SOCIAL ORGANIZATION
ON THE
PIONEER FRINGE

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With special reference

to the

PEACE RIVER AREA.

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of the requirements for the degree of

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-BY-

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PREFACE.

In 1929 the American Geographic Society undertook the planning and financing of a research programme which included a socio-economic study of the Canadian Prairie Provinces. A research body, the Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee, whose members are on the staffs of Canadian Universities, was formed for the express purpose of directing the Canadian part of the programme. A five-year project is under way and it includes a survey of social and economic conditions in selected areas of the Prairie Provinces.

The survey is a direct outcome of a growing body of opinion that foundations ought to be laid for a science of settlement. Plans are under way for similar research projects to be carried on in the fringes of land settlement in other parts of the world, such as the far western prairie regions of United States, Alaska, South America, South Africa, Australia, and Manchuria. The work is being carried out by a great many scientists, including geographers, geologists, soil experts, economists, historians, and sociologists. In this way the accumulated experiences of the past will be brought together and analysed so as to be available for the use of public and private bodies, who are concerned with the question of land settlement and with related problems such as transportation, development of natural resources, immigration policies, public administration and the establishment of various social institutions and services in pioneer communities.

The present study together with a similar one dealing with the means and modes of living of pioneer farm families, form a part of the basis for a larger monograph on the Peace River Area, which is to be published shortly. The Book is written by Dr. C. A. Dawson, head of the Department of Sociology, at McGill University who conducted a social and economic survey in the Peace River Area during the summer of 1930, and directed the statistical

analysis and the interpretation of the data.

The data consists in the main of schedules containing social and economic information obtained from 332 Peace River farm families. The personal interview method was used and several hundred standardized questions were put to heads of families by field workers who recorded the answers at the time of interview. Schedules for village and open country centres, schools, churches, hospitals and other social organizations were filled out in a similar way, by interviews with public officials and institutional leaders. Additional information has been obtained from various public and private sources including the Provincial Departments of Agriculture, Education, and Public Health at Edmonton, Alberta, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Ottawa, the Department of Interior, Ottawa, public officials in the Peace River Area, as well as from a number of old-timers and other private individuals.

The writer takes this opportunity to express her appreciation to the Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee, who made the data available for this study, and to acknowledge her indebtedness to Dr. Dawson who supervised it throughout the period of preparation. Special thanks are due also to Dr. C. E. Hughes, Professor of Sociology, at McGill University, for helpful suggestions during the earlier phases of the study and to Glenn H. Craig, graduate student in Sociology at McGill University for his friendly co-operation and criticism.

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CHAPTER 1.

NATURAL HISTORY OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION ON THE RURAL FRONTIER.

1. The Frontier Defined. The modern frontier is a place of new possibilities and of new ventures. It is the scene of bold experimentation, both by individuals and by groups. A spirit of buoyant optimism and hope for the future is common to most of its inhabitants. Successes are long remembered and news of them spread far and wide while failures are glossed over or quickly forgotten in the attempts to reach new goals. The glamor which is thus cast over the new region attracts a great variety of people, including the young, the venturesome and the ambitious, as well as the discontented, the oppressed and other maladjusted elements from older societies. Numerous racial, linguistic and religious types are likewise represented among the migrants, while from the point of view of occupational background the pioneers reflect many divisions of labor in both urban and rural societies.

The development of the frontier's natural resources proceeds largely by the trial and error method. Severe hardships, disappointments, and sometimes failures attend the efforts to win a livelihood from the new environment. Success is often attained only by foregoing all but the basic necessities of life. Social facilities under such circumstances are meager, if not entirely absent. The first social institutions to make their entry are almost entirely subsidized by agencies outside the frontier. But they, too, are subjected to the impact of the new environment. Old regulations fail to attain their objectives and old customs prove obsolete. New practices and new techniques must be developed or the institutions, like the misfits among individual pioneers, will be forced to retreat. In economic and the social organizational spheres alike, constant

changes occur, and reorganization must therefore continually take place. These processes are greatly speeded up where the products of the machine age have been brought to the aid of the pioneers. They give a greater measure of control over the physical environment, and help to overcome the barriers of isolation and thereby make a network of community relationships possible.

2. Types of Frontiers. The term "frontier" carries with it the connotation of an area which is sparsely settled and whose natural resources have been little developed, if touched at all. It forms a "margin" or a "fringe" of older settled communities to which it is directly related. Frontiers have been classified according to the nature of this relation, as was done, for example, by R. D. Mackenzie. He says:

> "There are many types of frontiers. They may be grouped, however, into three general classes, according to the nature of their economic relation to the centres of dominance. First, the trade frontier, which is characterized for the most part by the exchange of primary products for manufactured goods. This has been the relation of the far-flung parts of the British Empire to the Mother Country. It is the relation of the regions of agriculture everywhere to those of manufacturing. Second, the plantation frontier, a species of the first class, but sufficiently different to merit separate consideration. The plantation frontier is usually located in or near the tropical zone. It implies large scale finance and organization, and an abundance of cheap labor supplied by subject peoples. The third type of frontier may be designated the industrial frontier. It implies the introduction of machine industry under outside finance and management into the less industrialized parts of the world, as for instance, the recent invasion of European and American factories into China, India, Latin America and Canada." 1

The above classification evidently refers to specific world centres. It omits any reference to the "cultural" frontier in urban centres and to the "settlement" type of frontier. Its author admits that his classification is not all-inclusive but claims that it has wide application. Thus lumbering

1 R. D. Mackenzie, "The Concept of Dominance and World Organization," American Journal of Sociology, July 1927, p. 29.

and mining frontiers, for example, would be classified as "industrial frontiers", while the agricultural region with which this study deals comes under the heading "trade" frontier.

The above classification applies particularly to the modern age, but it is significant to note here that the term "frontier" in its broadest sense applies to all times and places. It is found whenever men have moved out from congested areas to hitherto unsettled territory. Moreover, it has no definite geographic location. It is in fact a condition, or a stage of development.

Comparison of the historical events of various frontiers, especially on this continent, reveals a typical trend, or what might be termed a natural cycle of development. Certain typical stages were observed almost a hundred years ago by an American writer whose comment runs as follows:

"Generally in all Western settlements, three classes, like the waves of the ocean, have rolled one after the other. First the pioneer, who lives a very simple life, loosely attached to the soil. He remains until he begins to feel himself crowded out, then he moves off to another area. The next class of emigrants purchase the lands, add field to field, clear out the roads, etc., and exhibit the picture and forms of plain, frugal civilized life. Another wave rolls on. The men of capital and enterprise come. The settler is ready to sell out, and push farther into the interior and become, himself, in turn, a man of capital and enterprise. The small village rises to a spacious town or city; substantial edifices of brick, extensive fields, orchards, gardens, colleges, and churches are seen. Thus wave after wave is rolling Westward, the real Eldorado is still farther on." 2

The above passage indicates a series of invasions and successions by different population types and a gradual thickening up of settlement. Each period, moreover, is characterized by a typical mode of exploitation which a historian, F. J. Turner, has aptly symbolized in his description of American migrations during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries.

2 Peck's New Guide to the West (Boston 1837).

Quoted on page 6 in an unpublished M. A. thesis on Frontier Religious Organization, by H. G. Tuttle, McGill University, 1931.

"Stand at Cumberland Gap and watch the procession of civilization file past - the buffalo, the Indian, the fur trader, the hunter, the cattle raiser, the pioneer, the farmer - and the frontier has passed by. Stand in the Rockies a century later and see the same procession with wider intervals between. The unequal rate of advance compels us to divide the frontier into the trader's frontier, the rancher's frontier, the miner's frontier, and the farmer's frontier." 3

Turner's theory that the frontier is a stage of development, which irrevocably passes with the advent of agriculture, is supported by the following official pronouncement issued in 1890 by the Superintendent of the Census Bureau, Washington, D. C.

"Up to and including 1880 the country had a frontier of settlement, but at present the unsettled areas have been so broken into by isolated settlements that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line. In the discussion of its extent, its westward movement, it can not, therefore, any longer have a place in the census reports." 4

Turner's entire agreement with the above statement is couched in the following terms:

"This brief official statement marks the closing of a great historic movement. Up to our own day American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward explain American development." 5

The above point of view has been generally accepted in America for a number of years, and historians, novelists and poets have lamented the "passing of the frontier" and of "the frontier spirit" in diverse terms. But during the last decade the problem of the frontier has taken a decidedly different turn. Isaiah Bowman, the American geographer, takes issue with

3 F. J. Turner - The Frontier in American History; p. 12.

4 Bulletin issued by the Department of Census Bureau, Washington, D. C. quoted by H. G. Tuttle, op. cit. p. 1.

5 F. J. Turner - The Significance of the Frontier in American History; a paper read before the American Historical Association at a meeting in Chicago, July 12, 1893.

the earlier view in the following decisive terms:

"Nothing could be further from the truth than the oft-repeated statement that there is no longer an American frontier. The error had its origin in a four line statement, in a report of the United States Bureau of Census for 1890. In other words, the rather "definite" line that marked the border of advancing settlement was said no longer to have that marked continuity which it had long displayed. Quite wrongly, later commentators have taken this to mean that frontier conditions had passed and that the years immediately preceding 1890 marked the end of pioneering.

As a matter of fact, frontier living is still the rule, not in one community but in scores of communities; not in isolated districts, but throughout a thousand mile belt of territory. This conclusion is reached after summer field studies of 1921 and 1930, including a traverse of several thousand miles through selected regions in the West.-----It is one of the outstanding characteristics of a frontier, or pioneering people, that they live a life of experiment.------ With unending change in strongly accented climatic and economic conditions, an entire region may not be able to cease experimentation. The pioneering type of life then becomes not a stage of development, but an ultimate result."[6]

The above statement, which is based on direct observation rather than a reference to past periods heralds a new approach to the study of the frontier. A programme of research work[7] has been undertaken by the American Geographical Society,and some of the earlier findings, embodied in two preliminary volumes, "The Pioneer Fringe" and "Pioneer Settlement" have already been published. The theory underlying this work is that a "science of settlement" is needed. To this end regional studies are being made in Western United States and Canada, in Alaska, South America South Africa, Australia, Siberia, and Manchuria. It is hoped that such accurate knowledge may be gained as to replace earlier haphazard methods of settlement by more intelligent planning by both governments and private individuals.

6 J. Bowman - in a pamphlet "Jordan Country"p. 1.

7 This program has been approved by the National Research Council (of the United States) and likewise received both approval and financial support from the Social Research Council - For details, see the preface to The Pioneer Fringe.

3. The Natural History of the Agricultural Frontier. The cyclical trend in frontier development, which was noted by Turner and other American historians suggests a convenient form of reference for the study of any new region. The settlement process may be traced in terms of its typical stages or periods. At each stage the economic, transportational, or any other aspect of pioneer life can be seen in relation to their conditioning factors. Moreover, if we view these stages in their natural sequence, certain trends can be observed and the dynamic aspects of frontier life are thus given proper emphasis. An attempt will be made in the following outline to trace social organizational development and to note its relations to the larger factors which condition it at each stage. The outline refers to frontiers in western United States and Canada, though it may apply in part also to other regions in the world.

An agricultural frontier passes through several stages which may be differentiated under the following headings: (1) The fur trading period (2) The transition period and (3) the agricultural period. The latter again may be subdivided into early or scattered settlement period, and the period of regional integration.

These stages vary in length of time from a few years to several decades or even whole centuries. Divisions are somewhat arbitrary since each stage merges more or less gradually into the succeeding one. Yet each is distinguishable by certain predominant features such as a certain economic interest, certain typical population elements, and certain forms of social organization. Keeping these qualifications in mind we may note the characteristics of each of the above periods in the order mentioned.

(1) The Fur Trading Period. This stage begins with the discovery of the new region, an event which may be the result of deliberate planning,

but which more often is merely an incident in the journey towards other goals. The motives for exploration may be the desire to found colonies, to expand trade, to win new converts to an established religion, or merely the love of adventure. Explorers therefore include soldiers, traders, missionaries and adventurers of various sorts. Each of these occupational types is eventually followed by the others and sometimes several of them engage in joint expeditions. Rivers and lakes form the natural travel routes, but they are sometimes abandoned for overland pack trails when mountains, swamps or other topographical barriers intervene. Forts or trading posts are usually established at strategic points in the new region, for example at the mouth of a river, at a ford or any similar place where a break in transportation occurs. These posts are generally fortified. They give protection against lawless elements and serve as bases of operation for traders and missionaries. They are also the natural points of entry to the new region for trappers, prospectors, or farmers, and some of them become the nuclei of the first agricultural settlements. The strategic value of the new region may be the first consideration, especially if it leads to distant goals, as was the case of the great Western plains in the days of the California gold rush. Natural resources may be discovered but they are not developed until access to outside markets make their exploitation profitable.

In wooded or park land regions the fur trade forms the first economic venture. The barter of manufactured goods for raw furs bring the native hunters and trappers into economic relationships with distant world centres. At this period the contact with the "outside" are limited, however, to one or two per year, namely the bringing in of new supplies and the shipment of raw furs to eastern markets. The traders and missionaries, like the Indians,

are dependent largely on the local food supply, and the part-time pursuits of hunting, fishing or gardening often lead to the discovery of new natural resources, whose exploitation form a later stage in frontier development. The first white invaders of the frontier form a small and very mobile male population. Institutions are limited to the trading post and the mission and each of them serves a number of functions. The mission, in addition to its religious function serves as an educational and a social welfare centre. The trading post is an administrative centre, a stopping place as well as a social centre. News from the outside and local gossip is exchanged here by the men who drift in from time to time, and hilarious gatherings sometimes take place.

The frontier's isolated position, and the often hazardous journey involved in reaching it accounts for the absence of white women. Normal family life is therefore lacking for all but those men who find wives among the native women. The children of these unions are usually accepted among whites and natives alike so long as the population is small and predominantly male. But later on the coming of white women and children means a raising of social barriers and the term "half breed" or "breed" then carries with it a note of contempt.

(2) <u>The Transition Period</u>. The close of the fur trading period comes when new means of transportation are built so as to make the development of hitherto untapped resources economically feasible. Lumbering and mining industries are established where timber and minerals abound. A rapidly growing population increases the demand for local food supplies and agriculture may therefore develop a subsidiary industry. It may eventually become the chief pursuit if larger areas of fertile soil are found. But if this condition is lacking farming dwindles in importance when the resources

for the major industries are exhausted and an exodus of population takes place. The population of mining and lumbering frontiers is almost entirely male and extremely heterogeneous as to cultural types. It is a confused, unstable society where the rougher elements are frequently in evidence. Social activities centre in saloons or dance halls, where leisure activities afford the only occupations open to women. Governmental institutions are represented by police magistrates and recorders of mining or lumber claims. The establishment of miners' or lumbermen's committees or associations often takes place where lawless elements threaten human life and property. Other social institutions such as for example health facilities were few in the earlier days, but great improvements have been made in this respect during recent years, partly due to stricter govenment control, and partly due to local pressure by workers' unions.

(3) The Agricultural Period. The preceding stages of exploitation are eliminated in many of the plain and parkland regions of the West. Hence the transition from trading and hunting to agriculture is more direct. Cheap land and abundant pasture makes ranching profitable. Other influential factors are the low labor costs and the fact that the crop is one which can "walk to market" even though the nearest railway point is several hundred miles away.

The coming of ranchers heralds the retreat of native hunters. Wild game becomes scarce and the Indians are forced to move on to new hunting grounds or change their livelihood. The traders and missionaries whose work depends on the Indians gradually disappear also. The process is often one of open conflict, with raids on settlements and theft of cattle by the Indians, and aggressive warfare on the part of the invaders. These disturbances are avoided where

governments set aside reserves for the natives and agree to pay certain "treaty money" every year. Other forms of accommodation are those where the natives become laborers for the invaders, or the still rarer instance, where the Indians learn the agricultural pursuits of the white man and so maintain their independence.

Rapid influx of people takes place during this period, yet the population remains relatively sparse and widely scattered. A number of women arrive as members of families, but the excess of males is still very great. The new agricultural settlers bring with them some of the primary institutions of older societies. A few schools are built and itinerant ministers hold occasional religious services. Social life includes neighborly visits and occasional dances or parties in the school house. The branding of stock in the spring and the round-up of cattle in the fall afford the ranchers and cowboys some social contacts, while rodeos or stampedes in the nearest town are occasions which attract young and old for many miles around. A spirit of hospitality and of social equality characterizes this period on the frontier, while the adventures of cowboys, sheriffs and cattle survive in songs and stories long after the days of the "wild west" are gone.

The ranching era soon ends in areas where the rainfall is sufficient for grain growing. The pressure of population in old societies, the extension of railroads, the expanding world markets are all influential in ushering in the next stage of farming. The land, formerly leased by ranchers or held as squatters' claims is now parcelled out by government surveyors. Widespread publicity is given to the new region through a host of agencies, including government and immigration officials, railway and land comapnies, the daily press and in short all those who invest capital in the area. Such circumstances frequently turn the tide of migration into a rush not unlike that which occurs in newly discovered gold

fields.

Various rumors as to the probable routes which railways will follow leads to wild speculation. Land values rise as settlers flock in ahead of the railway and ranchers are obliged to move on to new margins of settlement or change to other farming methods. Raising of livestock is for a time combined with grain growing but the attempts to find an export staple leads rapidly toward one-crop farming. Crop failures, declines in prices and changing land values all play their part in modifying farming practices. Stable agricultural practices involving some form of mixed farming are eventually adopted, but the development seldom follows an even trend, and it differs greatly in various regions. Certain stages are speeded up, for example by the advent of a railway, while others are delayed by general world conditions such as wars or economic depressions.

The influx of a farming population materially changes the character of the frontier. Clusters of farmsteads are formed, fences are built and roads are constructed. Crossroad stores appear here and there in some enterprising farmer's home near the centre of a given settlement. Postal, telegraph, and sometimes telephone services are soon added, and managed by some member of the farmer store keeper's family. Such stores often form the nucleus of a rural neighborhood. A school, a church, or a community hall is built nearby. The first "public" building usually serves a number of functions. A school, for example is invariably a centre for religious services, farmers' or young people's meetings and for occasional parties and dances. These primary institutions are indicative of a growing number of women and children on the frontier and the establishment of family life for many of the male pioneers.

The advent of the railroad leads to the establishment of new trade centres.

A variety of commercial interests are represented by retail merchants and agents of all sorts who are anxious to share in the profits of a rapidly expanding market for manufactured goods. While earlier traders may hold their own for a time they are eventually displaced by new types of business people who introduce more efficient retail methods and keep their supplies abreast of the growing demands for a greater variety of consumers' goods and services.

The rise of commercial trade centres makes more and better organized social facilities possible. The villages naturally become the centres of larger organizations. In addition to schools and churches a number of educational, fraternal and athletic organizations are established. Business and professional people who represent a variety of talents give leadership and active support to these different group interests.

The growth of larger towns in a new region marks the final stage in frontier development. They are the outcome of a complex set of circumstances, including nearness to large trade basins, early establishment and a network of communication facilities. They become the distributing centres for specialized goods and services to all parts of the new area and their populations set the pace for smaller villages and rural neighborhoods in the adoption of urban modes of living. Through their economic, administrative and social institutional agencies they keep in touch with local developments in all parts of the frontier and they tend therefore to become the foci of a region-wide community. Their local papers and their political and business leaders voice local public opinions and make the needs of the region as a whole known to the outside world.

-CHAPTER 11.

THE PEACE RIVER AREA; THE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF FRONTIER SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

In the preceding chapter the frontier was defined and the typical stages in its development were outlined. The characteristic features of each period were mentioned, including methods of exploitation, population elements, means of transportation, and social facilities. In the following pages the above generalizations will be applied to a specific region. First, the physiographic conditions of the area studied are presented, including its vicinal position, size, and major topographical features. Then an attempt is made to trace the process of community development through the three earlier stages, namely the fur trading, transition and early agricultural period. The fourth stage, that of regional integration is bound up with the growth of commercial trade centres, and is so complex as to require a separate chapter.

1. The Area Studied. The frontier with which this study deals is in the north-west corner of the Province of Alberta. The Peace River country, as it is called, lies between the 55th and the 59th parallels of north latitude, and between 114 and 122 degrees east longitude. It comprises the drainage basin of the Peace River, between Hudson Hope and a point some fifty miles below Fort Vermilion, as well as the areas draining into Lesser Slave Lake and those on the headwaters of the Hay and Fort Nelson rivers. This huge territory comprises about 120,000 square miles[1] or an area greater than England, Scotland and Wales combined. The region with which we are particularly concerned forms about one half of the Peace River country. It is the potential agricultural belt west of the Peace and the Smoky rivers and extending west into the Peace River Block, a square-shaped territory in British Columbia. The term Peace River Area will be

1. F. H. Kitto, The Peace River Country, Canada, Revised Edition p. 8.

used to include these two divisions, namely the Alberta section, known as Census Division No. 16, and the Peace River Block, which forms a part of British Columbia.

This agricultural frontier whose arable land is extimated between ten and twenty million acres has until recently been shut off from the rest of the Canadian West. This is due not only to its position in the most distant section of the Western plain region but because a 250 mile wide belt of rough, wooded or swampy wasteland spparates it from older settlements in the Edmonton district. Not until railways and highways were built across this intervening region did the northern hinterland become readily accessible from outside points.

As regards topographical features the Peace River area forms a series of plateaus sloping north and east from Hudson Hope and varying in altitude from 2600 to 1000 feet above sea level. The Peace River forms a natural barrier between the north and south sections as it flows eastward from Hudson Hope for about 230 miles to the town of Peace River where it changes to a generally northern direction. The stream bed is 800 feet below the plateau level near the foothills,and the banks gradually diminish to about 100 feet of gentle slope near Fort Vermilion, below which they almost disappear.[2] This natural barrier which varies in width from a quarter of a mile at Hudson Hope to a mile at Fort Vermilion, is further marked off by its "breaks", or rough wooded hills stretching back for several miles along either bank. The Peace is readily crossed only in three places in its 230 mile course between Hudson Hope and the town of Peace River, namely by ferries at Taylor's Flats in the Peace River Block and at the old trading post of Dunvegan and by a railway and general traffic bridge at Peace River.

2. Ibid.

The Peace River Area comprises three larger and several smaller sub-divisions marked off by natural boundaries. To the north of the Peace are the Berwyn and Fairview prairies, a belt 15 to 20 miles wide, stretching roughly 40 miles from west of Peace River town to the breaks of Hines Creek, north of Dunvegan. A hilly stretch near Whitelaw separates the east and west sections of this fertile area, while to the north are smaller arable sections including the Clear Hills, and Battle River areas. To the north-west, the Hines Creek area merges into Clear and Eureka prairies which parallel the north bank of the Peace towards the provincial boundary. South of the Peace are the Spirit River and Grande Prairies. The first, directly south of Dunvegan is roughly 20 miles square, and the Saddle Hills separate it from Grande Prairie to the south and from Rolla-Pouce Coupe prairies further west. Grande Prairie, an area about 25 by 45 miles in extent, and bounded on the east and south by the Smoky and Wapiti rivers is the largest agricultural section in the whole Peace River Area. A stretch of rough, wooded territory near the provincial boundary separates it from the third large sub-area, namely the Rolla and Pouce Coupe prairies in the Peace River Block. In addition to the last mentioned sections there are several smaller fertile patches to the north and west. These so-called "prairies" were really lightly wooded or open park-like stretches when the white settlers came. But successive fires have swept over them, destroying heavy timber and making way for grassy plains here and there. The surface of each is gently rolling or level, but often broken by the valleys of small streams, by lakes, and an occasional swampy area. The broken topography of the area explains to a large extent the scattered nature of the Peace River settlements, whose origin and growth we must now attempt to trace.

2. <u>The Fur Trading Period.</u> The discovery of the Peace River country

is linked with the history of the Western fur trade. Competition between the two great rivals, the Hudson's Bay Company with headquarters in London, and the North-West Company, centred in Montreal, led to a scramble for more and more territory in the West, over which the first comers might extend their monopoly. It was this quest for hitherto untapped trade areas and the search for an overland route to the Pacific which led Alexander Mackenzie of the North-West company to ascend the Peace River in 1792. After wintering at Fort Fork, the newly-built post six miles above the junction of the Peace and Smoky rivers, Mackenzie completed his journey to the Pacific ocean in 1793. The outcome of this exploratory trip was the establishment of a string of trading posts along the Peace River. They include Fort Vermilion built in 1798, Dunvegan in 1800, Fort St. John in 1805, as well as a number of others beyond the foothills of the Rockies in what later came to be called "New Caledonia."

For about a hundred years the raw furs obtained by barter from the Indians, formed the main export staple of this distant region. They were shipped annually by canoes or eight-oared York boats to Montreal by way of Fort Chipewyan, Lake Winnipeg, and the Great Lakes. When the two great fur companies merged to form the Hudson's Bay company in 1821, the fur brigades followed the more northerly route via Churchill River to Hudson's Bay.

The Peace River country soon became a valuable asset to the North-Westers as they discovered other resources than furs. Herds of buffalo, red deer, and moose furnished meat supplies not only to the local trading posts but to the voyageurs and the traders in the Athabaska country further east. Hunting of game and the making of pemmican (meat dried in the Indian fashion) became important spare time pursuits to the men at the trading posts. Some notion of its importance may be gathered from the fact that

during the year 1830 a total of 37,286 pounds of fresh meat was received at Fort Dunvegan.[3] Plenty of leisure time during the summer months after the year's "returns" had been shipped east and the need for vegetable supplies naturally led some of the traders to take up gardening. A Dunvegan trader's diary for 1808 has this entry:

"Our principal food will be the flesh of the buffalo, moose, red deer, and bear. We have a tolerably good kitchen garden and we are in no fear that we shall want the means of a comfortable subsistence.[4] Some years later this trader had good results from small grain plots though he found the wheat subject to smut. Other agricultural ventures such as the raising of cattle and horses were also incidental to the fur trade. Horses were brought to Dunvegan as early as 1809 and used to pack meat home from distant hunting grounds. Domestic cattle had evidently arrived by 1840 as witness this entry in the trader's journal:

"Shipped to Chipewyan three kegs of butter." (The common powder keg holds 9 gallons).[5] This is the earliest known record of butter making in Alberta.

Agriculture remained a minor industry, however, until the end of the nineteenth century. The plots were only a few acres in size and the tools in use were primitive. A ploughshare and a scythe were brought from England but other tools such as harrows, shovels and carts were made of local materials. These early experiments served to show the agricultural possibilities of the north country. However, little advance was made in exploiting the soil resources until the southern prairies had become fairly well settled and better means of transportation made it possible to ship grain and cattle from the north frontier to outside markets.

The white population in the northern frontier was entirely male during the fur trading period. Because of its isolated position and the difficulties of access the region was considered unfit for white women. The population

3. Quoted from the trader Daniel Harmon's diary by E. Jaffary in an article on "Farming in the Peace River a Hundred Years Ago", Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 36, 1929, p. 482.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

consisted of wandering Indian tribes and a few white traders at each post. It was a life of extreme isolation for the latter, broken only by semi-annual contacts with the outside and the visits of an occasional traveller. In the absence of white women it was common practice among the traders to find a mate among the Indian or half-breed women. The children of such unions constituted no racial problem so long as the white population was small and largely male. But the social barriers were gradually raised against them when white women began to come into the area at the beginning of the present century.

The circumstances outlined above imply a dearth of social facilities in the frontier during the fur trading era. This condition continued until the last quarter of the nineteenth century when missionaries brought religious institutions to the area. The Roman Catholic and the Anglican churches became interested in the north country about the same time, and missions were established at Fort Dunvegan and at the Shaftsbury settlement during the 1880's. The work of the churches was extended during the next two decades to the prairies south of the Peace, where missions were established at inland trading posts near the crossing of Indian trails. But the wanderings of the Indians made religious work among them difficult and not until the land was occupied by agricultural settlers were the churches able to establish their work permanently in the area.

3. <u>The Transition Period.</u> The fur trading period drew to a close at the turn of the century. Rumors of oil and minerals attracted adventurers of various sorts. But a still more influential factor in bringing about a change was the disappearance of the choicest free land in the prairies to the south. This fact, together with glowing reports of the fertile soils in the Peace River country turned the tide of hungry landseekers

northward. The completion of the railway as far as Edmonton in 1890 also influenced new developments in the northern region. Modern transportation facilities were thus brought within 300 - 400 miles of the northern prairies and it seemed probable that they would soon be extended over this last lap also. It should be kept in mind, however, that the fur trade continued to be the major economic interest of the Peace River Area during the first ten years of the present century. Only in scattered settlements here and there did agriculture become the chief occupation of the people.

A concrete example of the changing frontier life is found in the Shaftsbury settlement, one of the oldest communities in the Peace River Area. Situated on the first bench or lowest level of the Peace River valley it comprised a straggling row of houses fronting on the river as did the homes in older Canadian settlements before the railways came. Both Anglican and Catholic missions were established here,and sought to adjust the Indians to the white man's civilization by promoting agriculture,as well as by their religious and formal educational activities. Wheat from the Anglican mission farm won first prize at the international seed exhibition at Chicago, and thereby brought the agricultural possibilities of the new region to public notice. On the east bank of the Peace was Fort Fork, Mackenzie's old trading post at the end of the overland pack trail via Athabaska and Grouard. This route was used by private traders, prospectors and early landseekers from about 1890 when Edmonton was the nearest "end of steel." Independent traders entered into competition with the Hudson's Bay post, and in 1896 the latter was moved down to what is now the town of Peace River. The attempt of a number of prospectors to reach the Klondike gold fields by the overland route was an incident in the settling of the Peace River Area. These adventurers abandoned their horses at Shaftsbury, and ascended the

Peace River by boats, hoping to reach their destination via the Nelson and Halfway rivers. None of them appear to have reached the Klondike, however, and many of those who drifted back took up land or became traders on the prairies in the Peace River Area. The Shaftsbury settlement was a stopping place for the first settlers bound for the prairies further west. It had the first Dominion land office west of Grouard, and served as a provision base for the early rural settlements at Griffin Creek and Bear Lake. The grist mill built by the Catholic missionaries late in the 1890's supplied flour to the rural settlers on the western upland as well as to the local community. The population of Shaftsbury was largely male, and very mobile. Most of the people were going further west or intent on making money and returning whence they came. A few white women came at the beginning of the century, but they were members of families who settled on the prairies. This explains why the missions remained the only social institutions in the community.

The coming of the railway to Peace River town meant the decline of Shaftsbury settlement. The land office was moved to the latter centre in 1912 and the stream of landseekers was thereby deflected along the new travel route. Indians and halfbreeds drifted north and west when fur-bearing animals and game receded before the advance of the white settlers. While it is still the centre of a Catholic mission the Shaftsbury settlement today is chiefly noted for its historical significance. It is of interest here to note that a cairn has been erected on the opposite bank of the Peace near Mackenzie's old trading post.

4. <u>The Early Agricultural Period.</u> We must now turn to the new agricultural settlements which appeared on the Peace River prairies during the first

ten or fifteen years of this century. Grain growing, as already noted, had been carried on along the north bank of the Peace as early as 1890. About ten years later landseekers began to trickle in over the Athabaska - Grouard trail and take up land near Griffin Creek and Bear Lake, and other points west of Shaftsbury and Peace River Crossing. The influx of homesteaders and squatters to the prairies south of the Peace took place about the same time. Alex Monkman, a trader employed by a small firm, turned the first sod in 1901 at Lake Saskatoon, near the present Wembley, A few years later his example was followed by others who settled at Flying Shot, Spirit River, near Bear Creek and at other points in what is now the Grand Prairie district.

The ranching period, a typical stage of western frontier development, was omitted in the development of the Peace River Area. Natural pasture was not plentiful and meadow or hay land was also lacking. Besides, it was virtually impossible to send cattle over the longppack trails to outside markets. The settlers, therefore, raised enough livestock to supply their own needs as well as the growing demands of the local market, but few of them had large herds.

Grain growing, mainly wheat and oats, became the chief farming industry Those who brought in little or no capital found it profitable to add to their income by working for more affluent neighbors, by freighting goods from outside during the winter months or by keeping a stopping place for new arrivals. Later on when railroad building began many homesteaders found work on construction gangs or at freighting supplies to the railway camps. Some settlers "got their start" by selling seed grain, cured pork or other farm produce to newcomers. The growing stream of migrants, some of whom brought capital, thus helped to create a local market and enabled the earlier

settlers to gain a permanent foothold on the land.

The settlement pattern took the form of scattered farmsteads. This was due to a number of conditioning factors such as the broken topography, the Dominion land settlement scheme by which each homesteader was allotted a quarter section of land, i.e. 160 acres, and finally it was due to the individual mode of migration, which prompted each pioneer to rely on himself in seeking a favorable location. Climate, too, played a part in scattering the pioneers, since the relatively low annual precipitation, ranging from 9.73 to 22.15 inches per year necessitated large landholdings if the settlers were to improve their standard of living. Even if all the land was occupied in a given township, which was seldom the case, the houses were often half a mile or a mile apart, except where settlers found it convenient to build in adjacent corners of their land.

The settlement process was by no means one of steady advance, and the rate of economic development varied from one district to another. The same generalization applies to rural communities whose development we shall now attempt to trace. [6] The expansion of settlement beyond the banks of the Peace led to the growth of rural neighborhoods. Some of them clustered around former fur trading posts such as those at Spirit River and Lake Saskatoon. Others developed where homesteaders settled on adjacent lands in a fertile area. Pioneers who kept stopping places often played the role of land guides and placed later arrivals near their own farms. Some farmers who had made a business of freighting provisions in from Edmonton opened up a store in the farm home. Such were the origins of the settlements at Old Beaverlodge, Brainard, Rolla and Pouce Coupe. Other divisions of labor occurred where the previously

6. Meteorological records kept by W.D. Albright at Beaverlodge Experimental Station over a period of 13 years.

acquired skill of the new settlers were put to use. The work of a carpenter, a blacksmith or a harness maker, for example, was often exchanged with neighbors in return for other work.

Communication services were also attended to by members of the farming population . When twenty-five or thirty households had been established in a given locality the settlers applied for a post office. It was eventually established at the crossroad store or in some other centrally located farm house. The building of the Dominion telegraph line was another factor in the development of open country centres. At Vanrena, near Fairview, for example, an enterprising farmer used his influence to get both telegraph office and post office established in his home, and his wife put in charge as operator. This man also opened a store and his house therefore became the distributing centre for the surrounding district. The influence of outside institutions is clearly seen in the growth of Flying Shot settlement, near the present town of Grande Prairie. The initial developments are well described by the first white woman settler in Grande Prairie district. Mrs. Clifford, whose husband combined farming and trading writes as follows:

> "In 1909 the R.N.W.M.P. (Royal North West Mounted Police) were established on the prairie and for one year we accommodated them at Flying Shot. Constable Clay (now Sergt. Clay) was the first officer in charge.
>
> The first Protestant service was held in our house at Flying Shot in October, 1907, by Rev. M. Johnson of Spirit River, the Anglican minister in charge there. Rev. Dr. Forbes and wife visited Grande Prairie the summer of 1909 on a tour of inspection. They were so pleased with the prospect that they came back in 1910 to reside. They lived with us at Flying Shot during 1910 and part of 1911 and while there established the first hospital with Miss Agnes Baird in charge, Miss Baird arriving in the fall of 1910.
>
> In June 1911 was held the first court presided over by His Honor Judge Noel (now deceased) Mr. M.W. Eagar was prosecuting Crown Attorney. I entertained the judicial party as there was no other place for them to go at that time."[7]

7. Unpublished letter from Mrs. M. Clifford to W.D. Albright, Supt. of Beaverlodge Experimental Station.

Federal officials were then present in the area before the rush of settlement began. They continued to administer local affairs until the population was large enough to make municipal government possible. Mounted police stationed at Peace River, Dunvegan, and Flying Shot patrolled the whole area. They were replaced by the Provincial Police in 1929, a change which indicated that the northern settlements were passing out of the frontier stage. The control of land offices, and the administration of the homestead laws was under federal authorities until 1930, when the western provinces were given control of their public lands and other natural resources. The first rural municipalities were organized at Berwyn and Grande Prairie in 1915 and 1916, since then two others have been formed. Village municipalities were organized soon after the railway came. It was not uncommon for new "end of steel" centres to obtain local self-government within a year after their establishment. The setting up of municipal institutions has not meant a decrease of provincial and federal governmental services in Peace River Area. On the contrary, distant governments have shown increasing interest in the north frontier, and have sought to meet its needs by the expansion of existing services and the addition of new ones. In the following chapter further reference is made to these various types of governmental services in the area.

While distant governments exerted administrative control over the region as a whole, the development of local social institutions depended largely on the initiative of the settlers themselves. The first public building was usually located near the crossroad centre. Its type and purpose appears to have varied with the felt needs of the population. At Sunset Prairie and Rolla settlements in the Peace River Block, where the majority of settlers were single men, the first objective was a community hall. A log building, erected at Sunset Prairie by voluntary labor during the

first year of settlement became the centre for all sorts of social activities. Churches came first as we have seen, at Spirit River and at Flying Shot where the missionaries followed closely in the wake of the traders. Churches, too, were probably the first community concern at Valhalla and Friedensthal where Scandinavian and German settlers clustered in group settlements.

But in many settlements an elementary school conforming to the provincial system of education was the first social institution. Most of the parents had enjoyed a public school education in their homelands and they were anxious to give their children similar advantages. Moreover, since the school was secular it was an issue on which people with diverse religious views could agree. The fact that financial aid and the organizational machinery of the provincial Department of Education were at the disposal of the settlers further facilitated the erection of schools.[8]

In spite of these favorable circumstances there were great difficulties to be overcome in the erection of the first Peace River schools. The experiences of the early settlers in Beaverlodge district, most of whom were Ontario families linked by the tie of a common religion, furnishes a good illustration.

"Among the settlers of 1909 were quite a few children of school age, and something had to be done about their education. The difficulty in starting a school arose from the fact that there was no school district, no inspector and only a monthly mail. Any correspondence would take a month to reach Edmonton and another month for the reply. Before going out for supplies in 1910 the settlers held a meeting in the home of R. C. Lossing to discuss how they might obtain a school. All favored the project and appointed a committee to wait upon the Department of Education. Eventually the school district was laid out and by means of voluntary labor, except a foreman paid for part time, they put up their own log school house. The windows were brought in from Edmonton and the rest of the material came from the woods in the district. Everyone cooperated ungrudgingly including the bachelors. While the school was being built Mrs. Drake was hired as a

8. Educational institutions are further elaborated in Chapter IV.

teacher, and for a short time schooling was carried on in a vacated settler's shack."[9]

The above school, like most others in the new region, served as a meeting place for church services, Sunday School and other community meetings.

Social life in these early settlements was very informal. An atmosphere of friendliness and hospitality to everyone characterized most pioneer homes. But the long distances between neighbours, poor roads and the pressing business of breaking and cultivating the land, and building homes left little time for social contacts during the summer months. The winter months afforded more leisure but cold weather and heavy trailstended to confine the settlersto their homes. Business trips to store and post office tended to become social events, during which news and local gossip were exchanged. Other contacts were made by friandly visiting, especially on Sundays, by occasional church services or dances in the school house. Family events such as weddings and funerals were shared in by all the settlers for miles around, while the children's Christmas concert and annual picnics at some nearby lake likewise brought old and young together.

Several Peace River settlements followed the example of older Canadian communities and celebrated Dominion Day by holding annual sports. Such celebrations were held at Bear Lake, near the present Berwyn, at Lac Cardinal, and more recently, at Dawson Creek andat Lake George in the Hines Creek area. White settlers, Indians and half-breeds arrived by waggon, buckboard, saddle horse or on foot. Homesteaders occasionally brought their milk cows with them and were thus able to stay for several

9. W. D. Albright, unpublished manuscript.

days near the scene of festivities without neglecting their daily chores. The programme consisted of horse races, cowboy "stunts", and contests of various sorts. In the evening, a dance was held at a nearby school house or on a platform specially erected for the purpose. Old-fashioned dances such as jigs, Red River reels and quadrilles were enjoyed by people of all ages, and Indian and half-breed women made up for the scarcity of white girls. Drinking, freely indulged in by most of the men, added to the hilarity and the affair usually continued until morning.

As time went on the celebrations were better organized,and adjacent settlements sought to outrival one another in the variety and quality of entertainment. A number of these frontier festivities became known throughout the whole region. As roads improved they attracted visitors from distant areas. The annual stampede, still held at Dawson Creek, draws people from Peace River, a distance of more than a hundred miles. These frontier entertainments continued tobe held after the railway came, but they underwent many changes. They are now held inthe new railway villages and towns, and organized sports, such as baseball, soccer and basketball games take the place of the less formal "wild west" performances. The village people are the chief organizers and the annual sports day has become the vehicle by means of which business men and local boosters in general advertise their town both near and far.

The preceding paragraph touched on the social side of frontier life. The daily experiences of most settlers, however, were those of hard work, lack of material conveniences, and loneliness. The women in particular suffered since lack of conveyances, poor roads and routine duties isolated them even from their nearest neighbours.

Another great drawback in the earlier period of settlement was the absence of health services. As late as 1907, the nearest doctor was at Grouard, 250 miles from Grande Prairie. Those requiring hospital treatment were obliged to go to Edmonton. Children were born without the assistance of doctor or midwife, yet there seems to have been few cases of infant mortality. The first efforts to improve these conditions were made by the Presbyterian Church, which as already noted, established a little mission hospital at Flying Shot settlement in 1910. Private physicians came in when the railway was built, and in 1918 the provincial government placed public health nurses in Griffin Creek and Bear Lake Settlements north of the Peace. The further development of health facilities is discussed in succeeding chapters. But it may be stated that while the first health facilities were established entirely by outside agencies, the settlers have gradually assumed responsibility for their maintenance and extension.

So far the growth of the Peace River settlements has been outlined by means of general description. The environmental setting has been presented and the earlier stages of community development have been indicated. Only passing reference has been made, however, to the population elements involved in the settlement process. A statistical summary of the trends in growth of population, sex and age distribution as well as of ethnic groups represented in the area seems pertinent here. It serves the double purpose of substantiating some of the general statements already made and of indicating some of the factors of the social environment during the period of centralization, which forms the subject of the following chapter. With respect to the economic aspect of the settlement process the brief references already made must suffice. Its

detailed analysis and the interpretation of the settlers' economic progress forms the major topic of another study.[10]

The growth of population for Peace River area may well be compared with that for Alberta, the province of which it forms a northern extension. The absolute figures as well as the corresponding percentage increases or decreases for successive census periods are shown in Tables I and II. The marginal character of Peace River settlements as compared with the whole province is seen from the fact that its highest increase, 423.8 per cent, occurred in 1916, while the peak for the province, 153.9 per cent, came ten years earlier. The wide fluctuation in percentage increases for successive five-year periods in the smaller area also indicates its newness as compared with the province.

The absolute figures must be kept in mind here. An increase of roughly five thousand people in the period 1911 - 1916 for the frontier region corresponds to 423.8 per cent of the 1911 total while an increase of about six thousand people in the next five years corresponds to only 98.8 per cent of the 1916 figure. The post-war depression of the early 1920's is reflected in the low increase of 3.3 per cent for Alberta during 1921 - 1926, and its influence is even more marked in the north country where a net decrease of 6.4 per cent showed that the exodus of population exceeded the influx. The rapid upward trend during the period 1926 - 1931 for both the Province and its northern frontier is related to improved economic conditions throughout the West. It is significant to note that the momentum of northward migration was not spent until late in 1930, a year after the depression was general in older areas.

10. See G. H. Craig, "The Means and Modes of Living on the Pioneer Fringe of Land Settlement with special Reference to the Peace River Area." Unpublished M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1933.

TABLE 1

THE GROWTH OF POPULATION FOR PEACE RIVER AREA COMPARED WITH THAT FOR THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA FOR THE PERIOD 1901 - 1931. /

Year	Province of Alberta.	Peace River Area. Census Div. No. 16	Peace River Area. Peace River Block.
1901	73,022		
1906	185,412	743	
1911	374,295	1,165	
1916	496,442	6,102	
1921	588,454	12,131	1,694
1926	607,599	11,352	
1931	731,605	29,278 //	6,685 *

/ Data from Dominion and Alberta Census for years indicated.
//This total includes 1333 people in Battle River Settlement which extends north of Census Div. No. 16.
* The census for Peace River Block is taken only at 10-year intervals, i.e. in Dominion census years.

TABLE 11.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE OR DECREASE OF POPULATION FOR PEACE RIVER AREA, COMPARED WITH THAT FOR THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA.

Census Period	Province of Alta.	Peace River Area. Census Div. No. 16	Peace River Area. Peace River Block.
	%	%	%
1906 over 1901	153.9		
1911 over 1906	101.9	56.8	
1916 over 1911	32.6	423.8	
1921 over 1916	18.5	98.8	
1926 over 1921	3.3	- 6.4	
1931 over 1926	20.4	157.9	294.6 (1931 over 1921)

Another index of frontier conditions is the great excess of males as compared with the number of females. This is particularly true of the period of most rapid growth of population. The trend is similar for the two areas, i.e. a relatively balanced ratio during the early settlement period while the population is small, then a marked increase of males during the years of most rapid migration, and finally an approximation towards a balance between the sexes as the settlements grow older.

TABLE III

CHANGES IN THE SEX RATIO FOR THE PEACE RIVER AREA AS COMPARED WITH THOSE FOR THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA. ƒ

Sex Ratio: Number of Males per 100 Females.

Census Year	Province of Alberta.	Peace River Area.	
		Census Div. No. 16.	Peace River Block.
1901	128		
1906	140	116	
1911	149	194	
1916	126	202	
1921	123	160	
1926	120	136	
1931	121	142	185

ƒ Alberta Census, 1906, 1926; also Census of Canada, 1911, 1921, 1931.

The greater excess of males in Peace River Area as compared with the Province is related to the absence of railways in the north until 1916. As soon as the area became readily accessible there was a marked increase of female migrants as seen in the drop of the sex ratio from 202 to 160 over a five-year period. The relatively wider fluctuation in the sex ratio

for Peace River Area during the last ten years is due to the fact that it is still a region of rapid migration, especially toward the margins of older settlements. The present great excess of males in the Peace River Block as compared with the Alberta section is related to the lack of railway facilities, a drawback which was removed in 1930.

TABLE IV.

TRENDS IN THE SEX RATIO FOR THE AREAS OF FIRST AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE PEACE RIVER AREA. /

Sex Ratio: Number of Males per 100 Females.

Year	Total Population	Number of Males per 100 Females.
1906	743	116
1911	966	239
1916	3,642	208
1921	6,233	135
1926	6,004	137

/ Table includes data from the following Municipalities: Peace No. 857, Fairview No. 858, Grande Prairie, No. 739, Bear Lake No. 740.

If we look at the sex ratio for the oldest agricultural districts of the area studied we find a trend similar to that for the province as a whole. At the beginning of the century the sexes almost balanced. During the next ten years males outnumbered females by more than two to one, due to the influx of single men to the Fairview - Berwyn and Grande prairies. There was a marked trend towards a balanced sex ratio after the railway reached Grande Prairie. Indeed it approximated that for the total rural population in Alberta, which in 1926 was 132 males per hundred females. The recent

sex ratios indicate that the oldest agricultural districts in the Peace River Area are reaching the stage of fairly stable settlement.

If we turn now to age distribution we find here another index of frontier conditions. The population pyramid built on the sample group of 313 farm families is extremely irregular. There is a tendency toward a balanced sex ratio for the age-groups below 15 years, which includes the children born in the area. There is a disproportion of young people between 15 and 20 years of age, but a marked excess of males between 30 and 50 years of age. The adult female population tends to fall in the age groups between 20 and 45 years. Old people form an insignificant proportion of the whole group, and this applies especially to females above 50 years of age. It is on the whole a youthful population with a relatively large proportion of people in the most active period of life. The tendency towards symmetry for the lowest age groups suggests that within a generation or two the population pyramid for the area will approximate the symmetrical proportions found in those based on areas of stable settlement.

Modern frontiers attract a heterogeneous population as regards ethnic elements, so long as migration is not hampered by restrictive controls on the part of governments. This statement is supported by data for the province of Alberta as well as for the northern hinterland. The trends for the province during the last three decades also gives a convenient basis for interpreting the Peace River data.

The British group forms the largest proportion, varying from 47.8 to 59.8 per cent. The drop of about 7 per cent during the last decade is due to relatively greater increase of other ethnic groups rather than to a decrease in absolute numbers of British people. Proportions of 5 - 8 per cent for the Scandinavians, and 13 - 17 per cent for North and West Europeans are maintained throughout the period. The greatest

TABLE 5.

POPULATION PYRAMID OF 332 PEACE RIVER FARM FAMILIES

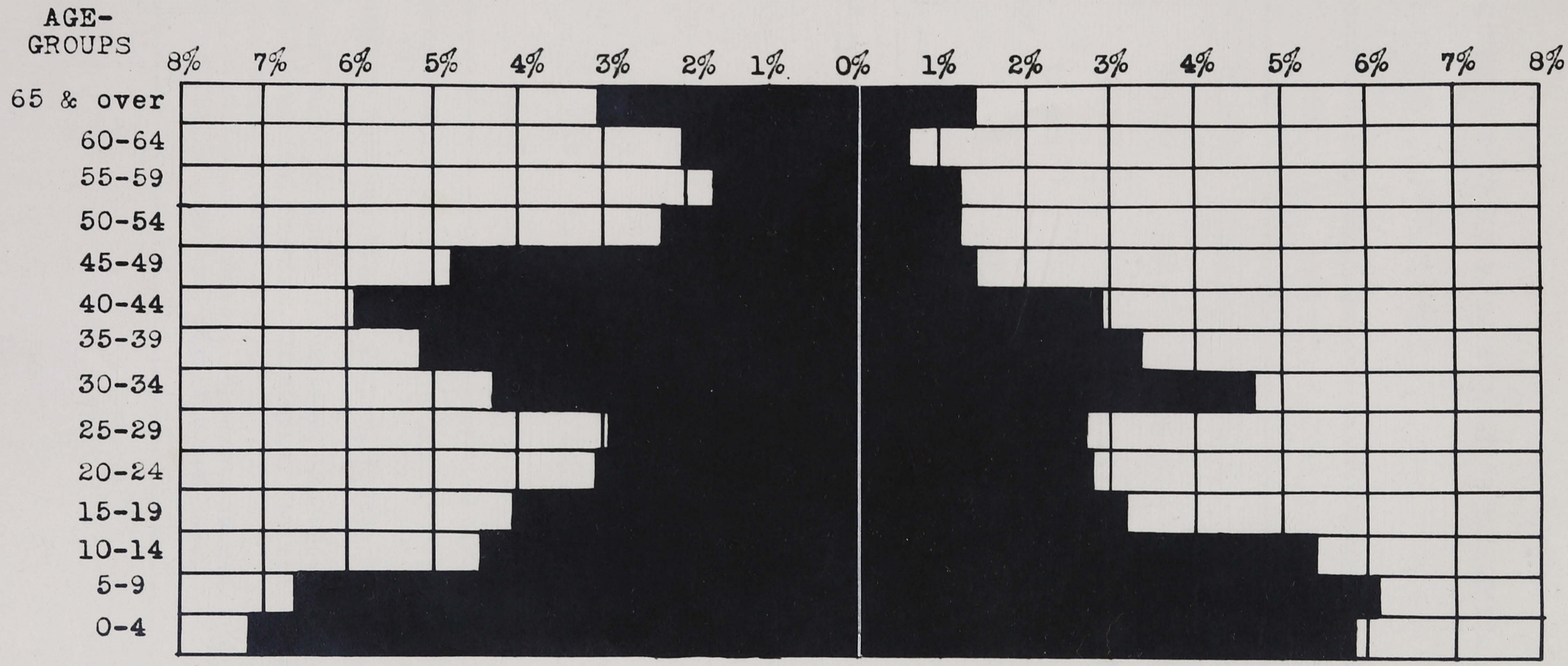


TABLE VI

PRINCIPAL ETHNIC ORIGINS OF THE TOTAL POPULATION IN ALBERTA FOR 1901 - 1931.

Total Population.

Ethnic Origin	1901	1911	1921	1931
Total	73,022	374,295	588,454	731,605
British	39,903	192,629	351,820	389,238
Scandinavian ≠	3,940	29,634	47,471	62,779
North & West European. ≠≠	13,002	62,074	80,794	129,218
Central & South-East European ✱	7,151	39,727	82,750	124,929
Various Other ✱✱	14,026	50,231	25,619	25,441

Percentage Distribution.

Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0	100.0
British	47.8	51.5	59.8	53.2
Scandinavian ≠	5.4	7.9	8.0	8.6
North & West European. ≠≠	17.8	16.6	13.7	17.6
Central & South-East European ✱	9.8	10.6	14.1	17.1
Various Other ✱✱	19.2	13.4	4.4	3.5

≠ Scandinavian includes Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Swedish, and Finnish.

≠≠ North and West European includes French, German, Dutch, Belgian, and Swiss.

✱ Central and South-East European include Austrian, Hungarian, Czechs and Slovaks, Polish, Roumanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Italian, Greek and other central and south European groups.

✱✱ "Various Other" includes Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Hebrew, and other non-European groups of little numerical significance here.

proportional gain is seen in the Central and South European group which increases steadily from 9.8 per cent in 1901 to 17 per cent in 1931. The group called "Various other" includes Indians, Asiatics, Hebrews, and others whose origin is not specified. The Indians who comprise the majority, vary between 13,000 and 15,000, but their corresponding proportions dropped from 18.4 per cent in 1901 to 2.1 per cent in 1931.

TABLE VII

PRINCIPAL ETHNIC ORIGINS OF THE TOTAL POPULATION IN THE WHOLE PEACE RIVER AREA, AND IN 5 SUB-AREAS.

Percentage Distribution in 1931. /

Ethnic Origin	Whole Peace River Area.	Fairview District	Grande P. District	Berwyn District	Rolla District //	Fringe Areas *
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
British	50.2	57.4	55.2	56.7	59.3	40.8
Scandinavian.	12.2	8.9	14.1	11.1	13.3	9.5
North & West European	16.9	24.9	17.8	14.9	13.8	15.5
Central & South Eur.	13.9	6.3	11.7	13.6	4.9	26.8
Various Other	6.8	2.5	1.2	3.7	8.7	7.4

/ Data from Census of Canada, 1931, Bulletin 22, T. 3, p. 174.
// Rolla district includes Sub-division C (Beaton River) and D (Kiskatinaw River) in Census Division No. 10, British Columbia.
* Fringe areas include Hines Creek and Clear Hills Settlements; i.e. Local Improvement Districts, No's 859, 888, 889, and 917. Ethnic data on 1333 people in Battle River, the third settlement elsewhere included with above areas, were not available.

The ethnic distribution in 1931 for Peace River Area is almost a counterpart of that which obtains for the province. The British group forms about one-half of the total population, a slightly smaller proportion than that for Alberta as a whole. A regional difference is seen in the

Scandinavian group which comprises 12.2 per cent of the north frontier population, but only 8.6 per cent for the province. The North and West-European group is practically the same for both areas, i.e. 16.9 per cent in the area studied, and 17.6 per cent for the province. Central and South-Europeans are under-represented in the north frontier, where they form 13.9 per cent of the total population as compared with 17.1 per cent for Alberta. Native Indians form 5.9 per cent of the frontier population, or the bulk of the group called "various other."

If we compare older and newer settlements in the Peace River Area we find certain intra-regional differences in the ethnic distribution. The British group comprises 55 - 59 per cent in the three older settlements, and in Rolla, but the proportion drops to 40.8 per cent in the Fringe areas. Scandinavians form proportions varying from 9.5 per cent in the Fringe to 14.1 per cent in Grande Prairie. They have thriving settlements at Valhalla, north-west of Grande Prairie, and at Rolla in the Peace River Block. The high proportion of North and West Europeans in Fairview district is accounted for by the German group, which alone comprises 18.9 per cent of the population. The main difference between old and new districts is in the proportions of Central and South Europeans. They form 5.6 per cent of the total population in Fairview and Rolla, 12 - 14 per cent in Grande Prairie and Berwyn, but 26.8 per cent of the Fringe populations. This group is composed mainly of Poles, Russians, and Ukrainians, most of whom are post-war immigrants. A few of them have arrived by way of United States, however, and they have assimilated much of the culture of this continent. By way of summary it may be said, then, that British, Scandinavian and German people comprise the bulk of the population in the older Peace River districts. The same is true of Fringe Areas, but here the proportion of Central and South Europeans is twice as great as in older districts.

The Fringe percentages for the other ethnic groups indicate that it is largely the British group which is being displaced. Again, we may note that the Indians, comprising the majority of the group called "Various Other," are receding to the margins of settlement as indicated by the higher percentages in Rolla and the Fringe areas.

TABLE VIII

BIRTHPLACES OF FARM OPERATORS. Comparison of 332 Peace River Farm Operators with the Total Farm Operators in Census Division No. 16, and in the Province of Alberta. /

	Total Farm Operators			Percentage Distribution.		
	Peace River Sample	Census Division No. 16	Province of Alberta.	Peace River Sample	Census Division No. 16.	Province of Alberta.
No. of Occupied Farms	332	2796	77,130	100.0	100.0	100.0
Operators Reporting Birthplace	329	2736	75,394	99.1	97.9	97.7
British Born	185	1477	34,713	55.7	52.8	45.0
Canada	117	956	20,290	35.2	34.2	26.3
British Isles	68	504	14,099	20.5	18.0	18.7
United States	66	649	19,130	19.9	23.2	24.8
Continental Europe	78	610	21,389	23.5	21.8	27.7
Scandinavia	35	324	6,294	10.5	11.6	8.2
North & West Europe	23	63	3,026	6.9	2.3	3.8
Central & South-East Europe	20	223	12,069	6.0	8.0	15.7
Asia & Other Countries			162			0.2
Not Reported	3	60	1,736	0.9	2.1	2.3

/ Data for Census Division No. 16, and for the Province taken from the Alberta Census, 1926, Table 10, p. 195.

Another approach to the question of ethnic origins on the north frontier is made by comparing the birthplaces of Peace River farm operators with those for the province as a whole. The survey sample of 332 farm operators is also presented for comparison with all farm operators in Census Division No. 16. Two circumstances make the comparison less valid than it might have been. The survey sample was collected in 1930, while the data for the other groups is taken from the 1926 census. The sample therefore includes 80 farm operators who have settled in the area since the above census data were gathered. Again, the sample includes 55 men from the Peace River Block, an area for which corresponding data for the total farm operators are not available. These discrepancies are not great enough, however, to obscure the similarities between older and newer regions.

The British-born operators are slightly over-represented in the survey sample as compared with the two other groups, and this applies mainly to the group born in the British Isles. The United States born operators, on the other hand, are slightly under -represented, having only 19.9 per cent as compared with 23 - 25 per cent for the two larger areas. For the rest, the sample gives slightly more preference to operators from North and West Europe than is warranted by the proportions for the Census Division.

The sample is on the whole fairly representative of the total farm operators in the Peace River Area, in so far as birthplace can be taken as a criterion of ethnic background.

The immediately preceding tables indicated in quantitative terms some of the social environmental factors in the Peace River Area. Its population was found to be youthful, predominantly male and composed of a variety of ethnic elements. Its age and sex distributions follow a trend similar to those for the whole province, but the rate of progress varies widely as between

older and newer districts. As regards principal ethnic origins and birthplaces of farm operators the new region presented, with minor differences, a population as heterogeneous as the whole province.

The interaction between this frontier population and the physical environment which surrounds it has up to this point been traced through the earlier settlement periods. The stage is set as it were for the phenomenal development of village and rural communities which forms the topic of discussion in the following pages.

CHAPTER III

DISTRIBUTION OF VILLAGE CENTRES WITH THEIR SERVICES AND INSTITUTIONS.

In the preceding chapter an outline was presented of the physiographic features of the Peace River area. A brief deseription was also given of the earlier stages in the settlement process, including some reference to the modes of exploitation, the population elements and the social organizational structure which predominated in each period. The present chapter deals with the later agricultural period and particularly with the growth of trade centres and the trends toward regional centralization of various economic and social institutional services. Reference will first be made to the more important conditioning factors such as transportational and communicational changes and their influence on the rise of new villages and towns. Next follows a general discussion of present sociological theories regarding the classification, growth, and interrelationships of modern trade centres. Some of the studies made of rural communities in older settled regions, especially on this continent, have led to the formulation of certain concepts and hypotheses in the light of which we may attempt to interpret the Peace River data. Information obtained from fourteen trade centres will then be summarized, particularly with regard to the economic, professional and social facilities they provide for the adjacent farming communities as well as for their own residents. Indication will be given of some tendencies toward a division of function among these centres and therewith also toward the integration of the whole region as one large community. Finally, an attempt will be made to show

how accessible in terms of physical distance these village services are to a sample group of 332 Peace River farm families.

The coming of the railway to the Peace River country was the greatest single factor in bringing the period of isolated settlements to a close and ushering in a new era of extensive agricultural development. The primitive canoe, the pack horse, and the canvas-covered sleigh gave way to modern freight and passenger trains. The time-distance between Grande Prairie and Edmonton, the nearest large city was reduced from three or four weeks to one or two days and later to twenty-four hours. Semi-weekly train service throughout the year and lowered transportation costs made the world markets for wheat, cattle and other farm produce accessible to Peace River farmers. Without these improvements the north country would have remained an isolated region which could support only a few hundred trappers and squatters.

The railway followed the most accessible route already marked out by old pack trails. (See Fig. 1 Base Map) From Edmonton it went north for a distance of 136 miles to the first divisional point at Smith. Here it crossed the Athabaska River and turned west along the south shore of Lesser Slave Lake, then north-east to the second divisional point at McLennan, a distance of 267 miles from Edmonton. The main line continued in a westerly direction, crossed the Smoky River and reached Spirit River at mileage 362. A projected extension further west to Pouce Coupe was abandoned after a roadbed some 55 miles in length had been completed, and the main line turned southward instead for about 50 miles until Grande Prairie was reached. [1] Meanwhile a branch line from McLennan to Peace River was completed and

[1] F. H. Kitto - The Peace River Country - Revised edition, pp. 60-61.

the railway was opened to general traffic in 1916.

Much of the territory through which the northern railway passes, before it reaches the Smoky and the Peace Rivers consists of rough waste-land, swamps, and low-lying wooded stretches. There is a two-hundred mile section between Edmonton and McLennan which produces little or no freight earnings. This "traffic desert" greatly increases the overhead costs of the railway system and accounts in part for its perpetual financial difficulties.

After a five-year lull in railway construction between 1916 and 1921 a new policy was adopted by which 15 to 45 mile extensions were added from time to time. From Grande Prairie the line pushed westward, reaching Wembley in 1924, Beaverlodge in 1928, Hythe in 1929, Pouce Coupe in 1930 and Dawson Creek in 1931. To the north the wide expanse of the Peace River proved a formidable barrier, but it was eventually crossed by a million-dollar bridge and the branch line was extended to Berwyn in 1921 or '22 to Whitelaw in 1924, to Fairview in 1928, and to Hines Creek in 1931.[2] The delay in crossing the Peace River retarded the agricultural development of the Fairview-Berwyn prairies which were homesteaded as early as those south of the Peace. General agricultural development and growth of economic and institutional services in the northern section of the Peace River has therefore not kept pace with the developments in the southern settlements.

Apart from the penetration of the railway to the Peace River Area there were a great many other improvements in communication at this time. A Dominion Government telegraph system was built well in advance of settlement. It extends from Edmonton via Grouard,

2 Ibid.

Peace River, Dunvegan, and Grande Prairie as far west as Hudson Hope, and gives most of the settled areas direct connection with outside points. A recent important addition to the system was a branch line from Grimshaw northward via Battle River and Keg River settlements to Fort Vermilion. The older settled districts and trade centres are also served by a long-distance telephone system built by the provincial government. Close co-operation exists between these two services so that telephonic messages can be relayed to outside points over the Dominion telegraph lines. Rural telephone service has so far been provided only in the older districts close to Fairview and Grande Prairie. The two systems are owned by private companies and are linked up with the larger government-owned services.

Great activity in road construction during the last two decades has been further means of opening up and connecting scattered rural settlements. A network of farmers' market roads and better grade highways has gradually been built, partly by provincial aid and partly by means of local taxation. The most important of these undertakings is the provincially-owned highway from Peace River via Dunvegan and Grande Prairie to the Alberta-British Columbia boundary. Branch lines have also been built from Grande Prairie eastward to Sturgeon Lake, from Roycroft to Wanham, and from Grimshaw to Notikewin in the Battle River district. (See Fig. 1 Base Map) The British Columbia government subsidized road construction in the Peace River Block so that in addition to the Pouce Coupe - Fort St. John extension of the Alberta highway there are branch lines from Pouce Coupe to Rolla Landing and to Sunset Prairie. (See Fig. 1) Truck service became possible in 1926-27 from Rolla and Pouce Coupe to the then "end of

steel" at Beaverlodge, and a great impetus was thereby given to agricultural development in the Peace River Block.

One of the greatest drawbacks in the road situation was removed in 1930 when the provincial highway between Edmonton and Peace River was completed. It follows the same general route as the railway and is a fairly good motor road except during rainy seasons and when the snow is deep.

The railway bridge at Peace River is used also for highway traffic, and other important links in the northern road system are the government ferries across the Athabaska River at Smith, across the Peace River at Dunvegan and at Taylor's Flats in the Peace River Block.

Of all these modern means of communication and transportation the railway played the chief role in the re-alignment of the earlier settlement pattern. It was routed through the most fertile districts but its stations were located anywhere from one to four miles from existing open country centres. The new village sites laid out in rectangular subdivisions and blocks with streets that were eighty to one hundred feet wide were commonly located in a field. The nearby crossroad centres faced the alternative of moving or losing their trade. A common procedure was to move the old village bodily to the new location as was done in the case of Beaverlodge. The present site was a bare field in August 1928. A month later it became the newest "end of steel" west of Grande Prairie. In less than three months a hundred houses, including a score of business establishments, had been moved from Old Beaverlodge, which was a mile from the new centre. Sometimes this moving of old centres involved a change of name. Thus Bear Lake Settlement became Berwyn and Waterhole was

renamed Fairview. One great advantage in moving these rural hamlets was that of a fresh start on a planned townsite. The earlier indiscriminate clustering of stores, residences and barns gave way to better spacing along regular streets and to improved sanitary conditions.

These changes in the location of centres were not without their drawbacks, however. Apart from the actual cost involved in moving there was some disorganization of institutional facilities. Changes had to be made in the boundaries of school districts and in the areas served by the churches. But these temporary dislocations were on the whole compensated for by the rapid growth of the new villages which made stronger organizations possible. Each new "end of steel" became a scene of feverish activity and rapid business expansion. Retail merchants, land speculators and business agents of all sorts flocked in and the tide was further swelled by new agricultural settlers. Business boomed, especially while railway construction gangs, carpenters and laborers added their numbers to the village population. Multiplication of units in the basic retail services naturally resulted from the desire of various interests to share in the general prosperity. The reflation period followed within a year or two when the railway pushed on into new territory. Business failures, decline in land and commodity prices, and an exodus of population characterized this stage. Gradually the little trade centre adjusted itself to the role of serving only the adjacent farming areas while the boom surged on like a wave to the newest "end of steel."

A concrete illustration of a frontier town in the boom stage was presented by Hythe in the summer of 1930. Owing its origin entirely to the railway it attracted a population of three to four hundred people

within a year. [3] At the time of the field workers' visit it was still in the "tent and shack" stage. The business places were for the most part one-story, unpainted buildings, and many owners lived at the back of their premises. Other residences included one or two-roomed shacks and tents pitched on vacant lots. The streets were not yet gravelled and there were few sidewalks. Hythe is known as the "town of flowing wells," because of the presence of Artesian wells, an exceptionally fortunate possession in a region where a good water supply is difficult to obtain.

A commercial inventory, as taken in July 1930, showed that Hythe had forty-nine different business interests. The total retail turnover for the year ending in July 1930 for twenty-six of the largest units (not including implement agencies) was estimated by a local financial authority, and placed at over one million dollars. [4] The array of business establishments included bank, general stores, hardwares, harness shops, blacksmith shop, lumber yards, a bakery, stores for meat, groceries, ready-made clothing and jewelry. Personal services included two hotels, four restaurants, a licensed liquor store and a barber shop.

The rapid mechanization of farming in this new area and the increasing dominance exerted by distant manufacturing centres is evidenced by two gasoline and oil stations, four garages, four grain elevators, and no less than six agricultural implement agencies. The presence of thirty tractors on farms within a six-mile radius from Hythe helps to explain why more land had been broken in this district during the last year than in the twelve previous years of settlement. The slow

3. The 1931 Census of Canada reported a total population of 358 for Hythe.

4. Grande Prairie is the only centre among the fourteen trade centres included in this survey whose business turnover exceeded that of Hythe.

progress of the earlier years is explained by the lack of railway facilities. The Hythe farmers were forty-five miles from the nearest railway point as late as 1924.

The boom period in Hythe is also reflected in its professional, civic and social facilities. It has already attracted a doctor, a dentist, and a veterinary surgeon, while legal services are provided by lawyers from nearby villages. Local self-government has already been obtained and is vested in three village councillors. Other public officials include a police magistrate and a field supervisor for the Soldiers' Settlement Board.

The social organizations in Hythe exemplify the types of services which present day pioneers demand. A four-roomed public school which was nearing completion and the plan to engage three teachers in the fall of 1930 indicated an active interest in education. Religious interests were served by three different denominations, two of which had already erected their churches. Much interest in fraternal and recreational organizations was evidenced by four lodges, three of which had affiliated sister organizations, and no less than six athletic clubs. Occasional dances, card parties and moving pictures in the two local shows offered further recreation to village and country people alike.

Some of the larger festive occasions in Hythe include the concerts supplied by visiting Chatauqua entertainers, and the animal sports day, held twice already. The latter event is one way in which local boosters "put their town on the map" of the north country. Members of the village council, the board of trade and a number of other business men are active in planning the programme which includes baseball and basketball tournaments, horse races, and athletic contests. In 1930 this event lasted two days and drew over a thousand spectators. The

new "mushroom" town was thereby effectively advertised to all parts of the north country.

Attention must be turned now from this somewhat spectacular example of frontier community development to an analysis of both larger and smaller trade centres in the Peace River area. A comparison of their economic and social facilities will help to evaluate the present stage of development in Hythe.

The rising tide of migration consequent upon the entry of the railway to the north country included a great many people who were not directly interested in farming. Retailers, shopkeepers and agents of various sorts formed a large part of the new village populations. The old town of Peace River increased its total from 742 to 980, a gain of over thirty-two percent in the five-year period preceding 1921. Grande Prairie trebled in size from 337 to 1061 during the first five years after the railway came. Spirit River and Clairmont, also located on the railway, had by 1921 attained populations of 210 and 130 respectively. In spite of the post-war depression which was reflected in a decrease of population for the whole area [5] the number of village people increased during the period 1921-26. Extension of the railway into new territory gave rise to half a dozen new centres including Berwyn, Brownvale and Whitelaw to the north, and Dimsdale and Wembley to the south of the Peace, each with a population varying between one and three hundred people. Improved economic conditions and further railway construction accelerated the growth of villages in the late 1920's, when Fairview, Beaverlodge and Hythe appeared.

This recent commercial expansion in the Peace River Area was due

5. See Table 1 Chapter II.

not only to the scramble among individual trades for profit but to the invasion of the frontier by large business corporations. Independent dealers continued to dominate the retail trade for consumers' goods such as general merchandise, hardware, meat, clothing, drugs and beer, but chain organizations control the market for lumber, farm implements, tractors, automobiles and motor fuel. Banks, grain elevator companies and livestock shipping associations likewise established their branches here, as elsewhere in the Canadian West.

In spite of this tendency toward standardization of economic services the rate of growth varied for different trade centres. Distances between them, their location with respect to fertile soil areas and aggressive business methods were among the influences at work. Farm families were also agents in the process. The improvement in road conditions and more general use of automobiles enabled them to travel farther in one day and gave them a degree of choice as to where they would buy their goods and services. The relative monopoly formerly enjoyed by trades in the earlier crossroad centres thus gave way to keen competition, not only among rival merchants in the same village, but among adjacent trade centres. The result was a division of function among them. Some centres continued to be service stations supplying groceries, lumber and hardware, as well as shipping facilities to the nearby rural neighbourhoods, while others developed additional specialized facilities which attracted customers within a radius of fifty or a hundred miles.

In order to analyse this situation in the Peace River area it becomes necessary to distinguish among different types of trade centres. They may be classified according to population, number of business

units, total retail turnover[6] important business and communicational facilities[7] or in terms of the main functions they may perform.[8] The first method is used in Census Reports, the second and third by commercial rating firms, such as Bradstreet's, while sociologists have evolved the more complex classifications. Zimmerman's method [9] which is particularly useful for this study, terms a trade centre " "independent," or "secondary" if it is served by railway and has a bank, a local newspaper, as well as postal, telegraph and express offices. A trade centre lacking one or more of these services is to that extent "dependent" on another village or town. The assumption implied in this classification is that the above named facilities are necessary to any modern trade centre in order to attract customers living beyond the immediate neighbourhood.

American sociologists have in recent years given increasing attention to the study of rural trade centres, with special emphasis on their changing relationships to each other and to the surrounding country. Sanderson and Gillette [10] hold the theory that modern communication facilities together with a rising standard of living result in a tendency for rural life to become organized about major trade centres

6. B. L. Melvin, "Village Service Agencies in New York 1925." Cornell Bulletin No. 493.

7. C. C. Zimmerman, "Farm Trade Centres," University of Minnesota Bulletin No. 269, P. 10; cf. H. P. Douglass, "The Little Town," pp. 37 - 42. See also Sorokin, Zimmerman and Galpin, "Source Book in Rural Sociology", Chap. V.

8. J. H. Kolb, "Service Relations of Town and Country", University of Wisconsin Research Bulletin No. 58 gives a composite classification of trade centres varying from the single-service type to the urban and highly specialized type.

9. See Footnote 7, above.

10. D. Sanderson, "The Rural Community" 1932. pp. 564 - 565, and J. M. Gillette, "Relations Between Town and Country", Am. Soc. Pub. 1928, P. 114.

which can supply specialized goods and services. This view implies that there is a tendency (at least in the United States) for small, elementary centres to disappear. This theory is challenged by Zimmerman and Fry [11] who hold that there is a division of function between larger and smaller centres, and that the smaller centres do not necessarily disappear. Of particular interest to the Peace River survey is a recent study of Western Canadian trade centres.[12] The findings here are that there was actually a greater proportion of small, dependent villages in the Prairie Provinces in 1930 than in 1910. Still a third school, led by Kolb[13] advances the theory of fairly uniform distance relationships among centres of various sizes. This conslusion was based on evidence from Dane County, Wisconsin, where farmers tended to live not more than two or three miles from the nearest open country centre, while slightly larger villages were within a radius of four miles, and partly specialized and urban centres were fifteen to thirty-five miles away. This theory is derived from the study of old farming communities and is not wholly applicable to new sparsely settled regions such as the Peace River area. Yet Kolb's notion of "interrelation of service areas for various types of centres" [14] is suggested for the present study.

11. C. C. Zimmerman, "Farm Trade Centres in Minnesota", 1930. University of Minnesota Bulletin No. 269, PP. 38-42. cf. C. L. Fry, "American Villagers", 1926, Chap. III.

12. N. L. Whetten, "The Social and Economic Structure of the Trade Centres in the Canadian Prairie Provinces with Special Reference to its Changes 1910-1930."

13. J. H. Kolb, "Service Relations of Town and Country", 1923. University of Wisconsin Research Bulletin No. 58, P. 7.

14. Ibid. P. 8-9

Another useful hypothesis, and one about which exponents of the two last cited schools of thought are in substantial agreement, runs as follows: "Geographic distance, even in the presence of modern communication and transportation facilities, is a major determining factor in the distribution of farm trade centres." [15]

Keeping these different theories of rural trade centres in mind we may now turn to the study of fourteen Peace River towns and villages. Five of these are in the Fairview-Berwyn area north of the Peace, six are in the Grande Prairie district, and three are located in the Peace River Block. All but the last three centres were served by railway at the time of survey, and "steel" has since reached two of them, so that only one, namely Rolla, is still an open country centre.

Zimmerman's classification [16] of independent or secondary centres and dependent or elementary centres as given above was used in grouping the sample, but some account was also taken of the size of population, number of business units and the total retail turnover for the year ending in July 1930.

Using the three-fold classification of trade centres for the villages and towns studied in the Peace River Area, we get the following groups: (1) Small, elementary centres which include Brownvale north of the Peace, Clairmont near Grande Prairie, and Rolla and Dawson Creek in the Peace River Block. In 1930 these hamlets each had 50 to 150 people, 12 to 34 business units,[17] and $100,000 to $200,000 business turnover.

15. N. L. Whetten, op. cit.
16. C.C. Zimmerman, Farm Trade Centres in Minnesota, 1930 pp. 38 - 42; also see page 51.
17. The term "business unit" here means "business interest" rather than a separate establishment. Two or more interests are often combined, especially in the smaller centres. Examples are: hardware and agencies for implements or automobiles; garage and automobile salesrooms; real estate and fire insurance. Due to this overlapping, same establishments

(2) The larger elementary centres include Fairview,Berwyn, and Grimshaw, all located north of the Peace, and also Sexsmith, Wembley, Beaverlodge, Hythe, and Pouce Coupe which are situated in the settlements south of the Peace. These villages each had 100 to 300 people, 26 to 52 business units, and $200,000 to $500,000 total retail turnover. Fairview and Hythe, both "end of steel" towns at the time of survey, were exceptions with their "boom" figures of $600,000 and nearly $1,000,000 total business turnover. (3) Independent centres include Grande Prairie and Peace River. The latter does not come directly within the scope of this survey but some mention must be made of its functions with relation to the regions north and west of it. Grande Prairie had a population of 1464,[18] a total of 82 business units, and a regail turnover of more than $2,000,000. Peace River had 864 people, and a retail turnover of a little more than half of that for Grande Prairie.

A description of one centre from each of the above groups will indicate what economic and social facilities are likely to be found in centres of a given size. These case studies also show the division of function among trade centres, and therewith something of the trend toward regional integration. We may conveniently begin with the simplest type of centre and deal with the larger ones in order of complexity.

The hamlet of Brownvale fairly represents the small elementary centres in our sample. It is located north of the Peace River in the rural municipality by the same name, and owes its existence entirely to the railway. In 1930 it had a population of about 50 people, a total

17(cont'd)were inadvertently counted several times, and the figures for total business units in the Peace River centres are consequently too high.
18. 1931 Census of Canada.

of 17 business units and a retail turnover approximating $100,000. Its business establishments included five grain elevators, two general stores, two implement agencies, and one of each of the following services: hardware and furniture store, gas and oil station, livery and feed barn, blacksmith shop, bakery, and a small boarding house. The significant thing about these retail services, is, that all except the hardware store are branches of chain organizations whose headquarters are in Peace River, Grande Prairie or distant outside points.

Brownvale's dependence on outside points is further illustrated by the fact that while it has a railway siding and a loading platform it lacks a station and therewith also express and telegraph services. Banking facilities are available only three days a week and come under the supervision of the branch bank at Whitelaw, a larger village seven miles away. Berwyn, eight miles distant in the opposite direction from Brownvale, is the nearest point for medical, hospital, and legal services, and the same applies to such facilities as high school, agricultural and school fairs, sports celebrations, weekly movies, and dances.

This dependence on larger centres for social institutional facilities implies, of course, that Brownvale has few more organizations than are found in rural neighborhoods. It has a one-roomed elementary school, a Presbyterian church with its Ladies' Aid, an Orange lodge, a card club, a baseball and a basketball team. Civic improvements are at a minimum since the village is not large enough to be incorporated.

It is evident from the above circumstances that Brownvale plays the role merely of a shipping point and a service station for basic commodities. Situated as it is, within seven or eight miles distance from larger centres it is doubtful whether its functions in the immediate

future will increase very much.

Compared with small, elementary centres, such as Brownvale, the trade centres of the next largest type are much more complex. Wembley, a village situated about 15 miles west of Grande Prairie, fairly represents this group. Its total population approximated 200,[19] and the retail turnover for its 39 business units was about $340,000 for the year ending in July 1930. It had essential communication and financial services such as postal, telegraph, and railway facilities, and also a branch bank. There was a good deal of duplication in basic retail services, which included four grain elevators, five farm implement agencies, three gasoline and oil stations, two garages, two livery and feed barns, two blacksmith shops, a harness and repair shop, a lumber yard, a creamery, three general stores, and two hardwares. The business establishments relating to personal services included a barber shop, a drug store, two clothing stores, a hotel, a restaurant, and a laundry. The professions are represented by a doctor, two lawyers and a resident minister.

Wembley's incorporation as a village when the railway came in 1924, has made a number of civic improvements possible. They include gravelled streets, board sidewalks, seven public wells, and a community hall which seats 250 people. Sanitation provisions include two or three private cesspools, while scavenger work is done by a drayman. One particularly modern convenience is afforded by the electric light system which is supplied by power from Grande Prairie.

Wembley, in common with at least a score of other villages, is in many ways subsidiary to Grande Prairie. It depends on the larger centre

19. The 1931 Census for Canada gives Wembley a population of 183.

for wholesale supplies, a local newspaper, the public land office, provincial police, district and supreme court functions and a number of other governmental services. Wembley-ites go to Grande Prairie for hospital and dental services. The larger town also offers a wider range of consumers' goods then is commonly found in villages like Wembley. This applies especially to clothes, millinery, furniture, shoes, jewelry, automobiles, etc.

This dependence on the larger centre extends also to certain social and recreational services. A brief survey of Wembley's social organizations will serve to illustrate this point. The public school provides elementary education, but Grande Prairie was until recently the nearest high school centre. Extra-curricular school activities include those of basketball and baseball,teams, the annual school fair, and the school choir which participates in the musical festival at Grande Prairie. Wembley is the centre of a United church charge and a preaching point for an Anglican minister living at Grande Prairie. The United church congregation is particularly active, and has a Ladies' Aid, a Sunday school as well as Trail Ranger and C. G. I. T. clubs for boys and girls, respectively. In addition to these primary groups there are twelve other organizations in Wembley, namely a board of trade, a women's institute, Masonic and Orange lodges, an agricultural society and an athletic organization with subsidiary clubs for baseball, basketball, soccer, tennis, hockey and curling. Most of the athletic clubs are members of Grande Prairie sports leagues and participate in both local and out-of-town tournaments. Grande Prairie sets the standatd for annual sports celebrations, but it is a matter of great pride to Wembley-ites that their agricultural fair is rated higher than that of the larger centre. Local community consciousness is further linked with the achievements of Herman Trelle, a farmer

in the nearby district of Lake Saskatoon. Mr. Trelle's success in growing wheat, oats, peas and potatoes has won him several world championships and thereby made the name of Wembley known in several continents.

It is worthy of note that while village people are the leaders in most of the social organizations, the rural people participate in them too. The board of trade and the women's institute draw about one third of their members from adjacent rural districts. Country people are also members of several athletic clubs, mainly curling and baseball. They are of course active in the agricultural society and cooperate closely with the village people in organizing the annual fair. They share in social activities such as dances and weekly movies, and support athletic events in the role of spectators. There was some evidence of close relation between their distance from town and the amount of social participation in village affairs by country people. But further investigation is needed to show this relationship in quantitative terms. Interviews with farmers suggested however, that three or four miles is the maximum distance travelled by country people during the winter in order to practice curling.

The pattern of community organizations found in Wembley is typical for frontier towns of its size. The great diversity of interest groups in such frontier centres shows that urban influences are spreading rapidly to the margins of settlement. The ambitious of every village to become, if not the metropolis of the north, at least an independent centre is clearly seen in its organized town boosters, namely the board of trade, as well as in its multiplicity of clubs, lodges and socio-educational institutions.

There is as yet no dominant centre for the whole Peace River area, although commercial and social institutions tend to be centralized for the

areas of north and south of the Peace in the towns Peace River and Grande Prairie, respectively. Peace River is one of the oldest trade centres in the north and is strategically located for river, railway and highway traffic. Traditions of fur trading days still cling to it as it is the distributing point for all the trading posts further north. It also serves as a wholesale and administrative centre for the fertile prairies west and north of the Peace. Here are the district land office, head-quarters of the police, a modern municipal hospital, the Anglican bishop's palace, the Catholic Mission as well as flourishing public and high schools. The tourist and the landseeker may here meet the trader, the missionary or the Indian trapper coming up the river from distant northern points. Its beautiful location in the valley near the junction of the Peace and the Smoky rivers makes it one of the most attractive spots in the north country. Peace River's great drawback, however, is that it is at the south-east corner, rather than at the centre of its trade area. There is little agricultural land directly east and south of the town, and its future seems therefore to be that of a gateway to the north rather than the centre of a constellation of towns and villages.

Grande Prairie, in contrast with Peace River, is much more fortunately situated. It is near the geographical centre of a large and expanding agricultural settlement. Its position and its network of transportation and communication facilities explain why the town continued to grow after the railway pushed further west. It is the distributing centre for all points south of the Peace River from the Smoky River to Hudson Hope, and its wholesale houses include dealers in groceries, meat, fruit, lumber, hardware, oil, gasoline, farm implements, automobiles, in fact all the goods which find ready sale among modern agricultural people.

Here also are several manufacturing plants including those for ice cream, bread and pastry, doors and sashes, electric power and the local weekly paper. In regard to outside economic relations Grande Prairie, like Peace River, is mainly under the dominance of Edmonton, the capital of Alberta. But a number of other Canadian cities are also supply centres for the Peace River area. General merchandise , hardware and drugs come from Winnipeg and Calgary, lumber and fruit from Vancouver and other points in British Columbia, while furniture, automobiles, oil and gasoline come directly from Eastern cities. The Peace River area is then a trade frontier, not only for Alberta, but for the greater part of Canada.

Grande Prairie is the administrative centre for the region south of the Peace for a great many governmental services. It has a public land office, the only court house north of Edmonton, provincial police detachment, and a large municipal hospital. It is the district centre for three chartered banks as well as for several mortgage and trust companies, for agricultural agents, inspectors of highways, schools, noxious weeds, and for provincial departments for natural resources, and the headquarters of two rural municipalities, as well as the town council. Professional, educational and religious facilities have kept pace with economic development. Grande Prairie has several doctors, dentists, lawyers, and veterinary surgeons, a school inspector and about a dozen teachers. It has both elementary and secondary public schools, a Catholic separate school, and it is the centre for no less than eight denominations, six of which have their resident ministers there.

In general appearance Grande Prairie is a typical western town with its rectangular blocks and its wide streets. Its civic improvements include gravelled streets bordered by sidewalks, chemical fire fighting apparatus,

daily delivery of water from public wells, garbage disposal to a dumping ground outside the town limits, privately-owned electric light and telephone systems the latter of which serves adjacent rural districts. The recent appointment of a committee under the provisions of the Town Planning Act of Alberta indicates an organized attempt on the part of the citizens to guide the future development of their town.

An almost urban complexity characterizes Grande Prairie's social organizations. In addition to the schools and the churches already mentioned it has no less than 32 societies for young and old, including a board of trade, a women's institute, eight agricultural associations, eight lodges, ten athletic clubs, and six organizations exclusively devoted to the interests of young people and adolescent boys and girls. Its two theatres provide the only "talkies" in the north country and they alone attract visitors from all parts of the southern settlements.

The energies of many of these organizations are united in sponsoring the larger community events, such as the two-day sports celebration on July 1st and 2nd, the two-day agricultural fair, the school fair, the musical festival, the winter carnival and the chautauqua concerta. Other important local events are the district conventions and conferences held from time to time by various interest groups such as teachers, women's institutes, religious leaders,boards of trade, farmers' and farm women's political associations etc,, etc.

All these events provide direct contacts among people from all parts of the Peace River Area, and thereby make Grande Prairie an important centre for the moulding of public opinion. This together with its economic, administrative and social institutional functions gives it some foundation for the proud claim of being "the hub of the north country."

The services found in Grande Prairie also indicate that this section of the frontier, at least, is rapidly emerging from the pioneer stage.

The discussion on the types of trade centres in the Peace River Area and their various interrelationships is not complete without some reference to the theory that small elementary centres tend to be eliminated by the advent of good roads and motor traffic. While the Peace River data are far from complete in this point, such information as was obtained does not substantiate the above theory. It is true that a great many earlier open country centres "disappeared" with the coming of the railway, but they "reappeared" as new commercial villages along the right-of-way. Such a shift in location forms part of the history of Fairview, Berwyn, Grande Prairie, Wembley, Beaverlodge, and Pouce Coupe. Moreover, a number of new centres sprang up along the railway owing to the regulations governing the maximum distance (about 8 or 10 miles) permissible between stations. It may further be noted that open country centres which are six miles or more from the railway seem to be holding their own. This applies to the little centres at Vanrena, Red Star, and Friedensthal north of the Peace, and to Bezanson, Glen Leslie, Halcourt, Rio Grande, and Valhalla among others in the Grande Prairie district. But in any case it is too soon to draw anything more than tentative conclusions on this point from a region which is far from having reached its optimum of population.

The case studies of trade centres in the previous pages indicated the array of social and economic facilities that have reached various sections of the new region. It is important, however, from the point of view of this study to discover how accessible these facilities are to the rural people. To this end a table was prepared showing the average

distances travelled by members of 313 farm households for various services. The sample was treated first as a total and then subdivided for old settled, transition and fringe areas so that a regional comparison would be made. (See Table IX). The average distance from 17 different economic and social facilities were listed in ascending order for the sample as a whole. The basic economic services and primary institutions are closest, i.e. within a range of 4.5 to about 11 miles. Specialized services such as bank, high school, hospital facilities and various professional facilities are 13 to 26 miles away.

It is significant to note the influence of the 67 households from the fringe areas in bringing up the general averages. In old settled and transition areas we find elementary school, church, post office and community hall within distances of 2.3 to 5 miles. Basic economic services, such as general store, hardware, lumber, implements, garage and bank are available within 5 to 8 miles, while specialized services are 8 to 16 miles away. The great drawback in the transition areas was the distance of 62.5 miles from shipping point. Even the newly settled fringe areas were closer to railway by an average of about 13 miles. But the railway has pushed into the Peace River Block since the summer of 1930, and the average distance from shipping point now would probably not be over 12 - 15 miles for the 52 households in the transition sample. The relatively low averages for most facilities in the transition areas, as compared with old settled districts is probably in part due to the method of sampling. The transition sample was collected close to Rolla and Pouce Coupe, while that from the old settled areas is widely scattered through Fairview, Berwyn, and Grande Prairie districts. (See Base Map.) The high averages for the fringe sample of 67 households means that many services such as school, church, bank, doctor

TABLE IX

AVERAGE DISTANCE FROM SPECIFIC TRADE, PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES FOR 313 PEACE RIVER FARM HOUSEHOLDS.

Types of Service	Total Sample-313 Households	Old Settled Areas-194 Households	Transition Areas-52 Households	Fringe Areas-67 Households.
1.Grade School.	4.5 miles	2.3 miles	2.9 miles	12.2 miles
2. Post Office	5.1 "	4.0 "	4.3 "	9.1 "
3.Community Hall	6.0 "	4.3 "	4.3 "	12.3 "
4. Farmers' Local	6.1 "	4.5 "	4.9 "	11.9 "
5. General Store	6.6 "	5.3 "	5.0 "	10.9 "
6. Chureh.	6.9 "	5.0 "	3.1 "	15.4 "
7. Hardware.	8.3 "	5.8 "	5.7 "	16.6 "
8. Lumber.	9.3 "	7.1 "	5.4 "	18.7 "
9. Implements.	9.8 "	6.7 "	5.9 "	20.3 "
10. Garage.	10.9 "	7.7 "	5.9 "	23.1 "
11. Doctor.	12.9 "	10.5 "	8.8 "	22.9 "
12. Bank.	14.0 "	8.1 "	5.7 "	35.9 "
13. High School.	19.7 "	11.4 "	8.3 "	52.7 "
14. Lawyer.	20.9 "	13.4 "	10.8 "	50.2 "
15. Dentist.	23.6 "	16.0 "	9.0 "	57.1 "
16. Hospital.	24.3 "	15.6 "	14.6 "	57.1 "
17. Shipping Point	25.9 "	7.8 "	62.5 "	49.8 "

and medical or dental services are virtually inaccessible to many of these people. The condition as regards school, church, bank, and basic economic services has likely improved a great deal during the three years since this survey was made. But the figures indicate some of the handicaps of pioneers during the early years of settlement.

The next two tables indicate the number of centres patronized by the 313 pioneer households for various types of goods and services. Table X summarizes the data with regard to "elementary services" which included general store, hardware, implements, garage and bank.[20] The term "all services" includes those of the first group, and also the following: post office, shipping point (nearest railway station), elementary school, high school, church, community hall, hospital, doctor, lawyer and dentist.

TABLE X

NUMBER OF TRADE AND SERVICE CENTRES PATRONIZED BY 313 PEACE RIVER FARM HOUSEHOLDS FOR ELEMENTARY SERVICES

Districts	Total Number of Farm Households	Number of Centres Patronized						Total Centres Patronized
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Old Settled Areas	194	123	60	11	-	-	-	20
Transition Areas (Rolla-Pouce Coupe)	52	44	7	1	-	-	-	4
Fringe Areas	67	16	41	10	-	-	-	6
Total Sample	313	182	105	26	-	-	-	27

20. The item "lumber" was omitted, because the data were incomplete. It would appear, however, that better grade lumber is obtained at the same centres as other basic necessities. Rough lumber was bought at local mills by the following number of farmers: 33 in old settled, 15 in transition, and 43 in fringe areas.

TABLE XI

NUMBER OF TRADE AND SERVICE CENTRES PATRONIZED BY313 PEACE RIVER FARM HOUSEHOLDS FOR ALL SERVICES

Districts	Total Number of Farm Households	Number of Centres Patronized						Total Centres Patronized
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Old Settled Areas	194	10	35	66	55	23	5	58
Transition Areas	52	-	-	23	18	7	4	11
Fringe Areas	67	1	13	11	11	16	15	13
Total Sample	313	11	49	100	84	51	18	77 /

/ This total does not equal the sum of the figures above it, because five centres, namely Peace River, Fairview, Grimshaw, Berwyn and Hythe were patronized by more than one of the sub-groups.

Elementary services are obtained in one to three centres by all the households. The wider scatter for the fringe sample, as compared with those from other areas, is due to the fact that there is little centralization of services as yet in the new settlements. It may be necessary, for example, to go to three different places for groceries, lumber and banking facilities.

Table XI shows that farm families patronize from one to six centres for all services. The modal groups for old and transition areas fall in the "three" centre column, while the totals in the "four centre" column are only slightly smaller. The wide scatter for the fringe group is again due to the lack of facilities within the areas concerned rather than to the exercise of choice on the part of farm families. In older settlements, on the other hand, a favorable location with respect to larger towns like

Grande Prairie or Fairview would obviously tend to reduce the number of centres patronized. It should be mentioned, too, that 26 of the 77 centres patronized are elementary school centres.In addition to these there are 14 places that serve as schools and community centres. This gives a total of 40 centres or about one-half of the total number listed whose functions are limited to their immediate rural neighborhoods. Yet even allowing for all these complicating circumstances the tables suggest two inferences as regards the trading habits of the 313 Peace River farm families. First, these families appear to buy basic goods and services in the centres nearest to them; secondly, they range farther afield to three, four or even more centres for all services, including the more specialized ones. This latter practice which has been facilitated by the advent of good roads and the increasing use of automobiles is an important conditioning factor in the division of function among trade centres, and in the consequent growth of larger specialized centres. The data raises several questions as to the frequency of direct contact made with the larger centres. How many times a year, for example, do farm families travel more than 15 or 20 miles on shopping expeditions, or to attend the hospital, doctor,or movie in a distant town? And what is the effect of the winter season in narrowing down the "cruising range" of rural people on the frontier? More detailed investigation is needed to answer these and similar questions.

The discussion in the preceding pages centred about the structure and growth of trade centres in the Peace River Area. The railway was seen to play an important role in integrating the frontier settlements, and in centralizing social and economic facilities in the commercial centres which dot its right-of-way at regular intervals. Some mention was made of the physical environmental factors which condition the more rapid growth of

certain centres as compared with others, and of the division of function which eventually results from this uneven rate of development. That the rural people also play a part in stimulating the growth of specialized service centres was seen from the tendency of farm families to patronize several trade centres for various consumers' goods as well as for professional and social institutional services.

While the division of function among trade centres was related here mainly to economic institutions and services,it applies equally well to social facilities. Specialized trade centres which have direct contact with a wide trade area tend also to be the places where larger social institutional facilities are developed. The relationship among these complementary institutions is one of mutual assistance, since their services by the very fact of their proximity to another, are more readily accessible to adjacent rural and village populations.

Brief reference has already been made to the types of social facilities one might expect to find in trade centres of different sizes. But a separate analysis of the regional organization of the frontier as regards religious, educational, health and recreational facilities is needed. This topic forms the subject matter of the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PEACE RIVER AREA.

In pioneer settlements as everywhere else, the daily lives of the people are characterized by a variety of interests and desires apart from those directly related to the business of making a living. Among them are the desires for religious participation, for education for one's children, for recreation of various sorts, interest in politics, in civic affairs, and a great many others. A variety of formal and informal interest groups are gradually developed to satisfy many of these needs and desires. The activities of these interest groups and the interrelations which in time are developed among them comprise a great deal of what is ordinarily termed community life.

An approach to the study of the social structure and growth of pioneer communities may therefore conveniently be made through these channels of group activity. By tracing the successive steps in their development, their functions and their distribution, we may gain some understanding, not only of the institutions themselves but of their place in the larger life of the neighborhood, the village or the whole region.

The analysis of the social organizational structure of Peace River communities will be treated under the following headings:

(1) Religious organization.
(2) Educational institutions.
(3) Hospital and health services.
(4) Socio-educational and recreational activities.

The three major topics of religion, education and health are then given separate mention, while a variety of other social, political and other leisure time organizations are grouped together. With these general comments, we may deal with each of the above topics in turn.

1. Religious Organization. The establishment of religious institutions in western pioneer regions forms one aspect of the larger community building process. The main interest here in studying this development is to discover how and when religious facilities become available to the settlers, and to note what adjustments are made, both by churches and by their followers, in response to the new environmental conditions. Our chief concern, in short, is to see how the church - any church - becomes a part of the social fabric in a new region.

Demoninational questions are, for the present purpose at least, of minor importance. No attempt will be made to determine the relative strength and rate of growth of specific religious groups. Hence in presenting any data for a given church the aim is to illustrate a typical stage or trend of events rather than to measure the growth or evaluate the work of that particular organization. The fact that references are made more often to some religious groups than to others is not due to a deliberate intention to belittle their contribution to the religious development of the area studied here, but rather to the lack of available data on the work of these groups.

Religious organization in pioneer areas passes through certain typical periods of development which may be characterized as follows:

(a) the itinerant or travelling missionary.
(b) the mission church.
(c) the self-supporting church.

It is important to emphasize that while these stages are applicable to religious groups in general, there is nevertheless great variation in the forms they take in different times and places, and even among different groups at work within a region at a given time. Moreover, the work of the churches in a given area does not advance along a solid front in the sense that all groups pass through the same stage at the same time. There may be great differences, for example, between the rates of progress of two organizations working

in the same locality at the same time, or between similar units of a given church as they function in adjacent settlements. Yet allowing for all these variations we can still trace common trends in the development of different denominational groups due to the fact that the new environment presents similar problems to all the churches in a given region.

Keeping in mind all these qualifying circumstances we may briefly characterize each of the above periods, as they apply to frontiers in general and to the Peace River Area in particular.

(a) Travelling missionaries in a pioneer region are the forerunners of organized religious groups. They are sent by distant religious organizations, and are entirely supported by outside funds. Their stay in any given locality is short, at best only a few months, and it is usually confined to the summer season. They seek to reach all settlers, irrespective of former religious affiliation and their services, which are characterized by a minimum of ritual, are held in schools, private homes or other available buildings. Their work is without doubt greatly appreciated by people who formerly participated in the religious life of older communities, but their chief function is probably that of preparing the way for more permanent religious organizations in the new area.

(b) The mission church is the next stage in religious development. Its work is carried on by an ordained resident minister, located as centrally as possible with relation to the people he serves. In addition to the congregation at the centre of his parish or charge, he visits several preaching stations in adjacent hamlets or rural districts. The number varies for different churches and depends also on the religious distribution in the areas concerned. Weekly services are held in the centre church while the outlying points are reached once or twice a month during the summer, but only at irregular intervals as weather permits during the winter.

The chief characteristic of the mission church as compared with that of an old established community is that it is heavily subsidized from

central church organizations. The cost of the church and the minister's residence erected at the centre of the charge is financed wholly or in large part by outside funds. The minister's salary likewise comes largely from outside sources, though as settlements grow older, an increasingly larger share is contributed by local congregations. The latter may also contribute to mission funds to be used elsewhere before they become self-supporting.

The central congregation is well organized as regards subsidiary groups whose leaders are drawn largely from the progessional and the business classes. One or two subsidiary groups may also be found at rural points, especially where there is a church building, but they are smaller and less well organized than those at the central church. Many rural points, however, lack all subsidiary organizations.

(c) The self-supporting church, as the name denotes, marks the final stage in frontier religious organization. The local congregation not only meets all its own church expenditure but contributes also to mission work in other communities. It may also give financial support to educational institutions, to hospitals, or to other larger group undertakings. Local autonomy implies some measure of control in the selection of ministers, and it may also mean that the minister devotes all or most of his time to the one congregation. The self-supporting churches on the fontier like those in old communities, have a complexity of subsidiary organizations, including a church board, women's auxiliary associations, missionary societies, one or more choral societies, young people's societies, boys' and girls' clubs, and well organized Sunday School and adult Bible classes. All these groups seek to satisfy within the church a variety of social, educational, as well as religious interests of their members and adherents. Most of the supporters of this type of church are members as in contrast

with mission churcheswhere the majority of people on the constituency roll are adherents rather than members. [1]

Before we apply the above generalizations about frontier churches to the Peace River Area it is necessary to analyse its population with regard to trends in religious distribution. The Roman Catholics formed the largest group up till 1911, at which date they outnumbered the Anglicans, the next larger group, by five to one. There were less than fifty people of either Presbyterian or Lutheran affiliation. Yet even at this time the area had no less than eleven denominational groups, as well as a small unspecified group. The period since 1911 has been one of rapid religious development, and it is closely related to the unparalleled expansion of agricultural settlement. The white population increased by more than a thousand percent in the census period 1911-1921, and the 1921 total was almost trebled during the next ten years.

The number of religious denominations in the area rose to nineteen in 1921 and to twenty-three in 1931. There were in addition several hundred people of various sects and a small number reported as "unspecified". The major groups in 1921 in order of their numerical strength were: Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Anglican, Methodist and Lutheran. The increase in the last three groups was quite marked by 1921. This is particularly true of the Presbyterian, which rose from a poor seventh to a good second and almost equalled the Roman Catholic group. The Methodists, now approximated the Anglicans in number and the Lutherans also show a proportionately larger increase than the latter group. Other groups which

1. The term "member" means a person who is definitely affiliated with a given religious organization, whether active or not, while an adherent is onewho is on the local constituency roll, irrespective of whether he has met all the qualifications for membership or not, This difference in relationship applies only to Protestant groups, since Roman Catholics are all considered members of their church.

warrant recognition include the Baptists, the Greek Church and the Mennonites.

Since 1921 the denominational distribution has changed, largely because of the church union in 1925 when the Methodist, the Congregational and the Presbyterian churches joined to form the United Church of Canada. This reduced the major religious groups in the Peace River Area to three, and accounts also for the disappearance of the two first mentioned groups from the census reports for 1931. The Presbyterians who remained outside the union continue to be listed under the old name. In 1951, this group comprised 3400 people in Peace River Area, or about 9.8 per cent of the total population. It seems a large proportion considering the number of Presbyterian congregations in the area, but is probably explained by the fact that many Presbyterian families, whether they attend other churches or not, yet retain their former affiliation.

The accompanying table shows what the trend in religious distribution for the Peace River Area has been during the last decade. The United Church group now leads, comprising about one-quarter of the total population. The Roman Catholic group, almost trebling its number, has maintained much the same proportion, nearly 23%, as in 1921. The Anglican group dropped from third to fourth place, and is exceeded by the Lutheran. The Anglican proportion decreased from 15.86 to 14.18%, while that for the Lutheran rose from 11.70 to 15.48% of the total population. The Baptists are decreasing in relative importance, while the Greek Church and the Mennonites, though still small, show proportions for 1931 that almost double their corresponding 1921 figures. The Adventists show a slight percentage increase, and the same applies to the group headed "Various", which includes Jews and members of Eastern Religions. Leaving out the groups "Other Sects" the combined Protestant groups bear a ratio of 2.6 : 1 to the combined Catholic groups.

TABLE XII.

RELIGIOUS DISTRIBUTION IN PEACE RIVER AREA FOR 1921 AND 1931. /

Denomination	Number of Persons		Percent of Total	
	1921	1931	1921	1931
All Groups	12,131	34,494	100	100
Church of England	1,924	4,889	15.86	14.18
Roman Catholic	2,759	7,914	22.75	22.94
United Church	- - -	8,717	-- -	25.27
Presbyterian	2,713	3,396	22.38	9.83
Methodist	1,835	- - -	15.13	- - -
Congregational	27	- - -	.22	- - -
Baptist	547	912	4.51	2.64
Lutheran	1,419	5,337	11.70	15.48
Adventists	43	302	.35	.88
Mennonites	90	630	.74	1.83
Other Sects//	442	665	3.64	1.93
Greek Church	282	1,441	2.32	4.18
Various///	46	255	.37	.74
Unspecified	4	36	.03	.10

/ The data for 1921 is for Census Division 16, while that for 1931 includes also the Peace River Block.

// Other Sects comprise Brethren, Christians, Church of Christ, Disciples, Christian Science, Evangelical Association, International Bible Students, Mormons, Salvation Army, and a number of unspecified sects.

/// Various includes Jews and Eastern Religions, such as Confucians, Buddhists, etc.

Note: Data from Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. I, T.38, and from Census of Canada, 1931, Bulletin No. XXI, T.7.

As regards the distribution of the major religious groups in various parts of the Peace River we may compare a sample group of 313 farm households from old settled, transition, and fringe areas with the census data for the corresponding settlements.

TABLE XIII.

RELIGIOUS DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO AREA FOR 313 PEACE RIVER FARM HOUSEHOLDS
(All Persons Included Irrespective of Age.)

Areas	Total Households	Total Persons	Protest-ants	Rom. Cath.	Unspec-ified.	Percentage Distribution Prot.	R. Cath.	Unspec.
Old Settled	194	682	439	153	90	64.4	22.4	13.2
Transition	52	174	131	14	29	75.3	8.0	16.7
Fringe	67	234	170	19	45	72.7	8.2	19.1
Whole Sample	313	1,090	740	186	164	67.9	17.1	15.0

Note: Average No. of Persons per household for whole sample....3.5
" " " " " Protestant household.....3.7
" " " " " Roman Catholic household....4.3
" " " " " household for Unspecified....2.4

The "Unspecified" group includes 38 single male households.

The Protestants comprise 67.9% of the whole sample, Catholics (including Greek Catholics) 17.1%, while the religion of 15% was unspecified. How representative this sample of the whole Peace River Area is, may be judged from the fact that in 1931 72% were listed as Protestants, 27% as Catholics,[2] and about 1% was unspecified. The unspecified group in the sample is exceptionally large and is partly accounted for by the fact that enumerators

2. 1931 Census of Canada, Bulletin No. XXI, T.7. These data include the Peace River Block Population, but not the 1333 people in Battle River Settlement who live north of Census Division 16.

failed to obtain specific information on the question of religious affiliation. This group is proportionately larger in transition and fringe areas than in older settlements, though in terms of absolute numbers the situation is reversed. It is significant, too, that out of 68 households in the unspecified group 38 were those of single males. One suspects that lack of church facilities or of religious interest also help to explain the large proportion here.

Turning to the sub-areas we find the Catholic sample for the old settled areas fairly representative, with 22.4% as compared with 17% to 29% for the total population in these settlements. The Protestants accordingly are under-represented, unless we assume that most of those in the unspecified group belong to the Protestant sample.

The reverse situation holds in the transition and fringe areas. The Protestants are over-represented with 75 and 73% respectively, as compared with 70 and 64 for the total population in these settlements. The Catholic sample of 8% for the newer areas is far too small, since this religious group comprises 29 to 35% of the total population in transition and fringe areas respectively.

This great difference is explained by the fact that economic and geographic rather than religious factors have formed the basis of collecting the survey sample. But in spite of these discrepancies the sample is probably fairly representative of the area studied.

The census data in the preceding tables indicate that the religious life of Peace River Area at present revolves about three major groups, namely, the Roman Catholic, the Anglican and the United Church. But in addition to these there are eight other denominational groups, each totalling more than 300 people, nine smaller Protestant sects, a few Jews, some members of

Eastern religions, and finally, an unspecified group. In three decades the area has attracted one-tenth as many denominational groups as the whole of the United States with its centuries of religious history. The social significance of such a multiplicity of religious groups is far-reaching, the more so, since their members have scattered widely and are mingled in nearly every locality. Exceptions do occur, as in Friedensthal and Valhalla where German and Scandinavian pioneers have clustered in group settlements. But the problem of all the churches is essentially the same, namely that of reaching a widely scattered constituency. Moreover, their difficutlies include not only those imposed by geographic, climatic and economic conditions but also the indifference to church matters on the part of many settlers, and the competition that necessarily develops where two or more churches are working in the same area. Just how these conditioning factors affect the distribution of religious facilities is the matter to be considered in the following pages.

Some indication of the distribution of religious facilities in Peace River can be obtained from a description of church organizations in successive zones of settlement. Only the more objective facts will be dealt with here, such as areas served, church buildings, place of residnece of minister, frequency of services, types of subsidiary organizations, etc.. There has been no attempt to obtain complete data about all the churches for the whole area. No reference for example is made to the Spirit River district, or to those adjoining the town of Peace River. It is thought, however, that the churches for which data are to hand, are fairly representative of the region.

There is a marked concentration of religious organizations in the railway towns and villages. Most centres have at least one, but more often two or three churches, each with their resident ministers, and each has in addition one or more minority groups served by ministers living elsewhere.

The presence of a church generally implies a resident minister and vice-versa, but there are a few congregations who have one without the other. The following table shows the multiplication of services in 14 trade centres, and indicates a direct relationship between size of centre and number of congregations.

TABLE XIV

DISTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS FACILITIES IN PEACE RIVER TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Centre	Total Population	No. of Congregations Served by Resident Ministers	No. of Groups Served by Visiting Church Leaders
Grande Prairie	1,464	6	2
Berwyn	200	4	1
Fairview	260	3	1
Hythe	278	2	2
Wembley	183	2	2
Beaverlodge	211	2	1
Sexsmith	304	1	2
Rolla	150 (App.)	1	3
Pouce Coupe	150 (App.)	3	1
Dawson Creek	100 (App.)	1	1
Whitelaw	100	1	3
Grimshaw	137	2	2
Brownvale	50	-	3
Clairmont	110	1	1

As regards denominational distribution of churches the pattern follows closely that of the various religious elements. The Roman Catholics have strong congregations in Grande Prairie, Pouce Coupe, at Friedensthal near

Fairview, and at Berwyn. The Lutherans have resident ministers at Berwyn and at Valhalla, each of whom serves a number of preaching points. The work of the Presbyterian group is centred at Grande Prairie and at Brownvale, with a resident minister at the former centre. United Church and Anglican congregations are the most numerous, as one would expect from the proportions they form of the total population. They have church buildings and resident ministers in practically all villages with populations of 150 people or more; the smaller villages are preaching points for one or both of these denominations, and these centres often have only one church building.

As one passes from these centres, however, out into the open country there is a rapid "falling off" of religious facilities. Church buildings are few, and found only in older settlements such as Griffin Creek, Lake Saskatoon, and Bezanson. Hence Rural schools become alternative meeting places. The schools within a 15-mile radius of a larger village centre reflect something of the diversity of services found in the latter, since they are preaching points for two, or sometimes three different denominational groups. This applies for example to Erin Lodge, Lothrop and Kerndale schools near Fairview, and to Buffalo Lake and Bezanson schools in the Grande Prairie districts. In the more distant rural settlements there are still fewer churches, and schools or private homes serve as meeting places.

The cost and type of church buildings vary for different religious groups and different places. Log churches or small frame buildings, built at a cost of $500 to $1,000 are commonly found in rural districts. In the village centres frame structures costing from $1,000 to $6,000 are found, while still more expensive and spacious churches are found in larger towns such as Grande Prairie. Distant organizations have helped to finance these churches, either by gifts or loans; the amount of outside assistance varies

for different groups, but one-third from the local congregation and the rest from outside sources are common proportions. The local church property also includes minister's residences, financed in the same way as the churches. They vary in cost between $1,200 and $24,000.

Most of the ministers in the Peace River Area. as has already been implied, live in the larger village centres. Exceptions occur in the case of the Lutheran minister at Valhalla, and the German-Catholic priest at Frienensthal both of whose congregations are strongest in the country. All the resident ministers are ordained men and many have done advanced theological study. Many of them, especially the leaders of the Catholic Church have been in the Peace River Area more than five or ten years. A few of the United Church and Anglican ministers are assisted by student supply during the summer months, but most of the student ministers are found in the outlying settlements, such as Hines Creek, Clear Hills, Peace River Block, etc.

It follows naturally from what has been said above, that the villages are favored in the matter of church services. The central churches of nearly all religious groups have weekly church services, throughout the year, and regular Sunday School classes as well. Nearby rural points are served once or at most twice a month by a given minister, and points further out are reached less often. The country points may not have church services for two or three months during the winter season. Only one minister of the score or more interviewed by field workers stated that he was able to reach his rural preaching points regularly throughout the cold season. The attendance at rural points varies between 12 and 20 persons; in the villages the average is 20 to 40 persons for the Protestant groups, and 60 or 70 for the Catholic congregations. Grande Prairie is an exception in that two of its major church groups have average attendances of more than a hundred people.

Subsidiary organizations are concentrated at the village centres, while

the rural districts have fewer and less well-organized groups. The larger congregations in Grande Prairie of both Protestant and Catholic churches have an almost urban variety of subsidiary groups, including church boards, women's associations, mission societies, choirs, young people's societies, dramatic clubs, Sunday Schools, and boys' and girls' clubs. Fewer of these groups are found in the smaller centres; those most commonly found are the church board, the women's auxiliary association, and the Sunday Schools. As we pass out to the rural districts, the numbers dwindle still more. Where there is a church building there will usually be a women's organization, whose functions are partly social but include also the raising of funds for church repair or for new equipment. Sunday Schools are found in the better settled rural districts, but there are few in fringe areas.

With regard to distances travelled to church there is a significant difference between Protestants and Catholics. The former usually attend whatever Church is nearest, so long as it is one of the larger Protestant family. The Catholics on the other hand, hold themselves aloof from all other groups and travel long distances to reach their own church services. These differences are closely related to the policies of their respective churches. The major Protestant groups invade all hitherto unchurched areas and seek to enlist the support of all, irrespective of former affiliation, while the Catholics seek to reach mainly their own people. The Catholics organize fewer but stronger congregations than the Protestants. The work of the latter, on the other hand, tends to be spread over larger areas, with a consequent overlapping among the several denominational groups. The coming of a second church in a given locality often weakens the first one, since many adherents leave the first group to join that of their own religious affiliation.

With regard to financial status the great majority of the Peace River

churches are still in the mission stage. Only two congregations in the area studied, namely, the United Church and the Roman Catholic groups in Grande Prairie were self-supporting. The other church groups, even in the larger centres such as Berwyn, Fairview and Hythe are subsidized to the extent of one-third to one-half of the minister's salary. The student missionaries are entirely supported by the central church organizations. Heavy subsidization characterizes the work of both the Roman Catholic and the United Church of the Battle River area, where new church buildings and residences for the ministers have been erected at total costs of $5,000 to $6,000, and entirely financed from the outside. The central churches also pay all current expenses at the present time.

Apart from the Battle River area, most fringe settlements are still in the travelling missionary stage, as regards religious facilities. Summer student supply and travelling missionaries visited Hines Creek, Clear Hills and distant parts of the Peace River Block. A Sunday School Mission Van under the auspices of the Church of England, visited Peace River Block in 1930, and missionaries sent out by the " Fellowship of the West", an Anglican organization in Montreal, also worked in these fringe settlements.

Apart from economic drawbacks, and difficulties imposed by the physical environment, there are the problems of assimilating diverse cultural elements. This difficulty faces the Catholic churches, especially in Berwyn and Battle River. Their congregations include English, Irish, German, Polish, Ukrainian and Russian people, some of whom were born in Canada, while others are recent immigrants. The services are at present conducted in three languages, but the priests hope that in time English may become the common tongue.

With the above distribution of religious facilities in mind we may now proceed to study the other side of the picture, namely that of participation by individuals. A sample group of 313 farm households were studied in order to determine their religious interests as expressed in degree of affiliation, attendance, and financial contribution. These indices were studied for the sample as a whole, as well as for sub-groups representing old, transition and fringe areas, and the data are summarized in the following tables.

One test of the effectiveness of the church is the proportion of the population which it enrolls. Two types of relationship are commonly recognized, namely "members" and "adherents". The former are in the membership roll of the church, whether active or not. The adherents means all those whose names are on the constituency roll of a given congregation; they call themselves by a church name irrespective of whether they have met all the qualifications for membership. Every Catholic is considered a member of his church regardless of age. This is by no means the case for Protestants and besides, most Protestant churches set an age limit. In order therefore to make a fair comparison between the two major groups, the children below 13 years of age were excluded from the sample. This age limit is agreed upon by the Institute of Social and Religious Research in United States and further it is the age at which candidates are received for confirmation in the Church of England. Limiting the sample, then, to all persons 13 years or over gave a total of 749 persons, including 525 Protestants, 106 Catholics, and 118 of unspecified religion. The Catholics were all members; the Protestant group showed that 45.8 per cent were members, and the remainder, 54.2 per cent, were adherents; no data were available for the unspecified group. If we consider the 749 persons as one group we find 46.2 per cent were members; 38.1 per cent were adherents, and

15.7 per cent were not specified in either category. It is also of interest to note that 494 persons or 66 percent of this adult group attended church occasionally.

It is difficult to evaluate these data as to membership and adherence as there are no available figures for Canada by which we may compare them. In 1926 the proportion of church members for the total population of United States was 46.6 per cent.[3] If we consider the total population of our sample, placing the children in the same category as their parents, we find that 42.5 per cent are church members. This is probably a fairly high proportion for the rural population in a new area. The group of 118 persons, or 15.7 per cent of all adults raises certain questions. There are indications that the size of this group was due in part to the inability of enumerators to obtain data re religious affiliation. If more information were available this group would probably be somewhat reduced. In any case it is quite characteristic not only of frontiers, but of older areas to have groups of people who are wholly disinterested in religion.

The membership and adherence classification is, however, not an adequate one by which to measure religious interest, especially in new areas. A large percentage of adherents does not necessarily mean a lack of interest. This is particularly true in frontier congregations, where the membership, at least for Protestant churches, is rarely more than 50 per cent of the total population for a given group. This statement is borne out by the Peace River sample which showed that of the total adult Protestants attending church, 53.3 per cent were members, while the remaining 46.7 per cent were adherents. (See Footnote

3. H.G. Tuttle, unpublished thesis - McGill University, 1930, p. 76.

of the following Table.)

TABLE XV

ATTENDANCE OR NON-ATTENDANCE OF ALL PERSONS 13 YEARS AND OVER

FOR THE TWO MAJOR RELIGIOUS GROUPS

	Number of Persons			Percentages	
	Total	Attending	Non-attending	Attending	Non-attanding
All Groups	631	494	137	78.3	21.7
Protestants	525	408/	117	77.7	22.3
Roman Catholics	106	86	20	81.1	18.9

Note: No data were available for the "unspecified" group of 118 persons.

/ 217 persons or 53.3 per cent of the total Protestants attending church are members; the remaining 191 persons or 46.7 per cent of the attending group are adherents.

We must turn now to the attendance data for the two major religious groups in the sample . All children below 13 years of age have been excluded, and likewise the unspecified group of 118 persons for which no data were available. The Table indicates that 78.3 per cent, or well over three-fourths of all Protestants and Catholics in the sample attend church. Of the two major groups, the Catholics rank first with 81.1 per cent attending church, and the Protestants second with 77.7 per cent. Complete lack of religious facilities as well as distances to church complicate the situation regarding attendance. In this connection it may be noted that the average distance to church for the survey sample of 313 households was 6.9 miles for

the whole group. But regional averages disclosed great differences between old and new districts. The figures were 5, 3.1 and 15.4 miles for old settled, transition and fringe areas respectively. (See Table IX , Chapter 111.) The relatively low average for the transition areas is probably due to sampling of families close to village or open country centres, while the high average distance for the fringe settlements means that the church facilities are virtually lacking for a large proportion of the households sampled.

The information with regard to frequency of attendance is summarized below. . The distribution shows a concentration below 5 times and above 50. The Protestants are largely responsible for the low attendance figures, although it is noted that the Catholics have 18.9 per cent of their number in the low attendance group. The Catholic group definitely leads in the high attendance frequencies, with 38.6 per cent attending church 40 times or more, while only 12 per cent of the total Protestant group show this frequency. The concentration in the groups below 10 is in part due to the few opportunities these people had to attend church. The high attendance record of the Catholics is due in part to the opposite phenomenon. Of the 106 attending Catholics 81 persons, or 77 per cent of the Catholic sample, lived in the Fairview district where religious services were accessible once or twice a week. There were 39 persons in the sample who attended denominations other than their own; of these 34 attended the United Church, and 5 the Anglican. These figures bear out an earlier statement that Protestants who are interested in religion will attend whatever church is accessible to them until their own arrives. It is of course impossible to say what part of the low attendance figures is due to lack of opportunity and what part is due to lack of interest. But if we grant that sparse population and newness of

settlement are detrimental to church attendance it seems likely that religious interest varies less from place to place than the attendance figures would indicate.

TABLE XVI

FREQUENCY OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE DURING ONE YEAR FOR PERSONS 13 YEARS AND OVER FOR THE MAJOR RELIGIOUS GROUPS.

No. of times during one year	Total	Protestants	Roman Catholics
not attending	137	117	20
1 - 4	121	101	20
5 - 9	58	58	0
10 - 14	64	61	3
15 - 19	17	16	1
20 - 24	51	45	6
25 - 29	36	23	13
30 - 34	24	22	2
35 - 39	18	18	0
40 - 44	34	27	7
45 - 49	15	7	8
50 - 54	56	30	26
Total	631	525	106

In other words, if people in older and newer areas had equal opportunity to attend church the frequencies of attendance would be much more evenly distributed.

Religious interest has sometimes been measured not by membership or attendance, but by the "money measure". It is a debatable question whether the amount of financial support given to the church is a reliable index. It is fairly evident, from what has already been said about the Peace River area, that were it not for outside aid, this region would have little or no organized religious work at all. The data in the following Tables suggest, however, that the amount of church contribution is related, not so much to religious interest as to economic factors.

The distribution of church contributions for 636 persons is shown in the next Table. The percentage of the church population who give financial support to religious organization is very similar for the two major groups, i.e. 75.9 per cent for the Protestants, and 77.3 per cent for the Catholics. The average amounts given are also similar, i.e. $4.50 per person for the Protestants, and $4.70 per person for the Catholics. Relatively high proportions, i.e. 24.1 per cent for the Protestants and 22.7 per cent for the Catholics make no contribution, but to conclude that this is evidence of lack of interest in the church would be very rash indeed. It would rather seem, in view of the small contributions in general, as if it were lack of money rather than lack of interest which prevented these people from being more generous to their respective churches. That economic conditions are in great measure responsible for the small contributions made by farm families is further borne out if we compare old and new settlements. Table 18 indicates that relatively more people contribute

TABLE XVII

DISTRIBUTION OF CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 636 PERSONS 13 YEARS OR OVER.

Contributions	Total Persons	Protestants	Roman Catholics
$			
0	152	128	24
.01 - 1.99	73	64	9
2 - 3.99	119	104	15
4 - 5.99	84	66	18
6 - 7.99	67	55	12
8 - 9.99	36	30	6
10 - 11.99	39	29	10
12 - 13.99	14	9	5
14 - 15.99	2	0	2
16 - 17.99	6	6	0
18 and up	20	15	5
Total	636	536 ≠	106
Average Contribution per person	$4.52	$4.50	$4.70
Percentage of Group who contribute	76.1%	75.9%	77.3%

≠ This total includes 5 persons whose religion was not specified; they contributed a total of $15.00.

≠≠ The whole adult sample, inclusive of those whose religion was not specified was 749 persons; 64.6 per cent of this group contributed to church funds.

to the church in old settlements than in new, and furthermore, the average amount given per person is directly related to the stage of settlement.

TABLE XVIII.

CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 749 PERSONS 13 YEARS OR OVER, IN OLD SETTLED, TRANSITION AND FRINGE AREAS.

Areas	Total Persons 13 Years & Over	No. who contribute to the church.	Percent Contributing	Average Amount per person contributing.
				$
Old Settled	468	376	80.3	6.84
Transition	128	88	68.7	3.74
Fringe	153	90	58.8	1.03
Whole Sample	749 ✱	554	74.0	5.40

✱ This includes the "unspecified" group of 118 persons, of whom 5 contributed to church funds.

The theory that the economic status of farm households is a determining factor of how much they contribute to religious purposes is supported by the following Table. The 313 farm households in the survey sample were classified according to total cash income in $1000 groups. The average amount of church contributions by all households rises steadily from $2.48 in the lowest income group to $19.25 per household in the $4000 group, while a slight drop occurs for the highest income group. The proportion of households who contribute also increases as we pass from lower to higher income groups, and finally, the average amount given by those who actually contribute to the church is directly related to the size of income, varying as it does from

$8.64 per household in the lowest income group to $23.20 per household in the $4000 group. Total church contributions for the whole sample are $2906 or $9.28 per household.

TABLE XIX

RELATION OF TOTAL CASH INCOME TO CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR 313 PEACE RIVER FARM HOUSEHOLDS.

Total Cash Income Groups	No. of Households	Average Church Contributions for all households	Households actually contributing		
			Number	Percent of Whole Group	Average Amount Contributed
$		$			$
1 - 999	87	2.48	25	29.9	8.64
1000-1999	80	6.88	46	57.5	11.95
2000-2999	48	10.25	33	68.8	14.91
3000-3999	40	14.75	27	67.5	21.93
4000-4999	24	19.25	20	83.3	23.20
5000 and over	34	17.41	28	82.4	21.14
TOTAL	313	9.28	179	57.2	16.24

Two other items of living expenditure were compared with church contributions, namely the amounts spent on theatres (movies) and that spent on social activities, such as organizational fees, fairs, sports and other recreational activities. It was thought that this comparison might show the relative importance of the church to these rural families, insofar as the money measure is a reliable index. The average amount spent on theatres was $7.64 per household, while that for other forms of social participation was $23.38 per household. The theatre was a strong competitor of the church in all income groups, and in the highest group the theatre

won out; In only three cases out of 313 families did the church alone receive support. There were 179 families or 57.2 per cent of the sample who contributed to the church but it is safe to say that 95 per cent of the total supported either the theatre or other social activities or both. The amounts spent on the non-religious activities also reflects something of the attendance rate. Contributions may or may not be given at church services but the theatre and other activities charge admission fees. By the amounts spent on each one would conclude that the attendance interest runs higher for these activities than for the church. The figures, taken together with the fact that fewer denominational splits occur in the non-religious organizations, help to explain why the latter are soon maintained by local support while the churches remain in the mission stage for a long time.

It would be interesting to know what part village people play in supporting the frontier churches and how this proportion compares with support given to other community activities. Answer to this and similar questions would involve a closer study of village congregations themselves. The surmise here is that they, directly at least, contribute more money than rural people toward the work of the church.

2. Educational Institutions in the Peace River Area. The development of the schools in frontier areas, like that of churches, follows a cyclical trend, whose successive stages may be named as follows. (a) pioneer schools, (b) schools in older settlements. A brief outline of the characteristics of each of these stages will serve as a basis for interpreting the educational institutions of the Peace River Area.

(a) In unorganized frontier areas the matter of education is an individual concern. We have noted in earlier chapters the efforts of church organizations

to establish mission schools, particularly for Indian children. In areas that are sparsely settled by white people the problem of formal education is in many cases, entirely neglected. Some parents, however, attempt to solve the question by teaching their children at home, or else by making arrangements with others, perhaps neighbors, to instruct their children. Governments, too, have in recent years attempted as solution by organizing correspondence schools, in which children are directed in their studies from distant centres by means of instructions and exercises forwarded by mail. These efforts eventually result in the organization of state-supported schools, which are the main topic of discussion here.

The establishment of pioneer schools depends on a combination of circumstances, chief of which are: the influx of population, the initiative of local settlers, and the advice and financial assistance of outside governmental agencies. The characteristics of the pioneer school may be summarized as follows: the first school plant is usually an unpretentious and poorly equipped building, often built from local materials, such as logs or rough lumber. The school terms are short, and commonly confined to the summer months because of poor road conditions, or inadequate heating facilities in the school building. The teachers are often inexperienced and they seldom stay more than a term or two in a given district. Exceptions to this rule occur, where a settler or a settler's wife is engaged to teach the new school. The problem of a suitable boarding place for the teacher is a serious one in districts where most of the homes are shacks or log houses with two or three rooms at the most. This condition alone frequently explains the short stay of teachers. Delay in building the first school, short terms of operation, frequent change of teachers, and road conditions which prevent regular attendance even when

school is open, all combine to retard the pioneer children's educational development, as compared with that of children in more favored communities.

With regard to financial status the pioneer school is heavily subsidized by outside governmental funds. This assistance takes the form of grants or loans towards the building of schools, the provision of equipment and a substantial cash grant towards the teacher's salary. Local contributions include voluntary labor in the erection of the school, funds raised at social functions, and eventually taxes. The tax income is small and difficult to collect, since most pioneers are in straitened financial circumstances.

(b) As settlements grow older their schools tend to pass beyond the pioneer stage. Improvements in their economic conditions enable the pioneers to build more permanent and better equipped school plants, to maintain full-time operation, and to engage experienced teachers. All these factors make for better progress of the pupils, and a larger proportion are able to complete the elementary school course. The one-roomed or ungraded school is the rule in rural districts, but those in villages and towns have two or more rooms. The larger teaching staff, better equipment, and the grouping of the school population in several classrooms all make for greater efficiency in class instruction. One or two high school grades are usually added as the frontier older
village centres grow and in some places the full secondary course is given. The greater accessibility of the village schools the larger child population, and the greater permanency of the teaching staff also help to make many extra-curricular activities possible. It is in these schools one may expect to find well organized athletic teams,school choirs, as well as literary and debating societies such as are common in village or town communities outside the frontier.

An outline of provincial educational policies with regard to frontier

schools is pertinent here, before we pass on to the topic of regional distribution of schools in the Peace River Area. According to the Alberta School Act a school district may be formed in any unsurveyed part of the province where there is a minimum of eight resident children of 5 - 16 years of age, and where at least four persons are liable to assessment on their land. Organization takes place upon the petition of three residents in the proposed district. The local school inspector acts in a consultative capacity and he may undertake the work of organization in the absence of local petitioners. Plans for district boundaries and the erection of the school building must receive his recommendation in order to gain the educational departments' approval.

The provincial government realizes the need for outside assistance to frontier settlements and has gradually evolved the following scheme to promote education there. Where schools are erected without securing debenture loans the department provides a special building grant of $200 toward purchase of windows, doors, shingles, etc. for log or unfinished rough-lumber schools. Other grants to the poorest schools include $15 at the time of organization of the new district, a school library grant amounting to about $15 - $20, payable annually for five years, and also cash grants which total $3.90 per teaching day during the first two years of operation. [4]

This means that new districts are assisted to the extent of about one-third of their building costs, if they avoid going into debt, and they also receive cash grants totalling about 78 per cent of the teacher's salary, calculated at the rate of $1000 per annum.[5]

4. In addition to the regular grants paid to all new rural schools, a poor district is given the equalization grant. This special assistance, established in 1926, provides $2.80 per teaching day to districts whose assessment is less than $10,000. The grant is scaled down by 20 cents per teaching day for every additional assessment of $5000, and is payable for not more than 100 days per calendar year. It is not given to districts whose assessment is $75,000 or over. - Data from Alberta School Act, 1931, pp. 129 - 130.

5. This rate of salary was commonly paid to rural teachers in the Alberta section of the Peace River Area in 1929 - 1930.

Even larger subsidies are paid by the British Columbia government to the schools in the Peace River Block. Here the government pays all of the teachers' salary during the first two years of operation, and it assists also in the erection of schools on somewhat similar plans as those followed by the Alberta government. In the Peace River Block the new school districts raise about $200 - $300 per year by a tax of 1-6 mills on the assessed valuation of occupied land, a fund which covers other operating expenses, as well as the reduction of building debts. During the third year of operation these assisted schools pay a share (usually one half) of the teacher's salary. At the time of survey in 1930 there were 25 schools within the Block and 2 outside, of which all but 3 received the special subsidy.

If the B.C. scheme were followed in the Alberta section it would mean 30-40 per cent increase of present government expenditure on each rural school during its first two years of operation. This involves no small item as is seen from the fact that during one year (1930) no less than 27 new school districts were organized north of the Peace River alone, or more than had been established within the whole Peace River Block up to that date.

Other differences in the educational policies of the two provinces are seen in the matter of administration. The B.C. policy is one of centralization, while decentralization is the keynote of the Alberta public school system. This is seen especially in regard to the engage-

6. The rate paid to rural teachers in the Peace River Block was about $1300 per annum in 1930.

ment of teachers. The B.C. government selects the teachers, at least for the heavily subsidized rural schools, while this matter in Alberta is left to local school boards. The latter make contacts with applicants for schools through advertisements in provincial newspapers, a system which at best is inefficient, and which functions exceptionally poorly in outlying districts. One alternative, sometimes used in pioneer districts is to ask the inspector's or the educational department's assistance in selecting a teacher. But this method is not obligatory.

As regards supervision of schools the Peace River Area is served by two inspectors on the Alberta side, while a third inspector covers the Peace River Block. In 1930 the Alberta inspectors had 106 and 101 school districts in their respective districts, and the territory of each extended over distances of 300-400 miles. Limited railroad facilities and poor roads add to the difficulties of covering these huge territories. In outlying districts motor vehicles are abandoned for horse and buggy, while the annual inspection trip from Peace River to Fort Vermilion, 300 miles north, is made by river boat. In addition to their duties of supervising classroom instruction the inspectors assist, as already mentioned, in the organization of new schools, and they may be official trustees for as many as half a dozen districts, where there are difficulties in obtaining a local school board. It follows that inspectors are able to give only a few hours annually to the supervision of each school,and to the direction of inexperienced teachers.

It is important to note here, that both Alberta and B.C. governments maintain a relatively high standard in the qualifications required of rural teachers. The days of the "permit" teacher, so common a decade

or two ago, are gone. Government grants to new schools are made conditional upon the local board obtaining the services of a qualified teacher, i.e. one who has completed at least three years' high school as well as the provincial normal school course.

The preceding paragraphs have suggested the methods of subsidizing education on the frontier. We must now examine how they work out in practice on the north frontier.

The pattern of distribution of schools in the Peace River area is more uniform than that of any other social institution. It is a fairly good index of the distribution of population since schools tend to follow the pioneers to the very margins of settlement. School houses are about 4-6 miles apart in the settled areas, but distances are greater on the fringe where one or more potential school districts intervene between "pockets" of settlement. As regards size and equipment the gradation parallels that found in the case of the churches. The only town schools, with 4-8 classrooms for elementary and high school grades, respectively are found in Peace River and Grande Prairie. The latter has also a two-roomed Catholic separate school to which Catholic ratepayers pay taxes. It is subject to the same supervision as other public schools, and receives similar grants. The smaller centres each have 2-4 roomed schools, while hamlets like Bromvale and the rural districts have only one-roomed schools.

As regards secondary education, one or two grades are added in most village schools, and they may be taught in certain rural schools also, where the inspector gives his permission. In the Peace River Block the B.C. government has assumed full responsibility, by providing three

years' high school work at Rolla and Pouce Coupe, respectively. In Alberta, however, a different plan has been worked out, in addition to those already mentioned. This new plan involves the consolidation of two or more rural districts to form a rural high school district. The school is located as centrally as possible, usually in a village which participates in the scheme. The provincial government assists the project by grants, totalling about one-third of the operating costs, provided an average of at least 15 pupils is maintained. The net carrying costs to the local districts is shared proportionately on the basis of the total assessment of each. Local taxation varies from 1-3 mills on the dollar, and is usually about $3-$5 per quarter section (160 acres). This scheme has been adopted in Fairview, Berwyn, Spirit River, and Beaverlodge, and local public opinion is optimistic about it.

Schools in the frontier village centres have apparently reached the standards set elsewhere, but the rates of progress in rural settlements are very uneven, even for adjoining school districts. This is inferred from a study made of 16 rural schools, all located within 15 miles of Fairview. One of these schools had been established 3 years, another 4 years, and the rest were 5-15 years old. The tax rate varied from 10 to 25 mills, and all school taxes were collected by the local municipality for those districts or parts of districts which lay within its boundaries. This method of collecting taxes has proved to be more efficient than that obtaining in districts outside the municipality.

A fairly stable financial condition was indicated by the fact that only one school of the sample group received more than the ordinary grant of 90 cents per teaching day.

Differences in the financial conditions of these 16 schools were reflected in their school plants. Four still used log schools, two made use of community halls, three had the older type of frame buildings, while six had modern frame buildings on concrete foundations, Four schools had solved the problem of accommodation for the teacher by building a teachers' residence.

All of these schools were staffed by qualified teachers, the majority of whom had taught less than five years. Female teachers outnumbered male teachers by two to one, a common phenomenon in elementary schools. As regards length of school term 13 of the sample groups had attained full-time operation, i.e. 10 months per year. Their progress was characterized as "normal" or "advanced". The remaining three were open 6-8 months during 1929-30. The inspector classifies these three schools as "retarded" and adds the following illuminating comments: "many newcomers; just began operation in a new building; distances great, poor attendance, indifferent attitude." In two German districts the major factors of retardation included the language problem and dissension between Roman Catholics and Protestants.[7]

The history of these schools revealed early financial struggles, and in some cases poor administration or disputes over boundaries at the time of organization. These experiences appear to be repeated with minor variations in the fringe areas. Recent instances of inefficient administration may be cited, for example, from Battle River settlement where two new districts had gone in debt during a boom period in order to build

7. Data from Inspector G.L. Wilson, Peace River.

$2000-$2500 schools. They were falling behind in salary payments to the teachers after a few months' operation, and the prospect is that of only six month school term for the next few years. The instance of an adjoining district may be given here by way of contrast. Here the people built a log school at a cost of $700. The government paid about one-third of the cost while the rest was raised locally by voluntary efforts. By this method the district avoided debts and was able to finance eight-month terms from the beginning.

Other difficulties in new districts arise from the fact that legal means of tax enforcement are not applicable to homesteaders until they have received the patents on their land, an attainment which requires at least three years. And even if homesteaders were willing and able to pay the school tax the amount would only be $12-$15 per year for a quarter section.[8]

While many of these struggles of pioneer schools are due to environmental difficulties, there are others which suggest weaknesses in the educational system itself. The administration of schools seems to be a matter of much local experimentation in spite of governmental efforts to control it and the results are often detrimental to all concerned, but particularly to the children. Larger units of administration and therewith more centralized control would seem to offer a solution to many of these problems, but this would involve some loss of local autonomy,

8. This estimate is based on a mill rate of 20-25 and an assessment of $600 per quarter section, an arbitrary valuation commonly used in Peace River homestead areas.

a price which many are not willing to pay.

Some notion of the results of inadequate educational facilities in fringe areas can be had by studying the question of retardation. An approach was made to this problem by comparing a sample group of 298 children from 13 newly settled Peace River districts with the total school population for the province. It should be noted that eleven schools in this sample group had been established only one or two years; the two remaining ones were 3 and 8 years old, respectively. T he accompanying Table shows the average age of children for the two groups mentioned.

TABLE XX
AVERAGE AGES OF THE SCHOOL POPULATION IN 13 NEWLY ESTABLISHED PEACE RIVER SCHOOLS AS COMPARED WITH THOSE FOR THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, 1930.*

Grade	Average Age for the Province	Average Age for 13 Peace River Schools	Total Number of children in the 13 Peace River Schools
1	2	3	4
1	7.2	8.0	116
11	8.2	8.7	41
111	9.5	11.0	48
1V	10.5	12.7	39
V	11.4	12.5	21
V1	12.7	14.0	13
V11	13.5	13.3	3
V111	14.6	13.8	14
1X	15.6	14.5	2
X	16.7	16.0	1
TOTAL			298

* Data from Annual Report of the Department of Education, 1930, p. 94, and from unpublished material supplied by the Department of Education, at Edmonton, Alberta.

In the Peace River sample the average ages for the first five grades are from 0.5 to 2.2 years higher than the corresponding averages for the province. These two extremes apply to Grades 11 and 1V, respectively, and there is more than one year's retardation in Grades 111 and V. The number of children in the Peace River sample who are above Grade V is too small to give representative averages, but the figures, such as they are, indicate little or no retardation for the pupils in Grade V1 or higher.

Another index of retardation is obtained if we compare the percentage of pupils who are under age, normal, or over age, in each grade. The sample group mentioned above is again used, with the exception of the three children in the high school grades (i.e. above Grade V111).

TABLE XXI

TABLE SHOWING NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES IN EACH GRADE UNDER AGE, NORMAL AND OVER AGE. COMPARISON OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POPULATION IN 13 NEWLY ESTABLISHED SCHOOLS IN PEACE RIVER AREA WITH THAT FOR THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA. ✱2

Gd.	Total in each grade: Prov. of Alb.	Total in each grade: 13 Peace River Schools	Percent in each grade: Under Age — Prov. of Alb.	Under Age — 13 Peace River Schools	Normal — Prov. of Alb.	Normal — 13 Peace River Schools	Over Age — Prov. of Alb.	Over Age — 13 Peace River Schools
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	27307	116	1.79	0.86	70.56	47.50	27.65	51.70
11	19971	41	1.61	2.44	63.72	46.40	34.67	51.20
111	19851	48	1.91	-	60.65	22.90	37.04	77.10
1V	18982	39	2.39	-	58.60	20.50	39.01	79.50
V	17627	21	3.21	-	56.34	19.00	40.45	81.00
V1	15930	13	3.61	-	54.18	15.60	42.21	84.40
V11	13684	3	4.27	-	56.28	33.33	39.45	66.67
V111	13444	14	5.42	14.30	57.22	64.30	37.36	21.40
TOTAL	146796	295	2.80	1.30	60.51	37.60	36.69	61.10

✱ Provincial data from Annual Report of the Department of Education, 1930, p. 97.

Columns 4 and 5 indicate that the percentages of children under age in each grade for the Peace River sample is negligible, except in Grade Vlll. The percentages of children of normal age in the Peace River sample is less than the corresponding provincial figures for the first 7 grades. The differences between corresponding proportions vary from 17.32 per cent in Grade 11 to 38.58 per cent in Grade Vl.

The inverse relationship, however, is found, if we look at columns 8 and 9, which gives the percentages of pupils over age. The proportion of children over age in each grade for the Peace River sample is about twice as great as the corresponding proportion for the province.

The total proportions show that 37.6 per cent of the Peace River pupils are of normal age, as compared with 60.5 per cent for the province. But the situation is practically reversed for the percentages over age, i.e. 61.1 per cent for the Peace River group, and only 36.4 per cent for the province.

The problem of retardation is closely related to the rate at which settlement takes place and therewith to the density of population in a given locality. Where pioneers trickle in a few at a time and scatter widely as in Hines Creek district, north-west of Fairview, the result is delay in the establishment of schools for five to ten years, perhaps even longer. Apart from the sparse population, which may mean that the requisite number of children is lacking, there may be delays due to the unwillingness of bachelor householders to assume tax obligations. In one settlement an old pioneer who acted as land guide solved this problem in a unique way be settling all the married men in one neighbourhood and all the single homesteaders in another,with the result that there was little

local opposition when the first school district was organized. That unmarried settlers do not always exhibit a negative attitude towards the school may be instanced from Old Beaverlodge and several districts north of the Peace where single men contributed their share of free labor in building the first log schools.

The chief aim in this discussion has been to show that it is the rural schools and particularly those in newly settled districts which offer the greatest challenge to educators and to others who believe in giving pioneer children an educational opportunity similar to that provided by older communities. Some mention ought to be made, however, of the brighter side of frontier education, namely the special facilities which are rapidly being developed in the older settlement. Annual school fairs are held at five village and town centres in Peace River area through the cooperation of local and provincial school authorities. Medals, ribbons and other awards are given to the best display of art, handicraft, and other school work, and to the best of flowers, and vegetables grown by the pupils. The department of agriculture cooperates by promoting calf and swine clubs among children, and it offers a free trip to the nearest agricultural school to the boy and girl who obtains highest aggregate awards at each school fair centre. These fairs serve to bring the children of various districts together in friendly competition, and help to widen the educational interest of the general public.

Another school project which has been developed in the new region in recent years is the musical festival held alternately at Peace River and at Grande Prairie.[9] Over 600 contestants took part in a recent event of

9. These two towns have held separate festivals since 1930;

this kind. The programme consisted of vocal and instrumental solos and duets, of choral selections by both adults and children, and of selections in elocution. The event is supported by churches, schools, Women's Institutes, and a great many other organizations and gains region-wide attention. These events together with the mention already made elsewhere of the importance of the school is a neighborhood centre indicate that educational institutions play a major part in the social life of Peace River communities.

3. Health Organization in the Peace River Area. One of the greatest drawbacks in newly settled areas is the lack of health facilities. In the early stages of settlement its solution involves an expenditure beyond the means of struggling pioneers, even if they unite their efforts, a very improbable event where population is sparse and widely scattered. Moreover, a larger unit of population is needed to support a hospital than to maintain either a school or a church. Yet even these neighborhood institutions the pioneers are often unable to provide for themselves during the early years of settlement. The early establishment of health facilities in sparsely settled areas is therefore a development which must be initiated from the outside,

The stage through which frontier health organizations pass may be characterized as :-

(a) that of the outpost hospital.
(b) that of the public or community hospital.

(a) The first stage, as the name suggests, corresponds to the period of early settlement. The bringing of the first nursing and other health facilities to the new area is the work of social welfare agencies, operating

usually under private auspices. For several centuries churches have been the chief sponsors of health services to outlying settlements, and it is only during comparatively recent times that other organizations have become active in this work.

A hospital, staffed by one or two nurses, or a visiting nurse, represents the first health unit on modern frontiers. Both agencies serve large areas and attend to all types of cases. The outpost hospital is small, often housed in a building adapted temporarily for the purpose, and it lacks much of the equipment, and many of the conveniences found in older hospital centres. The work is heavily subsidized from outside sources, but as settlements grow older and more prosperous, they contribute towards its upkeep. Hospital fees are relatively high for those who are able to pay, but a great many people are treated without charge. This type of hospital is then essentially a charitable institution.

(b) No clear cut division separates the above stage from that of the public or community-owned institutions. The pioneers gradually assume more and more responsibility for the upkeep of the first hospital. Social contributions, at first made by individuals or by small neighborhood groups are increased by regular annual grants from local municipal organizations. These grants imply increasing control over the outpost hospital and in time its administration passes into the hands of the local community. The earlier "hand-to-mouth" methods of finance are now replaced by a system of local taxation. This change gives greater financial stability and the erection of a new hospital plant becomes possible. The interest taken by local groups in this larger project often continues to express itself in special gifts and contributions.

The new hospital plant is larger and better equipped than its predecessor. It usually attracts one or more private physicians to the centre in which it is located, and thus makes medical services more accessible to the local community. Continuous support from potential as well as from actual patients makes it possible to lower hospital rates, and hospital taxation becomes in effect a type of sickness insurance. There are several other developments in "state medicine" on the frontier which may best be referred to in dealing with health organization as it exists at present in Peace River Areas.

Health facilities in the north country, is everywhere else, tend to be concentrated where they may serve the largest number of people. It is to the larger villages and towns, therefore, that we must look for the wider medical and hospital services. Grande Prairie and Peace River towns might well be called the north frontier's health centres, since both have modern, municipal hospitals as well as medical and dental services. The former, for example, has three private physicians, a chiropractor, and three dentists. But as we pass to the smaller centres the health services become fewer and less complex. Fairview and Berwyn, which rank next in size to the above mentioned towns have only small cottage hospitals of the "outpost" type. The only other hospital in the area studied is the little Red Cross hospital at Pouce Coupe in the Peace River Block. Hence distances between the hospital centres range between 25 and 75 miles.

As regards medical facilities we find one or two doctors where there are outpost hospitals, but villages such as Wembley, Beaverlodge and Hythe, which are located in the Grande Prairie "hospital area" have only

one resident physician, and none are found in hamlets such as Brownvale and Clairmont.

It appears then that a village with at least 200-300 people, together with the residents of the adjacent rural trade area, is the minimum population which can command the services of a resident physician. The result is that doctors are located in railway centres 15-20 miles apart, except in the case of larger towns which have more than one. Dentists appear to be spaced still further apart. North of the Peace they are found only at Peace River town and at Fairview, while dental services in the southern districts are available only at Sexsmith, Hythe and Rolla, apart from Grande Prairie, of course. In short, dentists are located in centres 20-60 miles apart.

The above distribution of health services applies to older settled and transition areas. It shows a sharp gradation of health services as one passes from larger centres to adjacent villages and hamlets. In the fringe areas all health services are lacking, with the exception of Battle River where a woman doctor, paid by the provincial government, is located. Earlier efforts of the government to meet the needs of fringe settlements are instanced by the placing of two district nurses in the Bear Lake and Griffin Creek districts, before the railway came. The holding of travelling clinics in various village and rural centres constitute the more recent effort of the department of public health.

In preceding paragraphs a rough indication was given of how accessible health services are to village people. What the situation is with regard to the rural population, may be inferred from the accompanying Table which shows

average distances to various health services for 313 farm households.

TABLE XXII

AVERAGE DISTANCE TO VARIOUS HEALTH SERVICES FOR 313 PEACE RIVER FARM HOUSEHOLDS.

Areas	No. of Households	Doctor	Dentist	Hospital
Old Settled	194	10.5 miles	16.0 miles	15.6 miles
Transition	52	8.8 "	9.0 "	14.6 "
Fringe	67	22.9 "	57.0 "	57.1 "
Whole Area	313	12.9 "	23.6 "	24.3 "

For the sample as a whole the averages are 12.9, 23.6 and 24.3 miles to medical, dental and hospital service, respectively. But the averages differ widely for different types of settlement. The three health facilities are within an average range of 10-16 miles for the households in old settled and in transition areas, but averages of 22 to 57 miles for the fringe sample mean that health facilities are virtually inaccessible to many of the pioneers.

The trends in hospital accommodation and hospital finance for old and new settlements may be illustrated by brief reference to the hospitals at Grande Prairie, at Berwyn, and at Pouce Coupe.

The former is a municipally owned institution, built and equipped at a total cost of $90,000. It has a bed capacity of 40 well equipped operating and emergency rooms, as well as X-ray case room, nursery and sun-rooms. All

modern conveniences have been installed such as steam heat, electric light, running water and sewage system. The staff includes 9 graduate nurses, and consultative services are given by 7 doctors from Grande Prairie and neighboring villages. In 1929 a total of 996 patients were admitted, of which 13.9 per cent were maternity cases.[10]

The hospital area which supports this institution includes Grande Prairie, Wembley, Sexsmith, and Clairmont with their surrounding districts. The assessment roll comprises a million acres, and taxes for 1929 totalled $19,142, a little less than half of the total expenditure for that year. The remaining costs were met by patients' fees of roughly $16,000, a government grant of about $4,600, and donations and sundry earnings totalling nearly $4,900.

As regards patients' fees, the public ward rates are $1.50 per day for taxpayers, and $4.00 per day for non-taxpayers; private ward charges are $3.00 and $5.00 per day, respectively, for these two types of patients. A corresponding scale of rates is set for the use of operating room. It is important to note, also, that recent legislation makes the municipality responsible for the hospital fees of indigent patients who have had 90 days' residence within its boundaries.

This municipal hospital which was built in 1929 receives generous support from a great many local organizations, including some of the churches, the Women's Institute (W.I.) and the Farm Women's Organization (U.F.W.A.) Practically all the W.I. and U.F.W.A. branches in Grande Prairie district

10. Annual Report 1929, Dept. of Public Health, Alberta.

have contributed towards its equipment, such as the furnishing of a ward, or part of one, or a special piece of operating-room equipment, Other gifts include preserved fruit or the payment of fees for children from indigent homes.

The Berwyn cottage hospital illustrates the "outpost" type of health centre. The Women's Institute took the initiative in its establishment, by buying and equipping a house at a total cost of $5,000. The W.I. raised 40 per cent of this sum while the local municipality granted the rest. It has a capacity of 6 beds, and has also an operating room with equipment, but lacks an X-ray apparatus. Modern conveniences such as running water, sewage system and electric lights are all lacking; nor has the hospital its own well. The staff consists of two Catholic nurses of the St. Dominique order, trained in Wisconsin about 18-20 years ago, and brought through the influence of the local Catholic rpriest. The rates are $2.50 and $3.00 per day for rate and non-rate payers respectively, and a total of 140 patients were admitted in 1929.

This little hospital represents the earnest efforts of a part of the community it serves, yet even a brief outline of its equipment indicates how inadequate the facilities are, as compared with those of the modern hospital at Grande Prairie. The outlook for the future is that the municipality, which already subsidizes it heavily, will take over complete ownership and managament.

Lack of space forbids more than passing mention of the Red Cross hospital at Pouce Coupe. Suffice it to say that its bed capacity is twice that of the Berwyn institution and it is better equipped. Its cost, about $7000, was shared evenly among the Alberta Red Cross, the B.C. government, and the local

community. Salaries of the 4 nurses were at first paid by the Red Cross, but are now paid by the two other agencies.

The future trends in hospitalization in the Peace River area are evidently in the direction of municipal ownership and control. In the absence of wealthy local benefactors this appears to be the only way in which the increasing demands for hospital facilities can be met. It seems probable also, that Peace River communities will shortly extend the existing health facilities to include the services of a doctor paid by the municipality.

4. Socio-educational and Recreational Activities in the Peace River Area. The social life of pioneer communities is expressed in a great many group activities, apart from those bound up with churches, schools, and hospitals. These activities are organized by a network of clubs and associations in order to satisfy social, political, welfare, recreational, and a great many other leisure time interests. The data on such organizations in the Peace River area is incomplete, yet even the bare mention of the names and chief functions of some of these associations will help to indicate what sort of social facilities are available within the frontier itself.

The following classification of leisure time groups in the new region is purely arbitrary because nearly all of them combine a number of interests, as will appear from the activities. However, for the sake of clearness they may be grouped under the headings: civic, fraternal, socio-educational, and recreational groups. A brief comment on each type of association must suffice here.

Civic organizations include the town, village and rural municipal

councils which administer local self-government. The first two types have six and three members, respectively, who are responsible for the collection and expenditure of taxes for public improvements, such as streets, water supply, sanitation, fire prevention and similar matters concerning the local community. Only Peace River and Grande Prairie are large enough to be incorporated as towns; all the smaller centres with populations of 100-500 people are governed by village councils, and hamlets with less than 100 people, such as Brownvale, are administered by adjacent rural municipalities. Only the oldest rural settlements have attained local self-government, namely those in Fairview, Berwyn, Grande Prairie and Bear Lake municipalities. Their councils deal with such matters as public relief, roads, noxious weeds, collection of taxes for municipal and school purposes, and also municipal hospital taxes where community hospitals have been established.

Of similar type as these local administrative groups, are the boards which administer schools and hospitals, and the boards of trade found in practically every village of 200 people or more, might also be included here. The latter type of civic organization is composed for the most part of business men, but includes also a few farmers. It expresses public opinion in local matters and has considerable influence in municipal affairs.

Nearly every Peace River trade centre has one or more fraternal organizations whose functions are similar to those of mutual benefit associations found elsewhere. Those most commonly found in the area are Orange, Masonic, and Oddfellows' lodges, each of which usually has its subsidiary women's organization. The Elks, another fraternal organization, is active in Grande Prairie in community welfare work asuch as hospitals, relief to needy families,

picnics and Christmas treats for all the children, etc. etc.

The socio-educational organizations include Women's Institutes and a variety of farmers' organizations, such as the agricultural societies, registered seed, and horsebreeders' associations, and the United Farmers' and Farm Women's political parties. (the U.F.A. and the U.F.W.A.) Many of these groups, as their names indicate, are closely related to economic and political interests, but much of their time is taken up with functions of a social nature. The U.F.A. and U.F.W.A. groups are composed entirely of rural people. They hold monthly meetings during the winter months and programmes include lectures and discussions by local or outside leaders, followed as a rule by an informal sociable period. These organizations are essentially neighborhood groups, and their activities meant a great deal to the settlers in earlier pioneer days. In recent years, however, the attractions of the villages, together with the advent of good roads and automobiles, have lessened their importance. They are dormant as regards politics, except at election time, partly because local opposition is weak, and partly because their party is in power in the provincial legislature.

The U.F.W.A. and the Women's Institute have very similar functions. Both are interested in questions relating to health, current social problems, and local community projects. The provincial departments of agriculture and of public health cooperate with these organizations by providing lectures and demonstrations on health and household economy. The U.F.W.A. is entirely a rural organization, while the W.I. is usuallly found in villages and towns. It is interesting to note, however, that 9 of the 17 W.I. branches in Peace River area are centred in rural districts. The U.F.W.A. is definitely a political as well as a socio-educational group while the W.I. is a non-

partisan organization. Their efforts in regard to hospitals and local welfare work are the most outstanding contributions of these women's organizations. As instances of their activities it may be cited that W.I. branches organized the first hospitals in Fairview and Berwyn and both W.I. and U.F.W.A. branches have regularly supported the Grande Prairie hospital. Other local projects include contributions to schools, school fairs and relief to needy families. They also cooperate with the Provincial Police in providing relief in outlying districts. The great value of these women's organizations, apart from their material contributions to community welfare, lie in their opportunities for social contacts especially for women on isolated farmsteads.

If we turn now to the purely recreational clubs in Peace River area, we find an almost urban variety of organized sports. Grande Prairie, for example, boasts an athletic association with clubs for baseball, basketball, soccer, tennis, golf, hockey, and curling. Its teams have joined with those of adjacent villages to form baseball, basketball and hockey leagues whose match games are the high lights in sports day and fair day programmes. Similar intra-regional organizations are found north of the Peace, and in the Peace River Block. Most of the members of these clubs are young people, but married people form the majority in tennis, golf and curling clubs. Villages with populations of 200-300 people, such as Berwyn and Wembley, commonly have 4 or 5 types of athletic clubs but in smaller centres the number dwindles to one or two. It is significant to note that very few athletic organizations are found in rural districts. While a number of rural people play on village teams, the great majority who participate in sports, do so as spectators.

The village centres take a great deal of pride in their athletic teams

and the achievements of the latter advertise the "home town" throughout the whole north country. Two-day annual sports in villages of 200-300 people are commonly attended by more than a thousand people, including visitors from all over the frontier. The business which such entertainments attract is an important item to restaurants, hotels and others who cater to the travelling public, and it is not a mere accident therefore, that hotel keepers and retail business men are among the most active supporters of athletic organizations.

Other recreational facilities in the north frontier villages include dances, card parties, amateur dramatics, and the movies. Grande Prairie has the only "talkie" theatre in the north country, but many of the smaller centres have weekly movies, supplied by a travelling showman.

In recent years there has been a tendency for rural interest groups to meet in the village centres. This applies to the U.F.A., for example, and the result is the breaking up of older neighborhood groups. This change in rural social organization on the frontier facilitates social contacts between village and rural people and tends also to link widely separated settlements into a larger community. The local press aids in this integrating process, by circulating news to all parts of the region. These papers also present discussions of current issues and are thus influential in moulding public opinion. The fact that the four weeklies, published at Fairview, Peace River, Grande Prairie and Pouce Coupe form a chain organization makes for a common policy, and thus increases their influence in local affairs.

In the present chapter the pattern of distribution of institutional services has been indicated for Peace River area. The typical stages in the development of church, school, and hospital facilities have also been

pointed out. Similar stages could doubtless be found in the processes by which other social organizations have become established in the new region. In the last chapter an attempt will be made to indicate what these various social institutions and facilities mean to individuals living in the rural districts.

CHAPTER V.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Up to this point the topic of social organization in Peace River Area has been approached first by a study of trade centres and their various services, and then by a general survey of the social institutions, which are found in the area. The establishment of schools, churches and hospitals was dealt with at some length, particularly with regard to the regional distribution of these facilities.

In the present chapter we shall approach the topic of investigation from the standpoint of pioneer families and of individuals, in order to determine their relations to the various social facilities. The sample group of 332 farm families representing pioneers from old settled, transition and fringe areas forms the focus of attention for this purpose. We shall first analyse the population elements in the sample, and then pass on to the question of social participation. Some reference will also be made to physical distances, income, travel conveniences, housing facilities, and other factors which influence the whole situation.

The question of ethnic origins, of the Peace River people has already been dealt with in a preceding chapter. [11] Suffice it to say here that 59.3 per cent of the farm operators are of British origin. Scandinavians and North-Europeans (mainly Germans) comprised proportions of 14.5 per cent, respectively, while 6 per cent were of Central or South European stock. For the rest, 2.1 per cent were of various origins, while 3.6 per cent did not report

11 See Tables 6 and 7, pp. 35 &36 (Chapter 2).

their ethnic origin.[12]

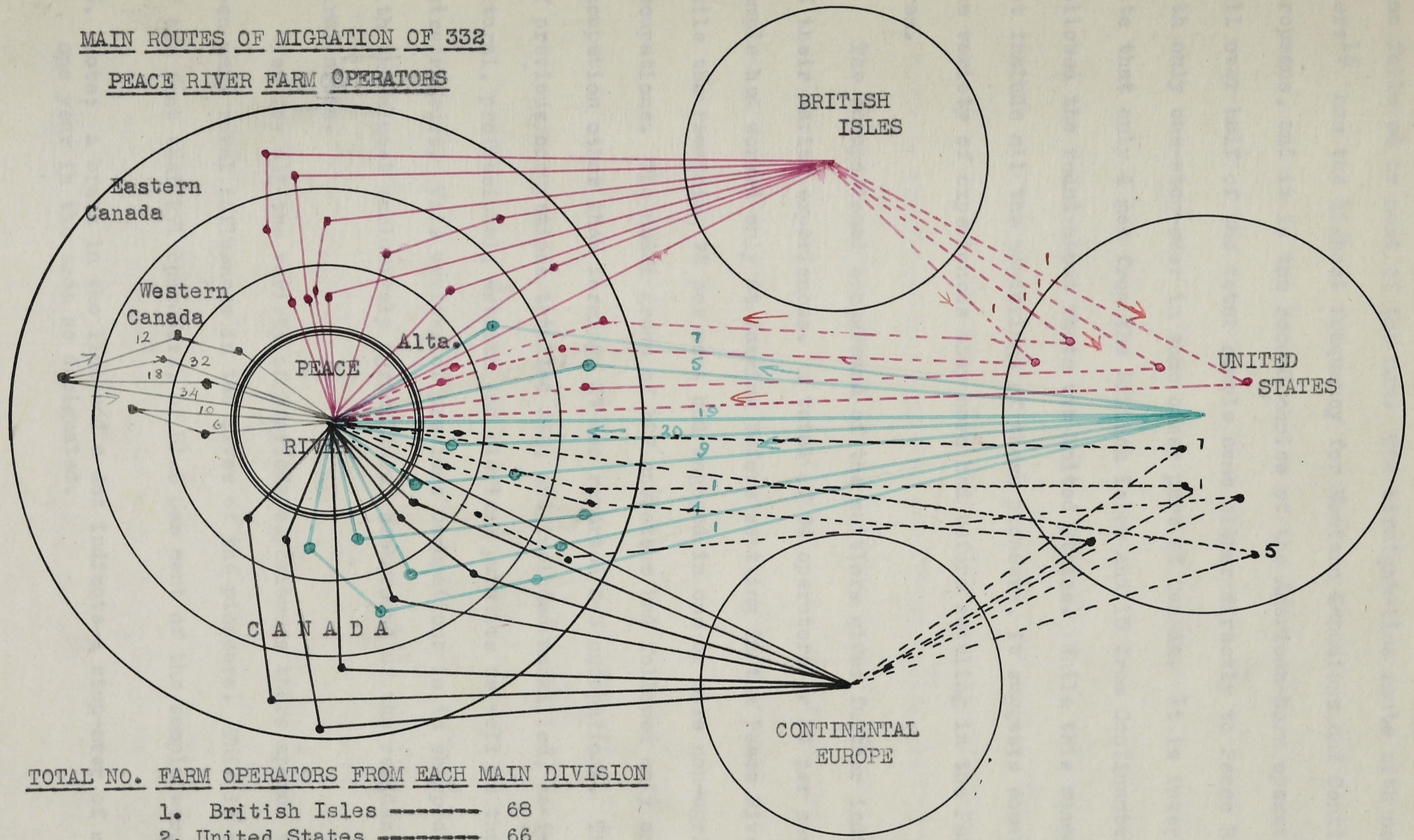
The birthplaces of farm operators has also been used as an index to determine the ethnic origin of the Peace River sample.[13] The analysis showed that 20.5 per cent were born in the British Isles, 35.2 per cent in Canada, 19.9 per cent in United States, 10.5 per cent in Scandinavia, 6.9 per cent in north-west Europe and 6 per cent in Central or Southern Europe. A small group of 3 men, or less than one per cent did not report their birthplace. Comparison of these figures with those for ethnic origins indicates that about two-thirds of those of British stock have been born on this continent; the same applies to about one-half of the north-west Europeans, and to roughly one-third of the Scandinavian sample. The data for homemakers were incomplete, but the figures for those who reported ethnic origins corresponded closely to those for farm operators. The Peace River sample which is fairly representative of the total population, as regards ethnic elements,[14] shows a heterogeneous population, in which pioneers of Anglo-Saxon and of north Europeans stock predominate. Further Anglo-Saxon influences may also be inferred from the fact that more than one-half of the operators in the sample have been born on this continent.

Some notion of the mobility history of Peace River settlers can be obtained from the chart summarizing the main routes of travel followed by the 332 farm operators , in their migrations from birthplace to the new region. While a great variety of routes have been followed, the general direction is westward, and the more direct routes from country of birth have

12. 7 out of 12 operators in the last group gave the answer "American" to the question of ethnic origin. Both this term and that of "Canadian" are thought to be too controversial to carry a definite meaning.
13. See Table 8, Page 38
14. See Table 8, Page 38

FIGURE 2.

MAIN ROUTES OF MIGRATION OF 332 PEACE RIVER FARM OPERATORS



TOTAL NO. FARM OPERATORS FROM EACH MAIN DIVISION

1. British Isles	68
2. United States	66
3. Continental Europe	79
4. Canada	115
5. Not Reported	4
TOTAL	332

NOTE:- A dot indicates a stop-over of at least one year in the region so designated. The figures denote the number of men taking a given route.

been followed by most of the men. The straight-line route with no stop-overs[15] has the highest frequency for Eastern Canadians, and Continental Europeans, and it is the second choice of the American-born operators. Well over half of the total sample came either directly to Peace River or with only one-stop-over in some other part of Canada. It is interesting to note that only 4 men from the British Isles and 15 from Continental Europe followed the round-about route via United States. While this summary does not include all the wanderings of these pioneers, it suggests something of the variety of experiences they have had before settling in the Peace River Area.

The occupational background of the settlers gives further indication of their varied experiences. A total of 94 operators or 28 per cent of the sample had worked only at farming before settling in the Peace River area, while the remaining 72 per cent had engaged in one or more non-agricultural occupations. The modal group of 127 operators had followed only one other occupation other than farming, 37 men reported 3-5 occupations. The number of previous occupations totalled 396, and included unskilled, semi-agricultural, professional, artisan and clerical pursuits as well as those of entrepreneurs. This variety of previous occupations is in sharp contrast with the almost exclusively agricultural background of the residents in old rural areas.

Yet for all the variety of previous experiences there appear to have been many rural influences in the lives of the pioneers. This is suggested by the fact that 271 operators, or 81.6 per cent of the sample were born on

15. Note: A break in the line and a dot indicate a stop-over of more than one year in the area so designated.

farms, and also by the large proportion,namely 75.6 per cent of the sample,who had done at least one year's full-time farm work before entering the Peace River Area. It should be kept in mind here that the sample represents only those who stayed on the land. No data are available to show the occupations of those who left the area after a short stay.

The factors of age, sex and conjugal state of pioneer families are no less important than cultural and occupational backgrounds in conditioning social participation. Age and sex distributions have already been dealt with [16]. Suffice it to say here that the survey sample shows a disproportion of males, especially in transition and fringe areas. As regards age distribution the sample shows that a large proportion of the settlers are in the active period of life. This is further borne out by the fact that the average age for 332 farm operators and 229 homemakers is 45.6 and 40.5 years, respectively.

As regards conjugal state it was found that out of 332 farm operators 66 per cent were married, 28.3 per cent were single,and 5.7 per cent were widowers, or else separated or divorced. Significant regional differences were evidenced by the fact that the proportion of single farm operators was greatest in transition and fringe areas, i.e. 41.8 per cent and 25.3 per cent respectively. In older settlements like Grande Prairie, on the other hand, the proportion of single men was only 19.1 per cent. It is significant to note also that 30 per cent of the households studied were single-male establishments. The relation between conjugal condition and length of residence on the present farm was studied, and the results show that single men average a longer term of residence than married men. The

16. See Table 5, page 34 (in Chapter 2.)

figures for the whole sample were 11 and 9.9 years for the respective groups. Figures for the sub-regions showed that the difference in length of residence was greatest in Berwyn, i.e. single men averaged 2.21 years longer residence than their married colleagues. In the other areas the differences were about a one year's longer residence for single than for married men. These data as regards conjugal state show another characteristic of frontier people, namely the absence of normal family life for a disproportionate by large number of farm operators as compared with those living in old rural communities. The relatively longer term of residence of single men is related to the tendency for frontiers to attract a majority of single men, particularly in the earlier period of settlement before transportation facilities are well developed. Lack of opportunity of marriage rather than choice probably accounts for the unmarried state of these men. Many of these bachelor householders have become "marooned" as it were during the early years of homesteading and the habit of living alone grows upon them, so that even when social facilities do offer they have lost the desire or the capacity to make use of them.

The educational background of pioneer families has a bearing also on social participation. Formal education forms an important part of the cultural background of pioneers. Interest and initiative in developing social organizations is likely to be most active among those who themselves have been trained within the school, one of the most highly organized social institutions. It is therefore important to discover what educational equipment modern pioneers have, when they begin to build communities with a new region. The Alberta public school system with its eight elementary grades and four high school grades was used as a basis for classification in analysing the

formal education of operators and homemakers. The figures showed that out of 314 operators who reported their standing 63,4 per cent had completed the public school course; the corresponding proportion for the 231 homemakers was 65.36 per cent. These figures also include those who had had higher education, namely 23.9 per cent of all the farm operators and 26.84 per cent of the homemakers. The proportions who had completed one or more years of high school were 15.6 and 10.9 per cent for men and women respectively. Special education, such as normal, business college, technical, agricultural or college training was reported for 8.3 per cent of the men and for 16.4 per cent of the women. College graduates comprised proportions of 1.2 per cent for the men, and 0.4 per cent for the women. The educational standing of the women is, on the whole, slightly higher than that of the men, but this difference between the sexes is not highly significant if we compare the major divisions, i.e. the groups who have had public, high school, and special training, respectively. That the Peace River sample represents, on the whole, a literate group of people, may be inferred from the fact that about 97 per cent of both farm operators and homemakers had received at least two years' formal education .

We may summarize the data presented with regard to the population elements in the Peace River sample by saying that it is a young, mobile, and predominantly male group. It is also a very heterogeneous population as regards ethnic, cultural and occupational elements. Yet it is ,on the whole , fairly well assimilated to the New-World culture judging from the proportions who are either of Anglo-Saxon origin, who have been born on this continent, or who have both of these factors in their favor in becoming adjusted to a region which is under British control. With these social environmental factors

in mind we may turn to the study of social participation of our sample group.

The social contacts of the Peace River sample were classified as being either informal or formal. The first group includes the more casual type, involving no regular attendance or membership on the part of persons who make them. They include attendance at parties, picnics, dances, fairs, athletics (as spectators), theatres (movies) and other entertainments. The formal contacts include those made as members of social organizations. The term member is used here to mean a relatively permanent relationship, whether it refers to a loosely organized Pioneer Club or to the rigid requirements of the Masonic lodge. The contacts with churches, Sunday schools and public schools were omitted, since they have been dealt with in former chapters. No attempt was made to measure such informal contacts as visits to relatives or neighbors, or business contacts such as trips to post office, or trade centre.

The accompanying Table summarizes the data with regard to informal social participation of 313 Peace River families, as well as for those in three sample districts. The three sub-samples from Fairview, Rolla, and the Fringe represent old settled, transition and newly occupied areas, respectively. The Table does not indicate frequency of participation but merely the number of families who have made contact through one or more of their members with the various types of functions.

Very similar proportions, i.e. 47.9 to 56.2 per cent of the whole sample of 313 farm families have attended the various functions listed; 3.8 per cent of the families had participated in other functions, such as chantuaquas and dramatics. Only 4 families, i.e. 2.8 per cent, had made no informal contacts

TABLE XXIII

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FARM FAMILIES REPORTING VARIOUS TYPES OF INFORMAL SOCIAL PARTICIPATION. SAMPLE. 313 PEACE RIVER FAMILIES AND THREE SUB-GROUPS.

Numerical Distribution

District	Whole Sample	Fairview	Rolla	Fringe
No. of Families	313	76	52	67
Parties	176	43	38	24
Picnics	151	46	23	13
Dances	150	25	27	37
Fairs	177	58	41	5
Athletics	177	34	34	21
Theatres & Entertainments	171	54	28	12
Other ¥	12	9	0	1
No. Contacts	9	1	1	4
No Information	29	6	2	13
Percentage Distribution				
Parties	56.2	56.6	73.1	35.8
Picnics	48.2	60.5	44.2	19.4
Dances	47.9	32.8	51.9	55.2
Fairs	56.6	76.3	78.8	7.5
Athletics	56.6	44.7	65.4	31.3
Theatres & Entertainments.	54.6	71.1	53.8	17.9
Other ¥	3.8	11.8	0	1.5
No. Contacts	2.9	1.3	1.9	6.0
No. Information	9.3	7.9	3.8	19.4

¥ "Other" refers to functions not specified elsewhere, such as chautauquas and dramatics.

Note: Children below 6 years of age were omitted from the tables on social participation.

and no information was available for 9.3 per cent. The percentage of families who have made a given type of informal contact varies from 44.7 to 76.3 for Fairview and from 44.2 to 78.8 per cent for Rolla. Fairs appear to be the most popular functions in both areas, but the opportunities to attend them are, of course, infrequent. The fringe sample shows a marked falling off in proportions as compared with the other groups, i.e. from 7.5 per cent for fairs to 55.2 per cent for dances. The fringe also has the largest proportion of families without contact, or for whom information is lacking. The Table suggests that a much greater variety of informal functions are available to Fairview and Rolla families than to those in the fringe.

Another approach to the study of informal participation was made by comparing the average number of informal contacts of married operators and homemakers. The averages were very similar for the 222 couples studied, i.e. 22.6 and 20.5 informal contacts in one year for men and women respectively for those reporting contacts. The frequency of contact for the two sexes is practically the same in a given sub-region, i.e. 25.5 and 22.5 for the Fairview sample, 26.7 and 23.6 for Rolla, and 14.4 and 13.5 in the fringe. for men and women, respectively. The amount of informal participation is not so closely dependent on the matter of sex as it is on stages of settlement. In the old areas the number of informal contacts average about one per fortnight for either operators or homemakers, but in newer areas the average is slightly more than one informal contact per month.

A comparison was also made between the 222 married operators and 91 single men,[17] as to their frequency of informal social participation. The

17. The married men' s group included 5 widowers who had housekeepers, and the single men's group included 12 who are either widowers living alone or whose wives have not yet joined them on the farm.

single men who reported contacts averaged 5-6 more contacts than married men in Fairview and the fringe, but the reverse held true for the Rolla group. It is significant to note, however, that the proportion of married men having no informal contacts at all, was lower in Fairview than the corresponding single men's groups, i.e. 3.8 per cent as compared with 20.8 per cent for the two respective groups. In the fringe 25 per cent of both married and single men had no informal contact. It appears from these figures that the proportion of married men making informal contacts is greater than that for the single men in older areas, where social facilities are readily accessible. But the number of single men who actually participated in informal social affairs do so more often than the corresponding group of married men.

It is often said that the family rather than the person is the unit of social participation among rural people. In order to test this statement a total group of 182 families with one or more children [18] at home was studied. The data showed that the proportions making informal contacts as a family group comprised 57.2 per cent of the Fairview sample, 69.2 per cent of the Rolla sample, and 38.3 per cent of the fringe sample. Leaving out for the moment those who gave no information, or who had no contacts at all, it was found that the number of Fairview and fringe families having individual contacts only, was almost as high as that for families who participated as a unit. The numbers were 17 and 24 respectively, for Fairview families, and 16 and 18 for fringe families. This was not the case in Rolla, however, where the families participating as a unit were 3 times as numerous as those having individual contacts only. The number of "family units" contacts in the various areas averaged only 3-8 contacts less than the corresponding averages

18. Children 6 years old or less were not considered here as regards the social participation.

for operators and homemakers.[19] It would appear on the whole that there are regional and perhaps cultural differences in the tendencies of families to participate as groups. The similarity between averages for "family unit" contacts and those of heads of households suggests also that both operators and homemakers make family group contacts rather than individual ones. Individual contacts are made then by their children, and a study of 70 persons, who participated in social functions without being attended by their parents, showed that all but 9 were 16 years old or more, and all but one of the remaining groups was 13-15 years old. These persons averaged 33 individual contacts for the whole sample, or 10-12 more contacts than operators and homemakers. The children's total informal contacts are likely more frequent than these figures indicate since a number of them probably participate by "family unit" contacts as well.

We must turn now to a study of formal organizational contacts. The data are summarized for five types of organizations, namely: Farmers' and Farm Women's associations, lodges, Women's Institutes, Ladies' Aids and Auxiliaries and various other groups represented by only a few people in each case. No differentiation was made between the sexes in summarizing the data for the first two and the last group. The remaining ones refer, of course, only to women.

The term "active" refers to persons who had attended at least one formal meeting during the year, while those listed as "members only" reported no participation during the year covered by this study.

Out of the whole sample of 313 farm families there are 51 per cent who had

19. The fact that operators and homemakers include those of childless households would probably make these group averages higher.

TABLE XXIV

PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL SOCIAL ORGANIZATION FOR 313 PEACE RIVER FARM FAMILIES AND FOR THREE SELECTED SUB-GROUPS.

Type of Organization	Whole Area	Fairview	Rolla	Fringe
Total Families	313	76	52	67
No. of Families having no Formal Contacts	153	39	25	48
	No. of Persons	No. of Persons	No. of Persons	No. of Persons
Farmers' and Farm Women's Org.				
Active	52	15	2	6
Members only	15	4	1	2
Lodges ¥				
Active	26	8	0	0
Members only	25	3	8	2
Women's Institute				
Active	20	6	4	-
Members only	2	1	-	-
Ladies' Aid and Aux.				
Active	24	8	2	-
Members only	4	-	2	-
Other ¥¥				
Active	51	5	16	5
Members only	36	9	6	5

¥ Lodges include Masonic, Orange, I.O.O.F. with their sister organizations.

¥¥ Other - refers to a variety of groups i.e. G.W.V.A., Elks, Agricultural Societies, Pioneer Clubs, etc. - whose participants were very few.

one or more members in various social organizations; the remaining 49 per cent had no formal participation at all.

As regards regional distribution the greatest number of members of organizations are found in older settlements, as represented here by Fairview, families. The number dwindles rapidly as one passes to the transition group in Rolla, and in fringe areas the number is insignificant. The total number of active members for these groups was 173 persons, or a little more than one person per family for those participating in formal organizations. The relatively large number of people who are "members only" may be due either to indifference or else to lack of organizational facilities in many rural neighborhoods.

If we compare the married operators with the homemakers as regards formal social participation we find that 67 men or 30.2 per cent of the 222 married men, and 51 women or 22.4 per cent of the total group reported formal contacts. These 51 women averaged 14 formal contacts during the year, while the 67 men averaged only 8.8 contacts, or 5.1 less than the women. Regional samples indicated that both men and women were most active in the older settlements, particularly in Grande Prairie. Both the number of persons who made formal contacts and the frequency of their formal participation are small, in transition and fringe areas. These data suggest that the married women who made formal contacts did so more frequently than the corresponding group of men. This difference is particularly noticeable in older settlements and appears to be due to the presence of women's organizations, such as the Women's Institutes and the Ladies' Aid Societies. The above data on social participation of Peace River farm families may be briefly summarized as follows: 87.9 per cent of the 313 families reported some informal participation during the survey

year; 29 per cent reported that they had made no informal contacts, and 9.3 per cent gave no information. The average number of contacts for married men and women were very similar, but there were marked differences between old and new settlements with regard to amount of informal participation. The family group tends to be the unit of participation, but grown-up children of farm families also made additional individual contacts.

Formal organizational contacts were made by only 51 per cent of the 313 families, and they included an average of only one person per family for those who participated. The frequency of formal social contact averaged less than one a month for the 118 men and women who reported such participation. The meagerness of formal social participation in the fringe was even more marked than in the case of informal participation.

We must now examine some of the economic factors which condition the social participation of Peace River farm families. The detailed analysis of their means and modes of living belongs to another study,[20] but a few of the most pertinent factors may be presented here. The amount of money spent by farm families on items other than bare necessities, their housing facilities, the types of conveniences found in farm homes, all help to explain the situation with regard to social participation. Table 25 shows the distribution of advancement goods for three sample groups of Peace River farm families. Advancement goods include a variety of items other than bare necessities such as food and clothing. The low averages for cash family living, especially in the fringe, explains why so little is left over for these non-material goods and services.

20. See G.H. Craig:- The Means and Modes of Living in the Pioneer Fringe of Land Settlement, with special reference to the Peace River Area. Unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1933.

TABLE XXV.

AVERAGE AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FIVE MAIN ITEMS OF ADVANCEMENT GOODS PER FAMILY FOR THREE SAMPLE PEACE RIVER AREAS.

Area	No. of Families *	Total Cash Living	Total Advancement Goods	Personal	Travel	Organization **	Education	Church & Charity
Average Distribution per Family		$	$	$	$	$	$	$
Fairview	76	940.27	62.03	14.52	18.65	12.30	9.83	6.73
Rolla	52	540.51	55.49	27.19	3.32	17.78	4.60	2.60
Fringe	67	435.52	25.77	11.88	6.99	3.27	2.60	1.03
Percentage Distribution			%	%	%	%	%	%
Fairview	76		100	23	30	20	16	11
Rolla	52		100	49	6	32	8	5
Fringe	67		100	46	27	13	10	4

* Family is here taken to include all households in the sample groups, whether consisting of parents and children, of operator and homemaker, or of male persons living alone.

** The term 'organization' includes membership fees to formal organizations, as well as money spent on picnics, dances, movies, and other types of informal participation.

The amounts spent on organization, the item of chief interest here, average $12.30 per family for the Fairview group, $17.78 per family for Rolla, and only $3.27 per family for the fringe sample. These figures indicate that a great many of the Peace River spend little or nothing on social participation

TABLE XXVI.

HOUSING FACILITIES OF 329 FARM FAMILIES IN THE PEACE RIVER AREA.

District	No. of Homes	Average Value $	Average No. of Rooms
Old Settled	202	1063	4.19
Transition	54	635	3.35
Fringe	73	254	2.31
Whole Area	329	823	3.66

	Percent having only		Percent Built of:-		
	1 Room	2 or more Rooms	Frame	Log	Log and Frame
	%	%	%	%	%
Old Settled	12	88	51	37	12
Transition	22	78	41	49	10
Fringe	43	57	23	73	4
Whole Area	22	78	43	47	10

Further indication of the struggle to make a living on the frontier is seen from the housing conditions. The fact that more than one half of the farm homes in the total sample are built either of logs or of log and frame materials, and that the average number of rooms is only 3.66 for the whole sample shows that many of the Peace River families have accommodation which is little better than that of new homesteaders.

The number of families who have certain conveniences such as radio,

piano, telephone and automobile are seen in the next table. Each of these conveniences are owned by 23 to 60 per cent of the people in old settled areas. There are no telephones and few radios in either transition or fringe areas, and automobiles are owned by only 23 and 5 per cent of the sample groups for these areas. Taking the sample group as a whole there are only 43 per cent who own automobiles, 23 per cent have a gramophone or piano, 17 per cent have radio, and 13 per cent have telephone. The great proportion of the families are then without one or more of these modern conveniences.

TABLE XXVII.

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES HAVING SPECIFIED CONVENIENCES AND SERVICES IN OLD SETTLED, TRANSITION, AND FRINGE AREAS - PEACE RIVER

Area	No. of Families	Radio	Piano, Gramophone or both	Telephone	Automobile
No. of Families having Conveniences.					
Old Settled	202	47	85	42	122
Transition	55	4	16	-	18
Fringe	75	4	17	-	4
Whole Area	332	55	118	42	144
Percentage		%	%	%	%
Old Settled		23	42	21	60
Transition		7	29	-	23
Fringe		5	23	-	5
Whole Area		17	36	13	43

With regard to reading matter in the homes the average for old settled areas was 4.52 periodicals per family, for transition areas the figure was 3.89 per family, while in the fringe the average was only 1.89 periodicals per family. The first two types of areas appear to be fairly well supplied with current reading material, but the fringe again lags far behind.

The daily farm work routine also helps to throw light on social participation. During the busy season the schedule runs somewhat as follows: the farmer rises at 5 a.m., starts fire, feeds horses and milks cows; breakfast is at 7 a.m. and teams are on the way to the fields half an hour later. An hour and a half's rest is taken at noon, and field work stops at 6.00-6.30 p.m. Evening chores require another hour's work. This 12-hour work day is followed fairly closely by most families during five months of the year and it explains why farm families have little leisure time except on Sundays. The working period is reduced by several hours during the winter but social participation is not increased at a corresponding rate because cold weather and poor road conditions constitute severe drawbacks. The above indices of the modes of living indicate that 88 per cent of the families in older settlements are fairly well housed, i.e. they have two or more rooms. The one-roomed shack is used by 22 and 43 per cent of the transition and fringe families respectively. The amounts spent for social participation average $12-$18 per family in old and transition areas, while in the fringe areas the average is practically nil. It might be noted here, that if an odd fringe family had more money available for social participation the virtual absence of facilities would preclude the spending of it, unless the family so situated went long distances to

older settlements. The above data regarding modes of living suggest that poor economic conditions tend to restrict the social participation of a great many farm families to those types which do not involve the spending of money.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding chapters an attempt was made to trace the process by which village and rural communities have been established in the Peace River Area. The natural history method of approach was used to trace the stages of social organizational development, as they applied to some of the most stable settlements in the region. Historical data were used, wherever it was available, but many of the details of the community building process were filled in by observations of successive stages of settlement which are found in adjacent districts at the present time. This regional point of view was also applied in giving a perspective of the pattern of distribution of large and small trade centres with their interrelated social and economic facilities. Sample groups of farm families in old settled, transition and fringe areas were also studied in order to determine how accessible social institutional facilities are to them, as reflected in the amount and variety of social participation they have, the money they spend on it, and their modes of living in general. Every stage of the community building in the Peace River area is conditioned by the position of the area with relation to older settlements, and by physical environmental conditions, such as topography, soil and climate. The rate of development of social institutional facilities depends also on the arrival of the railway and the building of roads and other communication facilities which speed up economic progress. The struggle of the pioneers to win a foothold in the region is accentuated by a mode of land settlement which leaves the entire responsibility of

choosing land to the individual homesteader. This plan, or rather the lack of it, results in the scattering of population over wide territories, and often results in disappointment and failure. The sparsemess of settlement also retards road construction, and delays the establishment of schools, churches and other social facilities. Lack of capital which is a typical characteristic of the pioneers, and often the very reason for their migration to places where free land is obtainable, is a further handicap. It forces them to eke out a bare existence for many years, and makes it difficult, if not impossible, for them to pay for the establishment of schools, churches, and other social facilities which satisfy the non-material wants of human life.

The analysis of the major institutions which have been established in Peace River Area reveals certain characteristics and problems which are common to them all. Their arrival lags behind that of economic institutions, and their facilities are meager for a long time, and dependent on subsidies from the outside. Their permanent establishment depends eventually on the settlers' ability to pay for them. The wide scatter of population makes it impossible to place social facilities within easy reach of all the settlers. Social organizations are therefore concentrated in village centres where the nuclei of patrons are found.

In addition to these general problems each type of institution has also its specific problems, related to the system under which it functions, the constituency it serves, and the modes of financing it. The hospitals are few and far between because they are expensive and need large units of population to support them. The churches are handicapped by the heterogeneity of religious elements which necessarily results in the overlapping

of areas served by different denominations, by the apathy of their followers and by the fact that they are dependent on voluntary contributions. Schools are in a better position, since they have the support of the provincial government, and eventually that derived from local taxation. But they are handicapped by inefficient administration. This results in wasteful methods of finance, indifferent selection of teachers, short school terms, and consequently the retarding of the pupils and progress.

The same general problems and handicaps which characterize the major institutions apply also to other social organizations. They, too, tend to be centralized in the villages, and are readily accessible only to those rural people who live within easy travelling distance, or who own automobiles. Farm families participate more frequently in informal social functions than in organized activities, and the amount and variety of social contacts is directly related to their economic condition, as reflected in their income, their general mode of living, and the stage of settlement of a given locality. It must be admitted that the pessimistic summary just outlined applies particularly to the areas of recent settlement. The older communities show phenomenal development in both the number and variety of social organizational facilities. Their residents point with justifiable pride to their schools, their hospitals, their churches, clubs and their urban variety of recreational facilities. It is not the intention of the writer to belittle these achievements of Peace River pioneers, but only to bring out the fact that the facilities they offer are accessible to a relatively small fraction of the total

population. The present study touches only the surface of a number of questions relating to pioneer communities. More intensive research of typical districts and of specific institutions is needed before the problems of social organization in pioneer areas can be adequately stated and made the subject of scientific planning. Yet even on the basis of a preliminary study one is perhaps justified in sketching the more general outlines of plans for community development in new regions. Proceeding on this assumption the writer ventures to make the following suggestions.

There is obviously no panacea for all the ills of fringe communities. The whole problem is so complex as to require the advice of a great many experts and the cooperation of a great many organizations and individuals, both within the region itself and in the older communities which exert political, commercial and other types of control over it. The first step then in a comprehensive scheme of organizational development would be to call in experts in order to devise plans which, when applied, will eliminate the present waste of human and material resources. It is true that much work based on careful planning is already being done. But it is piecemeal, and deals often with emergencies rather than with the underlying problems.

A well integrated plan for the development of social institutional facilities on the frontier is obviously dependent on an adequate scheme of land settlement. There is need for restriction in the size of areas to be opened to settlers at a given time, and for thorough investigation of the soil resources so that settlers may be guided in their choice of

land. More careful supervision of the type of settlers admitted to the new region is needed in order that those who are unlikely to make successful adjustments may be eliminated at the outset. Concentration of suitable settlers in selected districts is not enough, however. The pioneers must be assured of adequate initial working capital, provided either by long-term loans at reasonable rates of interest, or by enabling the settlers to earn ready money at public work, such as road construction, for example. Guidance by agricultural experts is also essential, especially for settlers who are unfamiliar with the methods of farming best suited to the new region. Having outlined some of the measures which will serve to give the pioneers adequate economic opportunities, we may now proceed to outline plans for more adequate social facilities.

These will obviously depend on outside subsidies, but they should be made conditional on the fulfilment of certain requirements, so as to stimulate local cooperation. Generous gifts, distributed without determining whether or not they meet real needs, are apt to defeat their own purpose and weaken local initiative. Larger units of administration would make public institutions such as schools and hospitals more efficient and help to widen their scope of service. Private organizations, such as religious denominations, may conserve their resources and render better service by exploring the possibilities for more cooperation.

Account must also be taken of present trends in rural life such as the tendency for organizations to be formed on the basis of common interests rather than that of geographical location. While there are certain interests which will continue to be satisfied in the rural neighborhood,

such as those relating to the elementary school and the church, for example, there are others which tend more and more to be focused in the trade centres. To go counter to these modern social trends, made possible by better roads and the use of automobiles, will defeat the aims of even the best laid plans for the development of rural fringe communities. A great deal of propaganda is obviously required to bring these changes about in a country with the democratic form of government. But many of the methods and media now so successfully used by commercial and industrial interests to further their particular purposes might well be used to educate the general public with regard to land settlement problems. The daily press, the radio popular lectures, articles in magazines and demonstrations of various sorts could be utilized. There is need, moreover, for the remodelling of the courses of study in public, agricultural, and normal schools, so that young people may be given better understanding of their local social environment. Such enlightnment may be expected to lead to the development of more adequate social facilities for the next generation of rural people.

The above suggestions may appear to involve somewhat preposterous undertakings. Yet it must be remembered that pioneer problems will have to be dealt with in any case, so long as there are unoccupied territories to be settled. It is cheaper in the long run for both public and private bodies to deal with settlement problems in such ways as to avoid the repetition of earlier mistakes. Besides, the insistent demands of rural people for more of the social facilities now enjoyed chiefly by urban and village dwellers must eventually be met, if frontiers are to attract energetic people in the future.

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Department of the Interior
Canada

HONOURABLE CHARLES STEWART, MINISTER. W. W. CORY, DEPUTY MINISTER.

NATURAL RESOURCES INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

F. C. C. Lynch, Director J. E. Chalifour, Chief Geographer,

MAP OF
PEACE RIVER
AND
GRAND PRAIRIE DISTRICT
ALBERTA

Scale 1:792,000 or 12½ Miles to 1 Inch

10 0 10 20 30 40 50 60

JANUARY 1930

Showing Dominion Lands Vacant; for complete information and regulations governing Homestead entry apply to Agent at PEACE RIVER or GRANDE PRAIRIE or Sub Agents at places marked with red circle

Number of quarter sections (160 acres) in each Township open for entry to settlers shown in brown tint
Homestead entries made during 1929, shown in green tint

Coal Mines — Water Power developed
Other Minerals — " " undeveloped
Oil and Gas Wells — Power Transmission lines
Height above sea level in feet, land elevation 1519', water elevation 1519'
Main Roads supplied by Provincial Authority shown thus

Township numbers shown thus: 15

Range numbers shown thus: XV

subdivision of Township

31	32	33	34	35	36	
30	29	28	27	26	25	
19	20	21	22	23	24	
18	17	16	15	14	13	
7	8	9	10	11	12	
6	5	4	3	2	1	

twice the scale of map

PEACE RIVER BLOCK

GRANDE PRAIRIE

PEACE RIVER

BUFFALO HEAD HILLS

NAYLOR HILLS

HAWK HILLS

BIRCH HILLS

CARIBOU MOUNTAINS

WOOD BUFFALO PARK

SIXTH MERIDIAN

FIFTH MERIDIAN

LESSER SLAVE FOREST RESERVE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FOREST RESERVE

RY, DEPUTY MINISTER.

SERVICE