

selected by the survival of the fittest and they grazed by the migratory system.

As the grazing diminished by overcrowding, the herds were pushed further out to the prairie area where the grass was shorter and rainfall less, with water holes farther apart.

When some of the ranchers who had made their headquarters in the prairie country, especially north of the Bow River became aware of the need to protect some of the area close to their wintering grounds, they built drift fences out from the river to safeguard their immediate holdings. This protected grass was used as wintering grounds, and in the spring as calving areas. This was really the first evidence in the Calgary area of a kind of range management.

These fences were mostly built using natural breaks and coulees as borders and no attention was paid to the legal survey. Consequently, when the farm people came in and acquired titles, the drift lines had to be done away with and fences built in the legal positions.

With the building of fences, the grazing became limited to smaller areas and livestock were allowed to graze only the forage that was within the area. This soon depleted the range and, in most cases, it took the next 50 years to bring the grass back into thriving and profitable production.

A Short History of Canada and Alberta

Ed McKinnon

On July 1, 1867, the united provinces of Upper and Lower Canada (which become the separate provinces of Ontario and Quebec) joined with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to form the Dominion of Canada. Up until this time, the area had been under the control of the British government, which had appointed a Governor General, to see as best he could that some kind of authority was exercised. The various colonies, such as Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland had their own kind of government, a legislative assembly elected by the people, and an executive council appointed by the governor. They were more or less on their own, but under the protection, of the powers in London. The other areas of the territory were loosely held by the Hudson Bay Co., which had been given authority to govern all of the land that was drained by rivers flowing into Hudson Bay. The business of the company was the fur trade with the Indian people, and it was presided over by a Governor who was elected by the shareholders of the company, and responsible to them. Another name for this area was Rupert's Land.

The rest of the area, with exception of Vancouver Island and the lower mainland around the mouth of the Fraser River, which had been established as a British Colony, was designated as the North West Territory, and was assumed by the British to belong to them.

The North West Territory was turned over to the Federation in 1870. The same year, the Government of Canada purchased the rights of the Hudson Bay Co. from the shareholders, and it became part of Canada.

With the promise of a connecting trans-continental railway, the colony of British Columbia joined up in 1871.

Prince Edward Island finally came to terms in 1873, and Newfoundland held out as a British colony until 1949.

The provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta were formed

in 1905 from the North West Territories and Manitoba had joined 30 years earlier. The Yukon and North West Territories remained as territories under control of the Federal Government.

Canada now has ten provinces and Yukon and North West Territories covering 3,560,238 square miles, an area somewhat larger than continental United States.

The federation is governed by a parliament, elected by the people, a senate appointed by the government, members of which have to resign at age 75, and a Governor General selected by the government.

The parliament is elected for a period not to exceed five years. It is based on the British parliamentary system, where the party with the majority is the governing body, and the minorities sit as the opposition. The Governor General is a representative of the British Crown and, his functions are mainly ceremonial. The Federal Government is in charge of things pertaining to the interest of the whole country, such as transportation, navigation, international trade, collection of duties, immigration, etc. The capital of Canada is Ottawa, situated in the eastern part of Ontario.

The provinces have a similar system. There is a legislature, elected by the provincial residents, and a Lieutenant Governor appointed by the Federal Government. The provincial governments are concerned with administration of municipal affairs, education, public works, agriculture, and the con-



Summer range camp in Bow River Forest Reserve about 60 miles northwest of Calgary. Photo taken in 1968.

trol of public lands and natural resources. The provincial legislatures are required to conduct a session yearly—usually running from February to May—and most years there is also a shorter fall session.

The Far North

The people of the Yukon quite recently have elected their first Legislature but they still have a Commissioner appointed by the Federal Government who has final control. After a break-in period they are supposed to have status similar to that of the other provinces, with local control and an appointed Lieutenant Governor.

The North West Territories have members elected by the residents to the Federal House of Commons, who can bring their problems to the attention of the Government of Canada, but they have no local autonomy. There is still a Commissioner appointed by Ottawa who is in control.

This system leaves the Government of Canada in full control of all of the land and resources of the area between the Alaska border and the Hudson Bay, north of the 60th parallel, to the Arctic Ocean and 200 miles out beyond the shore line.

Alberta Range Management

More than half of the land in Alberta is still in the hands of the Provincial Government. The arable land is leased out to Alberta citizens either on an annual basis or a lease not exceeding 7 years.

The rates vary according to the productivity of the soil. The operation is pretty much up to the operator, but he generally has to either pay for the cost of summerfallow or lease the same amount as there was when he started. The rent for arable land is either cash beforehand, or on a crop-share basis.

The non-arable land that is not forest but feasible for grazing can be leased by Alberta citizens for 1 to 7 years on annual leases or longer, but not exceeding 7 years. The rate, based on animal units per month, ranges from \$3.60 in the southern part and is scaled down to \$1.78 in the farthest north.

Generally, the management is assessed for each area. Restrictions as to turn-out time, and recovery time, have to be observed. Cattle are required to cover all the lease and not just graze one corner. Leaving approximately 40% of annual growth is a requirement. The rates in forest reserves are a little less, but range the same as open land with respect to latitude.

The land owners in the area adjacent to the lease land generally have first chance at the lease, but not always. The leases can be sold or assigned but there is no guarantee that they will be renewed for the new owner.

The grazing land in Alberta has been managed mostly for

the convenience of the owners, rather than for the good of the range. Water has been another important factor. However, in the past 25 years more and more people are making use of range management principles, and their results are being observed and followed. The saving of convenient areas for late-fall and winter pasture has long been the program in the drier areas where there is generally less snow. While in 4 years out of 10 only small amounts of supplemental feed are required, it is necessary to be prepared to full-feed from 3 to 5 months because of not knowing when the two tough years may come.

Most ranchers have available crop or hay land that has clean-up potential and relieves the pressure on grazing land. Grain crop and vegetable crop refuse is used to help supply the 3 to 6 months that feed is required.

Improvement of pastures by replacing the natural forage with improved strains of grasses and legumes has been extensive, both by private land owners and on government lease land. Clearing of trees and shrubs in foothills and northern areas has increased carrying capacity and, with introduction of faster maturing beef animals, Alberta is producing more beef than all the rest of Canada. The introduction of new strains of grains, grasses and especially of cultivars that lean more to the production of forage than of seed is showing good results. The feasibility of automatic sprinklers and the developments of dug-outs also has enhanced the beef industry.

Editor's Note: *The two stores above about Calgary and vicinity came at an appropriate time since the Society will be meeting there next February.*

VREW Meeting

The Vegetative Rehabilitation Equipment Workshop will hold its 36th annual meeting at the Regency Hotel, 3900 Elati Street, Denver, Colorado, on February 4 and 5, 1982. Normally, this workshop is held in conjunction with the Society for Range Management's annual meeting, but because of restricted travel for Federal agency personnel in the United States, a more central meeting place was selected. This will allow members of VREW who are planning to go on to the SRM meeting in Calgary to take advantage of group flights which will be available from Denver. Room rates are \$40/single and \$55/double, plus tax. Participants are urged to make early room reservations. Additional information can be obtained from *Ted Russell, Range Management, USDA, Forest Service, P.O. Box 2417, Washington, D.C. 20013 or phone (703) 235-8139.*



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