eagle, 4 May, 1933.
2. Ibid., 3 May, 1934.
3. Town Minutes, 7 April, 1934.
5. Ibid., 28 March, 1935.
6. Ibid., 2 May, 1935.
7. Ibid., 16 May, 1935.
this festival the orchestra, band, choir and soloists from Rosetown received commendation from the adjudicator.

The successes of 1935 were carried into 1936 but this was the last year of more than ordinary achievements. This does not mean that interest had dwindled but that the continued straitened times made it impossible to carry on projects which depended upon a greater stability of population and finances. Thus the orchestras and the band found it impossible to maintain themselves under these conditions. Yet Rosetown had done well and several of her artists became known in the larger sphere of Provincial and Dominion music.

This is the story of a fortunate little town with energy and ambition to make the most of its resources. Thirty years had transformed a bog hole into a flourishing town, the chief centre of an area which contained 74 grain elevators, shipping annually an average of 7 million bushels of wheat. Ten oil companies with a total storage of nearly 1½ million gallons of fuel, were established in the town and it was estimated that this was the largest above ground oil storage of any town in the Dominion. Hardware, grocery, fruit and other wholesale houses had resident representatives. Besides this, Rosetown could boast two large hotels, six cafes, six garages and service stations, automobile distributors, a theatre, two banks, a sixty-bed hospital, a newspaper printing establishment, six farm machinery warehouses and a number of shops both chain and independent. The town had too, a public and high school employing eleven teachers, a separate school and convent, and four churches. Even the

1. Rosetown Board of Trade Pamphlet, 1939.
prosperous, complacent, and materialistic citizens could certainly boast of their success.

Yet the success of the town was but a pattern of what was happening elsewhere in the province. The centre with the best land and the extra railway and highway facilities grew at the expense of its neighbors. This was especially apparent in the thirties when small villages like Zealandia, Sovereign, Fiske, Anglia, McGee and others tended to lose ground. Merchants and machine agents in the smaller places could not compete with the larger and more aggressive businesses of Rosetown. Nor must one overlook the importance of the automobile which made transportation so much easier than in the old days, the existence of the theatre which drew people from far and near, and the larger variety of goods which could be purchased in Rosetown.

The contribution of the town except for the material development of the area was not great. Except in the field of music, cultural activities were quite limited. This is probably typical of prairie settlements and for that matter is to be expected. For its first thirty years a community is engrossed with its own growth—cultural achievements come with maturity.

The future must remain a matter for speculation and no attempt will be made to suggest what is in store. Opinions vary within the town, some feel that the installation of a modern waterworks and sewage system would so enhance the community that it would attract wholesalers in large numbers. Others point out that present modern transportation facilities both by road and rail which make access to the cities so easy, definitely preclude any possibility of greater expansion. The evidence at the moment suggests that the latter judgement is sound and that Rosetown will remain a small prairie town.
Although an extensive search was made for primary sources many of the records that one would expect to find have been lost or destroyed. The Village and Town Minutes, the Hospital Minutes were complete but School Board Minutes earlier than 1924 could not be found. The Church records were not complete, the Board of Trade Minutes did not exist any earlier than 1941 and the records of organizations such as the I.O.D.E. were not available. The author believes that the list which follows is a true account of materials of this nature available.

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<th>Name</th>
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Smith, J.H. | June, 1948
Staples, W. | July, 1948
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Taylor, C. | August, 1948
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