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The United Farmers and Farm Women of Alberta: 
The Development of a Movement, 1909-1921

by

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B.A., University of Calgary, 1982
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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of History

We accept this dissertation as conforming to the required standard

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photocopying or other means, without the author's permission.
This study examines the emergence and evolution of the United Farmers and Farm Women of Alberta (UFA/UFWA) through three stages: the "movement forming," the "movement building," and the "movement politicizing." It argues that the UFA/UFWA developed a "movement culture" of two ideologies and several core elements that helped push farmers through those stages. The core elements, products of farmers' inherited ideas and their class and movement experience, included a belief in education; feelings of community; a sense of class opposition; gender assumptions; commitment to organization, co-operation, and democracy; a social ethic; religious convictions; a sense of citizenship responsibility; agrarian ideals; and collective self-respect and self-confidence.

In the movement forming stage, which spanned the three decades to 1909, farmers questioned the status quo and acquired a nascent movement culture which prompted them to create several farm associations. Organizational rivalry led to the final act of "movement forming" - the formation of the UFA. In the second stage, the "movement building" stage, the organization gained a substantial membership base, established a women's section, built its culture, and moved toward independent political action. In the third stage, the "movement politicizing," farmers committed themselves to direct politics, were confirmed in this decision by their interpretation of events, created political structures, and entered the 1921 elections.

This dissertation shows how agrarian education, co-operative enterprise, community relations, and a non-wheat economy were crucial to this movement development. It also sees the post-war UFA/UFWA social and political philosophy, including group government, as an expression of the movement culture.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank, first and foremost, my supervisor, Ian MacPherson, for his kindness, support, and patience, and for helping me to discern the broad themes of this study when all I could see was the detail. I am also grateful to Patricia Roy for her painstaking editing and insightful suggestions. These two individuals contributed greatly to the quality of this dissertation. L.D. McCann and Eric Crouse made useful comments as well. I am responsible for the errors and weaknesses that remain.

Several institutions gave generous financial aid. The University of Victoria provided a Fellowship for the first three years of my doctoral studies and a President's Research Scholarship. I received a Doctoral Fellowship for my fourth year from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation awarded me the Alexander Fraser Laidlaw Fellowship. The University of Victoria Department of History helped fund my research trips.

In addition, I would like to thank the staffs of the Glenbow Archives, Calgary, the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton, the University of Alberta Archives, Edmonton, the National Archives of Canada, Ottawa, and the Queen's University Archives, Kingston, for their capable assistance. My thanks also to George Colpitts, Jimmy Tan, and Caron Coutu for helping with my technical and computer work.

Last, but not least, I wish to acknowledge my wife Faye and daughter Sara who made this project possible and enjoyable.
TO SARA,
AND TO THE MEMORY OF HER GRANDPARENTS,
GORDON RUSSEL RENNIE AND PHYLLIS LORRAINE RENNIE
Introduction

The old country hall stands decrepit, leaning and rotting at the foundation, its windows boarded up, its paint - the little that remains - peeling. The interior, renovated in tacky 1960s fashion, is in shambles from hard use, neglect, and vandalism.

This was once a happy place. Here, with a blue and gold UFA flag hung proudly on the wall, proclaiming "our motto equity," farmers chatted, smoked, educated themselves, and talked about the latest co-operative shipment. Here, women overcame loneliness, sewed for the Red Cross, wrote resolutions demanding legal rights, and discussed household efficiency. Here, the Junior UFA planned the next debate, and shouted, "Hip hooray, we are members of the U.F.A." Here, youth and adults tripped the light fantastic into the "wee sma'" hours of the night to the tune of Yankee Doodle on a screechy violin. Here, a sense of community, mutuality, and collective confidence was built. Here, farmers perceived that a truly just society was within their reach, and took political action to grasp it.

All that remains are the ghosts of those memories and noise of the door flapping in the wind.

All eyes were fixed on the doorway of the Mechanics' Hall in Edmonton, Alberta, on January 14, 1909, at the Alberta Farmers' Association (AFA) convention. The weathered delegates shifted restlessly, evincing a fidgety anticipation, and discussed the imminent event in subdued tone. Suddenly, James Speakman appeared at the entrance way with the Society of Equity delegates and announced the arrival of "the other section of the United Farmers of Alberta." The response was pandemonium. Instantly, a chorus of "For They Are Jolly Good Fellows" reverberated through the hall as the Equity men marched down the aisles and found seats. Then, after three hearty cheers for the old organizations and the new one, AFA president Fletcher "extended the hand of good fellowship to all." The amalgamation was complete. The United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) had been born.

It had been a long time coming. Since 1905 the two associations had tried to join forces. Most sensed the new organization had a grand destiny. But none of the
delegates who went that afternoon to observe the legislative proceedings expected that in
twelve short years a UFA government would be formed. The UFA and the United Farm
Women of Alberta (UFWA) would also see all their candidates elected in the 1921
federal election, would spawn a great co-operative movement culminating in the Wheat
Pool, would be responsible for important women's rights, social, and agrarian legislation,
and would indelibly shape Alberta's political culture.

This is the story of the greatest democratic movement in Canadian history, and the
most successful state or provincial level farm body in North American history. It begins
by tracing the roots of the Alberta movement and covers the period to 1921 when the
agrarian revolt broke out. Along the way, it describes, like I.A. Wood, the central
Canadian background of the Alberta farm movement, and, like Paul Sharp, shows
environmental and American influences. Following W.L. Morton, it tries to illumine the
many factors behind the UFA/UFWA; unlike him, it sees the organization more as a class
than a sectional movement. It elaborates on Ian MacPherson's argument that co­
operation shaped the UFA/UFWA, and, like David Laycock, reveals diversity in
agrarian thought. Unlike biographers of UFA/UFWA leaders who often exaggerate their
subjects' importance, the study examines the UFA/UFWA as a mass movement. It does
not ignore the role of leadership, but concentrates on the rank and file by analyzing
convention voting, letters to the editor, and local secretaries' reports. It rejects some
scholars' argument that farmers were simply entrepreneurs whose main aim was to
improve their status within capitalism through scientific techniques, pressure tactics, and
"managerial capitalism." It favours the view that farmers sought popular political
control and aimed to protect their families, communities, and way of life against
corporate hegemony. It also recognizes that farmers often used business methods to
preserve their traditional values and lifestyle.

Most of the published and unpublished studies on the UFA/UFWA focus on its
politics, not on the organization itself. In particular, they say little about the UFWA and
gender notions in the movement. They also fail to explore links between the
UFA/UFWA and the rural economy and relations between farmers and between
producers and other groups. This thesis seeks to fill these gaps.

The study's main argument is that the UFA/UFWA is best understood by
examining its developing "movement culture."\textsuperscript{16} As a mass movement, the UFA/UFWA was "a group venture extending beyond a local community or a single event and involving a systemic effort to inaugurate changes in thought, behavior, and social relationships."\textsuperscript{17} It arose because farmers' demands for reform to alleviate their hardship were frustrated by what they felt was an unresponsive political system.\textsuperscript{18} In mobilizing to meet this challenge, they developed a unique culture, a movement culture.

Lawrence Goodwyn argues that American farmers' co-operative experience spawned such a culture, one that led them to support the Populist Party.\textsuperscript{19} Critics have shown weaknesses in Goodwyn's argument about the strength of the co-op movement in Populist states,\textsuperscript{20} but other scholars confirm the existence of a Populist movement culture, arguing that it stemmed from different sources,\textsuperscript{21} not necessarily co-operative enterprise. This thesis similarly affirms that the UFA/UFWA movement culture was based on farmers' class, hinterland, environmental, community, co-operative, and movement experiences, and on certain intellectual and cultural influences.

The evolution of the UFA/UFWA movement culture helped to "make" the movement in three stages.\textsuperscript{22} In the first stage, the "movement forming," which spanned the three decades to 1909, farmers began questioning the status quo and established a nascent movement culture that led them to create several farm associations. Organizational rivalry brought about the final act of "movement forming" - the creation of the UFA in 1909. In the second stage, the "movement building," which lasted from 1909 to 1918, the organization gained a solid membership base, created a women's section, built its culture, and came to the brink of independent political action. In the "movement politicizing" stage, the third stage, farmers committed themselves to such action, were confirmed in this decision by their interpretation of events, gained women's political support, created political structures, and entered the 1921 elections.

Understanding the movement culture helping to drive farmers through these stages is challenging, because, as Robert Darnton points out, people of other cultures "do not think the way we do."\textsuperscript{23} Non-elite early modern Europeans enjoyed torturing cats;\textsuperscript{24} we find the idea repulsive. The eighteenth century popular French mindset clearly differed from our own, but we rarely think that major groups in our own century and country might have had a different world view than ours. Yet the UFA/UFWA had a
culture that was distinct from our late twentieth century urban outlook.

We can perceive that cultural gap by applying Darnton's maxim: "When you realize that you are not getting something - a joke, a proverb, a ceremony - that is particularly meaningful to the natives, you can see where to grasp a foreign system of meaning." It is worth considering whether we really "get" the following statements and if they have such a "foreign" meaning:

Ours is a great world movement which will make a nobler civilization.... We are in the midst of a great civic, a great national awakening; a silent revolution is in progress throughout the whole civilized world.^^

It is fitting that we ... should dedicate ourselves with a firm determination to do our share in lifting humanity from the dismal swamp of political debauchery where rule supreme the powers of darkness; dedicate ourselves to a higher ... conception - a conception of universal brotherhood and sisterhood.^^

These excerpts, written by Alberta farmers, may sound to us like self-justifying rhetoric or as quaintly naive mumbo-jumbo. This assessment contains a grain of truth, but our negative or vague impressions of the writings of intelligent and earnest farmers should alert us that we are not quite "getting" their "foreign system of meaning." In fact, by deciphering their language, we see that they were not foolishly utopian. Nor was their discourse merely self-serving or empty. It was "meaningful" - to them.

The point is that we are dealing with another culture. How many of us would talk about our organizations as these farmers spoke of theirs? People do not respond mechanistically to their circumstances; a culture mediates their responses to their environment. Some labour historians recognize this; few rural scholars have.^^

The UFA/UFWA movement culture, which comprised assumptions, beliefs, and metaphors, expressed farmers' class interests and was a weapon in their pursuit of political power, drained off their tension by providing scapegoats such as "big business"; and sustained them in their struggles by knitting them together and assuring them of ultimate victory. It also helped them communicate their agenda to the public.^^ It was a response to sociopsychological "strains" arising from frontier experience, environmental disaster, price squeezes, the Great War, corporate economic and political control, and from the general culture's inability to explain these pressures.^^
At the heart of this movement culture were a number of core elements that became fundamental notions shared by all, or nearly all, committed UFA/UFWA members: faith in education; feelings of community; a sense of class opposition; assumptions about gender; belief in organization, co-operation, and democracy; a social ethic; religious convictions; commitment to citizenship; agrarian ideology; and collective self-respect and self-confidence. The emergence and evolution of these elements helped "form," "build," and "politicize" the movement as follows.

Farmers' belief, based on popular tradition, that education would empower them to solve their problems inspired them to "form" and "build" the movement. Education, including that supported by corporations and the state, trained them for this work, and ultimately "politicized" them as they learned about independent politics and their need for it.

Farmers' sense of community made the movement possible. It stemmed from farmers' pride in their districts, familiarity with a local landscape, collective projects and mutual aid, social ties and activities, and economic bonds based on occupational pluralism and non-staple exchange. Through their community work, socials, and economic activity, farmers developed feelings of community and mutuality that enabled them to "form" and "build" the movement, and ultimately to take political action.

Farmers' sense of collectivity, and their experience with state and business power, produced a movement feeling of solidarity and opposition to corporate economic and political control. This "formed," "built," and "politicized" the movement by drawing farmers to it for protection and action, eventually political action. The UFA/UFWA maintained its class strength by accommodating differences among producers based on ideology, ethnicity, economic status, and agricultural specialization.

Assumptions about gender reinforced farmers' sense of class opposition and otherwise shaped the movement. Exhortations to be "manly" prompted men to "build" the movement and to support UFA politics to defend their families, rights, and country. Women used the movement to protect the home, to gain gender rights, and to further their class interests. Though the UFA never granted them equality, it endorsed their agenda, including their equal rights demands, because of their community and reform work and political support. By their unpaid work in the home and field, women made the rural
economy, and hence the movement, viable; by joining the UFWA and voting UFA, they "built" and "politicized" the movement.

Both sexes felt that organization would give them great collective power. Beginning in the 1890s, Alberta farmers created several associations, but organizational rivalry led them to "form" the United Farmers of Alberta. They then "built" the movement, convinced that if they recruited most farmers, they would become a powerful political pressure group. As their influence proved limited, they were "politicized," believing that every farmer brought into the movement would vote UFA.

Farmers hoped organization would enable them to create a co-operative society. Radical and co-operative ideology, the social gospel, and collaboration between farmers and producers and other groups, shaped a co-operative ethos, an ill-defined notion that "co-operation" should replace competition in economic, political, and social affairs. This idea "built" the movement by attracting producers to it. Farmers were later "politicized" as they perceived that only direct politics could inaugurate a co-operative order. Co-op enterprise strengthened farmers' co-operative ethic and "formed" the movement by hastening the creation of the UFA, "built" the UFA/UFWA by providing an economic incentive to join, and "politicized" farmers by elevating their sense of possibility.

They sought a democratic as well as a co-operative society. Part of their agrarian heritage, this ideal attracted many to the movement - "building" it. It was strengthened by farmers' class experience and the democratic example of the UFA/UFWA. When the old parties failed to reform politics, farmers were "politicized" to take direct action to create a co-operative, democratic order. The post-war UFA/UFWA philosophy informed them that class and group politics would bring about this perfect society.

Farmers' social ethic led them to believe that the state should bring in reform. Wartime idealism and state intervention, maternal and other ideology, economic hardship, and veterans' needs, prompted them to seek greater freedom, public morality, and equality of opportunity and condition through social, libertarian, and welfare legislation, and progressive taxation. Farmers "built" the movement to press governments to implement many of these measures, and were "politicized" as they realized the need for direct action to enact most of them.

Religious convictions strengthened farmers' social ethic, and "built" the
movement by giving it moral impulse and a sense of rightness about its program. Starting in the war years, many farmers were inspired by a social gospel message of societal regeneration through legislation or class action. Some saw the UFA/UFWA as a quasi-religious institution. Later, farmers caught a millennial vision of a redeemed society rising out of wartime sacrifices, and were "politicized" to take independent action to realize their Christian ideas about society.

Farmers' sense of citizenship responsibility told them it was their duty to improve society and their own lot through politics. Initially, this meant working to elect good candidates in the old parties and "building" the movement into an effective political pressure organization. When this did not succeed, farmers' citizenship sensibilities led them to take independent political action by constituency associations so that farmers, rather than plutocrats or professional politicians, controlled who represented them and what they did.

Agrarian ideology - the agrarian myth and the ideas of the country life movement - reinforced farmers' commitment to the UFA/UFWA. The agrarian myth told them they were the source of national prosperity and virtue - which inspired them to "build" the movement. The myth also assured them their demands were just. Since agriculture was the industry on which the nation depended, should not farmers have better legislation? Starting in the war years, the movement was "built" as its country life ideas attracted farmers to it. After the war, it was "politicized" as farmers concluded that country life proposals required independent political action.

Farmers' agrarian ideology, their movement education, and their community, co-operative, and legislative achievements, imparted self-respect and self-confidence - prerequisites for any successful movement. Such feelings encouraged farmers to "build" the movement and emboldened them to enter politics.

Self-respect and confidence; agrarian ideology; religious convictions; a social ethic; belief in democracy, co-operation, and organization; gender assumptions; a sense of opposition; a community ethos; and faith in education - these, then, were the core elements of the UFA/UFWA movement culture. Their development helped to "form," "build," and "politicize" the movement.

Besides the core elements, the movement culture contained a liberal and a radical
ideology. The pre-UFA associations espoused one or the other of these; both were present in the UFA/UFWA, although most farmers were liberals. Drawing on British and North American radical traditions, Alberta farmer radicals castigated monopolies and "special privileges" for corporations. Following the labour theory of value - that labour creates and should retain all value - they saw themselves and workers as producers. This producerism justified, in their minds, the creation of a farmer-labour political alliance to implement their program of monetary reform and state ownership which would redistribute wealth. Radicals were stronger civil and women's rights advocates than liberals, and were very suspicious of big business. Some sought the end of capitalism.

Prominent radicals included the intrepid ex-American mechanic W.R. Ball; the English single-taxer and second UFA president W.J. Tregillus; Strathcona pioneer Rice Sheppard, an enduring battle-horse; the Danish-born ex-Chicago socialist John Glambeck; Emma Root, a brilliant organizer; the distinguished-looking ex-Populist Kansas Governor John Leedy; and the sharp-featured, quick-witted, ex-Shetland Islander William Irvine. These and other men and women sustained a vibrant radical ideology that influenced the whole movement.

Farmers of the liberal wing had more faith than radicals in the benefits of a truly competitive capitalism. At the same time, owing to a "tory touch" or the "new liberalism," they supported state interventionism and ownership where necessary to ensure equality of opportunity and greater equality of condition. Their favoured solutions for farmers' economic ills included self-help through improved farm production, and, especially, co-operative enterprise. Before 1919, they preferred pressure politics to independent political action.

Notable liberals included Daniel Warner, an Alberta Farmers' Association president and UFA officer, who by appearances should have been a sheriff in his native Nebraska; first UFA president James Bower, a workmanlike farmer-co-operator with a substantial moustache; James Speakman, the articulate grandfatherly third UFA president; Irene Parlby, a UFWA president from an upper middle-class English background who commanded great respect; Margaret Gunn, a Country Life advocate; S.S. Dunham, a lawyer and irrigation farmer; and the lanky, Lincolnesque Henry Wise Wood, the greatest UFA leader of all, whose sincerity and homely charisma attracted
The UFA/ UFWA Movement Culture

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<th>Core Elements</th>
<th>Ideologies</th>
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<tr>
<td>Belief in Education</td>
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<td>Belief in Organization</td>
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<td>Belief in Co-operation</td>
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<td>Sense of Citizenship Responsibility</td>
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<td>Agrarian Ideals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collective Self-Respect/ Confidence</td>
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Stages (through which core elements evolved)

- The "movement forming"
- The "movement building"
- The "movement politicizing"
mass loyalty.

The numerically dominant liberal wing usually convinced the UFA/UFWA to adopt its agenda, although towards war's end the radicals got the liberals to endorse independent political action. Before then, there was tension between the two wings over politics, and sometimes other matters, but there was never a rupture; the organizational rivalry of the pre-UFA era convinced farmers they needed to maintain unity.

Women were not formally part of the Alberta farm movement until 1915. Once in the organization, they espoused the same movement culture core notions as men, and the radical or liberal ideology, while concerning themselves with women's rights and domestic and social issues associated with their "sphere." Their sense of class was generally stronger than their gender loyalty, although neither predominated in all situations. Both sexes' consciousness simultaneously included class, gender, community, ethnic, racial, and other identities, and any of these could come to the fore in a given circumstance.33

The study is structured as follows. Chapters one, two, five and eight are chronological chapters that examine the movement as it evolved through the "forming," "building," and "politicizing" stages. Chapters three, four, six, and seven are thematic chapters that treat subjects which were important throughout the period of study and helped to "form," "build," and "politicize" the movement. Chapter one focuses on the "movement forming" stage from 1879 to 1909. Chapter two analyzes the first phase of "movement building" from 1909 to 1913. Its main theme is the development of self-respect. Chapter three shows how a non-staple rural economy molded a sense of reciprocity on which the movement relied. Chapter four examines how social activities and relations between farmers and between the UFA/UFWA and other local and regional groups built feelings of community and co-operation which also strengthened the movement. As well, the chapter reveals the limits of farmers' sense of community, while arguing that the UFA/UFWA generally maintained its solidarity and effectiveness by accommodating differences between producers. Chapter five analyzes the second phase of "movement building" from 1914 to 1918, examining the origins and early development of the UFWA and how the movement culture, shaped by the war, edged the organization toward independent political action. Chapter six explores how co-operative
enterprise and ideology shaped the movement; chapter seven considers the role of education. Chapter eight deals with the "movement politicizing" from 1919 to 1921. Chapter nine analyzes the post-war UFA/UFWA philosophy and its politicizing effect. The conclusion/epilogue sums up the study's main arguments and briefly looks ahead.
ENDNOTES


3It was the greatest democratic movement because one of its main goals was to create a more democratic polity, and to that end, it organized almost 40% of the male farmers in the province at its peak and created a political theory, which, more than any other prairie populism, sought to ensure direct democratic control (see David Laycock, *Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies, 1910-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), esp. pp. 69-135). That theory was partly responsible for the election of UFA provincial governments from 1921 to 1935 and of UFA federal candidates who carried a majority of Alberta seats in that period. No other agrarian political movement in Canada or the U.S. has had such success without fusion or an alliance with one of the old parties. The UFA/UFWA was also as successful as other provincial or state farm organizations in lobbying and in building a co-operative movement - Alberta established the first contract wheat pool in Canada.


8Laycock, *Populism and Democratic Thought*.

Most of the above studies focus on leaders rather than on the rank and file of the farm movement. In "The United Farmers of Alberta, 1909-1920" (M.A. Thesis: University of Calgary, 1971), William McIntosh pushes this perspective to the limit by arguing that the UFA leadership dominated the organization. Bucking this trend is Carrol L. Jaques' "The United Farmers of Alberta: A Social and Educational Movement" (M.A. Thesis: University of Calgary, 1991), which tries, with some success, to view the UFA as a grassroots movement. Furrows, Faith and Fellowship, by Norman F. Priestley and Edward Swindlehurst (Edmonton: Co-op Press Limited, 1967), provides some sense of rank and file opinion by concentrating on annual convention resolutions.

See Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R. (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 1955, 1968 reprint); Vernon C. Fowke, The National Policy and the Wheat Economy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957, 1973 reprint); Paul Voisey, Vulcan: The Making of a Prairie Community (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988); Robert Irwin, "Farmers and Managerial Capitalism: The Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company," Agricultural History, Vol. 70, No. 4 (Fall 1996), pp. 626-652. The argument here is not that this view is "wrong"; certainly there were many entrepreneurial farmers, as Voisey shows, and some "managerial" farm enterprises, as Irwin reveals. The point is that UFA/UFWA farmers cannot, as a whole, be lumped into this paradigm.


In Populism and Democratic Thought, David Laycock alludes to a UFA movement culture (p. 88), but does not examine the concept in any detail.


Young, pp. 5-6.


What follows is an adaptation of Goodwyn's stage theory of movement.
development as outlined in *The Populist Moment*, pp. xviii.


24 Ibid., p. 90.

25 Ibid., p. 78.


27 Ibid., July 12, 1916, p. 12.


31 See Ibid., pp. 219–220.


Chapter One: The Movement Forming, 1879-1909

"The Trouble may be expressed in one word, monopoly."¹

Eighteen-Eighty. The future Alberta was on the fringe of the North American frontier. The tiny settler population clustered around fur trade posts, mission stations, and Mounted Police forts. Calgary and Edmonton had only a few hundred souls. The railway had not yet arrived; the era of the big cattle barons had not begun. Politically, the territory was a colony of Ottawa.²

In this context, Frank Oliver, a former journalist for George Brown's Globe, that gritty organ of Ontario Liberalism, established the Edmonton Bulletin³ which became a major force in the "movement forming." It initiated and popularized local and regional farm organizations, expressed agrarian discontent, and was a forum in which farmers debated issues.⁴

The "movement forming" era in Alberta, which spanned the three decades to 1909, involved the emergence of papers like the Bulletin and of farm associations questioning the status quo.⁵ Two approaches and ideologies developed that would help to "form" the UFA/UFWA's two wings. Radical organizations - the Patrons of Industry, the Farmers' Association of Alberta (FAA), and the Society of Equity (S of E) - advocated state action, co-operative enterprise, direct politics, and farmer-labour collaboration, while enunciating producerism, antimonopolism, and equal rights.⁶ In contrast, liberal groups - the Territorial Grain Growers' Association (TGGA), the Alberta Farmers' Association (AFA), and, to some extent, the Bulletin - promoted pressure politics and improved marketing and production, while opposing socialism and a farmer-labour alliance.

Farmers developed a nascent "movement culture" which led them to "form" these organizations. In particular, they acquired a sense that corporations and middlemen exploited them, a feeling of opposition heightened by their conviction that the land would otherwise make them prosperous. A larger western farm movement "formed" the Alberta movement institutionally and culturally by entering the province and creating myths that imparted collective self-confidence. Farmers came to believe that organization could make them powerful - if the competing farm associations could be united. This
conviction prompted the final act of "movement forming" - the creation of the UFA.

The Alberta "movement forming" was part of a North American farm movement that arose from the "efforts of farmers either to protect themselves against the impact of the evolving commercial-capitalist economy or to catch step with it." From the mid-nineteenth century, farmers were increasingly subject, as producers and consumers, to the credit system and markets of industrial capitalism, although their responses varied owing to unique social, cultural, economic, and political influences.

Shaped by this context, the emerging Alberta movement was partly "formed" by the culture of the Grange, an American farm organization that established itself in Ontario by the late 1870s. The "tap-root" from which subsequent Canadian farm associations emerged, the Ontario Grange demonstrated the possibilities of farmer cooperative trading, made education an agrarian tradition, and, by prohibiting politics and partisan discussion, created an anti-political current in farm circles that rendered many Alberta producers leery of direct politics.

In 1879, the year the Grange peaked, the first step in the Alberta "movement forming" occurred with the organization of the Edmonton Agricultural Society (EAS). This was the seed from which the Alberta farm movement would develop. Its former members would later be prominent in the Alberta Patrons of Industry, the Strathcona TGGA, the AFA, the S of E, and the UFA.

The EAS popularized the "garden myth," a utopian image of the land's agricultural potential, in its exhibition advertisements. Present in immigration literature, the myth was embraced by farmers, who, as rootless frontier men and women, yearned to be proud of their districts. Farm surpluses in the 1880s reinforced their faith in their "gardens," but they had to restrict production because there was no railway to take their produce to markets.

Frustrated, they "formed" the EAS into an incipient protest body. In 1884, it demanded a link to the Canadian Pacific Railway and complained that local farmers could not bid on government contracts. The Bulletin strongly supported the EAS while helping farmers to see themselves as part of a larger western movement by keeping them abreast of producers' struggles in Manitoba. Reading about the grain trade and CPR
monopoly developed their sense of opposition to corporate power.

The railway arrived near Edmonton in 1891, but high freight charges dashed local farmers' hopes it would open up lucrative markets. Their disillusionment was heightened by their belief, confirmed through their success at the Winnipeg Exhibition, that their "gardens" would make them prosperous without this impediment. They responded by attending a meeting called by Daniel Maloney, former president of the EAS, which demanded lower freight tariffs. The Company reduced rates slightly.

Farmers near Sturgeon River, just north of Edmonton, wanted an organization to deal with a multiplicity of farm problems. They met in December 1891 under George Long, a future UFA officer, and discussed forming a farmers' union to improve production, obtain cheaper imports, and secure better prices by finding new markets. After studying the constitutions of several farm associations, they organized a branch of the Patrons of Industry.

Like the Grange, the Patrons began in the United States and spread into Ontario. By the mid 1890s, the organization had spilled into the West. The Ontario Patrons established a binder twine company, which, until its collapse in 1912, provided an impressive co-operative example to farmers across the country. The Ontario Patrons also took direct political action, winning seventeen seats in the legislature in 1894.

Patron ideology was rooted in late eighteenth century English and American radicalism which blamed political oppression and corruption for economic misery. Like many American radical movements from the 1860s on, Patrons depicted farmers and workers as producers with a common cause against the non-producing rich who exploited them, mainly through the state. Patrons believed labour was the source of all value and that producers were entitled to the wealth they created. Like other radicals, they denounced corporate power - "monopolies" - and called for "equal rights" - no "special privileges for big business.

American Populism, the largest farm movement in North America, was a further, albeit indirect, influence on the Alberta movement. Its electoral defeat in 1896 revealed, like the Ontario Patron political defeats in the latter 1890s, the apparent folly of third party action. The lesson was not lost on the Alberta TGGA, the AFA, and the early UFA. Like the Grange and Patrons, Populism also popularized farmer co-operation, established
agrarian ideals in North American farm culture, and made equal rights, producerism, and antimonopoly key agrarian radical notions - that the FAA, S of E, and UFA/UFWA radicals would adopt. In these ways, Populism, and especially Patronism, an important Ontario influence like the Grange and Frank Oliver, helped to "form" the Alberta farm movement.

Following the Sturgeon River farmers, Patron lodges sprang up around Edmonton starting in 1892, and by 1894 organization was underway along the Calgary and Edmonton railway. Like their successors, the Patrons attacked high tariffs and freight rates. An Alberta Lodge petition read in the House of Commons declared that the government should not promote western settlement unless freight charges and duties on farm machinery and twine were lowered. Alberta Patrons were also involved in meetings to form co-operative creameries, requested a bridge to provide northern access to the railhead at Strathcona, and demanded an Edmonton normal school. They threatened to send Members to the Territorial Assembly in support of the latter demand. A Patron county association called for a division of the District of Alberta into two electoral jurisdictions to give northern Alberta farmers fair representation in Parliament against the southern ranchers. Already, north-south tensions, which would be exacerbated by such controversies as the choice of provincial capital, were evident in Alberta.

Inspired by Ontario Patron political victories in June 1894, Alberta Patrons helped to elect Daniel Mahoney and Frank Oliver to the Territorial Assembly. They also supported Oliver as a federal candidate in the 1896 election. An "independent liberal" and a provincial rights advocate, Oliver backed the Liberals' Manitoba school policy and their tariff for revenue plank. Invoking the agrarian myth, he argued that lower tariffs were needed because agriculture was "the great wealth producing industry of the whole country." He also called for an end to the CPR monopoly.

Oliver's victory marked the high point of Patron success in Alberta and the culmination of an important period of "movement forming." The Patron political campaigns had captured farmers' imagination, mobilized them, and formed them into a movement. But the agrarian political movement would be cut short. After 1896, no Patrons ran for political office in Alberta, and Patronism outside Alberta was
practically wiped out. The Liberals co-opted the Patrons with the Crowsnest Pass Agreement and the Fielding Tariff of 1897 which reduced duties on farm articles.³⁰

In short order, however, a war erupted with the CPR and the grain trade that opened a new chapter in the formation of a prairie farm movement. In identifying with the struggle, Alberta farmers molded a culture of opposition and gained pride from the legislation that resulted. Stories emerging from the events amplified these feelings, attracted new recruits, and sustained producers in subsequent skirmishes.

The CPR fired the first volley in 1897 when it decided it would no longer receive grain from flat warehouses³¹ or platforms at centres with grain elevators. In response, James Douglas, an M.P. elected with Patron support, moved first reading of a bill that sought to restore farmers' platform and warehouse privileges and to distribute cars more fairly. The CPR conceded farmers' right to load directly from wagons, and the bill was dropped.³² Unsatisfied, Douglas introduced another bill in March 1899, which, besides demanding flat warehouse rights, called for a chief inspector to supervise the grain industry. The House agreed to have the issue considered by a committee which approved the idea of an inspector but rejected the flat warehouse clause.³³

Douglas and Frank Oliver were livid. Oliver lampooned the committee members who voted to protect "the western farmer from the mistaken idea that he ought to have a free market for his produce."³⁴ In response to such criticism, the government appointed the Royal Commission on the Shipment and Transportation of Grain. At the hearing in Edmonton, farmers complained about prices and weighing of grain and about the railway's recent announcement it would impose extra charges if cars were not loaded or unloaded in twenty-four hours.³⁵ Although attendance was low at the hearing, partly because of farmers' lack of an effective organization, their representation had some effect; the CPR extended the loading time for Edmonton.³⁶

The Commission report formed the basis of the Manitoba Grain Act of 1900. The Act provided for improved supervision of the grain industry, the erection of flat warehouses and loading platforms, and fair car distribution to all applicants. While farmers gained movement pride from the Act,³⁷ it did not end their discontent. Difficulties in its enforcement gave rise to new grievances that led them to conclude that producer-owned grain companies, and ultimately, direct political action, were needed to
solve their grain shipping and handling problems.38

The Act also could not help farmers in a dispute about the oats market in 1901-02. This controversy did more to develop Alberta producers' sense of opposition to the grain trade than conditions leading to the Manitoba Act had. The incident began in December 1901, when, after a "boom" in prices, the bottom fell out of the oats market. Frank Oliver accused the Manitoba "grain combine" of paying high prices to dissuade farmers from selling to the government which had a contract to supply oats for the South African War. Having ensured that the contract could not be filled, the combine allegedly controlled the market and dropped its prices. In addition, the Grain Standards Board, a tool of the combine according to Oliver, announced that all damaged oats would be classified as No. 1 or No. 2 Alberta - which implied that most damaged oats were from Alberta. The Board also graded virtually all Alberta oats as injured. Oliver saw all this as an attempt to depress Alberta oat prices.39

Alberta farmers and businessmen protested this grading of Alberta oats, especially after they learned an Edmonton oat exhibit had won first prize at a Paris exhibition.40 Once again, the garden myth fueled farmers' anger; they believed the Board had stolen the wealth produced by their bounteous land. The government responded by finding new markets and relaxing its standards for purchases for South Africa, and it removed oats from the Board's control. Despite this action, the oats episode left ill-will in Alberta farmers' minds which made them receptive to new farm associations41 - thus helping to "form" the movement.

As the oats controversy came to a head in late 1901, the Grain Growers' movement was born just east of Regina. This movement would help to "form" the movement in Alberta as it spread into Alberta and imparted its mythology. Movements create myths to foster a sense of commitment among members. Tales about the Grain Growers would develop Alberta farmers' sense of pride and solidarity.

The stimulus for the creation of the Grain Growers was the railways' difficulty in handling the record 1901 crop. Because grain could be loaded most quickly from elevators, the CPR refused to provide cars to farmers shipping from warehouses and platforms. Oliver attacked the Company in Parliament for this action, while farmers took action at Indian Head by forming the Territorial Grain Growers' Association (TGGA).
Ottawa responded with the 1902 Grain Act which appeared to follow resolutions the TGGA had passed. The new Act provided for further construction of loading platforms and warehouses and required the railways to distribute cars according to the order of application; no longer could they favour elevator companies over farmers.42

The 1902 crop was even heavier than that of 1901, and the "freight car famine," more acute. The TGGA proved in the Sintaluta court case that the CPR had violated the 1902 Act, forcing the Company to obey the law.43 David had slain Goliath! For years, the western movement considered this victory among its "most treasured possessions."44 It gave farmers movement forming self-respect.

With the prestige gained from the Sintaluta case, the TGGA spread like wildfire across Saskatchewan and into Manitoba. Its movement into Alberta, however, was comparatively slow. The first Alberta TGGA branch was not formed until 1905, partly owing to the competition of the Farmers' Association of Lacombe - "the forgotten forerunner of the U.F.A."45

The leading force behind this organization was another Ontario influence on the Alberta movement - J.J. Gregory, "the Colonel" - who moved to the Lacombe district from the Niagara Peninsula in 1893. He was one of several who tried to establish the Lacombe Co-operative Society in 1898 - a multi-faceted co-op based on Rochdale principles. The Society collapsed the following year, owing to poor finances, lack of support, credit problems with wholesalers, and the opposition of banks and merchants.46

This did not deter the Colonel from trying to create a farm association. Increasing agrarian unrest in 1902-03 convinced him to act. He did not, however, establish a TGGA branch, believing it was geared for wheat producers and that Alberta farmers wanted a local organization.47 A radical, he was also averse to the TGGA's liberalism and avoidance of direct politics.

William R. Ball's letter in the Bulletin in December 1902 apparently triggered Gregory's organizing efforts.48 Ball, a Strathcona area farmer and ex-American mechanic, would be primarily responsible for establishing key ideas of the movement's radical wing, notions that remained intact well into the UFA era. Virtually absent from the historical record, and a self-styled "crank," Ball was as important in developing radical Alberta agrarianism as William Irvine would be. Ball's letter articulated the themes he would
preach for over a decade. In the language of producerism and the labour theory of value, he called on "the toilers and producers" who "create all the wealth," to form a protective union. Moreover, he expressed a belief in organization, based on farmer and labour culture, that would become a key "movement culture" idea. He noted that other classes had combined and promised farmers that organization would secure such measures as state railways and loans. He also revealed the Christian foundation of his critique, arguing that "the great Creator" intended "the profit from the large crops for those who tilled the soil," not for "a few immensely rich men."^*^49

In early 1903, Ball raised farmers' class awareness at several rallies in support of government ownership of railways. He compared CPR rates with those of the Intercolonial to suggest how much the West would save if its railways were state owned.^50 He urged farmers to hold meetings to discuss railway problems, and tried to organize a "political reform society" to address farmers' difficulties.^51 Likely in response to this agitation, and to Ball's letter in the Bulletin calling for a protective union, the Colonel and his son-in-law, F.B. Watson, organized the Farmers' Association of Lacombe in April 1903, which soon became the Farmers' Association of Alberta (FAA).^52

The FAA was something of a reincarnation of the Ontario Patrons with which Watson and Gregory were familiar. Like the Patrons, the FAA sympathized with labour, supported co-operative enterprise, and entered politics. After a successful recruiting campaign, the FAA nominated Gregory as its candidate for the Strathcona riding in the 1904 federal election. Henceforth, the Liberal Bulletin referred to the FAA as the "Farmers' Alliance" to cast Gregory's candidacy in a negative light by associating him with a politically defeated organization.^53 Undaunted, the Colonel carried on. His platform called for state railways and loans, aid for farmer co-ops, more government creameries and experimental farms, and the opening of B.C. markets for Alberta produce. Of Loyalist stock, Gregory promised to maintain the British tie and to resist undesirable American influences.^54

It was a mistake to play the anti-American card in a constituency where a third of the population was American.^55 This, plus weak organization, a lack of funds and newspaper support, and the popularity of the old parties, led to Gregory's sound defeat which killed the FAA.^56 Its demise, and that of the Ontario Patrons and American
Populism, created a strong aversion to independent politics among liberal Alberta farmers.

Gregory’s defeat did not mean farmers were content with their lot. Imbued with the garden myth, they were "elated" with the crops their "soil and climate" had produced that fall, but were "very disappointed" they were "deprived" of their "just portion" by unfair weighing, grading, and dockage. As prices were also low for livestock, farmers could not meet their obligations. They consequently "got a little excited and wanted some action taken."57 The result was a new era of organizational activity.

It began in the Poplar Lake area in the fall of 1904 when several school trustees discussed "the low prices and ... meagre returns for labor on the farm."58 Believing a combine existed in the Edmonton grain market, a subsequent meeting of electors appointed a committee to gather information about farm associations.59 Soon after, the farmers of the district established a branch of the American Society of Equity, an organization founded in 1902 in Indiana by J.A. Everitt. They had been influenced by W.J. Keen, secretary of the Turnip Lake School District and a subscriber to Up-to-Date Farming, the official Equity organ.60 The Society's central doctrine, "controlled marketing to compel profitable prices for all farm products,"61 involved setting prices for farm products and holding them off the market until those prices were obtained.

Reacting to the same conditions prompting the Poplar Lake farmers to act, Strathcona pioneer Rice Sheppard, in a letter to the Bulletin in early 1905, admonished farmers to organize.62 Keen, the Society's secretary, responded with a letter promoting the S of E. Evincing, like Ball and Sheppard, a belief in the power of organization, Keen declared in the language of antimonopolism and equal rights that

The platform of our Society is justice and equity to all and when this is backed up by a million or more strongly organized farmers they will carry such a weight that no political party, no railway monopoly, no implement trust, no clique of buyers ... will dare oppose them with a shadow of success. The Society of Equity, Mr. Editor, will not only remedy Mr. Sheppard's troubles, ... it will obtain profitable prices for all a farmer grows.63

Such discourse was characteristic of the Society and would be taken up by the radical wing of the UFA/UFWA.

Sheppard replied that the S of E was suitable only for conditions in the United
States. He urged farmers to form a branch of the TGGA - which he, Ball, and several other farmers did at Strathcona in March 1905. The activities, rivalry, and efforts to unite the TGGA and S of E would "form" the Alberta movement into the UFA.

Sheppard would be an important leader in the TGGA, the AFA, and the UFA. He came from England to the Edmonton area in 1898 and became a prosperous farmer. A radical, he was one of the first UFA officers to support independent politics. An effective speaker, "his highly emotional disposition" helped him to "dramatize the need for rural organization in a way few others could have done." As with Ball, his intensity and radicalism flowed from deep religious convictions.

Sheppard became secretary of the new TGGA branch; Daniel Warner, a future UFA officer and M.P., was elected president. Warner, who looked like a sheriff in a western movie, came from Nebraska in 1898 and became a well-to-do farmer near Edmonton. W.F. Stevens, a giant of a man, was an early director of the Strathcona TGGA. Possessing an acute intellect, he would display impressive ability as secretary of the Alberta successor of the TGGA. Another early TGGA director was the volatile Joshua Fletcher. Young and impetuous, he gained a reputation as a great orator and was elected president in 1907.

The importance of these men was mostly in the future. In the meantime, they had to contend with the aggressive organizing of the S of E. By the spring of 1905, the Society had grown enough to hold a convention which instructed the Executive to draw up a list of minimum prices for the next crop. The price of oats was so low that an Equitist exhorted farmers to join the Society by arguing that their being at the mercy of a few grain dealers did "violence" to their "manhood." It was unmanly to be ripped off by middlemen; "real farm men" should join the S of E.

The Society's strength was evident from its prominence in the parade held in Edmonton to celebrate the birth of Alberta as a province. For Equitists, it was a moment of movement pride, but they had obtained "the place of honor" in the procession only when they agreed to show their name as "Farmers" rather than "American" Society of Equity. This was but one instance of the difficulty the Society had in promoting itself in Alberta. The majority of farmers in the province were Canadian or British born and many were wary of anything American. The Society later changed its name to "Canadian
Society of Equity," but a taint of Americanism remained to hurt recruitment.

Yet the Society had much to offer farmers. It bought binder twine co-operatively and its locals shipped members' grain. Moreover, it convinced the Strathcona TGGA not to sell farm products below certain prices. This joint effort, though not too successful, revealed the Society's influence: it had convinced the TGGA to concede "the very principle on which the rival organization was founded" - controlled marketing. The two organizations also collaborated to improve the unprofitable hog market. In April 1905, the Strathcona TGGA appointed a committee to determine how many hogs Alberta exported, and the volume of pork products Edmonton merchants imported. The Society supported the TGGA committee and asked it to publish its findings, which it did. The two associations later worked on a submission for the Tariff Commission hearings.

These attempts at co-operation convinced farmers they would have greater success if they had a united movement. Accordingly, the major theme of the last four "movement forming" years was the struggle to amalgamate. The Strathcona TGGA initiated the first attempt in late 1905 which failed because Equitists felt the provincially oriented Alberta Farmers' Association (AFA) proposed by the TGGA could not effectively control markets. Equitists believed controlled marketing, to be successful, must be done internationally by a worldwide body. They were also suspicious of the close government links the AFA would have under the proposed constitution. The TGGA refused to join the Society of E, feeling that world prices could never be controlled and that Canadian governments would be more inclined to listen to a Canadian association than an American one.

Society secretary W.J. Keen also played a role in the merger failure. At a meeting of TGGA and Equity representatives, he opposed a motion supporting the amalgamation and asked for the withdrawl of the AFA draft constitution. In correspondence to the locals, he argued that the constitution downplayed controlled marketing and that adopting it would be cutting "loose from our own Society." He also claimed the constitution would make the AFA a political body and suggested the Association would be less democratic than the Society.

The failure to merge was not complete. In December, the Clover Bar branch of the Society of E joined with the Alberta Grain Growers to form the AFA. Soon after, the new
organization and the Society made separate presentations to the Tariff Commission. The AFA used liberal discourse to argue that "freedom of trade is a natural right." It invoked the agrarian myth that farming was the "fundamental industry," and averred that farmers' interests should have first priority in Parliament - which would mean lower duties on lumber, farm implements, and other goods. Consistent with its British perspective, the Association also proposed more trade with the Empire. Overall, it sought a "tariff for revenue," while asking that the duty on hogs and pork be maintained. In contrast to the AFA's liberalism, the S of E memorial used radical discourse. It asserted that capitalists "unjustly" extorted labor and money through high tariffs, and demanded that duties be made more "equitable." This moral economy notion about fairness contrasted with the AFA market focus. Finally, the Society demanded a lower tariff on farm machinery and protested a proposed hike in the duty on lumber and fruit.

After the Commission hearings, the AFA launched a strong recruiting campaign. As the rival organizations vied for farmers' allegiance, a lot of mudslinging and infighting ensued. Both grew steadily, expanding even into the South. The Society claimed over 1000 members in March 1906; the AFA, 1200 by May.

The AFA that year began work on one of its major preoccupations: the western shipment of produce - for sale in B.C. and abroad. The AFA and its successor were imbued with "the myth of the Japan market." They believed Japan's forty million people would soon demand huge quantities of Alberta agricultural products. Accordingly, the AFA called for a coastal terminal and changes to the Inspection and Grain Acts to promote "shipment to the coast." In testifying before the Agriculture Committee in Ottawa, Joshua Fletcher asked that farmers' car distribution rights for shipping east apply to westward shipments. The government granted this and Fletcher's other requests, including a petition for a classification for Alberta winter wheat.

Farmers' concern about western markets, and about special grades for Alberta grain, shaped a distinct Alberta movement. While sharing much culturally with the larger western Canadian farm movement, Alberta farmers already had different priorities, partly owing to their proximity to B.C. and the Pacific coast. In time, leadership, environment, and ethnicity would make the Alberta movement even more unique.

While emphasizing western markets, the AFA was concerned with a variety of
issues. The 1907 convention called for forest conservation, a commission to manage the
trunk system telephones, an investigation into interest rates, changes to the irrigation law,
and a coyote bounty. This wide-ranging program contrasted with the S of E's more
narrow and radical focus on controlled marketing and government ownership and control.
It demanded state elevators, terminals, packing houses, telephones, railways, and loans,
compulsory hail insurance, and graduated land taxes.

Several Equitists convinced the Society to accept this comparatively radical
agenda, including the ex-American Populist R.C. Owens, George Long, an ex-Patron
supporter, and that old FAA battle horse, J.J. Gregory - the "Colonel," no less. But the
most influential individual in this regard was W.R. Ball who had defected from the AFA
to the S of E in late 1905 or early 1906. Ball had never been comfortable with the liberal
TGGA/AFA market philosophy. The idea of controlling the market was more palatable to
his radical taste; he saw the strategy as an antimonopolistic tool. "Monopolies," he
argued, "are our one common enemy and it is not necessary to emphasize to thinking men
the importance of being in touch with farmers of all countries, thereby aiding one another
to secure profitable prices."

Committed to controlled marketing and state interventionism, the S of E was less
focused on finding new markets than the AFA; it felt it would one day control the
markets at hand - while the state would eliminate other forms of exploitation by owning
and operating key industries. Because of this radical emphasis, the Society was less
concerned than the AFA about local issues. Unlike AFA conventions, S of E conventions
did not consider matters like herd laws, stray ordinances, fire control, and pests. The
AFA's concern for such community issues, and its stress on improving markets and
correcting abuses in the grain trade, help to explain its growing success.

Meanwhile, in May 1906 the AFA proposed a renewed attempt at amalgamation.
The two associations agreed to hold simultaneous conventions in the fall at Lacombe for
this purpose. It was not to be. The rock on which the merger talks in Lacombe broke
down was an "ultimatum" the AFA sent to the S of E. It conceded the name proposed by
W.J. Keen - the Farmers' Union of Alberta - but stipulated that the new organization must
not interfere with existing farm associations. When a motion was moved at the Equity
convention to accept these terms, Keen objected, arguing that they compromised the
Society's "essential principle". For the Society to accomplish its purpose - the central control of the market prices of farm produce - it was absolutely essential that the field of operations be not limited to Alberta, or any other province, as their scope must be world-wide. They already had strong organizations in the United States and elsewhere, and they must also get well established in Canada, and to limit the field to Alberta would be fatal.

A majority of Equitists agreed.

The AFA was equally unwilling to compromise. It wished to work with the Grain Growers' Associations in Saskatchewan and Manitoba; it did not want to link up with the American Society which Equitists insisted a united Alberta movement must do. The AFA feared a multi-national body's agenda might conflict with the Canadian movement. The AFA focus on western markets, especially its belief in the myth of the Japan market, also worked against a merger on S of E terms. Revealing the seeds of a unique Alberta farm movement, AFA president Warner explained that

We want an Alberta organization to look after the interests of the farmers of Alberta. Until recently, we have been looking to the East for our markets, but now we are beginning to look to the Orient, and this matter of markets alone is of sufficient importance to warrant the continuance of an all-Alberta association. Our interests in this matter are vital, and to look after them we must have a distinct society, not one interested in Eastern Canada or in the United States, but in Alberta and in Alberta alone.

Analysis in the press clarified the deeper philosophical reasons for the failed merger. One article contrasted the S of E's unsuccessful attempts at controlled marketing with the more liberal and implicitly more successful AFA approach:

The Equity people contend that low prices for grain are the result of lack of organization among farmers, and that if they can but convert all the farmers to their views, they will be in a position to dictate prices to consumers, instead of having to accept what the market offers. They believe that farmers should be in a position to take grain to town, and instead of inquiring what it is worth, inform the buyer what it is worth and accept nothing else. This plan has been tried in Alberta as well as other places, but with little success, as the advocates of "controlled" marketing have had to accept the price as quoted by buyers or keep their products.

The Farmers' Association, on the other hand, propose to co-operate with other farmers' associations already in existence in securing fair play at the hands of the grain dealers. They do not go so far as to say that they will "make" the price of grain, but they say that by working in conjunction
with other organizations they will secure every cent for their grain that market conditions warrant. They recognize the law of supply and demand, and realize that they cannot hope to really "control" prices, but they aim at what they think they can obtain by co-operation - a fair deal at the hands of buyers and carriers of their produce.  

An Equitist provided an analysis more favourable to the Society:

The A.F.A. belongs to the old school of economics. They think that the law of supply and demand cannot be interfered with by the farmers, and that it should not be interfered with by the trusts. Consequently they think it is impossible for the farmers to ever exert any controlling influence upon the price of their produce. All they demand is fair play at the hands of buyers and shippers, and to get the price that market conditions warrant. Their methods to fight the trusts consist in investigation and litigation. Their ideal is "unrestricted competition."

The Society of Equity is more radical. Like the trusts, like the labor unions, they think it is not the so-called law of supply and demand that rules the price, but the law of offer and demand. They think the time of individual competition is fast passing away; that the proper way for the farmers to deal manfully with the trusts is to adopt their methods of controlling prices.

The idea of controlling the market by organizing all farmers would be central to the pooling movement of the 1920s, but the AFA liberal market ideology was more popular in the pre-UFA era.

The AFA tried to make the market work for farmers by informing them about prices and buyers so they could get top dollar for their products. In this way, middlemen could not "make a haul" out of farmers' ignorance. The Association also stressed that farmers had to produce the best product to get top prices, and it taught them, through meetings, seed fairs, and stock judging schools, how to increase the quantity and quality of their goods. Believing increased production would only lower prices and benefit a few, the S of E was less interested in farm improvement. One local president, in response to a letter about Department of Agriculture seed fairs, argued that "the government should try to get us better prices for what we raise now, instead of trying to get us to raise larger crops."

The AFA emphasis on better farm methods was a product of the Country Life movement and Progressivism which told farmers to become good businessmen.
Consistent with this image, the AFA acted as a lobby group, approaching governments "in a business way, the same as manufacturers or merchants do." The S of E, in contrast, did not lobby consistently; its faith was in controlled marketing and public ownership. Revealingly, it failed to appear before the 1906 Grain Commission. Partly by default, then, the AFA effectively became farmers' voice before the state.

The AFA also used a liberal version of controlled marketing. After 1906, it proposed, not to dictate prices according to S of E doctrine, but to help farmers keep their products off the market until prices went up. By 1907, even the Society had moved toward this approach. W.J. Keen explained that through the Society, farmers could "get good prices for their products, by selling at opportune times, and avoiding overstocking the markets." The S of E's failures to fix prices, and the growing popularity of AFA policies, had pushed the Society away from its determination to always "control" prices.

The AFA never really worked out its controlled marketing strategy. E.N. Barker outlined a few ideas in 1906:

The method by which the marketing of grain may be controlled is this: by insisting that implement notes ... be carried forward, say to June or July. Other payments may be dated to suit the farmers' greater convenience, so that his debts should not all become due at the same time. In the north, the bankers were approached and consented to loaning money on grain in the farmers' granary so that when the market was overloaded with grain, some farmers could hold back all or part of their grain until prices improved. By having money to hold on with the farmer can often bring up the price of grain.

Ironically, an argument used to dissuade Strathcona farmers from joining the S of E in 1905 was that "few farmers are able financially to hold their grain indefinitely. Few have a borrowing power sufficient for such a movement, few have granaries fit to hold grain after the winter months."

The AFA idea of controlled marketing became a key notion of UFA/UFWA co-operative ideology. Selling when prices were high, rather than in the fall when markets were glutted and prices supposedly depressed, was a maxim that culminated in the pool movement of the 1920s.

The AFA's brand of controlled marketing, its concern about local issues, its efforts to improve markets and production, its liberalism, business image, and lobbying,
ultimately made it the dominant Alberta farm body. This ensured that the AFA's ideas and approach would predominate in the farm movement, "making" the UFA's liberal wing its main wing.

At the 1907 AFA convention, secretary Stevens outlined the Association's major successes. It had gained legislation to benefit Alberta grain producers, had D.W. Warner appointed as a government agent to expand the B.C. market for Alberta produce, secured investigations of the grain and beef trades, and gave advice that led to the establishment of several government creameries. These accomplishments attracted farmers to the organization and motivated them to work for it by instilling self-respect. The Saturday News captured this pride:

A year ago the association had been in existence just a few weeks. Today it has branches all over the province and promises to become a source of no ordinary strength.... In its service, it has been able to enlist some of the ablest, most intelligent and most energetic representatives of the world's premier industry ... and it now stands in such a position as to be able to reap for the benefit of the farmers of the province the results of the months of early effort. The members are full of enthusiasm and thoroughly convinced that they are upon the right track.

Subsequently, the AFA obtained lower freight rates. And by co-operating with other farm organizations beginning in 1907, it negated the Equity charge it was narrow and provincial.

The AFA also had culture on its side. A product of the Grain Growers' movement, it had a heritage that gave it credibility. Had not the Grain Growers defeated the CPR in the Sintaluta case, and had they not reformed the grain trade? The S of E could not point to such a history of struggle and victory. Nor could it compete with the AFA legislative record. All it could do was offer a radical stew of state ownership planks and promise it would one day control the world's markets. The Society also suffered from an unsympathetic press. Consequently, it started publishing The Great West in 1907 to counter AFA propaganda and erase the image of American control which reliance on the Indiana S of E paper fostered. But it was not enough to compete with the AFA.

Knowing this, the Equity leadership launched an ambitious co-operative project at the end of 1906 or early 1907 by incorporating the "Canadian Society of Equity Limited." The company aimed to "build and operate elevators, warehouses, mills, stock yards, etc.,
to buy and sell all manner of farmers' supplies, to operate cheese factories and creameries and generally to carry on all kinds of business." Will Keen enthused that it would "change our position from one of helplessness to one of great power." The company's main object was to "take the place of the middleman ... and secure to its shareholders the dividends which have hitherto been wrongfully carried off by the speculators." Building on this radical rhetoric, its prospectus appealed to a budding movement sense of solidarity and opposition, expressed in antimonopolistic terms:

If the farmers of Canada stand together and fight the trusts with their own weapons they cannot fail to receive a just and equitable proportion of the general prosperity hitherto denied them; if they offer nothing but a disjointed and individual opposition to their enemies they will still fail and deservedly fail.

The founders of "Equity Limited" conceived of the company as a means of controlling the market. It was designed to fulfill one of the Society's aims described in its constitution:

To have built and maintained granaries, elevators, warehouses, and cold storage warehouses in principal market cities where practicable, so that farm produce may be held and controlled for an advantageous price instead of passing into the hands of speculators.

Keen promised that the co-operative company would soon control "all the farmers' markets in Alberta."

Keen was named company secretary, John Moran, president, and W.R. Ball, vice-president. These men headed the most ill-advised project in the history of the Alberta farm movement. The Society did not have the membership or resources to carry out the scheme, nor was agriculture sufficiently advanced in the province to support it. The split in the farm movement reduced the company's chances of success still further.

At the outset, however, all seemed to go well as company shares sold briskly. But in May and June the campaign began to unravel when letters condemning the company from the American district manager and Everitt himself were sent to Alberta S of E members and leaked to the press. The letters pointed to the inadequacy of the capital stock for the projects planned and accused the Canadian affiliate of seeking secession and of departing from Equity principles. "By daring to endorse co-operative action and the elimination of the middleman, the Alberta executive collided sharply with the Everitt
conception of 'controlled marketing.' Everitt wrote:

[Even] IF IT IS CONCEDED THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO CARRY OUT THE UNDERTAKING ALONG THE LINES PLANNED, IT MEANS THAT THEY MUST DESTROY ALL THE INSTITUTIONS NOW ENGAGED IN THESE LINES BEFORE THEY CAN SUBSTITUTE THE NEW PLANTS OR INSTITUTIONS. IN DOING THIS, THEY NATURALLY WILL ARRAY AGAINST THEM ALL OF THESE POWERFUL INSTITUTIONS, CORPORATIONS, AND INDIVIDUALS. THIS IS CONTRARY TO THE DECLARED PURPOSE OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY, WHICH IS TO NOT INTERFERE WITH ESTABLISHED BUSINESS BUT RATHER TO REGULATE ESTABLISHED ... INSTITUTIONS AND USE THEM ... FOR THE PEOPLE.

Once the letters became public property, financial support for the co-op dried up, putting it on a tailspin to bankruptcy. But its failure helped to "form" the movement by discrediting the cause of Equity, eventually leading the Society to seek amalgamation with the AFA.

Arrangements to wind up the Equity company were made at the Society's convention in November 1907 where labour leaders, likely at W.R. Ball's behest, encouraged the S of E to affiliate with the labour movement. The Equity leaders believed an alliance would benefit both groups politically and deflect attention from the failure of the co-op. As it turned out, disillusionment from that debacle made many Equity delegates more open to socialism and a coalition than they otherwise would have been.

T.A. Crerar, president of the Grain Growers' Grain Company, also spoke at the convention. He told his Company's story, one that became, like the tales of the Grain Act struggles and the early Grain Growers' movement, part of a western agrarian culture of opposition and self-respect the UFA/UFWA would share. He described the Company's expulsion from the Grain Exchange, the dark hour that followed when buyers boycotted the Company, its heroic determination to hold on, and the final victory.

The delegates listened attentively to Crerar, but the labour men had already stolen the spotlight. They advocated socialism, and proposed a "mass meeting of the farmers and trades." W.R. Ball endorsed this plan and the delegates agreed to have the rally the next evening. The meeting supported a farmer-labour coalition, although a tall, sparse Equity delegate, who would later symbolize the UFA, opposed the idea. Henry Wise
A movement sense of opposition to the grain industry emerged in this era out of farmers' personal experiences with the line elevators and railways, and out of such episodes as the Douglas bills debates, the oats dispute, and the expulsion of the Grain Growers' Grain Company from the Grain Exchange. Stories about these events and cartoons, such as that above, further developed this oppositional culture. SOURCE: Guide, Dec. 1908, p. 41
Wood argued that "farmers did not come off nearly so well as the labor men." Noting the lack of rural schools and the need of farm youth to work early in life, Wood declared he was "going back to his union to preach Equity" and he hoped the others would do likewise.\textsuperscript{134}

The showdown came the next and final day of the convention:

Brother Wood strongly recommended that the Society refrain from joining forces with the labor men, on account of the principles involved, arguing that the farmer was an employer and capitalist. Several other members agreed.\textsuperscript{135}

In response, an earlier affiliation resolution was shorn of its most radical clauses. The original resolution invoked producerism to argue that farm and industrial "workers" should join together to agitate for collectivism and popular political control:

Whereas, we the delegates of the Canadian Society of Equity in convention ... recognize the identity of interests between the workers of the world; and ...  
Whereas, the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada has unequivocally declared their absolute independent political action on the part of the working class, separate and distinct from the present two old parties ... both of which stand for the present form of property ownership; and  
Whereas, we believe that only in the collective ownership of the things used collectively (with production for use, instead of profit), lies the solution of the problem confronting the workers. Therefore be it  
Resolved that we reaffirm the position and attitude of the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, and pledge ourselves to affiliate if possible, and do everything in our power to wrest the reigns of government from the domination of the ruling class.

The resolution also urged Society members to buy goods with a union label.\textsuperscript{136}

The clauses removed from the resolution because of Wood's protest asserted an identity of interest between farmers and workers, declared that the TLC would take independent action, and favoured collective ownership. Most delegates endorsed the remaining clauses, but Wood argued that the TLC "had everything to gain, the farmers were getting nothing," and that "co-operation would be no good to the farmer."\textsuperscript{137}

To dissociate itself from the proposed alliance, the Wood wing presented a report regretting that the convention had committed the S of E to socialism and a boycott of non-union farm journals. It protested that these decisions had been made without
consulting the locals, arguing that the TLC had unduly influenced the delegates. The convention committee responded with an even milder resolution which simply stated that the Society should cultivate friendly relations with the TLC "and make a careful study of their common interests with a view of united action on said common grounds." This motion carried, although it was still unacceptable to the Wood wing. A letter was also sent to a labour representative promising that Equitists would demand a union label and not patronize non-unionized farm periodicals.\textsuperscript{138}

In the end, the TLC accepted the Society as an affiliate, though little came of the alliance.\textsuperscript{139} The convention debate on the matter, however, was an important "movement forming" episode. The controversy reinforced an ideological split that carried over into the UFA. Radicals established themselves as proponents of a farmer-labour alliance and social democracy; liberals took a stand against such objectives. More important still, the split weakened a Society already hurt by the co-operative debacle. Equity was now mortally wounded; the outcome of the third attempt to "form" the movement by joining the S of E and AFA was "practically a foregone conclusion."\textsuperscript{140}

While the Society's fate was sealed, the AFA grew in prestige and stature, partly owing to its efforts to establish a government meat plant. Pragmatism and a liberal belief in state aid to ensure market competition prompted the AFA to take up this cause,\textsuperscript{141} a "tory touch" led it to justify its demand by citing past government involvement in other industries.\textsuperscript{142} Similar ideas were behind the AFA's request for the province to operate farmer built grain elevators,\textsuperscript{143} although by 1908 it wanted the government to build, own, and run its own elevators. This was the policy of the Interprovincial Council of Grain Growers' and Farmers' Associations to which the AFA belonged.\textsuperscript{144} The AFA position on the meat plant showed a similar pattern of initially offering farmer assistance, and then demanding a straight government plant. The Association felt that since the province had taken full responsibility for building an urban telephone system, it should help farmers by constructing a meat plant.\textsuperscript{145}

The AFA meat plant campaign effectively started in 1906 when the directors asked the locals if they wanted a government pork packing and beef canning plant. About twenty locals responded, all in favour, but the Agriculture Minister rejected the idea.\textsuperscript{146} Prompted by a locally initiated meeting, the AFA secretary then called on locals to meet
the Minister at the seed fair in March 1907. Forty farmers appeared to demand a plant.\textsuperscript{147} AFA evidence at the Beef Commission sittings in June and July similarly favoured one or more government canning and packing houses.\textsuperscript{148} The Commission report recommended the government consider building at least one pork plant. The AFA claimed a partial victory, even though the Commission did not suggest the province undertake beef canning.\textsuperscript{149}

The government's response to the report was to appoint another Commission to examine the swine industry. This Commission heard evidence starting in July 1908 and reported in early 1909, just before the merger of the S of E and AFA. It found the hog industry in a sorry state and proposed that the province construct a pork plant.\textsuperscript{150} The AFA now passed the baton to the UFA. It would be up to the new organization to ensure that the government followed the Commission's recommendation.

The S of E had also called for a government plant as early as 1905,\textsuperscript{151} though it never got much past passing resolutions. By forfeiting the chance to take a prominent role in the campaign, the Society lost ground to its rival. It also suffered from mediocre leaders. W.J. Keen, John Moran, J.J. Gregory, and even W.R. Ball, simply did not have the leadership skills of such AFA men as W.F. Stevens, E.J. Fream, D.W. Warner, James Bower, and James Speakman. The only strong leaders the Society produced were W.J. Tregillus and Henry Wise Wood.

The AFA, however, had problems with its president Joshua Fletcher who in 1908 attacked W.F. Stevens for resigning as AFA secretary to become Livestock Commissioner. Fletcher publicly accused Stevens of having been bribed to keep quiet about the meat plant with the promise he would be given the post. Mud flew between the two men in the press,\textsuperscript{152} causing dissension in the AFA which "damaged its strong position in the province" and hastened its merger "with the tottering Society of Equity."\textsuperscript{153} The incident made this final act of "movement forming" necessary.

 Appropriately, the two men who initiated the amalgamation negotiations were W.R. Ball of the Society and Rice Sheppard of the AFA. Ball first proposed another merger attempt with Sheppard at a fair in Edmonton the summer of 1908. By August, Sheppard was actively promoting the idea, and in September AFA and Equity officials adopted a draft constitution to consider during the upcoming AFA annual convention
when Equity delegates would be present to try to effect an amalgamation.154

The convention opened on January 13, 1909, at the Mechanics' Hall in Edmonton. Fletcher, and E.A. Partridge, founder of the Grain Growers' Grain Company, urged that the merger "go through." After prolonged debate, the draft constitution was endorsed, and a committee of representatives from both associations was appointed to name the proposed organization.155 During the committee deliberations, Society delegate R.C. Owens insisted that the word "equity" be in the name. Rice Sheppard, another committee member, related how he found a name acceptable to all:

I have always said that the name was God given, for ... I had asked God to give us a name, and the name that came to me was The United Farmers of Alberta, Our Motto Equity.156

The morning of January 14, after both organizations had approved the report of another committee appointed to facilitate the merger, James Speakman was sent to invite the Equity convention to the hall. He appeared with the Equity delegates a few minutes later and announced the arrival of "the other section of the United Farmers of Alberta."157 The Equity men found seats and the AFA president "extended the hand of good fellowship to all."158 It was the final act of "movement forming." A decade of "movement building" was about to begin.

The three decades to 1909 witnessed the formation of an agrarian movement in Alberta as several farm organizations and periodicals began challenging the status quo. Two ideologies and approaches emerged. The Patrons of Industry, the FAA, and the S of E promoted a radical program of state interventionism, co-operative enterprise, political action, and farmer-labour collaboration, while articulating producerism, antimonopolism, and equal rights. The TGGA, the AFA, and to some extent the Bulletin, used liberal discourse to advocate pressure politics and improved marketing and production, while opposing socialism and a farmer-labour coalition. These two ideologies and approaches, one radical and one liberal, helped to "form" the two wings of the UFA/UFWA. The greater success of the AFA over the S of E ensured that the liberal UFA wing would dominate.

The "movement forming" also involved the emergence of a nascent "movement
culture" the UFA/UFWA would build on. Farmers quickly developed feelings of opposition to corporate power which denied them of their land's wealth. They responded by forming the early farm associations to protect themselves. The growth of a larger western agrarian movement "formed" the Alberta movement institutionally - with the establishment of the TGGA in the province - and culturally by imparting myths that spawned a movement sense of solidarity and self-respect. Through these myths and their experience, farmers came to believe that organization could make them a powerful force, a point driven home by the associational rivalry of the pre-1909 years. This led to the final act of "movement forming" - the creation of the UFA.
ENDNOTES


3Ibid., p. 62.


5This is an adaptation of the first stage of Lawrence Goodwyn's model of "democratic movement-building" outlined in *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. xviii.

6Producerism was the notion that farmers and workers, as the producers of all wealth, had a common identity and a common enemy - the nonproducing capitalist class. Antimonopolism was an aversion to monopolistic or corporate power. Equal rights was a protest against "special privileges" for corporations such as bonuses and tariffs.


10Embree, pp. 1-4.

11Ibid., p. 5.

12Ibid., p. 4.

13Ibid., pp. 13-14.

14Ibid., pp. 8-13.


Wood, chaps. 10-11. The Patrons also organized in Quebec and the Maritimes.

Wood, pp. 119-120. Ironically, the company collapsed primarily because of the elimination of the tariff on twine.

Wood, pp. 138-139.


Embree, pp. 24-26.

Wood, p. 144.

Bulletin, Mar. 19, 1892, pp. 2, 4; Mar. 26, 1892, p. 3; Apr. 2, 1892, p. 3; Apr. 27, 1893, p. 1.

Embree, pp. 27-28.

Bulletin, May 21, 1894, p. 4.

Embree, pp. 30-33.


Ibid., June 2, 1896, p. 2.

Ibid., June 1, 1896, p. 1.

Embree, pp. 34-37.

Charles F. Wilson, A Century of Canadian Grain: Government Policy to 1951 (Saskatoon: Western Producer Books, 1978), p. 25. Flat warehouses were trackside grain containers owned by grain dealers who often competed with the line elevator companies.

Gilbert Johnson, "James Moffat Douglas," Saskatchewan History, Vol. 6 (1953), pp. 48-49; Wilson, p. 27.
Wood, p. 164; Wilson, p. 28.


Ibid., Oct. 23, 1899, p. 4.

Embree, pp. 59-62. The testimony of the grain buyers in favour of longer loading time also influenced the CPR.

Wood, pp. 166-168; Wilson, pp. 31-32.

Embree, pp. 65-66.

Bulletin, Nov. 11, 1901, p. 6; Dec. 6, 1901, p. 2; Dec. 9, 1901, p. 2; Dec. 20, 1901, p. 2; Dec. 27, 1901, p. 8.

Ibid., Dec. 27, 1901, p. 8.

Embree, pp. 73-74.

Wilson, pp. 32-34; Wood, pp. 171-177; Embree, pp. 79-85.

Wood, pp. 177, 179-180; Wilson, p. 35.

Grain Growers' Guide (hereafter GGG), June 26, 1918, p. 11.

Embree, p. 86.

Ibid., pp. 86-87.

Ibid., p. 89.

Ibid., pp. 89-92.


Ibid., Jan. 23, 1903, p. 4; Feb. 12, 1903, p. 3.

Embree, pp. 107-108.

Ibid., p. 92.

Ibid., pp. 93-95. The Alliance spawned American Populism (see p. 18).

Ibid., p. 97.
In 1906, 31% of the population in the Strathcona constituency was American born. (Calculated from the Census of the North-West Provinces, 1906, p. 91.)

Embree, pp. 98-99.

Glenbow Archives (hereafter GA), Rice Sheppard, unpublished manuscript, M1135, "Twenty Years in the Great North-West," 1922, p. 52.


Bulletin, Nov. 25, 1904, p. 3.


Ibid., p. 102.

Ibid., p. 103.

Ibid., p. 116.

Saturday News (hereafter SN), Jan. 26, 1907, pp. 10-11.

Embree, p. 118.


Embree, pp. 119-120.

Calculated from Census, 1906, p. 91.

Embree, pp. 196-197.

Bulletin, July 27, 1905, p. 3; Farm and Ranch Review (hereafter FRR), Apr. 1906, p. 11.

Ibid., p. 124.

Ibid., pp. 121-122.

Ibid., pp. 124-125.

Ibid., p. 141.

FRR, May 1906, p. 19.

Embree, p. 143.

GA, United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, "Correspondence, records, and pamphlets relating to the Society of Equity and the United Farmers of Alberta, 1905-1935," typed correspondence, Keen to Clark, Nov. 6, 1905.

"Correspondence," handwritten letter, Keen to Clark, Nov. 6, 1905.

"Correspondence," typed correspondence, Keen to Clark, Nov. 6, 1905.

Embree, pp. 144-145. A few Society locals apparently joined the AFA later (FRR, May 1906, p. 19).

GA, Alberta Farmers' Association, M1745, Minutes of Conventions and Directors' Meetings, Strathcona and Calgary, p. 22.


Embree, pp. 148-162.


AFA Minutes, pp. 5-6, 17; SN, Dec. 29, 1906, p. 11.

SN, Jan. 26, 1907, p. 10.

It sought to help farmers "not along one line only, but along whatever lines they may need assistance" (FRR, July 1906, p. 13).

SN, Jan. 19, 1907, pp. 11, 13.
Correspondence," "Minutes of Delegates' Convention Held in Edmonton March 22/06," pp. 2, 4-5; "Resolutions Passed at a Convention of the Canadian Society of Equity in the Wetaskiwin District on March 28, 1908," pp. 1-2; AFA Minutes, pp. 27, 29.

Embree, p. 156.

Ibid., p. 167.

AFA Minutes, p. 57.

SN, Nov. 3, 1906, p. 3.

AFA Minutes, p. 55.

Ibid., p. 54.

Ibid., p. 55.

FRR, Jan. 1907, p. 8.

SN, Apr. 13, 1907, p. 11.

Ibid., Mar. 9, 1907, p. 10.

Ibid., Nov. 24, 1906, p. 16; Jan. 26, 1907, p. 11; Apr. 20, 1907, p. 10.

The objects of the AFA included: "To hold meetings for the discussion of subjects pertaining to the production of grain and livestock.... To encourage the production of superior varieties of grain, and the breeding and rearing of improved stock" (SN, Mar. 23, 1907, p. 9). AFA involvement in seed fairs and stock judging schools is recorded in AFA Minutes, p. 37; SN, Jan. 26, 1907, p. 11.


Embree, p. 189.

Morning Albertan, Nov. 13, 1907, p. 1. See also SN, June 1, 1907, p. 6.

Bulletin, Apr. 7, 1906, p. 3.

SN, June 1, 1907, p. 6.
114 AFA Minutes, p. 66.


116 FRR, June 1908, p. 13.

117 Embree, pp. 191-192.

118 Ibid., p. 197.

119 Ibid., p. 200.

120 "Correspondence," circular letter from Keen to the unions on behalf of "Canadian Society of Equity, Limited," Jan. 7, 1907.

121 Embree, p. 199.

122 Ibid., pp. 199-200.


124 Embree, p. 201.

125 Ibid., pp. 200, 198.

126 Ibid., pp. 200-201.

127 SN, June 15, 1907, pp. 6, 8; June 22, 1907, pp. 8, 10.

128 Embree, p. 198.

129 SN, June 22, 1907, p. 8.

130 Embree, p. 211.


132 Albertan, Nov. 15, 1907, p. 1.

133 Calgary Daily Herald, Nov. 14, 1907, p. 2.

134 Albertan, Nov. 16, 1907, p. 5.

135 Ibid., Nov. 18, 1907, p. 1.
136 Ibid., Nov. 16, 1907, p. 1.
137 Ibid., Nov. 18, 1907, p. 1.
138 Ibid., pp. 1, 5; Herald, Nov. 18, 1907, p. 2.
139 Embree, pp. 228, 230.
140 Ibid., p. 230.
141 See SN, Aug. 31, 1907, p. 6.
142 Ibid., May 4, 1907, p. 11; Jan. 11, 1908, p. 2.
143 This request is recorded in AFA Minutes, p. 86, although the motives behind it are not explicit.
144 GGG, June 1908, pp. 8-11.
145 SN, Jan. 11, 1908, p. 2.
146 AFA Minutes, pp. 23, 62, 83; GGG, June 22, 1910, p. 16.
147 SN, Jan. 26, 1907, p. 11; GGG, June 22, 1910, p. 16.
148 SN, July 27, 1907, p. 10.
149 Ibid., Jan. 11, 1908, p. 2.
150 GGG, June 22, 1910, p. 16.
151 "Correspondence," Keen to Rafn, Jan. 22, 1906.
152 Embree, pp. 240-244.
153 Ibid., p. 240.
154 Ibid., pp. 245-247.
155 Ibid., pp. 248-251.
156 Sheppard, "Twenty Years," p. 65.
158 UFA Fonds, Box 1, File 8, The Great West, Jan. 20, 1909, p. 3.
Chapter Two: The Movement Building, 1909-1913

"Truly it can now be said that the farmers are making themselves heard."¹

A CONVENTION WHICH WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY -
THE UNITED FARMERS OF ALBERTA A REALITY²

So rang the headlines about the creation of the UFA in January 1909. At last, the movement was fully "formed." It had united and developed ideologies and a nacent "movement culture." In the next five years, the UFA constructed this culture, which penetrated much of rural Alberta, and in so doing, "built" the movement. The most vital cultural development was the fostering of collective self-respect which produced mass commitment. This, and the continued growth of a sense of class opposition, strengthened by gender assumptions, spawned grassroots recruiting and an independent political campaign. The latter was cut short by farmers' fear of direct politics and belief that direct legislation would make the political system democratic like the UFA. Farmers also took steps to "build" a women's section.

In amalgamating, the AFA and S of E had agreed to a new constitution based mainly on the Society constitution, but with key clauses from its AFA counterpart. Like its predecessors, the early UFA would consist of locals, a central office, an Executive, and a Board of Directors. The Board's composition changed over the years, but always included the president, one or more vice-presidents or executive committeemen, and directors who generally represented federal constituencies. The Executive included the president and other officers such as the secretary, directors, or the vice-presidents or executive committeemen. The women's section would later be represented on both the UFA Executive and Board. Local officers included at least a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer.³

Every January, delegates selected by the locals attended the annual convention, the ruling body of the organization. The first UFA convention continued the S of E tradition of designating the locals "unions," and kept the membership fee at a dollar⁴ to attract new members. Most importantly, it chose the Grain Growers' Guide as an official organ,⁵ ensuring the UFA would be part of the larger farm movement. Revealing the
AFA's strength over the S of E, the convention elected two ex-AFA men, James Bower and Rice Sheppard, as president and vice-president respectively. Bower, a co-operative enthusiast with a substantial moustache, was a workmanlike and generally well-respected president until his retirement in 1912.

The officers were soon embroiled in a public debate about the location of the agricultural college, an incident that strengthened farmers' self-respect and feelings of opposition to "partyism." At the centre of the controversy was the outspoken William J. Tregillus. An Englishman, Tregillus had settled on the outskirts of Calgary in 1902 where he established a model dairy farm and the city's first pasturized milk business. He also served as chairman of the West Calgary School Board, was a city alderman in 1913, and opened a brick plant in 1914. A radical, Tregillus joined the S of E, was UFA vice-president from 1910-11, and president from 1912 until his untimely death in late 1914.

At the 1910 UFA convention, Tregillus proposed, in so many words, that the college be built in southern Alberta. He felt that an independent college would be better than one joined to the University in Strathcona. Above all, like many southern farmers, he wanted a college in the South for reasons of convenience, pride, and benefit. The dispute was one more episode in Alberta's north-south rivalry which had developed earlier from struggles over the location of the capital and University.

To sidestep this controversy, the convention endorsed E. Michener's resolution asking the UFA Board to confer with the government on the matter. Tregillus accused the Premier and University president of inspiring Michener's motion because they wanted the college at the University, and thus did not want the Tregillus motion approved. He suggested the Premier had friends with land in Strathcona who would benefit from a college there, and that he had lied about how the site was chosen. These accusations, coming as they did just before the Great Waterways Railway controversy of 1910, cast doubt about the government's integrity, planting a seed of movement opposition to "partyism" that would culminate in the agrarian revolt of 1921.

Equally important, the resolution of the issue spawned movement-building confidence and gave the organization credibility. The UFA Board eventually agreed to the University location for the college if agricultural schools were built in different parts of the province and if farmers were represented on the college board. The Liberals
1909 UFA Board members. George Long, former president of the Edmonton Agricultural Society, and a Society of Equity organizer, is third from the left. James Bower, first UFA president, is third from the right. Seated is secretary-treasurer, E. J. Fream. SOURCE: Glenbow Archives, NA-4338-25
granted these terms, suggesting to farmers that "the U.F.A. is respected in government circles and their wishes will be considered."\textsuperscript{12}

The greatest moment of movement self-respect happened on December 16, 1910, when 800 farmer delegates from across the country "marched four abreast up Parliament Hill"\textsuperscript{13} in the "siege of Ottawa" to meet the Prime Minister. It was the culmination of many encounters between farmers and Laurier during his recent tour of the West. The Ottawa delegates had unanimously endorsed a great symbol of the movement, the "Farmers' Platform"\textsuperscript{14} - a product of debate in locals and conventions, the \textit{Guide}, and the newly created Canadian Council of Agriculture (CCA) - which they now presented to the aging statesman. It demanded reciprocal trade with the United States, lower duties - ultimately free trade - with Britain, Dominion construction, ownership, and operation of terminal elevators and the Hudson Bay railway, a flexible Bank Act, co-operative legislation, an end to freight rate discrimination, and a government chilled meat export system.\textsuperscript{15}

In response, Laurier promised nothing beyond a state owned Hudson Bay railway. Later, the government intimated it might acquire some terminals.\textsuperscript{16} But that was all. The farmers had mustered their full strength and obtained little. They were not, however, discouraged. By creating a national movement, agreeing on a platform, organizing a mass demonstration, and getting a hearing in Ottawa, they had provided, according to one UFA man, a "concrete example to those who always say, 'oh, the farmers can't unite to do anything.'"\textsuperscript{17} From this came tremendous self-respect:

Canada sat up on Friday morning and rubbed its eyes to see that the farmers were at last coming to the front and were capable of doing business at Ottawa.... Although their clothing was not of the latest cut, nor their whiskers trimmed in the most approved style, they realized the part they were playing in the upbuilding of the nation and their feeling of dignity did not desert them.\textsuperscript{18}

As farmers thought retrospectively about the "siege," they mythologized it, adding to their movement sense of possibility. One local UFA secretary wrote:

The farmer ... who has carefully studied the attitude taken by the powers at Ottawa recently will not have much difficulty in noting how the wind blows.... [L]et our slogan be Unite! Unite! Unite!... If this much can be accomplished while we are yet in the green blade what shall we say of the time in the near future when the green blade will become full ear?\textsuperscript{19}
The "siege" also helped farmers see their movement as a force for national and international betterment. According to Tregillus,

> The historic trip of the organized farmers' delegation to Ottawa has not only awakened the people of this great Dominion to a realization of their...possibilities and their duty, but it has started a "new nationalism"...that augers well for the empire, and has created an influence which is and will increasingly be world wide.²⁰

The power of the "siege" as a symbol of self-respect did not fade with time. In 1913, local UFA leader C. Blunden asked the Guide for the booklet, the "Siege of Ottawa," so he could "look at it in the years to come and say 'that was the time when the farmers were beginning to think for themselves.'"²¹ The "siege," thus, became part of a shared noble past that inspired farmers. They were so proud of the event that they held another "siege" three years later.²² It rekindled the feelings of its predecessor, feelings of dignity that drew farmers to the UFA and energized them to "build" it.

The agrarian myth, of which Tregillus was the chief UFA propagandist, also imparted self-respect. At picnics, on speaking tours, and in articles, he told farmers that they alone produced wealth, and that farming, the most ancient, honorable, and healthful profession, intilled integrity, character, and highmindedness.²³ Tregillus concluded that given the importance and possibilities of agriculture, "we estimate ourselves too low and others take us at our valuation."²⁴ A few UFA farmers enunciated the myth in prose.²⁵ Bert Huffman wrote:

> The city's stifled throngs go by
> With empty heart and aching eye;
> The burning street, the maddening roar,
> The killing routine, o'er and o'er...
> But, O, so near that surging tide
> There lies the restful countryside...
> A freer life, a higher view,
> A wider outlook calling you-
> And health and Life and Gladness wait
> Inside the country's Open Gate!²⁶

The agrarian myth made farmers feel good about themselves, inspiring them to "build" the organization while attracting new members. Moreover, the myth justified farmers' "movement building" efforts; it told them their program would benefit the nation. Invoking the myth, the Farmers' Platform argued that agriculture should not "be
hampered by tariff restrictions" since other industries were "so dependent" on its success.\textsuperscript{27}

In January 1911, shortly after the "siege" of Ottawa, the federal government struck a trade agreement with the United States, which bolstered farmers' self-confidence, while its subsequent defeat elevated their sense of class opposition. The deal promised to establish reciprocity mainly in natural goods, opening the American market to Canadian farmers. Though unhappy it would not lower duties on much of what they bought, most farmers saw the agreement as a step in the right direction. Pleased with its economic benefits, they were ideologically favourable to lower tariffs, having imbibed free trade doctrines in Britain, Ontario, or the United States.

The agreement boosted movement confidence, as farmers believed their lobbying had led Ottawa to sign it. Opposition to reciprocity grew, however, as railways, fearing loss of east-west traffic, and protected industries, fearing the agreement might lead to free trade in manufactured goods, invoked British-Imperial rhetoric to argue that reciprocity would mean American control. UFA directors, on the other hand, told members it was their duty to support the measure in the 1911 election.\textsuperscript{28} James Bower suggested they would be "less than men" if they went back on their position and failed to vote for it.\textsuperscript{29} Manliness, for Bower, included consistency, resolve, and adherence to principle. He and James Speakman argued further that reciprocity would increase railway competition, thus reducing freight rates.\textsuperscript{30}

Farmers' critiques of protectionism reflected their ideologies. Farmers of the liberal wing used market discourse to argue that tariffs put "an artificial value" on goods,\textsuperscript{31} and that unviable companies should not be protected since "capital should be invested in such enterprises as are naturally advantageous."\textsuperscript{32} They also suggested the tariff was a costly source of government revenue\textsuperscript{33} and that its removal would create "more competition and less combination."\textsuperscript{34}

Radicals stressed that tariffs "produced trusts, combines, and mergers."\textsuperscript{35} They employed Jacksonian, equal rights discourse to condemn protection as a "special privilege" and to demand "equity" through freer trade.\textsuperscript{36} Drawing on Jeffersonian ideology, they accused manufacturers of stealing from producers, vowing to
THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

SOURCE: Guide, Sept. 13, 1911
smash the tariff wall. We will drive out the vultures who fatten on our toil. We will initiate equity, and abandon special privilege and hoggery, and thus usher in an era that will be a real peace and plenty civilization.\textsuperscript{37}

Using an old radical metaphor and strong class analysis, T. Baird described protectionists as privileged aristocrats living a pampered existence off the masses. He was glad farmers were outspoken in denunciation of the plug-hatted aristocracy of the privileged classes using their millions obtained in class legislation wrung from the masses by watering stock, etc., and who are always ready to spend freely to prevent anything to injure the protected interests of the privileged classes.\textsuperscript{38}

F.B. Sulman, another radical, saw tariffs as a tax on the poor.\textsuperscript{39} Still other radicals, and liberals, felt that protectionism bred corruption and dishonesty.\textsuperscript{40}

Alberta farmers had little sympathy for B.C. fruit growers' support for tariffs on their produce.\textsuperscript{41} Not wanting to pay high prices for fruit, UFA farmers did not show solidarity with protectionist fellow producers. Nor was there much enthusiasm in the UFA for the idea of bonuses for prairie farm products.\textsuperscript{42} Most farmers did not want such "special privileges," knowing that asking for them would contradict their freer trade stance.

Though Albertans voted solidly for reciprocity, it went down with the defeat of the Laurier Liberals, establishing the tariff as a symbol of oppression for farmers, elevating their sense of class opposition, and weakening their faith in the old parties. Even the Liberal party lost agrarian support because protectionist Liberals had opposed the deal. By creating hostility to corporate political and economic control, the downfall of reciprocity was "the first act in the agrarian revolt of western Canada."\textsuperscript{43}

 Farmers agitated for a single tax on land values to replace tariffs and all other taxes, a partially successful campaign that fostered movement building pride. Henry George's single tax aimed to return to society rising land values while forcing big land owners to put their land to productive use. This, George promised, would bring prosperity to all.\textsuperscript{44} Caught up in this utopian vision, Tregillus argued that a single tax would promote industry and

   throw open to labor the illimitable field of employment which the earth
Putting on the Screws

How the Farmer Benefits by a Protective Tariff

The tariff as a symbol of metropolitan oppression. SOURCE: Guide, Apr. 20, 1910, p. 6
The western farm movement had no sympathy for B. C. apple growers' support for tariffs on their produce. SOURCE: Guide, Apr. 19, 1916, p. 6
THEIR FAVORITE CHILD

SOURCE: Guide, July 2, 1913, p. 4
offers, ... doing away with involuntary poverty, raise wages to the full earnings of labor, make overproduction impossible until all human wants are satisfied, render labor savings inventions a blessing to all, and cause such an enormous production, and such an equitable distribution of wealth, as would give to all comfort, leisure and participation in the advantage of an advancing civilization.\textsuperscript{45}

Farmers also felt the single tax would drive out speculators, who, by holding land off the market, impeded development and forced settlers to locate far from existing services - while profiting from rising land values created by producers' work and risk taking.\textsuperscript{46} In addition, farmers believed a land value tax would shift the tax burden from farm to urban land\textsuperscript{47} since the latter rose in value the most and would thus be taxed at the highest rate. Moreover, by eliminating tariffs, the single tax would destroy monopolies. It would also simplify tax gathering, reduce fraud and government costs, and make the rich pay more taxes. Furthermore, farmers could improve their farms without penalty under a single tax since land values alone, not improvements, would be taxable.\textsuperscript{48}

Convention resolutions and the locals' responses to a survey about taxation show that most UFA members wanted all government revenues raised by a single tax - a land value tax - and a surtax on unoccupied land.\textsuperscript{49} The Henry George bug had bitten Alberta farmers. The articles in the \textit{Guide}, the addresses and discussions in the locals and conventions, and the reading of George's works those long winter nights, had done their work.

The provincial Liberals responded to farmers' single tax demands, imposing wild lands and unearned increment taxes\textsuperscript{50} and providing that, beginning in 1913, all districts organized under the Rural Municipalities Act would tax land values alone.\textsuperscript{51} Such legislation, as Paul Sharp notes, "was one of the most important, though infrequently mentioned victories of the agrarian reformers."\textsuperscript{52} It was a source of movement self-respect.

Farmers' self-assurance was further strengthened as the UFA convinced the provincial Liberals to act against corporations. It influenced the government to implement municipal hail insurance rather than privatize the business completely as planned,\textsuperscript{53} to continue its efforts to recover taxes from the CPR,\textsuperscript{54} to agree to take the Grand Trunk to court over a fire allegedly started by a train,\textsuperscript{55} and to pass a law disallowing mortgage
Farmers believed the single tax would eliminate land speculators and increase government revenue, resulting in lower tariffs. SOURCE: Guide, Sept. 30, 1914, p. 6
clauses in implement agreements. After a long fight, the UFA also convinced the province to legislate a standard equipment contract to replace industry warranties that allowed companies to avoid responsibility for their products. Moreover, the UFA induced the government to pass co-operative trading and direct legislation acts. And though it refused farmers' demand for a public elevator system, the province helped finance the Alberta Farmers' Co-operative Elevator Company, formed in 1913. These and other political successes "built" the movement by giving farmers a "sense of power" and by giving the UFA credibility which attracted new members.

The UFA had some success with Ottawa as part of the western movement - which was further cause for satisfaction. In early 1912, farmers told the Borden government they wanted state-owned terminals and a commission to supervise grain grading. They were disappointed when the government's proposed act allowed grain mixing which they believed lowered prices paid to them. They were particularly alarmed that the act permitted suspension of the car order rules to speed up grain movement when necessary. Farmer spokesmen, including UFA secretary E.J. Fream, lobbied successfully against the contentious clauses. The amendment to the car order section was dropped and the grain mixing provision was rendered temporarily inoperative.

The resulting Canada Grain Act of 1912 created, as the farmers had requested, a Board of Grain Commissioners to control the grain industry under strict new guidelines. Under the Act, the government also established a terminal elevator at Port Arthur in 1913, and later, an Alberta terminal and a transfer elevator in Vancouver. All told, farmers had done much to shape the Grain Act and to encourage terminal construction. This built self-respect; farmers had influenced even the party that had defeated reciprocity.

Farmers wanted a Board of Grain Commissioners because they believed "expert" bodies could be neutral parts of the state as shown by their confidence building successes with the Railway Board. The UFA asked the Board in 1909 to force the completion of an Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company branch line. The Board responded by ordering the Company to provide better service and lower its rates. This was a "splendid victory"! The UFA also expressed concerns about fencing, cattle guards, and crossings. Here too, "the rulings were in favour of the complaints supported by the association."
THE WORLD IS WATCHING

The Organized Farmers are the Heavyweights of any Nation

Another boost for self-assurance! Later, the Board responded to UFA demands about railway fire guards.64

Farmers were especially impressed with the Board's chairman, Judge Mabee. At a hearing in Edmonton in 1910, D. Mackenzie complained that the G.T.P. would not give him a suitable crossing at his homestead.... The chairman found that the railway had stopped up his road and given Mr. Mackenzie no way of crossing. "You engineers," he [Mabee] said [to the railway representatives], "get out in the country and act like a lot of vandals. You'll have to build a crossing there within thirty days and construct a road allowance according to regulations."65

Such experiences led farmers during the "siege" of 1910 to seek greater jurisdiction for the Board over freight rates and cases involving killed stock, and to call for independent commissions to operate government terminals and the Hudson Bay railway.66

As time passed, however, it became apparent that commissions did not always favour farmers. The Railway Board increased demurrage charges against producers,67 refused a UFA request for lower minimum railway car weights,68 and, despite many UFA petitions, upheld the CPR's right to levy discriminatory freight rates.69 Such decisions made farmers wonder if the Board was as free of corporate influence as they had thought. These suspicions grew, eventually fueling a post-war belief that only a new political system would ensure that the state acted for farmers.

But before the war, the actions of politicians, not those of commissions, forged farmers' animus to the state and the "interests" behind it. Fundamental to that sense of opposition was the UFA's frustration over the issue of live stock hit by trains. The organization lobbied hard for laws to force the railways to install effective fences and guards by making them liable for animals killed on the track.70 Amendments meeting those demands were introduced in the House in 1911, but they were withheld and postponed from session to session.71 Farmers were still working - with increased exasperation - for effective laws in this area after the war.

Farmers were also frustrated by their inability to get federal co-operative legislation. As with their campaign for stock laws, bills were introduced but not passed.72 They were also angry that Ottawa allowed grain mixing before investigating the matter,73 and would not permit producers to borrow on the security of their live stock and grain74 —
Farmers' sense of opposition to the federal state: plutocratic control of Parliament and politicians.

it seemed the bankers had the cabinet "tied hand and foot." Moreover, farmers discovered the limits of their influence with the provincial Liberals who denied their requests for government loans and a law to make machinery notes due in the spring.

Farmers' direct experience with corporate power further informed their sense of class opposition. In 1910, certain terminal companies were convicted for illegally mixing grain. Here, it seemed, was proof that farmers had been swindled out of their hard earned dollars. On a speaking tour of UFA locals, T.L. Swift of the Grain Growers' Grain Company told stories about the incident which became part of farmers' oppositional culture. At Stettler, he described

the machinations of the grain elevator combines, which resulted in great loss and fraud to the farmer. By means of illustrations..., he proved that the recent developments and reports by the warehouse commissioner ... had been an overwhelming indictment of the methods of the grain elevator companies.... The speaker ... riveted the attention of the audience, and his remarks were convincing when he urged upon all the need for co-operation to throttle the octopus.

Swift developed farmers' culture of opposition further by relating the history of his Company and its fight against the nefarious grain trade. To the Wellsdale UFA local, he outlined

the beginning and development of the Grain Growers' Grain Company from a small corporation of farmers to secure the highest prices for their products on the world markets. The company, Mr. Swift said, had not attained its present condition without opposition, but in spite of the opposition had steadily developed.... How had all this been accomplished? By co-operation.

Farmers faced other opposition in 1912 when the Credit Men's Association circulated a petition asking for amendments to the car distribution clause of the Grain Act which it blamed for a recent railway car shortage. The UFA saw this as "a deliberate attempt to take from the farmers one of their hardest fought for privileges." Parties supporting the Credit Men's request claimed that farmers tied up cars by taking too long to load them. E.J. Fream refuted this by showing that fewer than five percent of the cars the CPR handled had demurrage charges.

The UFA sense of opposition developing from such incidents was reinforced by the growth of monopolies. Truly this was "the day of mergers." The Guide revealed there
Farmer:—"We Farmers have been mighty easy."
Manipulator:—"Yes, you've been good boys, I hope you won't expose the trick now that I've showed you how its done.

An incident in the development of farmers' culture of opposition. In 1910, elevator companies were convicted for illegally mixing grain. SOURCE: Guide, May 11, 1910, p. 12
had been 135 mergers in Canada to 1910. Farmers were convinced these "trusts" paid producers low prices and charged consumers inflated prices. One such monopoly, the "Mountain Mill Lumber Combine," allegedly forced retailers to refrain from stocking American lumber so it could dictate prices. By demonstrating that no U.S. lumber had come into the province, Fream exploded the company's claim that the country had been swamped with cheap American wood.

Assumptions about gender also shaped farmers' oppositional culture. UFA men were admonished to exert their "manhood" against class oppression and other adversity. Any man who did not "kick" was "either a fool or a coward" because real men did not take difficulties "lying down." "Farmers! Acquit yourselves like men." UFA men - "true men" - were to take vigorous action to defend their interests. They were not, however, to be the rugged individualists of the self-made man or frontier myths. The movement's co-operative ethos had transformed traits celebrated in these myths - assertiveness, resourcefulness, and self-help - into ideal collective characteristics. UFA men were to embody these as an organization and class, not as independent yeomen.

Other ideals about maleness highlighted progressiveness. True UFA "men" practiced scientific agriculture, educated themselves on such subjects as political science, and supported the farm movement. Arguments against female suffrage could be depicted as unenlightened because they were unmanly - "hardly ... up to the standard of men." Tregillus argued that manliness entailed having lofty ideals and a high sense of moral purpose:

If we faithfully continue, victory is ours; for we have ... men of broad minds and high aspirations.... If we but care for ... our own families and interests, we are no better than the animals; but when we seek to lift humanity to a higher plane, then ... we justify the intelligence with which we have been endowed.

Like Tregillus, most UFA members believed real "men" acted with integrity, justice, and according to right principles.

Farmers' oppositional culture, reinforced by their sense of male toughness and responsibility, combined with their movement self-respect to ignite a grassroots "movement building" "mania for organization." The directors oversaw recruitment in their constituencies, and there were official organizers, but local farmers did most of the
organization work, spontaneously.

Drawing on agrarian and labour culture, farmers felt that if they "built" the movement by organizing most of their class, they would become an unstoppable force for agrarian and national reform. The formation of the United Farmers of Alberta out of a divided movement, and the UFA's growth and successes, reinforced this belief. "I will bet anyone five dollars to a doughnut," one secretary mused, "that as soon as we are organized thoroughly ... there will be no trouble getting Sir Wilfrid to ... declare he is in favor of everything we demand."\(^{94}\)

Imbued with this conviction, locals organized their neighbours. In other cases, farmers formed their own unions. One producer appointed himself an organizer. "I have been watching ... some of the farmers' organizations...," he wrote, "and as I do not wish to be classed among the drones, I have concluded to make an effort towards organizing a branch of the U.F.A."\(^{95}\) Many locals held contests between members or with other unions to increase membership. In one district, the unions held a convention that appointed area organizers.\(^{96}\)

Disappointments like the defeat of reciprocity spurred farmers to greater organizing efforts. Victories could have the same effect. Fream noted that during his successful fight in Ottawa over the Grain Bill, the farmer spokesmen "were told time and again that they represented the views of only a few." "What is the thought that suggests itself," he asked rhetorically. "Is it not that we should organize, organize, organize"?\(^{97}\)

Organize, they did. Official membership rose from about 2100 to 9400 from 1909 to 1913.\(^{98}\) The UFA's real membership, however, was, and would always be, higher than the official figures which were based on paid membership. Letters Fream received in 1911 indicated that many more farmers were active in locals than had been able to pay dues.\(^{99}\) Following settlement patterns, the UFA grew fastest in the South in 1910,\(^{100}\) and the next year crept into Grande Prairie country while gaining strongly in the Southeast. Lack of funds and local help for outside organizers kept the movement from growing even faster,\(^{101}\) although unions organized by unions proved more resilient than ones "brought to life on the spur of the moment by a fluent organizer."\(^{102}\)

Farmers of the liberal wing believed organization could make the UFA a powerful political pressure body. The early constitutions described the association as a lobby group
and rejected, in the tradition of the Grange and AFA, independent politics. Unhappy with this approach, radicals took direct political action. One scholar suggests the UFA Executive under Tregillus initiated this campaign, but it began in 1910 when most UFA officers opposed it. Except for Rice Sheppard, none directly involved in the political movement were officers. At a 1912 Board meeting, George Bevington proposed the UFA organize mass meetings to draft a platform and select political candidates. The motion failed to carry. Even Tregillus would not endorse it.

Though a supporter of independent politics, Tregillus did not overtly call for a new party in his UFA speeches until 1914. While broaching the idea in the Albertan in 1910, organization and co-operation were the themes of his addresses as a UFA leader. Keenly aware of partisan loyalties among members, he was not about to wreck the UFA by organizing a third party. In fact, far from spearheading the political campaign, it seems he did not know who the independent Macleod candidate was. And even if he had actively promoted direct politics, his influence would have been limited. The 1914 UFA convention ignored his call for a third party. Moreover, it seems he was not as interested in a new party as he was in defeating certain Liberals - which is why he worked for Arthur Sifton's Conservative opponent in the 1910 election rather than organize an independent campaign.

The early political movement, while encouraged by the moral support of Tregillus and other radical leaders, was primarily a grassroots affair. Local radicals like W.R. Ball, John Glambeck, and W.J. Glass convinced their unions and sometimes their districts to back direct action. Many of their supporters were ex-Americans who were familiar with populist politics, and, because they had settled mostly in the South, the independent movement was strongest there.

Political activists usually began by calling for aggressive action through the existing parties, sometimes in conjunction with a political association. A few promoted independent politics from the outset; all, or nearly all, soon wanted a new party. The main catalysts behind this increasingly radical stance were the Waterways Railway dispute of 1910, which tarnished the Liberal image, and the defeat of reciprocity.

T.K. Rogne was one who initially thought it did not matter what party a candidate belonged to if he were a farmer. But like other radicals, he soon called for a farmer-
labour party, and articulated a fundamental tenet of UFA radicalism: that reform required direct politics. "Direct legislation is O.K. if we can get it," he wrote. "Cheaper money on farm security also. Nearer and larger markets, less protection to the trust is all desirable, but to obtain any and all of these ... we must have real farmers to legislate."\(^{112}\)

Though a few independent farmer candidates were nominated before the war, and one gained a seat,\(^{113}\) the agrarian political movement was stillborn. Partisan loyalties were still strong, and few farmers were interested in direct politics; fewer still wanted the UFA in it. Radicals' attempts to convince conventions to allow the organization to support or place candidates were defeated,\(^{114}\) partly because members already had the right to take any political action if they did not associate it with the UFA.\(^{115}\) At the same time, liberal leaders discouraged third party politics. Vice-president W.S. Henry argued that a new party would perpetuate the evils of partyism.\(^{116}\) P.P. Woodbridge told a local secretary that his union's call for a farmer party was unconstitutional, and if persisted in, might destroy the UFA and farmers' ability to get anything from the party in power.\(^{117}\)

The antipolitical heritage of the Grange, and historical example, also discouraged UFA political action. The downfall of the Alliance, the Patrons of Industry, and the Farmers' Association of Alberta, appeared to prove that independent politics killed farm organizations. Moreover, farmers' belief in organization suggested that pressure politics and showing "our controlling power by standing together ... would perhaps be better than a third party at present."\(^{118}\)

Above all, the political movement's lack of success stemmed from farmers' belief that direct legislation - the initiative, referendum, and recall - would ensure the passage of good laws under the two party system. The direct legislation campaign began when the 1910 UFA convention called for the measure.\(^{119}\) Soon after, a multi-class direct legislation league was formed with Tregillus as president.\(^{120}\) Next January, the convention forced all candidates for UFA office to declare themselves on direct legislation. All were in favour, and the newly elected officers committed themselves to getting a direct legislation act on the statutes.\(^{121}\) Later, farmers signed a UFA petition demanding an act which prompted the legislature to endorse the principles of direct legislation in 1912.\(^{122}\) In 1913, the convention reiterated its request for an act,\(^{123}\) and got one later that year.\(^{124}\)
Farmers had learned about direct legislation through the Guide, the propaganda of the Manitoba-based Direct Legislation League, and from the United States. Their growing distaste for "partyism" made the promise of direct legislation - to "enforce their will in government" - appealing. Radicals believed the measure was compatible with direct political action, sensing that even independents or reform parties would become corrupt if not under direct democratic control. They also felt that direct legislation would ensure the creation of state industries. Farmers of the liberal wing considered direct legislation the "key that would open the door to all our reforms." They thought it would make independent politics unnecessary by forcing existing parties to respond to producers' demands.

Despite these different ideological perspectives, direct legislation united the movement. Farmers saw it as a "non-partisan" reform all could agree on. Indeed, radicals, despite their emphasis on independent politics, soon concurred with liberals that, for the time being at least, direct legislation was "the first plank in our platform." Direct legislation, then, diverted farmers from direct politics, taking the wind out of the independent political campaign.

Farmers' faith in direct legislation, partly a response to metropolitan political hegemony, owed much to their experience with direct democracy in the UFA. Farmers believed direct legislation would give them similar power over politicians as they had over their organization and leaders. Robert Irwin argues that a technocratic leadership dominated the Saskatchewan Cooperative Elevator Company and that centralized managerial control may have been more prevalent in the farm movement than has been thought. This may be true, but it does not apply to the UFA which was truly democratic; members, not the leaders, gained ultimate control, despite one scholar's argument that the UFA Executive determined the organization's policies. At the 1909 convention, prominent UFA leaders moved, seconded, or amended over half the resolutions - more than they would in subsequent conventions - but on the important question of which paper would be the official UFA organ, the delegates rejected two suggestions by officers, including one to let the Board make the decision, and chose instead the Grain Growers' Guide. Similarly, the 1910 convention defeated a proposal that an appointed UFA committee and the government devise a better hail insurance plan.
and insisted the locals have input.\textsuperscript{134}

Even the adoption of a motion stating that the next convention would only consider resolutions written by locals and by the resolution committee under the president's instruction\textsuperscript{135} did not weaken delegate democracy. While prohibiting spontaneous resolutions from the floor, the resolution forced unions to consider issues carefully in advance. And while it seemed to give the resolution committee and president great power to set the agenda, that power was more apparent than real. Fewer than ten percent of the 1910 to 1913 convention resolutions came from the resolution committee, and they were not necessarily the most "important" ones. A third of them were simply consolidations of several local resolutions with a similar meaning.\textsuperscript{136} Given this limited role, it would have been hard for the committee to control the convention agenda.

Furthermore, in only two cases can it be argued that the president strongly affected convention decisions through his alleged "control" of the resolution committee.\textsuperscript{137} In fact, the influence of the Executive and president over the committee was limited. Though appointed by the president or other officers, the committee was generally composed of independently minded local leaders. Their autonomy was evident at the 1913 convention when they endorsed a motion stating that unless the Grain Growers' Grain Company became "a purely co-operative association," farmers should not endorse the UFA Executive's plan to have the Company establish government supported elevators in Alberta.\textsuperscript{138} Moreover, conventions did not rubber stamp resolution committee motions; three times they refused to approve committee resolutions before 1913.\textsuperscript{139} Aware of this delegate independence, resolution committees and UFA officers rarely moved resolutions unless they knew there was strong support for them.

The rank and file - not the resolution committee or the officers - set the UFA agenda. Throughout the year, locals submitted resolutions that were published in the \textit{Guide} and mailed to the unions for discussion. Many of these were forwarded to the conventions for consideration. The great majority of convention resolutions came from unions, not the leadership or resolution committee. At the same time, members occasionally accused leaders of exercising undue influence to get conventions to endorse or defeat certain resolutions. Examination of the issues in question, however, suggests the officers did not affect the outcome of the voting.\textsuperscript{140} And only once did a union claim the
officers had failed to follow convention instructions to forward resolutions to the unions for discussion. The accusation was without foundation.\textsuperscript{141}

The bedrock of UFA democracy was the delegate system. Each local was entitled to send one delegate to the convention for every ten paid up members.\textsuperscript{142} Most locals told their delegates how to vote on resolutions while assuming they would exercise some discretion based on convention debate. Other unions simply asked delegates to use their judgement,\textsuperscript{143} knowing they would represent their locals' views. Most unions elected delegates and raised money for their expenses, usually through socials and dances, so that the best persons, regardless of their economic status, could be delegates. Some locals, however, endorsed individuals as delegates simply because they were willing to pay their own way.\textsuperscript{144} This weakened delegate democracy; it meant that some unions were represented by members who might not have been chosen if ability had been the only consideration.

The most serious limitation to delegate democracy was lack of representation in the convention. Before the war, fewer than half the locals sent delegates in a given year, and while the percentage increased somewhat,\textsuperscript{145} many locals had no delegates some years, and many more failed to send their full quota every year. Sometimes expense was an issue, although women's locals formed during the war sent delegates in higher proportions than UFA locals,\textsuperscript{146} suggesting that apathy was a reason for the failure of many male unions to send representatives.

The 1911 convention considered but wisely rejected proxy voting\textsuperscript{147} as a way of providing more local input in conventions. Proxy voting would have allowed locals to vote on complex issues without hearing the convention debate, producing less informed decisions. Moreover, it would have reduced convention attendance, lowering the quality of debate and its educative effect. Most seriously, fewer farmers would have learned about democratic citizenship by electing and instructing delegates and raising money for their expenses. This experience trained farmers, without their knowing it, for the political campaigns of 1921.

While rejecting proxy voting, UFA conventions adopted constitutional and other measures to make future conventions more democratic. To improve the accessibility of conventions for all locals, the 1911 convention equalized travel expenses by pooling
The democratization of the UFA effected by these measures, by the delegate system, and by rank and file control over resolutions and policy making, "built" the movement by inspiring farmers to make the political system as democratic as the UFA. They aimed to control governments as they did their delegates, conventions, and leaders, and felt they could do this through direct legislation. When they could not get the direct legislation act changed to their liking, they concluded, after the war, that a new polity was needed to allow constituents to "dictate" to Members.

Farmers used religious convictions to justify their support for direct legislation and other causes. Bert Huffman felt that direct legislation expressed the "God-given powers of the people." Daniel Boissvain argued that the measure was consistent with Biblical principles:

We are told in the Bible that for the great ones to exercise authority is wrong, "... whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant." The old Book also states that a house ... divided cannot stand. Could not these words be taken to mean the great value of Direct Legislation...? Religious ideals helped farmers "build" the movement by giving them feelings of moral rightness about their program. Austin Droney could not understand "how any people calling themselves Christian ... can vote for protection, and keep the other Christian's product out because he did not happen to be born in his dooryard." W.R. Ball hoped the political associations he envisaged would create a "good and pure government" based on "the principles ... of Jesus Christ."

Ball's call on the church to "condemn sin in high places" reflected the evangelical outlook most UFA members shared. Before the war, very few farmers invoked social gospel rhetoric about building a kingdom of God on earth. Instead, they stressed that that persons and institutions must follow Biblical principles. That was the standard by which they judged right and wrong in social, economic, and political affairs.

The campaign for equal homesteads for women revealed how farmers' prejudice
contravened that standard, and how Christian convictions could work against nativism. During the campaign, which began in 1911, some farmers were angry that ethnic minorities could homestead while British and Canadian women could not. As "Mother Scot" put it:

I often think how unfair it is to give these outlanders the privilege of homestead and deny that privilege to their own race and blood, when it happens to be of the other sex. Is not the mother - actual or prospective - of sons and daughters of British blood at least as worthy of a share of God's free gift as the hordes of men of alien race who are given free homesteads without a condition?¹⁵⁶

"Isobel," a Guide columnist, shared this view and ensured that a "Homesteads for Women" petition demanded homestead rights for women of "British birth" only. H. Ahern, on the other hand, a UFA man, argued that attempting to get a homestead law benefiting only British women indicated a "lack of Christianity."¹⁵⁷ Others agreed the "British birth" clause was prejudicial.¹⁵⁸

The homesteads for women campaign was an early step in the "building" of a women's section of the UFA. It exposed men to an important women's demand and mobilized women, trained them to work for a cause, and got them to think about joining the agrarian movement, especially as many UFA men signed the "Homesteads for Women" petition. M.E. Graham claimed that only two men at a picnic had been unwilling to do so, and indicated that "several prominent men of the district" had done most of the work obtaining 114 signatures of men and 48 of women.¹⁵⁹ The first prize winner of a Guide competition for the best letter on women's homestead rights was also a UFA man.¹⁶⁰

There were limits, however, to male support for equal homestead rights. Many men opposed the campaign, and those in favour were generally not sufficiently concerned to see a resolution on the subject brought before a UFA convention, although the UFA later endorsed UFWA homestead resolutions. Women argued that equal homestead rights were a matter of "common justice."¹⁶¹ One woman suggested those rights would provide the assurance of a home to women married to a "ne'er-do-well."¹⁶² Men especially were aware that if married women could homestead, families could cheaply expand their farms.¹⁶³ Here was an economic incentive for men to back the campaign.
Recognition of women's work also led some men to support women's rights, including the right to join the farm movement. The 1912 UFA convention resolved:

Whereas the women in the rural homes of Alberta are sharing with the men the burden of the struggle for better conditions and equal rights;  
And whereas we believe that under the law our women should enjoy equal privileges with the men;  
Therefore, be it resolved, that we believe that the wives and daughters of our farmers should organize locally and provincially along the lines of the U.F.A. for the improvement of rural conditions, morally, intellectually, and socially, and we urge all our members to assist in every way the development of such an organization.164

In arguing that women should organize to improve conditions "morally" and "intellectually," Tregillus and Sheppard, the mover and seconder of the resolution, believed maternalism would lead women to improve rural schools and that their inherent purity would elevate society's ethics. Farmers also expected that women's charitable and aesthetic sensibilities would promote mutual aid and culture in the countryside.165

While hoping organized women would improve rural life, men also believed they would benefit the UFA "socially." Already in some locals wives prepared refreshments for meetings, picnics, and functions. Their efforts were usually appreciated and often acknowledged. "Three cheers for the Ladies!"166 Women also sang and played instruments and participated in plays, recitations, and readings for the UFA. Farm men believed that, if organized, women would make further contributions in these and other areas.

Ideology and culture prompted some UFA men to invite women into the movement. Radicals like Tregillus and Sheppard held relatively progressive views about women, and believed they had a right to be in the UFA. Agrarian tradition reinforced that idea. There had been prominent female American Populist platform speakers,167 and four women officers in every Grange local.168 In Alberta, women had participated in S of E social activities.169

Even before the UFA called on women to organize, some farm women were involved in clubs. A Women's Institute was formed in the province in 1909,170 and by 1913 there were 22 Alberta Institutes which aimed to "promote the interests of home and country and to raise the standard of housekeeping."171 Some Institutes assisted UFA
A number of women attended UFA meetings and occasionally gave talks on such subjects as dairying. In addition, at least two women's auxiliaries were formed in association with UFA locals before the 1912 convention invited women to organize. That invitation bore little fruit, partly because farm men had not yet grasped the possibilities of having women in the movement. The UFA Board at this point envisaged women forming Homemakers' Clubs, rather than creating a class conscious female section. But that began to change. The 1913 UFA convention renewed its commitment to organize women and instructed the Board to encourage this work so that many women would attend the next convention and possibly hold their own meeting. Later that year, the Executive indicated that the women's convention should decide whether to form new Women's Institutes under a government department, or club auxiliaries under UFA auspices. Women's choice of the latter alternative would inaugurate an important development in the "movement building" during the war.

The 1909 to 1913 years were foundational "movement building" years for the UFA. The unity and growth of the organization, its legislative successes and agrarian ideals, and the "siege" of Ottawa, attracted farmers to the movement and built collective self-respect that mobilized members. Farmers' culture of opposition, shaped by gendered ideas about "manliness," developed through their legislative failures and encounters with corporate power. They responded with a grassroots "movement building" recruitment campaign. Radicals also promoted independent political action, but most farmers, because of agrarian political failures and the potential of direct legislation, preferred lobbying. They believed direct legislation could make the political system into a true democracy like the UFA. This "built" the movement by inspiring farmers hoping to create a more democratic political system. Their Christian convictions further motivated them by giving them a sense of moral rightness about their efforts. Aware of women's potential contributions to rural society and the farm movement, the UFA also took steps to organize a women's section.
ENDNOTES

1 Grain Growers' Guide (hereafter GGG), Mar. 2, 1910, p. 22.


4 GGG, Feb. 1909, p. 37. The fee was not increased until 1918, and then only to two dollars (GA, United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Annual Convention (hereafter MR), 1918, pp. 97, 99). Half the fee went to the local union, half to the central association.

5 GGG, Feb. 1909, p. 38.

6 Most of these facts are from GA, William J. Tregillus Fonds, M6286, biographical information, Calgary, 1982; GGG, Nov. 18, 1914, p. 4.

7 The resolution asked that the college be situated where mixed, dry, and irrigation farming could be studied (MR, 1910, p. 27).

8 A delegation of southern farmers visited the Premier in early 1910 to protest the affiliation of the college to the University (GGG, Mar. 2, 1910, p. 16).

9 MR, 1910, p. 27.

10 Morning Albertan, Feb. 25, 1910, pp. 2-3.

11 See L.G. Thomas, The Liberal Party in Alberta: A History of Politics in the Province of Alberta, 1905-1921 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), chap. 4. Thomas argues that the controversy "profoundly" affected Albertans' political behavior and may have been "the critical episode in the political history of the province" (p. 58).

12 GGG, Mar. 2, 1910, p. 16.

13 Ibid., Dec. 21, 1910, p. 39.

14 Ibid., p. 4.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., Dec. 21, 1910, pp. 39-40.
To enhance its symbolic value, the second "siege" was held on the third anniversary of the first one (GGG, Dec. 24, 1913, p. 7).

"Under protection the government gets only one dollar revenue for every two or three dollars that the manufacturers get" (GGG, Mar. 22, 1911, p. 14). See also Aug. 24, 1910, p. 7.
A few farmers broached the idea of bonuses for agriculture in the letters to the editor section of the Guide (see Oct. 19, 1910, p. 14; Aug. 27, 1913, p. 10), but there was never any general support for this in the movement.


Henry George, Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want With Increase of Wealth; the Remedy (New York: Modern Library, 1929, originally published in 1879).

MR, 1913, p. 9.

GGG, Apr. 27, 1910, pp. 13-14; July 9, 1913, p. 8.


MR, 1913, p. 9.

Ibid., 1912, p. 53; GGG, Oct. 11, 1911, p. 22.


GGG, July 31, 1916, p. 3; Sept. 18, 1912, p. 10.

Sharp, p. 69.


MR, 1910, pp. 29, 35; 1911, p. 10.

Ibid., 1911, p. 3.

MR, 1911, p. 39; 1913, p. 35; GGG, July 17, 1912, p. 10; Dec. 31, 1913, p. 15.


60 Wilson, pp. 44-45.


62 GGG, Mar. 16, 1910, p. 11.

63 MR, 1910, p. 7.

64 Ibid., 1912, p. 13; 1914, p. 12.

65 GGG, Sept. 28, 1910, p. 16.


67 Ibid., Dec. 18, 1912, p. 11. Demurrage was a penalty farmers had to pay if they took more than 24 hours to load a railway car allotted to them.


70 GGG, Aug. 24, 1910, p. 10; Sept. 21, 1910, p. 12; Dec. 28, 1910, p. 12.

71 MR, 1912, p. 5; 1913, p. 11; 1914, p. 13.


73 MR, 1913, pp. 10, 27. Grain mixing was permitted by legislation allowing samples markets.

74 This, despite a demand by UFA representative Fream at the 1913 Bank Act hearings that producers be granted this right (GGG, Apr. 30, 1913, p. 7; MR, 1914, pp. 11-12).
Ibid., 1911, p. 3. The government also refused to help needy farmers get seed in 1911-12 (GGG, Jan. 25, 1911, p. 21; MR 1913, p. 11).

One Guide contributor argued, for example, that "reckless fellows," not "men," made unjust laws (June 25, 1913, p. 15).

Ibid., Mar. 22, 1911, p. 16. Following one local's suggestion, central office also started a membership campaign fund (Mar. 13, 1912, p. 22; Aug. 7, 1912, p. 15).
One letter from a local secretary read: "We really have over 100 members on our roll, all active, but so far have only collected from 35." Another read: "This remittance [of membership dues] gives us a paid up membership of 134. We have a total membership of 240, but owing to so many not having threshed and the shortage of cars, the dues have not come in as well as we could have wished" (MR, 1912, p. 18).

In 1910, Tregillus was publicly accused of having endangered the organization by conducting UFA meetings with a "strong political flavor." He had spoken in the company of politicians and had allegedly criticized a cabinet minister (GGG, June 29, 1910, p. 48; Sept. 14, 1910, p. 13).

Tregillus declared: "The farmers of Macleod have set an example to the whole province.... They have said, 'We want better laws and we will send a representative to parliament who will help to make the kind of laws that we do want.... Let us take a man who is the best to be found, ... who knows what is right and will stand by it, and I understand that you have him right here in this district.' " (My emphasis. GGG, June 8, 1910, p. 16)

His statement in favour of a new party is recorded in MR, 1914, p. 8. No resolution endorsing this idea was passed.

Tregillus was particularly critical of the first Premier, A.C. Rutherford, and of Duncan Marshall, the Minister of Agriculture (Albertan, Feb. 25, 1910, pp. 2-3).
Robert Patterson won a seat in the provincial legislature in 1910 representing the Macleod constituency (GGG, Oct. 5, 1910, p. 32).

114 MR, 1911, p. 34; 1912, p. 48.


116 Ibid., Aug. 13, 1913, p. 15.

117 Ibid., July 23, 1913, p. 8.

118 Ibid., Jan. 11, 1911, p. 13.

119 MR, 1910, p. 27.

120 GGG, Sept. 21, 1910, p. 32. The idea of such a league was proposed earlier by a UFA union (Aug. 24, 1910, p. 12; Oct. 12, 1910, p. 16).


122 Ibid., p. 38; GGG, Nov. 20, 1912, p. 11.

123 MR, 1913, p. 27.

124 Ibid., 1914, p. 6.

125 Ibid., 1913, p. 8.

126 Ibid.

127 GGG, Dec. 11, 1912, p. 9.


129 MR, 1913, p. 8.


131 McIntosh, p. iii.

132 This statement is based on a careful count of resolutions dealing with matters that were not simply internal to the organization.

At the 1911 convention, president Bower may have influenced the committee to water down a resolution favouring a farmer-labour alliance which the convention referred to it. The committee's redrafted resolution, which carried, simply asked that discussions be held with labour to "ascertain if there be any neutral ground on which to work out our common interest." The other resolution initially called on the Executive to take steps toward securing UFA stock yards. The committee's revised resolution, which also carried and may have reflected Bower's input, merely asked the Executive to try to convince the municipal authorities to establish stock yards (MR, 1911, pp. 36-38).

This resolution reflected the views of committee member John Campbell. See GGG, Jan. 8, 1913, p. 18.

Rice Sheppard argued that opponents of the government pork packing contract were not given sufficient time to air their objections at the 1910 convention (GGG, Mar. 16, 1910, p. 18). Henry Sorenson claimed that president Bower "suddenly" called for a vote on compulsory hail insurance before the merits of the compulsory plan could be presented (Ibid., June 14, 1911, p. 16). There is likely some truth to these complaints, but the bottom line is that the 1910 convention endorsed the pork packing contract because a majority of the delegates believed it should be submitted to farmers, and the 1911 convention opposed compulsory hail insurance because a majority of the delegates did not want to pay hail tax on land they used for grazing.

At the 1911 convention, the Strathcona union argued that two of W.R. Ball's resolutions were not presented to the locals for discussion contrary to the previous convention's instructions (MR, 1911, p. 36). In fact, the resolutions were sent to the locals in circulars that were also printed in the GGG, Feb. 16, 1910, p. 17; Dec. 21, 1910, p. 24.

The 1912 constitution allowed for one delegate for every ten, and major portion of ten, paid up members (p. 2).

See, for example, GGG, Feb. 9, 1910, p. 16; Jan. 4, 1911, p. 16.

See, for example, Ibid., Jan. 11, 1911, p. 17; Jan. 15, 1913, p. 12.

About half the locals sent delegates to the 1914 convention (GGG, Nov. 4, 1914, p 13), and 229 of the 402 unions entitled to delegates were represented at the 1916 convention (Ibid., Apr. 26, 1916, p. 11).
At least 3/4 of the women's unions were represented at the 1917 convention: there were 50 women's locals on the books at the time; delegates representing 36 locals answered the roll call, and several came in later (MR, 1917, pp. 137, 49).

MR, 1911, p. 34.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 35.

GGG, Dec. 20, 1911, p. 16; MR, 1912, p. 46.

UFA constitutions, 1911, p. 11; 1912, pp. 2-4. Under the old constitution, the Executive comprised the president, secretary-treasurer, and three directors chosen by the ten directors. Under the new constitution, adopted by the 1912 convention, the directors on the Executive were replaced by three vice-presidents elected by the convention.

GGG, May 24, 1911, p. 13.

Ibid., Nov. 1, 1911, p. 12.

Ibid., Feb. 21, 1912, p. 12.


Ibid., July 26, 1911, p. 17.


Ibid., Aug. 16, 1911, p. 20.

The winner was F.B. Sulman (GGG, Feb. 7, 1912, p. 23), a prominent local UFA leader.

GGG, Jan. 3, 1912, p. 23. Another "equal rights" argument can be found in Mar. 9, 1910, p. 28.

Ibid., Jan. 3, 1912, p. 23.

Ibid., May 31, 1911, p. 21.

MR, 1912, p. 56.

GGG, Jan. 26, 1910, p. 5.


168 Wood, p. 27.


170 GGG, Dec. 14, 1910, p. 35.


172 See, for example, Ibid., Dec. 14, 1910, p. 35; May 14, 1913, p. 11.

173 See, for example, Ibid., Jan. 3, 1912, p. 14.

174 Ibid., Nov. 30, 1910, p. 36; Mar. 6, 1912, p. 16; Apr. 26, 1911, p. 16; Mar. 13, 1912, p. 22.


176 MR, 1913, p. 34.

177 GGG, Aug. 6, 1913, p. 11.
Chapter Three: The Rural Economy and the Movement

"As we all know, wheat is not our mainstay, nor can it be for generations to come."

- James Bower to the 1910 UFA convention

Many historians argue that a wheat economy was the basis of early prairie development and a prime cause of agrarian protest. Such arguments must be modified for Alberta. Its agriculture was more diversified than the wheat paradigm implies and this helped distinguish its farm movement from the larger prairie movement. Even after wheat became the main Alberta farm commodity during the war, non-wheat production remained crucial to the rural economy which included subsistence activity, wage labour, non-farm business endeavour, and formal and informal local exchange, supported by women's work. This multifaceted economy helped "form," "build," and " politicize" the movement, partly by molding its community and co-operative ethos. Emphasis on the wheat staple, in short, cannot illumine the Alberta movement to 1921; it blinds historians to complex economic factors behind the movement and makes them see farmers as they would be later - strongly affected by a wheat economy - rather than as they actually were.

Though the large-scale ranchers mostly disappeared after 1900 in Alberta, the small ranchers and farmers who replaced them, and who strongly supported the farm movement, raised proportionately more livestock and animal products than producers in the other prairie provinces. This was especially true during the "movement forming" years before 1909 when the stock industry was the mainstay of Alberta's rural economy. In 1900, stock and animal products sold or slaughtered were valued at $3.2 million - half a million more than land products (vegetables and field crops). In Saskatchewan, animals and their products were worth only $2.9 million - $1.7 million less than that province's land products. By 1901, the average value of livestock per acre of improved land in Alberta was three times that in Saskatchewan, and the average number of stock per farm was much higher.

Crop data further reveals that Alberta did not have a wheat economy. In 1900, only 23% of the field crop acreage was in wheat; it was 74% in Saskatchewan.
Moreover, Alberta produced over four times more oats than wheat, while Saskatchewan produced nearly twice as much wheat as oats. By 1910, wheat was a more important part of Alberta's economy, and more farmers were specializing in it, but it was still not a dominant staple. Though about 40% of the value and acreage of field crops was in wheat, the percentage was roughly 50% higher in Saskatchewan. And while the total value of wheat in Alberta slightly exceeded that of oats, the volume of oats was almost twice that of wheat. In Saskatchewan, the volume of wheat exceeded that of oats and its value was nearly three times as great.

Also in 1910, the value of animal products and animals sold or slaughtered in Alberta - almost $30 million - continued to be much higher than the value of land products - about $18 million. In contrast, Saskatchewan's land products were worth about $81 million - $63 million more than Alberta's - while its stock products and stock sold or killed were valued at $5 million less than Alberta's. Even allowing for variation in the production and sale of agricultural goods between census years, there is no doubt the Alberta economy was not wheat-based into the early UFA era. The main farm outputs those years were livestock, their products, and oats.

By mid-war, however, wheat was coming to the fore. The average wheat acreage per farm more than doubled from 15 in 1910 to 38 in 1916. From 1910 to 1915, wheat production per farm soared from 147 to 979 bushels, and the proportion of the value of crops in wheat increased from 39% to 61%. Still, wheat did not yet dominate the economy as it did in Saskatchewan. The average value and amount of wheat per Alberta farm in 1915 remained less than half that per Saskatchewan farm. And while the total value of Alberta wheat was one and a half times the value of the province's stock and animal products, the corresponding ratio for Saskatchewan was four times. Furthermore, the total value of Alberta stock and stock products plus the value of oats in 1915 exceeded greatly the value of wheat. The Alberta agricultural economy was clearly based on a variety of products; it did not rely on a single staple.

This was true even after the war, although wheat continued to play a growing role in the economy. Alberta farmers seeded 57% of their crop acreage to wheat in 1921, but they were not wheat specialists like Saskatchewan producers who sowed 66%. In 1920, Saskatchewan farmers produced 6 more bushels of wheat per capita of rural population
than Alberta farmers who still produced large amounts of non-wheat products. Per rural
dweller, Alberta farmers produced more barley, hay and forage, and 54 more bushels of
oats than Saskatchewan farmers. In addition, the average number of stock per farm
remained higher in Alberta, as did the average value of stock products and stock
slaughtered or sold per farm. Significantly, the average value of animal products and
animals sold or killed per Alberta farm, plus the average value of other non-wheat
products per farm, equaled the average value of wheat. Thus, while wheat had become
the most important agricultural commodity and the major source of farm income, it was
not the only important farm product. Alberta's agricultural economy continued to rely on
many goods.

The growth of wheat production stemmed partly from more favourable price
trends for wheat than for other farm products. Canadian wheat prices, generally following
world prices, climbed from 65 cents a bushel in 1896 to 75-85 cents in 1907, to $1.20 in
1912. With the financial crisis of 1913, the price dipped below a dollar, but recovered
during the war, reaching $1.28 in 1915 and over two dollars for several years after
1916.

In the southern plains, the environment favoured wheat. Lack of water and severe
winters limited the number of stock a farmer could care for, and the arid climate, which
rejected many midwestern crops, produced high grades of wheat. Additionally, the
treeless terrain facilitated the use of machinery for wheat production. The introduction of
Marquis wheat in 1911, which resisted drought better and ripened earlier than other
strains, was a boon to wheat growing throughout the province.

Wheat was also cheaper and easier to transport to distant markets than most non-
grain farm products. Moreover, compared to stock raising, it required a lower initial
investment, had lower production costs, turned a quicker profit, and needed less labour
important considerations in a debt-ridden, frontier society where land was cheap and
labour was expensive. Furthermore, unlike mixed farming, which necessitated year round
work, wheat farming was seasonal, making it easy for farmers to work at other
occupations or to seek warmer climes in the winter.

While environment, frontier conditions, transportation, and markets account for
the rise of wheat growing, similar realities explain the continued importance of non-

Chart 1: Average Number of Cattle Per Farm (nearest one)

Chart 2: Average Number of Horses Per Farm (nearest one)

Chart 3: Average Number of Sheep Per Farm (nearest one)
Chart 4: Average Number of Hogs Per Farm (nearest one)

Chart 5: Average Number of Poultry Per Farm (nearest one)
Chart 6: Number of Cattle Per 100 Acres of Improved Land (nearest one)

Chart 7: Number of Horses Per 100 Acres of Improved Land (nearest one)

Chart 8: Number of Sheep Per 100 Acres of Improved Land (nearest one)
Chart 9: Number of Hogs Per 100 Acres of Improved Land (nearest one)

Chart 10: Number of Poultry Per 100 Acres of Improved Land (nearest one)
Chart 11: Average Dollar Value of Livestock Per Acre of Improved Land

Chart 12: Average Dollar Value Per Farm of Livestock
Chart 13: Value of Live Stock as a Percentage of the Value of Land, Buildings, Implements, and Live Stock

Chart 14: Percent Return on Investment in Farm Property Contributed by Animal Products and Animals Sold or Slaughtered on Farm
SOURCE: Census, 1911, Vol. IV, p. xcv
Chart 15: Value of All Animals Sold or Slaughtered and of Animal Products as a Percentage of the Value of all Farm Products
SOURCE: Calculated from Census, 1911, Vol. IV, pp. xcii, xciii

Chart 16: Percentage of Value of Products Per Farm Contributed by Stock Sold Alive, Stock Slaughtered, and Animal Products, 1920
SOURCE: Calculated from Census, 1921, Vol. V, p. xli

Chart 17: Average Dollar Value of Stock Sold Alive, Stock Slaughtered, and Animal Products Per 100 Acres of Improved Land, 1920
SOURCE: Calculated from Census, 1921, Vol. V, p. xlii
Chart 18: Percent of Field Crop in Wheat

Chart 19: Average Production Per Farm of Wheat (in bushels)

Chart 20: Average Acreage Per Farm of Wheat
Chart 21: Percent of Value of Field Crop Contributed by Wheat

Chart 22: Average Dollar Value Per Farm of Wheat (in dollars)
SOURCE: Census, 1916, p. lii

Chart 23: Production of Crops Per Head of Rural Population, 1920 (in bushels)
SOURCE: Census, 1921, Vol. V, p. lxvii
wheat production. In much of the parkbelt and southwest of the province, an abundance of shelter and water facilitated mixed farming and stock raising, and Chinook winds periodically melted the snow, exposing grass for grazing. Where there was no railway, as around Edmonton before 1891, and in the far North until the war, farmers had little choice but to produce a variety of farm products for home use and the local market. High wartime prices prompted most farmers to raise some stock,\textsuperscript{24} encouraging the production of non-wheat field crops such as oats and forage.\textsuperscript{25}

Alberta's urban centres also encouraged mixed farming. By 1906, over 30,000 Albertans lived in its 5 cities and another 28,000 in its 18 towns and 33 villages. Saskatchewan, despite having 72,000 more inhabitants than Alberta, had nearly 10,000 fewer urban dwellers, and only 4 cities with 12,000 fewer persons than Alberta's cities.\textsuperscript{26} Manitoba's urban population as a percentage of its total was somewhat higher than Alberta's,\textsuperscript{27} but most of its urban dwellers lived in Winnipeg. Farmers who could not ship to the city cheaply did not have as many good local markets as most Alberta producers. Nor did they have a large market outside the province as Alberta farmers had in B.C. This outside market, and Alberta's relatively large and spread-out urban population, stimulated non-wheat production as demand for flour in these markets was limited.

Metropolitan propaganda and culture reinforced the economic incentives to produce non-wheat products. Newspapers, the farm press, railways and banks, schools and departments of agriculture and other state bodies, preached mixed farming through articles, fairs, courses, experimental and demonstration farms, and better farming trains. Farmers were receptive to this message; many had come from mixed farming regions in Ontario, the Midwest, or Europe where they had learned that diversified agriculture was the ideal and that one crop farming harmed the land.\textsuperscript{28}

Wheat specialization had other disadvantages. Distance from the Lakehead meant that Alberta farmers had to pay more to ship their wheat to foreign markets than their prairie counterparts before the completion of the Panama Canal in 1914. The vagaries of nature also discouraged wholesale wheat growing: frosts, pests, disease, and unpredictable levels of rainfall caused greater variation in the quantity and quality of wheat in Alberta than in the other provinces. In 1910, Alberta had the lowest average wheat yield per acre in the West - 10 bushels. In 1915, it had the highest yield at 31
Chart 24: Percentage of Total Population Dwelling in Urban Centres
SOURCE: Census, 1916, p. xix
Chart 25: Urban Population as a Percentage of Total Population
SOURCE: Census, 1916, p. xv; the 1921 figures are calculated from Census, 1921, Vol. III, p. 3
bushels, only to experience unprecedented crop failure in 1918 and 1919 - 7 and 8 bushels - again the lowest averages on the prairies. Yields rebounded in 1920 to 20 bushels an acre, but plummeted once more to another prairie-wide low of just over 10 bushels in 1921. Such variation, which was even greater in certain districts, made reliance on wheat precarious. Production of other goods, at least as an adjunct to wheat, promised greater income stability.

This volatility of wheat yields, and to some extent that of other farm products, shaped the Alberta farm movement. Frequent crop failure, and high debt loads resulting from recent settlement and wartime expansion, made some UFA/UFWA members desperate and therefore receptive to radical solutions. Crop and income variability also ensured that the UFA/UFWA worked for all its members, not just its elite leaders. Because of environment, farmers in a given area might need off-farm income or government aid one year and labourers to harvest their large crops the next. This happened especially in much of the South in 1914 and 1915. Such experience fostered an egalitarian and co-operative culture. Knowing they could be the next to have a crop failure, most UFA/UFWA members and leaders had personal reasons for supporting other members experiencing difficulty.

Alberta's diversified farm economy was at the heart of the "movement forming" before 1909. In 1901-02, a dispute about the price and grading of Alberta oats raised farmers' sense of opposition to the grain trade. Partly in response, J.J. Gregory created the Farmers' Association of Lacombe in 1903, feeling that the Territorial Grain Growers' Association (TGGA) could not meet mixed producers' needs. The next year, northern Alberta farmers who believed a combine existed in the grain market, especially for oats, established the Society of Equity (S of E) to "control" the Edmonton market for several products. Also in 1904, Strathcona farmers responded to depressed prices for wheat, oats, pork, beef, and eggs by forming a TGGA branch. A year later, feeling the TGGA focused too much on wheat related matters, and desiring to have "an Association that will embrace every farmer whether a grain grower or a stock grower," the Strathcona TGGA transformed itself into the Alberta Farmers' Association (AFA).

The S of E, the TGGA/AFA, and their predecessors were heavily involved in mixed farming causes such as trying to increase the price of various farm products and
lobbying the government to establish creameries and to promote the sale of different agricultural goods. In 1906, the province responded to AFA requests for help in selling surplus oats by sending the Association president D.W. Warner on a successful marketing mission to B.C.\textsuperscript{32} Also that year, the AFA launched a campaign for a government meat plant, a cause the UFA took up. Farmers' desire for a united farm movement to deal with such diverse agricultural matters led to the merger of the rival associations in 1909.

The first UFA constitution made it clear the organization would continue to "forward the interests of the producers of grain and live stock."\textsuperscript{33} It would not neglect wheat specialists, but its efforts to address the concerns of all farmers "built" and "politicized" the UFA/UFWA by attracting new members and fostering commitment. Frustration over wheat and non-wheat issues, and low prices for a variety of agricultural products, ultimately drew the organization into politics.

In its earliest years, the UFA concentrated on non-wheat issues since few members specialized in wheat. The directors, in fact, had difficulty finding pure wheat producers to speak for the organization at a Calgary conference in 1909 on western grain shipping. "You know we are not so well organized in the large wheat growing districts of the south as we are in the mixed farming districts," president Bower explained to the 1910 convention, "consequently we were somewhat in the dark as to who would best represent the wheat growers."\textsuperscript{34} It was not long before more wheat specialists joined the UFA/UFWA, but the organization never lost sight of non-wheat concerns, especially as southern locals lost members in 1915, and as new unions formed in the North.\textsuperscript{35} At the end of 1915, mixed farming constituencies still contained nearly half the UFA membership.\textsuperscript{36}

The early UFA's non-wheat focus was evident in its efforts to find new markets in B.C. for a variety of farm goods. To that end, Bower went to B.C. in early 1909 at the government's expense, much as Warner had for the AFA, and discovered large quantities of hogs, hay, and meat entering the province from the United States. To make Alberta products more competitive, he and the UFA advocated lower freight rates, a government pork plant and state controlled abattoirs, standardized inspection of hay, and licensing and bonding of commission merchants.\textsuperscript{37}

Farmers' support for these and other non-wheat causes shows the inapplicability
The wheat staple focus of Saskatchewan farmers versus the non-wheat emphasis of Alberta producers. In 1908, Saskatchewan farmers wanted the Scott government to assist with wheat storage and buying, primarily through the acquisition and operation of public elevators. Alberta farmers were mainly concerned with non-wheat issues and wanted the Rutherford administration to build and run a meat plant. SOURCE: Guide, Nov. 1908, p. 7
The UFA desire to open up B. C. markets for Alberta farm products. SOURCE: Guide, Jan. 12, 1910, p. 4
of the notion that a wheat economy shaped the early UFA, as does Bower's statement to the 1910 convention:

In making this province a prosperous mixed farming province we are more vitally interested in dealing with British Columbia than we are in terminal elevators at Fort William or Hudson Bay, or even line elevators through the prairie provinces. If we build up an interprovincial trade with British Columbia we build up a western export grain route at the same time, but as we all know, wheat is not our mainstay, nor can it be for generations to come. Our chief line of production is in our live animals, in our hay, and in our coarser grains, and in the west, and through the west, lies our market.38

Reflecting this non-wheat focus, the early UFA campaigned for compensation for killed stock and a government chilled meat system, and passed resolutions about such matters as coyote bounties, strays, and herd laws.

Non-wheat UFA activity did not wane even as wheat production increased. Thanks to wartime demand and the opening of the American market to Canadian cattle from 1913 to 1920, UFA members sold tens of thousands of head of livestock through their locals, co-ops, and elevator companies. When the U.S. market closed, the UFA sought a government assisted co-operative chilled meat system, and urged the province to make trial beef shipments to Britain.39 During the war, the UFA affiliated with the Western Canada Live Stock Union,40 and lobbied Ottawa to raise prices it paid for horses for the war,41 and for changes to the Bank Act to allow farmers to borrow on the security of their livestock.42

Such non-wheat activity gave rise to a distinct provincial farm movement. While most other prairie producers concentrated on the production, sale, and eastern shipment of wheat, the Alberta movement was primarily focused on marketing and transporting a variety of agricultural goods, some of them westward to B.C. The UFA/UFWA had its own agenda and interests, different in many ways from those of its Manitoba and Saskatchewan counterparts. While Alberta farmers shared many of the wheat related concerns of the larger prairie movement as wheat production increased in the province, their early years of different work - often done in relative isolation from the other western associations - paved the way for a unique post-war political movement.

The UFA/UFWA also worked to facilitate members' selling, mainly of non-wheat
products, in local centres. In 1910, Broken Hill union wanted a crossing to give farmers a direct route to Vermilion where they hoped to find "a better market" than at Manville. Two years later, Olds union agitated for a railway so local farmers could have a "ready market" for milk. In the southwest, unions enjoyed lucrative markets for hogs and other goods in Crowsnest Pass towns. Across the province, farmers sold to contractors, especially in the heady pre-war boom years. Onoway union decided in 1910 to ask members to "hold the produce they are selling to railway contractors at ... hay $12 to $15 per load, potatoes, carrots, turnips, beets, at fifty cents per bushel, and onions at 2 1/2 per pound."

The UFA association helped farmers market their non-wheat goods in larger urban centres. In 1913, it blocked a by-law that would have prohibited individual farmers from selling meat in Calgary, and arranged for the Grain Growers' Grain Company to sell UFA members' products at the Calgary public market. It also organized outlets for produce in other centres, including Red Deer and Edmonton, and called for a parcel post system to ship perishable goods to urban markets. During the war, UFA/UFWA locals sold eggs to urban centres through a government marketing service. Toward war's end, the UFA formed a milk and cream committee that negotiated prices with Calgary dairy companies. Later, the UFA helped create the Calgary Milk Producers' Association and affiliated with it and similar bodies in Medicine Hat and Lethbridge.

These efforts to help members market their non-wheat products brought new challenges and required much organization - locally, and between unions and central office. This formed bonds of mutuality and an ethos of "co-operation" that "built" the movement as farmers learned to work with each other and the organization. In so doing, they developed relationships, a sense of commitment, and skills they used for other movement purposes.

Buying and selling among UFA/UFWA members also "built" feelings of collectivity. "Has any member anything he wishes to sell?" - the UFA constitution suggested this be asked at every local meeting. Farmers bought and sold equipment, farm produce, livestock, and other things from each other. Settlers purchased many supplies from neighbours their first year, and even after that, few farms produced all the local goods they needed. UFA/UFWA unions provided forums and developed social links
that promoted this trade. Furthermore, unions bought and sold from each other. In 1910, Cowley union purchased a car of potatoes from the UFA Red Deer Co-op, Kasimir local ordered a car of hay from the Farmers' Exchange Company of Barons, and Claresholm Five Mile UFA union bought potatoes and vegetables worth almost $500 from Leduc, Alberta. Such exchange between members and locals "built" movement feelings of solidarity and "co-operation" as farmers supported fellow members economically.

The UFA central office helped farmers buy and sell. In drought years, it acted as an information bureau, bringing buyers and sellers of seed and feed together. In 1910, it tried to get freight rates reduced on hay and grain shipped within the province for local use. Occasionally, it advertised such products as cord wood, posts, pickets, and lumber farmers produced for sale from clearing the land. By assisting members with this non-wheat buying and selling, the UFA Association "built" movement loyalty as members felt the organization was working for them.

Wage labour also strengthened the movement. Scholars have shown that farmers relied on wage work in central and eastern Canada in the late nineteenth century and in Alberta in the 1920s and later. Such work was crucial for Alberta producers before 1921. The UFA constitution suggested members be asked at each meeting: "Does any member wish to employ a hand to work? Does any member wish a job to work or know of a person who does?" In the earliest settlement years, most farmers needed wages to make improvements and to support their families until they could market their livestock or harvest their first good crop. That is why Rice Sheppard criticized regulations that required a homesteader to spend six months of the year on his land when he could be away "earning good wages" on another farm.

Few farmers totally escaped their reliance on wages. When crops failed, they left their districts to look for work, making it difficult for UFA/UFWA locals to hold meetings. Some farmers needed wages because their farms were not large enough to support a family. They therefore worked routinely for more established or well-to-do farmers, even in better years. Sometimes the UFA office helped farmers find employment. In 1916, it published a notice in the Guide from a local secretary indicating that some of his union's members wanted work at haying time. The response was
Chart 26: Average Dollar Value of Forest Products Per Farm

Chart 27: Average Production of Milk Per Farm (in lbs.)

Chart 28: Production of Home-Made Cheese (in lbs.)
Chart 29: Production of Wool (in lbs.)

overwhelming, and a number found jobs as a result.\textsuperscript{66}

The importance of wage labour prompted a few farmers to demand a minimum wage for farm work\textsuperscript{67} and legal priority for farm wages over other creditors' claims.\textsuperscript{68} Such demands, however, received little support in the UFA/UFWA as a whole. Most farmers' main income was from farming, not from wage work, and their identity, at least as far as the liberal majority was concerned, was that of entrepreneur, not worker. Accordingly, the UFA sought to establish a maximum farm labour rate in 1921.\textsuperscript{69}

Farmers also sought non-farm wage employment such as working on irrigation canals\textsuperscript{70} and doing road and other work for Local Improvement Districts (LIDs). In 1910, the LID Association, whose officers included UFA secretary Fream and H. Greenfield, a future UFA Premier, passed a resolution favouring an eight rather than a ten hour day since Districts were having trouble competing with railway companies for men.\textsuperscript{71} One UFA local on the edge of the northern frontier raised money to hire some of its members to build needed roads and bridges.\textsuperscript{72} Around Lethbridge, farming and mining were "closely intertwined," and near Drumheller some coal miners homesteaded and gradually became full-time farmers.\textsuperscript{73}

Farmers earned income in all sorts of ways. A few were pound keepers, some earned commissions getting Guide subscriptions, and some plowed railway fire guards. For farmers in the dry-belt after the war, off-farm earnings were a matter of survival. There, locals clamoured for road, railway, and irrigation work "to tide them over ... and make it unnecessary for them to leave their farms."\textsuperscript{74} Some UFA farmers wanted to be relief officers.\textsuperscript{75}

The diary and accounts of Wilfred Sutton are particularly revealing of the multiple sources of rural wage work.\textsuperscript{76} Sutton, a prominent member and sometimes officer of the Winona UFA local, settled in the Edgerton district of Alberta from England in 1910 or 1911. In June 1911, he broke sod for an unnamed "boss," and from September to January 1913 he worked for R.B. Gunn, a farmer-merchant, at a wage ranging from $10 to $25 a month. While working the last two months for Gunn, and in February 1913, he also laboured for another party for $20 a month.\textsuperscript{77} In September of that year, he received $19 in wages, apparently for harvest work, and paid $10 for room and board. The following January 10, he did some sawing, and was paid a dollar. Sutton did much, if
not all, of this wage work while homesteading. Sutton's diary also shows the pervasiveness of the local exchange economy. In March and April 1913, he bought a bushel of potatoes, 30 bushels of oats, two dozen eggs, 30 1/2 bushels of oat chop, 11 bushels of flax, and 20 pounds of beef from four farm families. He also borrowed his neighbours' equipment, a practice that was not without obligations: he helped Dan Mackenzie stack hay on August 16, 1911, "in return for the use of his mower and rake." This deal is suggestive of Nancy Osterud's argument that farm men kept close tabs on their labour exchanges as if they were market transactions. Thus on November 12, 1913, Sutton worked for "Henton" digging a well; two days later, he wrote that "Henton is hauling a load for me in payment for work done at the well." On November 22, Sutton recorded another kind of informal economic arrangement: "Went over to Henton's and made a deal for him to haul 4 loads of wheat for school tax."

N. Rich of Manville, another UFA supporter, also exchanged labour with his neighbours, and, like most farmers, he bartered goods. Unable to sell his oats, he traded "some for a cow, some for a sheepskin coat, some for threshing, some for a pig, and some ... for a wedding present." In payment for wintering cattle, he got an ox, which he traded for a pony.

Money was short on the frontier. Most settlers arrived with little of it, but had heavy initial expenditures. Many, as a result, got in debt. All experienced erratic cash flows amid price and climatic fluctuations. Trading labour or goods with other farmers, bartering produce for store goods, or working off, rather than paying local taxes, were ways of coping.

All this informal exchange of equipment, labour, and goods molded farmers' sense of rural community; the interaction and interdependency fostered by these activities forged bonds of mutuality on which the movement "forming," "building," and "politicizing" rested. Even wage labour relationships could create ties of reciprocity rather than conflict, especially when farmers both hired and worked for their neighbours. Moreover, while hidden in the census and largely missed by the wheat staple paradigm, informal exchange kept the rural economy going, making the farm movement possible and enabling farmers to produce the wheat and other goods the census reveals.
UFA/UFWA locals were based on local exchange relationships. Virtually every person with whom Sutton had formal or informal economic dealings was a UFA member. In some cases, farmers, having developed economic and community ties among themselves, joined the UFA/UFWA as a group. UFA/UFWA locals, in turn, reinforced members' connectedness by strengthening economic relations between them - enhancing their sense of community, solidarity, and "co-operation."

The local exchange economy could have a very direct impact on locals, and ultimately on the movement. In 1919, Dora Burkholder, president of the Excel UFWA local, described an experience she had recruiting new members:

My husband asked me to go over to Mr. So-and-So's for some seed potatoes, so I started out to get the potatoes from a farmer about four miles away. On the way, I called on one of our neighbours and led the conversation to the subject of U.F.W.A. She became so interested in the work of our association that she paid her membership fee that very afternoon.

I then went on with my errand, but was fortunate enough to secure two new members, a mother and her daughter, at the farm where the potatoes were for sale. It was quite late by this time, but as I was driving home I could not resist the temptation of making the attempt to get another member. Before I could bring the subject up myself, my hostess, who is our U.F.A. secretary, said "Oh! Mrs. Burkholder, my daughter wants to join the U.F.W.A. but she has gone home now. Perhaps you can see her later."

...Of course I ... made a special visit to my new prospect, thus securing another member. On this trip, I also visited three others who promised to attend the next meeting and join the club.

All this because of a trip to buy potatoes from a local farmer.

In addition to local exchange, non-wheat production, and wage labour, small business activity was an important part of Alberta's rural economy. Such activity indicated some farmers' Progressive "business" outlook, but for most it was simply a pragmatic form of occupational pluralism. Farmers ran sawmills, freighted, located homesteads, speculated in land, or sold machinery. Many farmers cut telephone poles on a subcontract basis. In 1919, Junkins local asked the railways to deal directly with farmers rather than through a contractor. Some farmers, such as R.B. Gunn for whom Sutton worked, were merchants. A few, like UFA vice-president S.S. Dunham, were lawyers, and others, like another vice-president, P. Baker, were "farmer-preachers." For a
few of these professionals and businessmen, farming was a sideline, but for most, it was their main source of income. Certain kinds of work made it hard to tell where petty capitalism ended and wage labour began. Was F.B. Sulman, a UFA man, working as an independent contractor when he ploughed a neighbour's field for a money payment, or was he a casual labourer?87

One of the more important businesses for farmers was custom threshing. As grain growing spread, there was great demand for this service since few farmers could afford their own thresher. The Lien Act of 1916, which gave threshermen preference as creditors, made the business even more attractive.88 To take advantage of these opportunities, some UFA locals bought and operated threshing units collectively.

Business activity was especially important in northern Alberta where many farmers, including some women, trapped during the winter. By the war years, farmers caught most of the fur taken in Canada. In 1915 alone, over 306,000 muskrat pelts were sold in Alberta, and the province paid wolf bounties.89 The fur trade was sufficiently important to farmers that the 1921 UFA convention protested a pelt tax.90 The mover of that resolution was W.F. Bredin, a UFA director engaged in farming and fur-trading.91 Farmers near Lesser Slave Lake caught fish in the winter for sale. One girl claimed her father and brother had landed "2,700 big ones."92 In 1919, it was estimated there were over 10,000 part-time commercial fishermen in the prairies, most of whom were "farmer-fishermen" dependent on fishing for their livelihood.93 The Water Glen district northwest of Calgary was reminiscent of the precapitalist age when farming and cottage industries were inseparable. It was "rich in experienced spinners and weavers," and had a vibrant home woolen industry based on local sheep raising.94

Farmers did not always stick with one job or business, including farming, for extended periods of time. George Bevington, who became a UFA credit expert, exemplified many farmers' multi-occupational experience. Bevington arrived in Edmonton at the age of 15 in 1893. Sometimes he lived on his parents' homestead, but he "worked out most of the time, farming in the summer, at bush work, coal mining, etc., in the winter." Suggestive of the importance of teenage labour for farm families, Bevington gave most of his earnings to his parents. At age 20, he struck out on his own, hauling freight for Klondikers to Athabaska. After that, he rented and operated a farm for two
years. Then, after working at railway construction for a season, he ran a sawmill business and "engaged in a variety of enterprises - hotel and livery, coal mining, and so forth." Later, Bevington farmed for many years in the Edmonton area.

Such multi-occupational experience affected the farm movement. Because farmers could be agriculturalists, businessmen, or wage earners - at different times or at once - barriers between classes in rural areas were slow to emerge. This facilitated the development of farmers' sense of community and reciprocity on which the movement "forming," "building," and "politicizing" depended. Moreover, occupational pluralism fostered ideological diversity. Many UFA/UFWA radicals were, or had been, involved in the labour movement, and many liberals were, or had been, businessmen. This experience helped farmers collaborate with other groups on projects of mutual interest, contributing to the notion, fully expressed in the post-war UFA/UFWA social philosophy, that "co-operation" could be the animating principle of all human relations.

Subsistence work was also fundamental to Alberta's rural economy. Ian MacPherson and John Thompson argue that some prairie farm families were largely self-sufficient; others were mainly commercial; and still others were in between - "commercially-oriented but strategically flexible." They also contend that even families on mainly commercial operations "satisfied many of their consumption needs from their own farms." Analysis of the UFA/UFWA confirms these arguments and shows that subsistence activity was not limited to food production. With considerable variation depending on region, environment, material status, and culture, farmers were self-sufficient in many ways - even if they were "commercially-oriented."

Self-sufficiency was practiced most completely, mainly for cultural and economic reasons, by central and eastern European peasants who settled in east-central Alberta. Other settlers on the fringes of the frontier were fairly self-sufficient out of necessity. Until railways arrived, they had to hold back production for markets and concentrate on subsistence work. Yet even where railways existed, most farmers desired some self-sufficiency. A paper read to the Macleod UFA convention suggested that farmers establish co-operative mills to produce flour for home consumption. "We can then eat our bread," the paper concluded, "whether we can get money or not and we can afford to take our chances of the market."
Some farmers extracted coal from river banks and surface mines for their own use and sometimes for sale. One local arranged to have its members dig from a nearby mine. In addition, farmers cut hay and gathered wood from unoccupied land, which is why the Great Bend local favoured "reserving the vacant government lands in the vicinity for wood, etc." Great Bend also discussed wild game, a topic central office encouraged all unions to consider. Game was an important part of many farmers' diet, including that of UFWA president Irene Parlby's family. Like many farm women, Parlby also gathered berries.

As well, the Parlby family, and other farmers, fished for their own consumption. In 1910, F.C. Clare moved a resolution before the convention asking the province to take action against parties polluting rivers. Later, Clare's union told the Fisheries Commission that pollution and illegal fishing had depleted fish stocks in the North Saskatchewan. The union asked that steps be taken to restore the population since fish provided "a welcome change of food."

Besides fishing, hunting, and gathering, farm families produced much of what they needed on the farm, including grain, meat, fruit, dairy products, and garden produce. UFA member F.B. Sulman made furniture from willows and soap boxes. Self-sufficiency was most important before the war as farmers established themselves commercially. During the war, families consumed more garden produce, coarse grains, fish, and game to conserve meat and wheat for the war effort. For farmers facing crop failure or low product prices, especially after the war, subsistence activity was a matter of survival. The census hints at the magnitude of the post-war subsistence economy, revealing that 2252 pounds of whole milk per farm were consumed in Alberta in 1920.

Tradition also prompted farmers, including those bent on commercial production, to practice some self-sufficiency. Fishing, hunting, gathering, and raising stock and a garden for home consumption were part of rural life in Ontario and the American Midwest. Subsistence activity also seemed to make economic sense by freeing up money for other uses.

Subsistence work, occupational pluralism, and local exchange facilitated the movement "forming" and "building" by enabling members and prospective members to stay on the land who could not have survived as pure commercial wheat farmers.
Moreover, these activities helped sustain the national economy. Because of them, farmers could receive less for their products and still buy tariff protected metropolitan goods. Lower prices for farm products - which subsistence work, occupational pluralism, and local exchange made possible - also kept food prices low. This put downward pressure on wages - increasing business profits - and put upward pressure on overall purchasing power. All this stimulated the larger economy. Non-wheat economic activity also helped wheat specialists survive in difficult months and years, contributing to the western wheat boom that boosted the national economy after 1896.

Understanding the diverse nature of Alberta's economy reveals the importance of women's and children's work. The wheat staples paradigm, emphasizing wheat production for foreign markets, highlights men's work in the fields and largely ignores children's and wives' domestic and subsistence activity and their small commodity production. Women cooked, cleaned, and canned, did the washing, looked after children, made clothes and soap, acted as doctors, nurses, and teachers, gathered berries and hauled water. They milked cows and were largely responsible for keeping the government, and later, the co-operative and private creameries, busy. They raised most of the garden produce and poultry farmers sold in markets such as the Calgary public market the UFA helped establish. They gathered and sold eggs, including through the government egg marketing service the UFA supported.

Women and children also did field work, especially in earlier years when labour was expensive, and on smaller and poorer farms. Typically, they helped at peak times, particularly the harvest. During the war, they did the work their husbands overseas had done - everything from ploughing to stooking. They apparently enjoyed this activity, although it sometimes got in the way of UFWA and youth club work. They also operated the farms when their husbands were away hunting or fishing, or hauling coal, wood, or grain. Many men left home for weeks or months to work for wages, on contracts, or in small businesses. Sometimes they were away on UFA business: recruiting new members, organizing locals, attending conventions, establishing co-ops, or doing political work after the war.

By running the farm in their husbands' absence, women made this movement "forming," "building," and "politicizing" activity possible. Moreover, their commodity
production and domestic, subsistence, and field work made members' farms viable by producing needed cash, lowering costs of maintaining the farm and family, and freeing up men to generate off-farm income. Without this work, there would have been fewer farms, fewer UFA/UFWA members, and a weaker movement; indeed, the movement might not have even been "formed," let alone "built" or " politicized."

Farm women's work also illustrates the difficulty of making a sharp distinction between market and non-market work. Which of the two was raising chickens? Many things - the farm and the larger economies, the environment, the availability of wage work - might determine whether women would ultimately be raising those chickens mainly for the market or for home consumption. Yet even women's more purely non-market work, such as raising children or washing clothes, was essential to the operation of market oriented farm operations, present and future.

Women's market work, especially their small commodity production, was also very important to the farm economy, which led some men to recognize and acknowledge women's contributions. W.J. Keen, secretary of the Society of Equity, informed one local farmer that "wives, mothers, sweethearts" were invited to the 1905 annual meeting "for the founders know only too well the part they play in our business."112 Rice Sheppard frankly stated that without farm wives, most of the successful farmers of western Canada "would have been utter failures, including myself."113 Such recognition of women's work prompted some farmers to support the UFWA agenda and encourage women to join the farm movement.

Census and qualitative data show that the Alberta farm economy and movement were not driven by a wheat economy before 1922. While wheat became increasingly important, it never became a dominant staple in the period under study. Non-wheat production and activity remained integral to the rural economy. Far from being based on the production and distribution of wheat for export markets, the early Alberta economy resembled many nineteenth century rural economies, being based on a number of agricultural products, and on local exchange, occupational pluralism, and subsistence work.

This multifaceted rural economy, which women's work supported, made the
Alberta movement distinct and helped to "form," "build," and "politicize" it by enabling more members to stay on the land and by molding farmers' sense of mutuality as it forced them to work together, at many levels, on a variety of projects. The diverse Alberta economy was a factor in the development of the provincial farm movement and its culture.
ENDNOTES

1Glenbow Archives (hereafter GA), United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Annual Convention (hereafter MR), 1910, p. 12.

2The notion that a wheat staple economy was quickly established in the West can be found in W.A. Mackintosh, Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1935); Vernon C. Fowke, The National Policy and the Wheat Economy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957); Howard Palmer with Tamara Palmer, Alberta: A New History (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1990), p. 51. The idea that this wheat economy was a major catalyst of farm protest is expressed in William Kirby Rolph, Henry Wise Wood of Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950); Paul F. Sharp, The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada: A Survey Showing American Parallels (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1948). In A History of the Canadian Economy, Second Edition (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada, Ltd., 1996), Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owram also argue that wheat "was the dominant field crop from the beginning" and that it "underlay a regional identity and political perspective that has continued to the present" (pp. 237, 227).

3They disappeared rapidly after after the disastrous winter of 1906 which killed tens of thousands of cattle. Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior from 1905 to 1911, implemented policies that discouraged big cattlemen as well.

4Census of Canada, 1911, pp. xcii-xciii.

5Ibid., 1921, p. xxxv.

6There were 34 head of cattle, 10 horses, 9 sheep, and 5 hogs for every Alberta farm in 1901, and only 20 head of cattle, 6 horses, 5 sheep, and 2 hogs for every Saskatchewan farm (Census, 1911, p. 411).

7Census, 1921, p. lx.

8Alberta farms produced, on average, 399 bushels of oats and 84 bushels of wheat. Saskatchewan farms averaged 316 bushels of wheat and 167 bushels of oats (Census, 1911, p. li).

9Census, 1921, pp. lxxii, lx.

10Ibid., 1911, pp. liii, li. The total value of wheat in Alberta was $6.7 million; that of oats was $5.7 million. The volume of oats per farm in Alberta was 275 bushels; that of wheat was 147.

11Ibid., pp. xcii-xciii.
12 Census, 1921, p. lxi; Prairie Census, 1916, p. xlvi.


14 Ibid., p. li.

15 These conclusions are calculated from the data in Census, 1916, pp. lii, li, lxiii, 300.


17 Census, 1921, p. lxvii.

18 The average number of stock per farm in Alberta in 1921 was 10 horses, 17 cattle, 5 sheep, and 5 hogs; the average numbers per Saskatchewan farm were 9 horses, 11 cattle, 2 sheep, and 4 hogs (Census, 1921, p. lxxxvi).

19 In 1920, the figures were $395 for Saskatchewan and $488 for Alberta. Calculated from data in Census, 1921, p. xli.

20 These conclusions are based on calculations from the data in the Census, 1921, p. xli. The value of wheat was calculated as 65% of the value of all field crops (see p. lxxiii).


23 Ibid., pp. 86, 90, 92.


25 The value of forage crops per farm in Alberta in 1910 was $32. By 1915, it was $62 (Census, 1916, p. lli).


27 Manitoba's urban population constituted 38% of its total population in 1906; the corresponding figure for Alberta was 31% (calculated from Census, 1906, p. xviii). The difference between the two provinces declined as time went on.

28 See Voisey, pp. 77-80, 93-97.
29 Mackintosh, p. 24.

30 The following "movement forming" non-staple issues are discussed in more detail in chapter one.


34 MR, 1910, p. 3.

35 Ibid., 1916, pp. 25, 27. The loss of membership in the South can be attributed partly to hardship early in the year and mainly to apathy and busyness in the fall as the region experienced a bumper crop.

36 Northern constituencies contained about 44% of the membership (calculated from the table in MR, 1916, p. 54).

37 MR, 1910, pp. 10-12. The 1910 convention approved Bower's report making these recommendations (p. 20).

38 Ibid., p. 12.


41 Ibid., 1916, p. 17; GGG, Mar. 17, 1915, p. 13.

42 GGG, Mar. 8, 1916, p. 36.


45 See, for example, Ibid., Apr. 20, 1910, p. 17; June 8, 1910, p. 11; Aug. 3, 1910, p. 17; May 24, 1911, p. 15.

46 Ibid., Nov. 2, 1910, p. 17. For a similar example, see Saturday News, Dec. 14, 1907, p. 8.

GGG, Sept. 3, 1913, p. 16. By June 1914, the farmers' stall had done nearly $11,000 of business (Ibid., July 1, 1914, p. 39).


Queen's University Archives, T.A. Crerar Papers, Coll. 2117, Box 107, File 25, Fream, E.J., UFA circular no. 9, Sept. 15, 1912.

GGG, Jan. 2, 1918, p. 12.


Ibid., Nov. 12, 1919, p. 32; Nov. 26, 1919, p. 49.

UFA constitution, 1909, p. 15; 1917, p. 22.

Rice Sheppard's family, for example, bought many supplies from neighbours during their first winter in Canada (GA, Rice Sheppard, unpublished manuscript, M1135, "Twenty Years in the Great North-West," 1922, p. 32).


Ibid., Jan. 11, 1911, p. 17.

Ibid., Apr. 19, 1911, p. 23.

Ibid., Nov. 16, 1910, p. 25.


UFA constitution, 1909, p. 15; 1917, p. 22.
As Ray Bollman has pointed out, "farms have differed in size since the settlement of the west.... There has always been diversity among farmers" ("Changing Farm Size Distribution on the Prairies Over the Past One Hundred Years," Prairie Forum, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Spr. 1988), p. 63).

One UFA director doing organization work in the Yetwood district in 1910 discovered that many farmers were away working on an irrigation canal (GGG, Nov. 23, 1910, p. 24).

The following information on Sutton is derived from the entries and tables in his diary which is in the PAA, Acc. 66.119, Box 1, Files 1 and 2. Similar conclusions about wage labour can be drawn from GA, Emma Rowe diary, M7076, Box 1, File 2, 1919. Rowe's husband was a UFA member.

A small amount was deducted from these wages for lost time.

The June 21, 1913 entry says he was poisoning gophers on the homestead and "20."

Local buying and selling of farm products and borrowing of equipment is also
recorded in the Rowe diary, 1919.


81 GGG, June 26, 1912, p. 8.

82 See, for example, Ibid., May 22, 1912, p. 14.

83 Ibid., Feb. 9, 1910, p. 16.

84 A careful examination of the minute book of Sutton's local, the Winona UFA local (PAA, Acc. 66.119, Item 10) reveals that almost all the persons Sutton had economic relations with as recorded in his diary belonged to the union.

85 GGG, July 23, 1919, p. 35.

86 Ibid., Aug. 27, 1919, p. 12.

87 Ibid., Nov. 6, 1912, p. 8.


90 MR, 1921, p. 77.

91 Ibid., 1918, p. 15.

92 GGG, Apr. 3, 1918, p. 54.

93 Ibid., Feb. 5, 1919, p. 10.


John Lehr argues that self-sufficiency was a cultural preference for Ukrainians. See "'The Peculiar People': Ukrainian Settlement of Marginal Lands in Southeastern Manitoba," in Building Beyond the Homestead, pp. 29-46.

GGG, June 12, 1912, p. 10; Jan. 1, 1913, p. 22.

Ibid., June 14, 1911, pp. 16-17.

Ibid., Dec. 21, 1921, p. 9.

Ibid., Sept. 7, 1910, p. 17.

Ibid., Oct. 26, 1910, p. 16.


MR, 1910, p. 28.

GGG, Nov. 16, 1910, p. 25.

Ibid., Nov. 6, 1912, p. 28.

Census, 1921, p. cvi.

Voisey, p. 93.


Regarding women's field work during the war, see GGG, Oct. 31, 1917, p. 33; Feb. 27, 1918, p. 51; June 5, 1918, p. 49; Oct. 9, 1918, p. 38.

MR, 1918, p. 279.

"Correspondence," Keen to Clarke, Oct. 16, 1905.

Chapter Four: Creating and Defining the Community

"Our meeting together ... has tended ... to promote a community spirit."¹

-M. Shield, secretary of the Rathwell UFWA

"Community" was the foundation of the farm movement. Social activity, mutual aid, and local work fostered a community ethos - attachment to the people of a rural locality - that contained feelings of mutuality on which the movement "forming," "building," and "politicizing" depended. By developing class consciousness and accommodating producers differing in ideology, ethnicity, product specialization, economic status, and institutional affiliation, the UFA/UFWA strengthened this sense of community and expanded it to encompass the farm movement, and even other classes with whom farmers felt a community of interest, especially political interest. At the same time, there were limits to their feeling of community, especially with other races and groups.

Farmers' feeling of rural community began to develop with the "creation of a European landscape" of fields, roads, bridges, irrigation canals, and towns which "linked people's experience with a specific sense of place."² It was reinforced by formal and informal economic exchange between farmers and between producers and townspeople. It was further strengthened by the garden myth - a utopian image of the potential of a district - propagated by immigration literature and embraced by farmers to justify their choice of land. Their conviction that poor markets, high freight rates, tariffs, and monopolies robbed them of their "gardens'" riches helped to "form" the movement before 1909, and prompted the UFA/UFWA to take action, ultimately political action, to channel the wealth flowing from the land back to farmers.

UFA/UFWA locals built a sense of community. The unions helped frontier women and men "belong" by bringing them together - to talk, to work on community projects, to strengthen their economic links, or just to enjoy themselves. Many farmers, especially women, joined the UFA/UFWA primarily for social contact³ and the locals' activities, including concerts, dinners, sporting events, plays, and even
masquerades, where one might see a costume "composed entirely of Grain Growers' Guides." The Rose View local put on a typical social in 1910:

The first part of the program consisted of songs, recitations, duets and comic dialogues which brought forth roars of laughter, applause and well-merited praise from the audience. A dialogue by the children entitled "Little Grain Growers," in which each child held a card with a letter of the two words, "Grain Growers" printed on it, and recited a verse suitable to the letter and the occasion, caused much amusement and favorable comment.

The [supper] boxes supplied by the ladies were then auctioned off, ... [and] after the good things provided by the ladies had been done justice to, the floor was cleared so that all who wished might indulge in tripping the light fantastic to their hearts' content.

Such activities, which usually pointed to the movement and its work, formed ties of mutuality on which the movement developed.

Locally written songs promoting community pride and class loyalty were popular at union meetings and socials. One UFWA local sang, to the chorus of Yankee Doodle:

Doondale, Doondale, that's our name,
Protecting farmers' interests, that's our game;
Co-operative efforts are our aim
In Sunny Southern Alberta

After the war, the UFA/UFWA sold over a thousand copies of the song, "Equal Rights for All," written by a local UFA man. Sung in many unions and conventions, it proclaimed:

Steadily march along the battle's just commencing
We fight for equal rights for one and all
And if united there is nothing now preventing
The stronghold of the enemy shall fall.

Annual picnics also formed bonds of community - and attracted new members. With as many as three thousand participants, UFA/UFWA picnics fostered local ties as farmers and townspeople mingled and enjoyed football, baseball, tugs of war, races, shooting and bucking contests. Picnics required much work and organization. At one locale, visitors were greeted by a "race track with edges plowed, a football field, all nicely mown, heaps of hay for visitors, [and a] flag flying, with Blackfoot U.F.A. in gold and blue." Organizing picnics trained UFA/UFWA members for other movement work.
UFA Picnic, Hutton, Alberta, May 24, 1913. SOURCE: Glenbow Archives, NA-2142-3
and was a source of community pride as unions tried to outdo one another.

In building stronger communities, UFA/UFWA unions could break down cliques by bringing members of different clubs or factions into the movement.\(^\text{10}\) UFA/UFWA locals were not exclusive. All "directly interested in farming," including non-farmers, could join\(^\text{11}\) and were invited to the socials and picnics.

UFA/UFWA unions also built community spirit by mobilizing farmers to assist needy UFA/UFWA members and non-members in the district. Unions provided opportunities for farmers to practice the pioneer mutual aid ethic and the golden rule - the Lord's "inaasmuch."\(^\text{12}\) While George Fisher was recovering from an illness in early 1919,

Twenty-two plow teams - 90 horses - pulled on to Mr. Fisher's farm ... bright and early, and turned over 50 acres. Then ... G.F. Hobbs, local [UFA] secretary, marshalled his men for seeding and harrowing, and at the close of the second day they had done what they could to secure a good return from a nice patch of wheat.\(^\text{13}\)

This kind of scene occurred in hundreds of communities.

The UFA/UFWA constitution instructed members to "extend fraternal care to one another in sickness, misfortune, or distress."\(^\text{14}\) Following this, unions gave money and goods, did farm work, built houses and barns, and sewed and cooked for community members who were ill, injured, burned out, or suffering from crop failure. In response to an appeal from central, some UFA/UFWA members assisted neighbours with influenza in 1918-19.\(^\text{15}\)

UFA/UFWA farmers believed that helping persons in the neighbourhood was a form of "co-operation." "I was a victim of a broken ankle," related one UFA member, "and my crop would have been in the ground now, but the co-operation and true fellowship that exists in local 273 would not permit it." "True co-operation," he concluded, "is the only way to success."\(^\text{16}\) Such thinking, and the practical help behind it, formed bonds of reciprocity on which the movement "forming," "building," and "politicizing" rested.

The UFA/UFWA could even meet a community's spiritual needs. Because of the mainline denominations' slowness in adapting to frontier conditions, church organization was tardy in rural Alberta.\(^\text{17}\) A survey by UFWA leader L. Barritt in 1918 suggested that two-thirds of rural school districts had no church service and that most others had
irregular service. The UFA/UFWA helped fill this gap by becoming a quasi-religious institution. "We are trying to do the social work that the church has been unable to do," Barritt explained, "and to raise an ethical standard where the church has been unable to obtain a footing."

UFA/UFWA members prayed, sang hymns, and read Scriptures in conventions and local meetings. Sometimes, like Christians sharing their personal testimonies, they gave their "testimony" about what the organization had "done for me." Biblical rhetoric infused their discourse. UFA Auxiliary president Jean Reed admonished members to "study to show thyself approved of God." As women were thought to be more spiritual than men and were responsible for children's moral development, they set up Sunday Schools and called for Bible readings in classrooms. One UFWA "girls'" club studied the women of the Bible.

UFA Sunday was a poignant expression of the UFA/UFWA Christian and community spirit. Originated by the Roseview union in 1914, it became an annual event in many UFA/UFWA communities by the mid-to-late war years. Featuring a sermon on applied Christianity, the services celebrated the movement "from a religious viewpoint." At one UFA Sunday service,

Mr. Sheppard of Edmonton commenced with a service of song ... which was highly appreciated ... followed by an address on practical Christianity, which proved conclusively the U.F.A. was practically a Christian institution, its motto being Equity.... The audience then sang the hymn poem, "Stand up, stand up for freedom," which contains the following noble lines: "God gives to each a vision of purer, brighter days, when all our fair Dominion true Equity displays".... President Speakman led in prayer, lifting us from earth into the presence of God. The sermon which followed was a powerful one, based on a verse from Ephesians 4 and 5.... He traced co-operation ... in the community, the nation, and the whole earth.... Christ being the head we must all co-operate with each other in His spirit.

Reflecting farmers' desire to unify the community, a UFA Sunday service often featured several ministers speaking against sectarianism. The McCafferty union went further and started a non-denominational "community church" to teach "the life of Christ in a democratic age." By promoting Christian fellowship and weakening religious barriers in communities, the UFA/UFWA built bonds of "oneness" that drew the
While reinforcing local and ultimately movement ties through religious and social activities and mutual aid, farmers sought to strengthen communities through practical work and improvements. The Patrons of Industry agitated for a bridge and a Normal School at Edmonton. The Alberta Farmers' Association was concerned with many local issues, from herd laws to drainage - which was one reason it had greater success than the Society of Equity. UFA/UFWA conventions dealt extensively with questions affecting farmers locally such as branch lines, fencing, and fines for bulls running at large.

Unions made many demands about community matters. They pressed for school districts, irrigation, telephone and medical service, post and telegraph offices, and railway facilities. Their efforts sometimes bore fruit. Queenstown local convinced the government to let union members cut hay on the Blackfoot reserve after individuals had been denied the privilege. The local also obtained telephone service for the community and lobbied the province for a bridge, "pestering them to death until we got the bridge," John Glambeck boasted. Such small victories built confidence that made larger ones possible.

Unions did much local work themselves. They obtained road grants and improved local roads, organized cemeteries, controlled pests, stray livestock, and weeds, and built and equipped schools, churches, and community halls. Whether mainly for the UFA/UFWA or the larger community, planning and constructing those halls was a community event, involving local donations of labour and money. Halls facilitated the social, economic, and educational activity that built a sense of local community. They had a kitchen and auditorium for meals and theatrics. Some had such amenities as a library, games room, women's rest room, co-operative trading room, athletic and recreation equipment.

All this local work and activity strengthened farmers' community ethos and sense of mutuality. "Our club work has brought sunshine and happiness to many homes and a more friendly feeling exists in the community," noted one UFWA woman. Just meeting together, another argued, could create "a real community spirit." That spirit contained notions of reciprocity on which the movement was "formed," "built," and "politcized." Being and working together in the locals trained farmers to think collectively and work
for the benefit of all.

Farmers' community ethos could help to form "moral economy" ideas about community rights. Such a notion was evident in a UFA convention resolution which argued that local interests should have precedence over a contractor's right to maximize his profits in a free market:

Resolved, that it is in the interest of all parties concerned that the Ordinance Respecting Threshers should be so amended that the owner of a threshing machine who is soliciting business shall be compelled to thresh [for] all settlers in a district before leaving same, as a great amount of hardship ... is now being experienced through threshers leaving a few men scattered throughout the district ... and not threshing their grain. Seeing that the above Ordinance protects the thresher insofar as the payment of his account is concerned, it is equally right that the customers should have protection.\textsuperscript{33}

Farmers' community ethos led them to favour local democratic control, which is why they endorsed the proposed Municipalities Act in 1911 - it promised local "self-government."\textsuperscript{34}

The UFA central Association helped unions with their district concerns. In 1910, members of several southwestern locals were upset about fires consuming valuable pasture and timber, and about having to fight fires or put up fire crews without compensation. On their request, the UFA Executive took up the matter with the government, with some success.\textsuperscript{35} The UFA also supported Gleichen and Strathmore area farmers who believed their costly CPR land was unsuitable for irrigation. They lost a court case and a later appeal,\textsuperscript{36} but in 1916, president Wood helped to arbitrate a deal that generally satisfied the farmers.\textsuperscript{37}

The Association assisted individual members and unions with their local needs. It helped them get railway crossings, loading platforms, stock yards, scales, and harvest help. It helped them resolve their disputes with railway and machinery companies. It provided advice on matters ranging from filling out petitions for telephone lines to organizing pound districts. In response to a convention request, it set up an information bureau to help farmers find their stray animals.\textsuperscript{38}

The Alberta farm movement grew in stature and solidarity - was "built" and "politicized" - but only because it rested on this rockbed of community work. The
UFA/UFWA's help with local issues built mass movement commitment because it met farmers' day-to-day needs. If the leaders had tried to steer the organization only toward big class issues like freight rates and the tariff, they would have failed and the UFA/UFWA would not have attracted the support it did. UFA general secretary E.J. Fream knew there was no use "trying to straighten out big things if one's own house is not in order first."\(^{40}\)

Especially in the UFA's earliest years, some unions did little besides community work. "The matters dealt with have been purely local," reported one secretary, "principally dealing with binder twine, formation of a Local Improvement District, the opening of roads and getting the telephone line extended into the district."\(^{41}\) Some farmers grew impatient with this emphasis. "Now while these subjects are of interest to the local union," wrote another secretary, "and will be of some profit thereby, it seems that the big problems which mean much to every farmer in the province do not create the amount of interest they should." "The change might, however," he mused, "come at a later date."\(^{42}\)

Come, it did. Many unions broadened their perspectives. J. Darrough described this development in the Bowell union:

> Heretofore we have taken too narrow an outlook: we have been content as a Union to consider only local affairs, and have failed to grasp ... that we are part and parcel of an organization that is not bounded in its activities by prescribed lines, ... but is as large as our province in extent, and by its influence reaches out to all parts of our broad Dominion where producers of the necessaries of life are exploited for the benefit of the few.... But ... we have waked up. We no longer see as through a glass darkly, but with a clearer vision and broader view.\(^{43}\)

A similar process was evident in the annual conventions. Almost 40% of the demands the 1909 convention made related to local issues,\(^{44}\) but this percentage declined as later conventions dealt more with "class" questions.

Education in the unions, the Guide, and the conventions helped farmers build on their local sense of mutuality to develop class consciousness and a larger sense of western and agrarian "community." At conventions, delegates learned about the larger farm movement and considered motions about provincial, national, and international matters - as well as local ones. Inspired and broadened in outlook, they imparted their enthusiasm,
sense of class opposition, and vision to their unions. Farmers also caught wind of bigger
movement issues as Association officers spoke to locals or at UFA/UFWA picnics.

As farmers' class consciousness peaked after the war, their community ties made
the agrarian revolt possible. When the provincial Liberals unexpectedly issued writs on
June 23, 1921 for an election on July 18, the UFA/UFWA was organized for provincial
politics in only sixteen constituencies. With lightning dispatch, it organized an additional
two dozen on petition of twenty percent of the locals in each constituency as stipulated by
the 1920 convention, and forty candidates were placed in the field.45 Thousands of
farmers attended political rallies, made campaign contributions, distributed literature,
acted as scrutineers, and gave rides to the polls. All this was done with very little help
from central office and could not have been done without the social connections and
organization of the UFA/UFWA locals. A wave of political excitement, based on
community relations and events, consumed the countryside, as Barbara Cormack writes:

The month that followed, leading up to the ... election was not so
much a campaign as a crusade. Every little schoolhouse, every country
store, every straggling fence across which neighbours talked, became a
rallying ground for the expression of political theories.

The rural school, in particular, was the focal point of such
gatherings. For miles and miles they came - people who had never
attended public meetings in their lives, jolting over the rough trails in
buggies, wagons, democrats - children and babies tucked in behind - wet
days or dry - all to have a look at the candidate or special speaker and to
thresh out the pros and cons with the neighbours. Far into the night they
talked, the little building filling up with smoke, and the air so thick you
could cut it with a knife.

To attract bigger crowds there were the picnics and celebrations.
The crop was growing. It was not yet time for haying - all in all an
excellent time for such get-togethers. There was the scent of battle in the
air - but even more there was the fragrance of a new heaven and a new
earth. With farmer representation in the Legislature anything could
happen.46

The scene was repeated later that year during the federal campaign when UFA/UFWA
supporters worked to ensure that non-British women were naturalized and obtained
voting certificates.

To take effective political and other action, the UFA/UFWA had to maintain a
sense of community among farmers differing in ideology, race, ethnicity, farm specialization, economic status, and institutional affiliation. Limits to their notion of community, however, became apparent. Still, the movement generally accommodated, and often reconciled, different groups of farmers, ensuring its healthy development.

Ideological differences were one of the earliest and most serious threats to movement unity. Farmers did not have a more or less monolithic "petit-bourgeois" outlook. Some UFA/UFWA farmers inherited the radical ideology of the Patrons of Industry, the Farmers' Association of Alberta, and the Society of Equity. The majority acquired and developed the liberal outlook of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association, the Alberta Farmers' Association, and the Edmonton Bulletin.

Echoing nineteenth-century radicalism, radical farmers stressed antimonopolism and "equal rights" - no special privileges for corporations. Their producerism, which argued that labour creates and should retain all value, and that farmers and workers were fellow producers exploited by capital, led them to advocate a farmer-labour political alliance to agitate for a redistribution of wealth through radical monetary reform and state ownership of utilities and big businesses. More suspicious of corporate power and imperialism than liberals, radicals were also stronger proponents of civil and women's rights. Farmers of the liberal wing believed in the benefits of competitive capitalism, and, prompted by toryism or the new liberalism, supported state involvement in the economy to ensure equality of opportunity and a measure of economic equality. They were strongly committed to self-help through improved farm production, and especially through co-operative enterprise. Before 1919, they preferred pressure to direct politics.

These two outlooks and programs had the potential to split the UFA/UFWA, but the experience of a divided movement before 1909 convinced the two wings to get along, a task made easier by the compatibility of their agendas on such key questions as the tariff, freight rates, and direct legislation. On other issues, there was a measure of consensus with disagreement about degree or emphasis. Both wings, for example, believed in state ownership and control, although radicals wanted more of it than liberals. On still other matters, ideology gave rise to conflicting views. Radicals sought government loans for farmers; during the war, liberals believed co-operative credit was a better solution. There was never, however, a break over this issue; farmers were
democrats and accepted the majority position in the conventions, knowing that a split in
the movement would weaken their chances of getting any meaningful reform.

Only politics came near to wrecking the movement. Radicals believed the
UFA/UFWA should take direct political action; liberals did not concur until after the war.
The resulting friction destroyed, or weakened, some unions, although most locals found a
consensus. A majority of political activists belonged to specific radical unions, revealing
the importance of local leadership. Unions throughout the province with influential left-
wing officers often supported radical ideas, including direct politics. In the South,
fluctuating crop yields, and many American settlers with few ties to Canadian political
parties and who were familiar with radical agrarianism, made political activism
particularly popular.

After 1916, most radicals joined the Non-Partisan League, an independent
political movement, while remaining in the UFA/UFWA. The UFA/UFWA avoided
internal dissension and a rift with the League by endorsing direct political action in 1919.
That satisfied the radicals who initially opposed H.W. Wood's idea of independent
political action by occupational groups but then realized it could achieve their agenda.
Unity over the movement's policies, especially over political action, had been achieved,
both in local communities and the larger provincial movement.

Nationalism and racial, ethnic, and linguistic differences also challenged
movement unity - and revealed the limits of members' sense of community. Nativism hurt
the pre-UFA movement, but the UFA/UFWA weakened or dealt with prejudice so it did
not seriously hamper the movement's growth. Scholars have debated whether nativism
resulted primarily from structural or economic factors, psychological tensions, or from
multifaceted causes. The latter paradigm best explains the situation in rural Alberta.

Alberta farmers were quick to exhibit prejudice toward Amerindians. Rice
Sheppard argued that pioneers had converted an "almost worthless land into golden
wheat fields," and built "up a nation out of what a few years past was considered a
worthless land of snow and wild bands of red indians." By suggesting that settlers had
entered an essentially unpeopled wasteland - a "land of snow" - Sheppard was depicting
unassimilated Amerindians as "other": they were "red," not white; "wild," not civilized.

Such an image was a product of myth. The agrarian myth, which idealized
agricultural development, marginalized Natives\textsuperscript{56} by implying that non-farming peoples wasted land and were degenerate. American literature about the frontier, including James Fenimore Cooper's well-known tales, portrayed Amerindians as children to be raised and civilized on reserves, as noble savages who were dying out, or as barbaric, devil-like savages to be cut down like the trees of Frederick Jackson Turner's forest.\textsuperscript{57} Many Albertans shared these views, seeing Indians "as a sort of pest to be exterminated."\textsuperscript{58}

Farmers' negative images of Amerindians were reinforced by a need to justify their ownership of aboriginal land. There was more to this, however, than capitalistic acquisitiveness. Gerald Lively, the "poet of the western farmers,"\textsuperscript{59} and a socialist who foresaw the end of the "cursed competitive system,"\textsuperscript{60} wrote:

\begin{quote}
And the farmer's still forgotten when the rulers give a feast,  
He's not consulted if he'd come or not;  
For though he wins an empire from the savage and the beast  
His payment's still the lowest of the lot.\textsuperscript{61}
\end{quote}

No less than Sheppard, Lively considered Amerindians "savages," and was glad they had been shunted aside for white settlement. Economic self-interest and racist myths led most Alberta farmers to believe that whites were destined to take over the land - to build a socialistic society as Lively envisioned, or a capitalistic one as most farmers desired. This was the basis of their prejudice.

Farmers also gained psychological income from their racism. There was no little pride in Sheppard's and Lively's arguments that farmers were transforming a wasteland of "red" "savages" into a "civilized" nation. Additionally, farmers living near reserves had social and economic reasons for their prejudice. They wanted, or wanted other whites to acquire, reserve land\textsuperscript{62} to develop the local economy and community.

There was little incentive for farmers to moderate their views. Reserve Indians could not become UFA/UFWA members as they were not independent producers. Lacking the franchise, they could not support the organization politically. And they were isolated from whites. Ignorance about other races breeds bigotry, and farmers' ignorance about Natives was unchallenged by contact. Indians, therefore, were never part of a UFA/UFWA community. Economic interest, ignorance, and myth, ensured their exclusion.

The frontier myth argued that the Metis possessed Indians' racial traits. Partly as a
result, farmers often viewed "half-breeds" negatively. E.N. Barker, a prominent AFA and UFA man, joined a troop during the 1885 Rebellion, and apparently had little concern for Metis concerns or grievances. For him, the Rebellion was something to chuckle about:

Yes, the rebellion, viz., a difference of opinion, did quite a little for Alberta and varied the monotony of life for a time. Nothing is quite so distressing as the common-place when it's continuous.\(^{63}\)

Economic conditions could bring farmers' prejudice to a boil. In 1918 one farmer was livid that "Indian Half-breeds" were undercutting "our people ... American, Scotch, Irish, Russian, Ruthenian" in selling wood products. The writer appealed to UFA members to buy at a living price from whites who were building up the country rather than patronize the Metis who allegedly did "little or nothing to advance civilization."\(^{64}\)

Some UFA/UFWA farmers, however, accepted the Metis and even embraced them as part of their community. Revealing how personal contact can break down prejudice, Rice Sheppard wrote of his "halfbreed" neighbours: "No pure white was ever more kind, or ready to give a helping hand than Mr. or Mrs. Inkster and family."\(^{65}\) There were even attempts to bring the Metis into the movement. In 1920, the Grand Prairie UFWA local took "steps to do special work among the Cree people," and asked the central for literature in Cree or French.\(^{66}\) Moreover, the UFA protested a piece of legislation that allegedly protected a rich citizen from prosecution for fraud in obtaining Metis script.\(^{67}\) Farmers could see the Metis as fellow victims of plutocratic influence, and even as members of a UFA/UFWA community, though barriers to their acceptance remained. Class interests, local contact, and a democratic ethos, could mute, but not eliminate, prejudice.

The same thing can be said about some farmers' perception of blacks, although the main reaction to this group was hostility. In the spring of 1911, the Edmonton Board of Trade protested the recent settlement of a few hundred blacks around the city and insisted that no more be allowed to come.\(^{68}\) Many UFA locals endorsed the Board's demand,\(^{69}\) and two locals proposed that "negroes" already in the country be put on reserves so they would not come into contract with whites.\(^{70}\)

This prejudice had little to do with economic or structural factors. One local argued that another influx of blacks would have a "disastrous influence upon the welfare
and development of this province,\textsuperscript{71} but this was less a sincere belief about the economic impact of blacks than an attempt to justify excluding them. If any really believed blacks would harm the economy, their conviction was based on racist assumptions that blacks were inherently lazy. In no real way were black settlers an economic threat to Alberta farmers. They were not like Asians in B.C. who replaced white miners and lumber workers and lowered their wages. In fact, Alberta farmers usually favoured settlement, believing it would result in lower taxes and better services. For economic reasons, then, UFA locals should have viewed black settlers as a benefit. The problem was their skin was black.

Farmers' reaction to the blacks was fundamentally a product of "psychological tension." The sudden influx of non-whites created the spectre of racial plurality. This was unacceptable to farmers; they "yearned for a racially homogeneous society."\textsuperscript{72} "This country should be wholly a white man's country," declared one UFA secretary.\textsuperscript{73} Most farmers agreed. They feared that racial heterogeneity "would destroy their capacity to perpetuate their values and traditions, their laws and institutions."\textsuperscript{74}

Some farmers were also driven by a centuries old belief that black men lusted uncontrollably after white women and frequently raped them.\textsuperscript{75} "Isobel," a Guide columnist, revealed this mindset:

Fireside would like to know what the people ... think about the negro invasion that is now pouring into the Canadian west ... and farming large settlements contiguous to and among the whites.

There can scarcely be anyone who is not aware of the atrocities committed by members of these terrible communities, the only corresponding punishment for which is the lawless lynching.... Already it is reported that three white women in the Edmonton and Peace River districts have been victims of these outrages accomplished in peculiarly fiendish abandon.

Where will the end be?

... Ottawa has done nothing so far. How many of these industrious, courageous, unprotected, country women must be sacrificed to the horrors of a negro attack before the slow and rusty machinery that drives the engine of state can be induced to erect a barricade against so dreadful an evil?\textsuperscript{76}

The state was not as rusty as Isobel thought. It soon halted black immigration in response to the outcry of boards of trade, the Edmonton Labour Council, women's
The movement appealed to farmers' engrained anti-black racism to support various causes. SOURCE: Guide, Oct. 23, 1912, p. 8 (above), Dec. 11, 1918, p. 6 (below)
organizations, and farmers.\textsuperscript{77} Racism united these groups as nothing else could have. Psychological tension, ignited by a sudden influx of blacks, had thrust racist ideas to the fore, fanning a flare-up of nativism that transcended class and other boundaries.

Gender inequality could reinforce racism. Women like "Isobel" were angry that blacks had the right to homestead while good British Canadian women did not. "It should be possible," she concluded indignantly, "for Canadian women to secure from the government ... at least an equal share with the foreign negro in the rich heritage of the Dominion's homestead lands."\textsuperscript{78}

A few UFA locals did not fully support this anti-black frenzy. At a meeting of one of those locals,

The negro immigration question was ... discussed, and looking at it from all sides we do not agree with the Edmonton people in trying to stop them from coming into this country. We do not believe in encouraging them to come in, but once they are here, and unless undesirable as to character, we think they should be given a chance in this fair country of ours, and that their color alone should not make any difference.\textsuperscript{79}

The UFA/UFWA could weaken nativism. As nativism thrives on the unknown, getting to know other people can promote acceptance. UFA/UFWA locals often brought persons of different backgrounds, and occasionally races, together to socialize and discuss mutual problems. In 1917, the Poplar Ridge local, the members of which were black, held a dinner and dance which some whites from the Colinton union attended. The Colinton secretary related that the

members of the Colinton Local had nothing to complain of about the excellence of the program or the treatment meted out to us. The tables were loaded with good things and the address given ... had enough fire in it to make any slacker, colored or otherwise, line up and join the U.F.A. All went home well pleased with with the entertainment and when Poplar Ridge Local again opens its hospitable doors the white people will be well represented.\textsuperscript{80}

One or two other black locals were formed. But the ramparts of racism in the UFA/UFWA were never really broken down. Black and white unions were more or less racially exclusive,\textsuperscript{81} and white UFA/UFWA members continued to hold stereotypical views of blacks which they perpetuated through their minstrel shows. Most farmers' concept of a UFA/UFWA community did not include blacks.
Racial stereotypes, and the prospect of Asian immigration during and after the war, set off a new wave of racism. The topic of Asian labour was discussed at the 1918 UFA convention where several speakers "told of the experiences of British Columbia, California, and South Africa with the orientals." Their racist ideas confirmed, the delegates decided, despite their great need for farm labour, to "go on record as being absolutely opposed" to bringing in Asians, even as temporary workers. Racism had proven stronger than economic interest. Unlike some B.C. farmers, UFA men were willing to forego cheap and plentiful labour to save the country from an alleged racial menace. Drawing further on racist stereotypes, some UFWA women felt that Asians posed a moral or sexual danger. In 1921, the Calgary local learned that

there are a large number of girls - especially country girls - in the employ of Orientals, in Calgary and other cities. This has lain heavily on our hearts, and we have sought an avenue of service to these girls.

As more farmers became dependent on wage work after the war owing to crop failure and falling commodity prices, the potential economic impact of Asians fostered nativism. Discussing possible irrigation construction jobs, L. H. Jelliff, a prominent UFA man, argued that citizens did not want a "bunch of Chinamen and Japs to do the work the farmers can do." Radical UFA/UFWA farmers worried about the effect of Asian workers on white labour in general. One union carried this resolution:

Whereas this local views with concern the ever-increasing number of Chinamen who are arriving in this country ... entering into competition with white labor in the various factories, ... and in view of the fact that thousands of our boys have gone to fight to keep this a white man's country, ...

This local resolves that the Minister of Immigration be requested to give this matter closer supervision, ... and that no railway company be granted permission to engage laborers in foreign countries under any conditions.

Asians would never belong to a UFA/UFWA community.

Racism in the UFA/UFWA stemmed from several factors - economic, cultural, and psychological. Economic considerations informed perceptions about Amerindians, Metis and Asians, but the prospect of racial plurality, and with it, the apparent threat of cultural and moral denigration - heightened by fears of further immigration - thrust farmers' racial animus and stereotypical thinking about blacks and Asians to the front.
A nativistic argument in favour of female suffrage. SOURCE: Guide, July 1, 1914, p. 14
Racism did not, however, hurt the farm movement. With few non-white farmers in Alberta, white farmers could express nativism without alienating many potential members. If anything, racism strengthened farmers' sense of community by creating a feeling of solidarity against an outside social threat. Still, a few black and possibly a few Metis UFA/UFWA unions were formed, and there was never any campaign to have them removed. Class interest, local contact, democratic ideals, and feelings of Christian brotherhood, broadened some farmers' definition of their community beyond the strict limits of their racism.

Many UFA/UFWA communities contained non-Anglo-Celtic white minorities. The only opposition the organization officially expressed against such groups in the period under study was its request for the cancelation of military service exemptions and other privileges of pacifist groups like Hutterites. At the local level, there were isolated demands for measures like a head tax on "enemy aliens," and periodic outbursts about "men of alien race" homesteading while British women could not. Prejudice within unions sometimes made it hard to maintain unity, and a few farmers would not join locals having members of certain nationalities. But with 54% of Alberta "farm operators" in 1921 born outside the Empire, the UFA/UFWA had to attract a variety of groups if it wanted to succeed.

Besides class and strategic considerations, ideology fostered acceptance of ethnic groups in the UFA/UFWA. At least some farmers felt that blood mixing of European "races" produced, not racial degeneration, but racial progress. They did not believe in Anglo-Celtic superiority, but shared the melting pot ideal of Crevecoeur and F.J. Turner. A "new man" with new principles would emerge out of the blending of the races on the frontier. E.N. Barker argued that racial mixing resulted in "activity and progress," while J. Fletcher maintained that "the mixed race is the most law abiding."

Community dynamics also promoted openness to minorities. While some minorities were isolated in block settlements, which raised suspicions about them, most lived in ethnically-diverse localities or had social or economic contact with other groups, often through the UFA/UFWA. This contact, which increased as more of the "foreign born" joined the organization, weakened nativism.

Before the UFA was formed, anti-American nativism kept some Alberta farmers
from joining the American-based Society of Equity. As more Americans settled in the province, however, they joined UFA/UFWA communities, and made the movement their own. They were overrepresented in the Association leadership by mid-war, and shaped UFA/UFWA policies. Some 27% of the farm population in Alberta in 1921 was American, compared to 16% and 4% in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and this American presence helps account for the UFA's adoption of radical credit and political ideas. Americans were unwedded to the Canadian parties, and some had supported soft money doctrines and third parties in the United States.

About 27% of Alberta's farm operators in 1921 were born outside the U.S., Britain, and Canada. These included northern Europeans who were well accepted in Alberta, and central and eastern Europeans whom most British Canadians placed well down the "ethnic pecking order." Although most successful in attracting Anglo-Celts, the UFA/UFWA organized virtually all European groups. In many areas, it recruited them into ethnically mixed locals. In districts with large numbers of French, German, Dutch, Russian, Hungarian, Mormon, and other settlers, unions based on ethnicity, language, and occasionally religion were formed. Farmers' democratic ethos and desire to attract members, and growing minority influence in the UFA/UFWA, ensured that xenophobia, while present, had no great effect on the movement's openness to minorities and support for their rights. UFA president Speakman spoke to Germans in German during the war, and many UFA/UFWA members opposed the disfranchisement of Germans and central and Eastern Europeans in 1917.

This stance contributed to "a groundswell of Ukrainian support for the UFA" from 1918 to 1921. By the latter year, an estimated 3000 Ukrainians were UFA members in 47 locals. D. Prystash, a Ukrainian UFA leader, induced the UFA to donate $400 to assist with a pro-UFA Ukrainian newspaper, and persuaded the 1919 convention to resolve:

Whereas, the present Government put ... [Ukrainians] under special restrictions by different prohibitive measures, causing prejudice, humiliation, and injustice;

...Therefore, be it resolved ... that the Government be asked to take away all restrictions put upon their papers, language and publications, that the privilege of voting be restored [sic] to them, and that the Ukrainian Nation be recognized as an Allied one, as de facto she is.

Ukrainian UFA delegates, with the support of other UFA members, nominated a
Ukrainian UFA candidate for the 1921 provincial election, and another for a by-election held later - and both won.\textsuperscript{107} Ukrainian and other central and eastern Europeans were active and fairly well accepted members of UFA/UFWA communities.

Though some UFA/UFWA members hoped to assimilate minorities fully into the British-Canadian norm, this was not the official UFA/UFWA position. There was not even much support in the organization for an English only school policy.\textsuperscript{108} Although UFA/UFWA farmers wanted to "Canadianize" "foreigners" by having them learn English and be active citizens, at least a few in the movement felt that all groups had something to offer Canada. UFA general secretary H. Higginbotham wrote:

Have we not as individuals and communities a duty toward these new Canadians? Their traditions, their customs are different from those of the British-born, but can we not appreciate the fact that while we may have something of value for them, they in turn have much to enrich our civilization? Let us become familiar with the history and customs of their native land, so we may better understand their position in this new land and give them encouragement and assistance to become Canadian citizens in the truest sense.... Break down the racial feeling.\textsuperscript{109}

After the war, the UFA/UFWA stepped up its recruiting of minorities, hoping they would vote UFA if brought into the movement. To this end, it distributed literature in French, German, and Ukrainian.\textsuperscript{110} One pamphlet appealed specifically to minority groups, boasting that the UFA had provided

an organization from which our foreign population who have been betrayed and manipulated for the advancement of politicians' schemes, may expect the same fair and just treatment as is extended to all other classes of Canadians, being assured that our organization is anxious to co-operate with them, and have them co-operate with us for the advancement of our mutual interests.\textsuperscript{111}

In 1921, a "foreign born" committee was formed consisting of mainly local farmers who between them spoke a dozen languages and acted as UFA/UFWA organizers.\textsuperscript{112} Thanks partly to their work, the movement had notable success recruiting minorities.

The result, very often, was stronger local communities. "This neighborhood being made up of different nationalities we seldom saw much of one another," explained Mrs. Frank James, "and we felt the need of something to draw us together in a more neighborly manner. The organizing of the U.F.W. has solved our problem."\textsuperscript{113} Such unity
between groups could foster movement pride. UFA director F.W. Smith argued at one local meeting that "the different nationalities represented here truly show that the U.F.A. ... can unite all men into a common brotherhood."\textsuperscript{114}

By organizing most groups of farmers, the UFA/UFWA built community, class, and movement solidarity. Yet minorities did not gain equality in the organization. They were underrepresented in the central leadership; there were no "foreign" officers in 1918, and only one in 1916 and 1920.\textsuperscript{115} Ethnic barriers were weakened in the UFA/UFWA, but not obliterated. There were limits to the concept of a multicultural UFA/UFWA community.

Within its local communities and the larger UFA/UFWA community, farmers also had to deal with tensions between grain growers and stock raisers. Most early UFA members were small ranchers or mixed farmers who believed big cattlemen monopolized land that should be available to smaller producers. These members were thus hostile to the idea of closed leases\textsuperscript{116} which they feared would "keep out the small farmers and ranchers."\textsuperscript{117} By 1912, however, the UFA recognized that farming was not feasible on some land and proposed it be leased, with settlers having the first chance to secure leaseholds or permits.\textsuperscript{118}

The attack on the big ranchers continued during the war as the UFA demanded that large leases be taxed.\textsuperscript{119} They also expressed anger that most riparian rights in the province were in private hands. They believed the "people's" cattle should have access to lakes and rivers. UFA officers accordingly endorsed requests for public stock approaches.\textsuperscript{120} In southwestern Alberta, farmers were upset with sheep ranchers whose animals damaged their crops and ate their pasture. At the UFA's request, the government provided legal protection for farmers from this.\textsuperscript{121} After the war, farmers argued that large leases obstructed road development and made it hard to locate schools in convenient places. They wanted these lands kept open for farming or reserved for public grazing. In 1920, the UFA Executive asked the government to allow settlers adjacent to stock leases to form community lease districts.\textsuperscript{122}

While opposing large cattle and sheep ranchers, the UFA/UFWA had to accommodate tensions within its ranks between grain and livestock specialists. Grain producers wanted a compulsory hail insurance acreage tax to spread the costs of coverage
over a larger area. Stock producers, who were less affected by hail, successfully blocked this suggestion at the 1909 convention.\textsuperscript{123} Something of a compromise was reached when the 1912 convention instructed the Executive to press the province for a compulsory scheme, and, if unsuccessful, to propose that each municipality under the new Act administer a hail tax if a majority of its ratepayers approved the idea.\textsuperscript{124} The latter proposition, which the government essentially implemented, ensured that municipalities dominated by stock producers did not impose a tax. Partly for the sake of stockmen in municipalities favouring the tax, the 1918 convention endorsed a new scheme that only taxed crop land and provided better service to grain growers.\textsuperscript{125} A solution acceptable to grain and stock producers had been found.

Friction between grain specialists and stockmen also arose over the free range. Stock raisers opposed "any legislation which will tend to curtail the running at large of stock."\textsuperscript{126} Grain growers naturally wanted laws to protect their crops from stock and to ensure adequate compensation from damages. Seeking to accommodate these divergent interests, the 1912 convention asked for an amendment to the Pound Ordinance to establish "a means of settling, with the minimum of expense and ill-feeling, all claims for damages done by stock, without restricting the range of domestic cattle and horses."\textsuperscript{127}

As settlement proceeded, the UFA spoke more for mixed producers and less for ranchers. The 1913 convention asked the government to consider "the claims of... mixed farmers when making rules in regard to the grazing lands." At the same time, the ranchers' influence was evident with the tabling of another resolution demanding they pay "their full share of school taxes"\textsuperscript{128} - although three years later the convention requested a school tax on farm and ranch land.\textsuperscript{129}

The UFA, thus, represented small stockmen and especially mixed farmers, and opposed large cattle and sheep ranchers. When the interests of stock and grain producers conflicted, over hail insurance or the free range, it sought a mutually acceptable solution. The UFA/UFWA sense of community, both at the organizational and local level, was maintained, facilitating the movement "building" and "politicizing."

While accommodating different kinds of producers, the UFA/UFWA represented, and worked for, farmers of all economic "classes." Much movement work, including agitating for lower tariffs and freight rates, was for rich and poor members alike. Other
work helped well-off producers, such as the fight for railway cars to ship grain directly to market. Struggling farmers did not have enough grain to fill a car and could not benefit from this privilege. Yet the UFA sought to make direct shipping feasible for many members. In 1910-11, it fought for smaller railway cars and lower minimum car weights to assist "medium and small sized farmers" unable to fill and bear the expense of larger cars. Some unions set up co-operative weigh scales so small producers could pool their grain to fill a car. In 1909, the UFA tried to get the railways to supply partitions in stock cars so that shippers with only a few animals could keep them separate when combining to make a car load.

The UFA/UFWA also worked for down and out members. It collected thousands of dollars and items of clothing for crop failure victims; asked for protection for them against seizure or foreclosure; requested special provisions for homesteaders in marginal areas; tried to procure good quality seed grain for needy producers; arranged for unions to issue certificates for reduced freight rates on seed; and persuaded the government to distribute seed and food more widely and to provide a fairer means of collecting for them. In 1920, it proposed a lower price for seed wheat. UFA vice-president Baker explained that farmers having a crop "were willing to make a little sacrifice for the benefit of those who were less fortunate."

Officers like Baker encouraged the UFA/UFWA to help less well-off farmers because they needed their support to stay in office and knew that a crop failure or collapse in commodity prices could put them in need of the UFA/UFWA's help. The organization, therefore, did not simply serve an elite leadership, or well-to-do farmers. As it successfully accommodated different ethnic groups and product specialists, it worked for all classes of the farm community. In so doing, it avoided internal divisions and facilitated the "building" and "politicizing" of the movement.

While preserving a sense of community between "classes" of farmers, the UFA/UFWA had to maintain harmony with the Women's Institutes. The Institutes did many of the same things as the UFWA, leading the two organizations to collaborate on projects in many communities. At the same time, there were differences between them: the UFWA was more agrarian, class conscious, and independent than the government funded Institutes which included town and country women. As a result, and because of
personality clashes, tensions sometimes arose between the two groups. Mrs. J.E. Rosebrough of the Gem UFWA local related that

In our midst we have ... a Women's Institute organization which, I believe through no fault of our own, is threatening to split our community.... During the past year we have tried working with them in their organization, doing so for the purpose of avoiding this rift. But we didn't seem to be doing any good.... Since we honestly and sincerely tried working in their organization and [are] getting no ... return for our trouble besides dividing our time and strength between the two, we feel that the course we have taken is the only one possible. We would like, and in the future intend, to centre our efforts in the U.F.W.  

Fortunately, such scenarios were not too common. For the most part, the UFA/UFWA got along with the Institutes, as it accommodated farmers differing in ethnicity, economic status, and agricultural specialization - preserving the sense of rural community that made the movement possible.

Relations between farmers and other local and regional groups were also generally good, and much inter-class co-operation occurred. Tensions sometimes arose, however, especially between farmers and retailers as UFA/UFWA co-operative buying increased. Still, farmers had less friction with merchants than some literature suggests. Farmers' sense of community included other classes, although there were limits to their willingness to work with them.

Many locals sought to maintain harmony with merchants by dealing with them rather than shipping in food and dry goods co-operatively. One local explained that "while we are not averse to wholesale buying by farmers, we urge it only when the dealer puts too wide a margin of profit between himself and the consumer." UFA secretary P.P. Woodbridge similarly advised locals to avoid interfering with merchants by confining their co-operative purchases where possible to goods normally handled from manufacturers to consumers by commission agents.

One woman from the Doondale UFWA described how merchants and the UFA worked out a mutually agreeable arrangement:

At our last meeting we had two of our merchants. It seems there has been some ill-feeling between the merchants and the U.F.A., the former claiming that the U.F.A. were fighting the town, and the latter, vice versa.
The U.F.A. local had a man to present their side, and the merchants very
ably presented theirs, with the result that we came to the conclusion that
the only remedy would be co-operation.\textsuperscript{144}

With a similar end in view, the Alliance union appointed a "Local Trade Committee" to
confer with shopkeepers.\textsuperscript{145}

Most locals avoided conflict with merchants because they did not want to be
called town wreckers; they liked to think they were building up their communities.
Concerned that some thought "we were trying to run the local store prices down," the
Clark union adopted a by-law prohibiting it from selling to non-members for less than
regular store prices.\textsuperscript{146} Farmers were also loathe to alienate merchants who provided
credit and goods that locals could not buy co-operatively. The presence of retailers in
UFA/UFWA unions, the threat of social alienation from the larger rural community, and
the possibility of working with town leaders on mutually beneficial projects, were further
reasons farmers preserved workable relations with dealers.

Notwithstanding, locals could take a hard line. The Olds union bought direct from
processors and manufacturers to force merchants to drop their prices. "In every case we
give the home dealers a chance to serve the union," explained J. Stauffer. "They thought
the farmers would not dare to ship in anything themselves. They were ... shown that
unless they give the farmer a square deal they will lose their best trade."\textsuperscript{147} Despite this
run-in, the strength of community ties were such that the union worked the following
year with the Olds Board of Trade.\textsuperscript{148}

Merchant resentment must have been especially keen at Gleichen where the UFA
local "distributed about 60,000 lbs. of flour and other mill stuff, 44,000 lbs. of binder
twine, 367 cases of fresh fruit and 1,800 boxes of apples, besides quite a quantity of dried
fruit, on which they had saved the consumers about $4,000."\textsuperscript{149} It must have been small
comfort to Gleichen dealers that the union's motto was "live and let live."\textsuperscript{150}

In some locales, conflict between retailers and farmers escalated during and after
the war as UFA co-operative buying increased and cut into merchants' profits, sometimes
jeopardizing their livelihood. Occasionally, merchants threatened to stop farmers' credit
or influenced companies not to sell to UFA unions.\textsuperscript{151} They argued that farmers should
buy locally to build up the towns and pay their debts since storekeepers had given them
Farmers replied that they paid for this credit in high interest rates and prices and only got in debt as they could not get enough money from the banks. There were definite limits to farmers' sense of community with merchants.

Tension between farmers and other local groups usually stemmed from passing issues. In 1913, farmers were angry that money was spent on highways for the "idle rich" while rural roads were often impassable. Two years before, the UFA and several boards of trade were at odds over minimum railway car weights. Later, the UFA opposed an Edmonton Board of Trade application for a freight rate classification change, and protested a Red Deer Board of Trade request for an increase in the business needed for a station agent.

Despite such episodes, farmers generally saw local urban groups as members of their community with whom they could co-operate. In 1894, the Patrons of Industry and Edmonton citizens collaborated to press for a bridge across the Saskatchewan river. In 1901, businessmen, grain dealers, and farmers met to protest the grading of Alberta oats by the Grain Standards Board. Six years later, the AFA convention endorsed resolutions submitted by boards of trade calling for reduced railway rates and an end to railway bonusing by urban centres.

UFA/UFWA unions and other groups commonly co-operated. The Granum Board of Trade, merchants, and farmers jointly sought extended telephone service; the Clairemont townspeople and union formed a "Good Roads Association" to improve local roads; and two UFWA unions worked with Calgary women's clubs, the Board of Trade, and City Council to establish a women's rest room and creche. Across the province, UFA locals worked with boards of trade to encourage local railway construction.

Considerable collaboration occurred between the central Association and urban groups. The Calgary Board of Trade endorsed the UFA stand on reciprocity and its demands for freight rate reductions; the UFA/UFWA approved a Calgary Board of Trade plan for a public health department; and the UFA supported the efforts of the Calgary Consumers' League to establish a public market. It also seconded an Associated Boards of Trade request for the appointment of a freight rates expert to help with submissions to the Railway Board.
Agrarian co-operation created tensions between farmers and retailers in some communities. SOURCE: Guide, May 31, 1916, p. 6
UFA representation on boards of trade, including the Calgary Board, promoted this co-operation, but the main reason for it was mutual self-interest. Alberta urban dwellers and farmers alike would profit from infrastructure, utilities, rest rooms, public markets, freer trade and lower freight rates. Believing their own wealth depended on agriculture, businessmen could go to great lengths to help farmers. Sixty Lethbridge "citizens" guaranteed loans so farmers could buy livestock, and the Board of Trade called a water conference for farmers and lobbied with the UFA for government aid to drill wells.

Through such work, the UFA/UFWA formed a sense of inter-class community, a notion that included much of the prairie and far West. Regional co-operation began in 1909 with a conference involving the UFA, elevator companies, banks, railways, Alberta and B.C. Boards of Trade, and the Alberta government, to promote the development of a Pacific outlet for grain. Knowing they would benefit from this route, the parties agreed to call for Dominion owned coastal terminals, measures to facilitate the western movement of grain, and a new Alberta and B.C. inspectorate.

There were limits, however, to the sense of community shown at the conference. The farmer delegates were pressured to compromise their request for state terminals by conceding that the CPR should be allowed to build them if the federal government did not do so soon. Moreover, the farmers were induced to endorse a motion asking for a change to the Grain Act to enable producers "to get cars at the elevators in the same proportion as though they loaded them from the platform." An angry Guide pointed out that this would "make it easier for the elevator companies to secure control of a much larger portion of the wheat" and make it harder for farmers to get cars to ship directly. In the end, the government did not meddle with the Grain Act and UFA spokesmen learned their lesson. In future, they "stuck steadfast" to the principle of state owned terminals.

Farmers' interest in shipping from the coast was rekindled in 1912 with the imminent opening of the Panama Canal. To consider the Canal's advantages for western Canada, the Calgary Development Bureau and Board of Trade organized a conference involving politicians and farm and business representatives from the West. The conference endorsed motions presented by UFA secretary E.J. Fream favouring reduced
western freight rates and a government terminal. It also formed an association to promote its agenda and the western shipping route, electing James Bower as the Alberta vice-president. 176

In 1910, the UFA, provincial government representatives, and B.C. businessmen met in Vancouver to consider Alberta - B.C. trade relations. Here too, a degree of regional inter-class "community" was realized as all resolutions brought to the floor carried. Following the UFA agenda, the meeting demanded state abattoirs, a suitable hay inspection system, a merchant licensing and bonding law, and lower freight rates. At the same time, the conference revealed intra-regional tensions as Alberta boards dominated by businessmen with eastern interests opposed, or were indifferent to, some of the conference recommendations. 177 The limits of a western sense of community were again apparent.

Such limits were further evident as farmers tried to co-operate with labour. The Society of Equity linked up with the Trades and Labour Council (TLC) in 1907, 178 but little came of it. A renewed initiative came at the 1911 convention when the Wheatland Centre union suggested the UFA talk with the labour movement about affiliation. This was too radical for the convention which later approved a recommendation that the Executive appoint a committee simply to "confer with the organized workers of the province to ascertain if there be any neutral ground on which to work our common interest. "179 This was done, and the committee found it shared ideas with the TLC Executive about issues like direct legislation. The two parties suggested their organizations each appoint a committee to periodically take up questions of mutual interest. The UFA convention appointed its committee in 1912. 180

Shortly after the convention, W.R. Ball's West Salisbury union passed a strong resolution calling for a meeting in June with the "trades and labor unions of Edmonton and Calgary" to form an agrarian-worker political alliance to secure legislation in the interest of the "wealth producers" and "to protect them from the grasp of corporate greed." It was "hopeless," the resolution concluded, "to pin our faith to either of the old parties" which were "in the mighty grip of railroads and other combines and monopolies." 181

Most unions were prepared to send a delegate to the proposed meeting. Radicals
were especially enthusiastic, and hoped it might lead to a farmer-labour party, while liberals believed "it would result in good, if they did not go the length of forming a third party." Only a few unions, like Table Butte, decided "not to have anything to do" with the convention. The local felt that the sympathies of labour unions "do not run with the farmers."\footnote{182}

Despite such opposition, a joint meeting in June considered forming a provincial federation of labour to include labour bodies and the UFA. Those attending called for direct legislation, a parcel post system, and an extension of workers' political and other rights. At one point, however, the shoe began to pinch for the farmer representatives. Apparently at their request, resolutions were amended to say that farmer employers should remain exempt from the Workman's Compensation Act, and that the federation Executive should "consider the position of the farmers" when requesting legislation to compel fortnightly payment of wages.\footnote{183} There were limits to the farmers' sense of "community" with workers.

UFA vice-president J. Quinsey, and UFA president W.J. Tregillus, were elected vice-presidents of the proposed farmer-labour "Alberta Federation of Labor." But despite Tregillus' strong support for the AFL, the UFA Board later passed a "sympathetic but non-committal" resolution that simply expressed support for the AFL's objects and promised the UFA's assistance "wherever any common ground arises."\footnote{184} The directors understood that pressing for a definite alliance would split the UFA. They knew that many liberal members felt that "when we have succeeded in reaching the majority of the farmers in the province, we shall find there is no need of ... alliances with other labor organizations."\footnote{185} That the directors had struck the right chord with most members is suggested by the passage of a motion at the 1913 convention endorsing the Board's declaration of sympathy with labour and its vague promise of co-operation in matters of common interest.\footnote{186} The resolution expressed the limits of the sense of community most farmers felt with the local and provincial working class.

The UFA/UFWA never again considered a formal affiliation with labour, although some locals, especially radical unions, passed resolutions supporting workers' rights,\footnote{187} sided with labour during the Winnipeg General Strike,\footnote{188} and continued to seek a rapprochment with the labour movement. The UFA Political Association, the political
arm of the UFA/UFWA after the war, also sought an alliance, while the Edmonton and Strathcona UFA/UFWA Constituency Associations drafted a joint political platform with the Dominion Labor Party and veterans in 1921, although little came of it.

The highpoint of political and "community" collaboration with labour occurred in 1921 in the Calgary and Medicine Hat constituencies where farmers and workers cooperated in voting without alliances or joint platforms. Where one group was in a minority in a constituency, it supported the other group's candidate rather than split the reform vote by running its own candidate. Even liberal farmers endorsed this plan because they secured workers' electoral support without affiliating with them or endorsing their program.

The strategy was first used during the Medicine Hat federal by-election when labour supported the UFA candidate running on the Farmers' Platform. In the provincial constituency of Calgary, the UFA/UFWA endorsed the labour candidates in the general election who ran on a labour platform. In the Medicine Hat provincial constituency, the UFA and labour each nominated one candidate. Each candidate ran on the program of his own group while receiving the electoral support of both groups. There was a similar arrangement for the federal election in the East and West Calgary constituencies. The farmers endorsed the labour candidate in East Calgary while labour backed the candidate favoured by the farmers in West Calgary. Labour in Drumheller also supported the UFA federal candidate. Such co-operation enabled the UFA and many labour candidates to win seats. A strange anomaly occurred in Strathcona, however, where Rice Sheppard, that stormy movement pioneer, became a federal labour candidate after failing to secure the UFA nomination. He lost the election to the UFA candidate, D.W. Warner, who had been first AFA president when Sheppard was secretary.

Many workers, women, and businessmen in towns, especially smaller centres, voted UFA. There was a strong negative correlation between town size and electoral support for the UFA in the 1921 elections. People in towns considered themselves part of the rural community; they relied on the farm economy, had considerable contact with farmers, sometimes through the UFA/UFWA, and tended, as a result, to identify with rural interests and UFA candidates. Indicative of this inter-group community support was a UFA political convention for a Medicine Hat riding, held in Etzikom:
Farmers reaching out to labour for post-war political support. A cartoon debunking the Canadian Reconstruction Association's depiction of Grain Growers. SOURCE: Guide, May 7, 1919, p. 6
In some respects it was an extraordinary gathering. Grit and Tory, farmer and business man, lawyer and mechanic occupied seats side by side.... Every portion of the western part of the district was represented.... It was unanimously resolved to participate in provincial as well as federal politics.... [A]n onlooker could readily see that the farmers and the business men in the smaller towns meant to pull together and work in harmony.194

There was, thus, much co-operation in political and especially social and economic matters between the UFA/UFWA and urban groups. They felt a certain sense of community and believed they had common local and regional interests and grievances. Their co-operation reinforced the UFA's co-operative ethos; farmers felt their working together built a "spirit of co-operation."195 Their collaboration also assisted the movement; without the social, economic, and political support other groups provided, the UFA/UFWA would have been less successful. In local trading centres, inter-group co-operation stemmed partly from ties between town and country based on occupational pluralism, local exchange, and social activity, which the UFA/UFWA promoted. Working together reinforced those ties and farmers' sense of community as they believed their collaboration fostered "the neighborly spirit"196 - a feeling of reciprocity which facilitated movement development.

Social activity, mutual aid, and local work built a sense of community that contained feelings of mutuality on which the movement "forming," "building," and " politicizing" depended. A community perspective and common interests fostered co-operation between the UFA/UFWA and other local and regional groups. While there were limits to this collaboration, it expanded the UFA/UFWA's notion of community and furthered its work. As well, the movement accommodated - again within limits - differences among farmers based on ideology, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, agricultural specialization, institutional affiliation, and economic status. In so doing, it strengthened local communities, developed a movement feeling of community, and avoided the splintering that had plagued the pre-UFA movement, making possible the "movement building" and " politicizing."
ENDNOTES


5. Ibid., Mar. 2, 1910, p. 16.

6. Ibid., Dec. 17, 1919, p. 34.

7. Glenbow Archives (hereafter *GA*), United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Executive and Board Minutes and Reports (hereafter *Executive*), 1921, p. 68.


10. Ibid., July 7, 1915, p. 23; July 24, 1918, p. 41.

11. UFA Fonds, Box 1, File 10, UFA constitution, 1912, p. 5; 1921, p. 2.


13. Ibid., July 16, 1919, p. 10.


19 Ibid., Apr. 12, 1916, p. 43.

20 Ibid., June 5, 1918, pp. 48-49; Oct. 30, 1918, p. 12.

21 GA, United Farm Women of Alberta, Film BR, Convention, Executive, and Board Meetings, pp. 4-5. See also GGG, Oct. 13, 1915, p. 23.

22 GA, United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Annual Convention (hereafter MR), 1919, p. 94.

23 GGG, Aug. 21, 1918, p. 35.

24 Roseview held the first service that year (GGG, Aug. 12, 1914, p. 14), and submitted a resolution that carried at the 1916 UFA convention proposing that a day be set aside every year for the unions to celebrate UFA Sunday (MR, 1916, pp. 97, 116).


26 GGG, June 9, 1915, p. 12.


28 Chapter one examines these matters in more detail.

29 WI, Oct. 1, 1919, p. 4 (including quotation); UFA Fonds, Box 1, File 13, Report of UFA Secretaries’ Conventions, 1919, p. 15.

30 GGG, June 23, 1920, p. 20.

31 Ibid., Apr. 28, 1920, p. 40.

32 Ibid., Mar. 12, 1919, p. 92.

33 The term is E.P. Thompson’s. It refers to popular notions about the proper economic roles of social groups (John Scott Strickland, “Traditional Culture and Moral Economy: Social and Economic Change in the South Carolina Low Country, 1865-1910,” in Hahn and Prude, eds., The Countryside in the Age of Capitalist Transformation, p. 144).

34 MR, 1912, p. 57.

35 GGG, Aug. 9, 1911, p. 20; Sept. 13, 1911, p. 13; Oct. 11, 1911, p. 22.

36 Ibid., Sept. 14, 1910, pp. 16-17; Oct. 5, 1910, p. 16; MR, 1911, pp. 16-17.

37 GGG, June 9, 1915, p. 12; Mar. 8, 1916, p. 28.
Ibid., May 3, 1916, p. 11.


GGG. Nov. 9, 1910, p. 25.

Ibid., Aug. 3, 1910, p. 17.

Ibid., Nov. 9, 1910, pp. 24-25.

Ibid., May 14, 1913, p. 11. See also June 5, 1912, p. 12.


The argument that farmers' class and hinterland position determined their ideology is most clearly enunciated in C.B. Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953, 1962 reprint).

See chapter one for further discussion of these organizations' ideologies.


This is the labour theory of value.


This debate is discussed in some detail in chapter six.

Two well-rounded studies of nativism in B.C. and Alberta are Patricia Roy's *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984), and Howard Palmer's *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982).

Saturday News (hereafter SN), Apr. 15, 1908, p. 6.


This was what a member of the Alberta attorney general's office said in 1908. Cited in J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), p. 212.

GGG, Dec. 4, 1912, p. 11.


Ibid., Nov. 13, 1912, p. 15.

MR, 1911, p. 43; 1912, p. 58.

SN, Dec. 14, 1907, p. 4.

GGG, Aug. 21, 1918, p. 10.

GA, Rice Sheppard, unpublished manuscript, M1135, "Twenty Years in the Great North-West," 1922, p. 32.


GGG, Nov. 9, 1921, p. 17.


GGG, June 21, 1911, p. 16; June 28, 1911, p. 49.
Ibid., June 28, 1911, p. 49; July 5, 1911, p. 20.

Ibid., June 28, 1911, p. 34.

Ward, White Canada Forever, p. 169.

GGG, June 28, 1911, p. 49.

Ward, p. 169.


GGG, May 3, 1911, p. 24-25. J.M. Liddell, a local UFA secretary, wrote a similar letter to the Guide, noting that he was glad some women were aware of this "social danger which is one of the greatest they will ever have to face" (Ibid., May 31, 1911, p. 21).


GGG, May 3, 1911, p. 25.

Ibid., Aug. 9, 1911, p. 20. Another union's opposition to the Edmonton Board of Trade's resolution is recorded in June 28, 1911, p. 49.

Ibid., Apr. 18, 1917, p. 12.


FRR, Feb. 20, 1918, p. 198.

MR, 1918, p. 193.

GGG, Mar. 2, 1921, p. 35.


GGG, Jan. 1, 1919, p. 11.

MR, 1919, p. 67.

Ibid., p. 72.

There is an article in the *Guide* which objects to J.T.M. Anderson's notion of Anglo-Saxon superiority and his contention that "foreigners" were morally and racially inferior. The article also decries the exploitation of the foreigner and the attempts made to "denationalize him, to get him to forget his ancient traditions, his literature and his language" (Nov. 26, 1919, p. 41).

While 27% of Alberta farm operators in 1921 were American born (Census, 1921, p. 79), 36% of the movement's central officers in 1916, 1918, and 1920 were Americans (calculated from information in MR, 1916, pp. 4-12; 1918, pp. 7-17; GGG, Feb. 25, 1920, p. 43). Three UFWA officers were included in the calculations for 1918.

This is treated in more depth in chapter one.

Examples of ethnically and linguistically mixed locals can be found in GGG, Dec. 22, 1915, p. 12; Sept. 22, 1920, p. 16; Sept. 14, 1921, p. 23.

The secretaries' reports in the *Guide* bear this out as do the names of unions and local members.

Two resolutions on English language instruction were presented to the 1919 UFA convention too late to be dealt with by the delegates and were therefore considered by the Executive which decided to take "no action" on the one "in favor of no language but English being taught in schools." The other resolution, which called for the "enforcement of English language in all schools was not passed on the ground that it would conflict with the B.N.A. Act which gives Quebec the right to use the French language" (MR, 1919, p. 72). The membership was not concerned enough about this issue to see that similar resolutions were brought to the floor at any convention in the period under study.

GGG, May 19, 1920, p. 21.

Executive, 1920, p. 60; GGG, Mar. 30, 1921, p. 20.


Ibid., Jan. 26, 1921, pp. 23-24; Mar. 16, 1921, p. 22; Executive, 1921, pp. 31-32.

GGG, June 2, 1920, p. 32.

Ibid., May 12, 1920, p. 27.

MR, 1916, pp. 4-12; 1918, pp. 7-17; GGG, Feb. 25, 1920, p. 43.

GGG, June 15, 1910, p. 16; July 20, 1910, p. 16.

Ibid., July 6, 1910, p. 16.


125Ibid., 1918, pp. 43, 105-113, 123, 127.

126GGG, July 26, 1911, p. 20.

127MR, 1912, p. 59.

128Ibid., 1913, pp. 40-41.

129Ibid., 1916, p. 99.

130Ibid., 1911, p. 12; 1912, p. 5; GGG, Nov. 29, 1911, p. 14; Apr. 5, 1911, p. 17; Apr. 5, 1911, p. 17 (quotation).

131See, for example, GGG, May 3, 1911, p. 12.


135MR, 1914, p. 58; 1915, pp. 46-47.

136Ibid., 1911, p. 39; 1912, pp. 32-33, 53; Executive, 1918, p. 95.

137GGG, Feb. 3, 1915, p. 13; Apr. 17, 1918, p. 11.


139GGG, Jan. 28, 1920, p. 47.

140Ibid., May 19, 1920, p. 39.

141Jean Burnet emphasizes this tension in Next Year Country: A Study of Rural Social Organization in Alberta (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951).


143Ibid., June 18, 1913, p. 14.

144Ibid., Dec. 17, 1919, p. 34.

145Ibid., Apr. 16, 1919, p. 10.
more detailed discussion of these events can be found in chapter one.

GA, Alberta Farmers' Association, M1745, Minutes of Conventions and Directors' Meetings, Strathcona and Calgary, pp. 72, 74. The convention did not pass other board of trade resolutions judged to be inimical to farmers' interests (pp. 71, 75).


Ibid., June 2, 1920, p. 23.

Ibid., Mar. 9, 1921, pp. 10-11.

See, for example, Ibid., Sept. 1, 1920, p. 21; GA, Hugh Allen Papers, M10, File 9, clipping from the Grande Prairie Herald.

168 Executive, 1921, pp. 28, 55-56.

169 Ibid., 1920, p. 33.

170 GGG, Sept. 8, 1915, p. 12; May 31, 1916, pp. 9, 22.

171 Ibid., June 12, 1918, p. 11.


173 GGG, May 1909, pp. 4, 6; MR, 1910, pp. 5-6.


175 MR, 1911, p. 11.

176 Ibid., 1913, p. 12; GGG, July 31, 1912, p. 4.

177 GGG, Apr. 6, 1910, p. 16; Aug. 31, 1910, pp. 7-9; MR, 1911, pp. 6, 11-12, 22-24.

178 For more coverage of this, see chapter one.


181 GGG, Feb. 28, 1912, p. 16.

182 Ibid., June 5, 1912, p. 12.

183 Ibid., June 26, 1912, p. 16 (quotation); Sept. 18, 1912, p. 11.

184 Ibid., July 24, 1912, p. 11; Sept. 18, 1912, p. 11.


186 MR, 1913, p. 41.

187 Ibid., 1915, p. 50; GGG, Nov. 15, 1911, p. 16; Apr. 24, 1912, p. 16.

188 Alberta Non-Partisan, June 19, 1919, p. 8; GGG, Aug. 20, 1919, p. 9; Nov. 26, 1919, p. 40.
UFA Fonds, Box 1, File 14, Minutes of Conventions and Executives of UFA Political Association, pp. 24, 29.

GGG, Apr. 6, 1921, pp. 20-21.


Ibid., June 2, 1920, p. 23.

Ibid.
Chapter Five: The Movement Building, 1914-1918

Civilization ... is standing at the cross-roads; in every heart there is a barely conscious feeling of expectancy. In the silences it seems to us as though great things were stirring in the womb of time; we almost seem to hear the rustle of great events rushing to us through space. What is this old world about to bring forth?

-UFWA president Irene Parlby

In the three decades before 1909, the Alberta farm movement was "formed," a process culminating in the birth of the UFA. From 1909 to 1913, the movement was partially "built"; it grew rapidly and developed aspects of its culture, especially its self-respect. Shaped by the war, the organization completed its "movement building" from 1914-1918. It doubled its membership, created a women's section, and, in response to the sacrifices of the war, developed a social ethic which aimed to improve society through state action, a strategy informed by the social gospel and wartime state control. Farmers' belief in democracy, based on UFA/UFWA experience, and their feelings of class opposition, were also reinforced by war related state policies. These sentiments and beliefs, strengthened by movement self-confidence and a sense of citizenship responsibility, prompted farmers to "build" the movement, and to consider entering politics directly.

From 1914 to 1918, the movement gained the membership base from which its post-war growth and political action sprang. The directors officially oversaw recruitment, but the locals did most of it on their own, although a membership drive organized in 1918 by the central had some success. The UFA's achievements inspired farmers to undertake organization work. Discussing the movement's history at a local meeting, Henry Spencer described

the influence exerted by such a powerful organization.... At the last convention the government representative brought the draft of the "Long Term Loan Bill" to the attention of the delegates and asked for an expression of opinion before this bill was brought up in the legislature. He went on to show how the organization could be made still more powerful and beneficial by all farmers becoming members.
The war also underscored the effectiveness of organization. Spencer pointed out that "Germany would have been beaten long ago had she not been so thoroughly organized."5 Towards war's end, UFA leaders noted that other classes were organizing, and warned that if farmers did not follow suit, government policies would not reflect their interests.6

Farmers responded to such appeals. Paid membership swelled from over 9000 at the end of 1913 to upwards of 18,000 men, women, and youth by the end of 1918,7 though economic conditions affected the growth rate. Membership increased by about 1600 in 1914, despite losses in the older unions, mainly in the South,8 where drought left some unable to pay their UFA dues, and forced others to resettle or work elsewhere temporarily. Overall losses in membership in the South continued as a record crop in 1915 kept farmers too busy to organize. Male membership, as a result, did not grow that year,9 but the women's section, created in January, formed 23 auxiliaries with some 325 members, and about 250 women joined UFA locals. By the end of 1916, there were 50 women's locals with about 900 members; two years later, there were some 1400 on the rolls.10 In 1916, UFA membership also rose solidly - by 1500 or more men, thanks partly to a good crop. The following year, the UFA gained almost 3000 new members, although growth was slow in the deep South as a decade of drought began. That drought, and in 1918, frozen crops in the North and an outbreak of influenza, checked the movement's increase.11 But with a large membership and corpus of experienced local organizers, the movement was poised for the post-war era.

The creation of the Women's Auxiliary in 1915 was a major moment of "movement building." The 1913 UFA convention had called for an affiliation of women to the movement and instructed the Board to help organize a women's convention the next year.12 A few women's clubs linked themselves to UFA locals, and some women held a convention, but they neither appointed a secretary to handle mail nor planned another convention.13 Meanwhile, the 1914 UFA convention amended the constitution to allow daughters and wives of members to join the association on a family fee basis.14 A year later, fifty-eight women, including some from local clubs and the Women's Institutes, responded to an invitation from UFA secretary Woodbridge to all women, organized or not, to meet during the 1915 UFA convention to consider forming a UFA
auxiliary. They voted for an auxiliary, elected provisional officers, and endorsed the UFA constitution which was amended the following year to recognize the women's section. The UFA gave $100 for the Auxiliary's work in 1915 and $500 the next year.

A majority of women at the 1916 convention voted to change the name of their section to the United Farm Women of Alberta. They wanted greater autonomy and a name that indicated they were an integral part of the farm movement - not an adjunct as "Auxiliary" implied. Some men resisted the change, but after "a great deal of insistence ... on the part of our Auxiliary officials and members," the UFWA was created. Later, the UFWA president was put on the UFA Executive and the UFWA Executive became part of the Association Board.

While desiring autonomy and recognition in the movement, the women did not want to be separate from the UFA. UFWA president Irene Parlby later clarified that there are not two organizations. We are one organization.... We are the women's section of the U.F.A. organization. Personally, I think we made a mistake in taking a separate name. It has often occurred to me that we would have done better to have called ourselves the "Women's Section," because it puts us right where we belong. It is one organization.

Until the 1980s, historians argued that the pioneering partnership weakened patriarchy. Recognizing their wives' contributions to the farm and community, farm men gave them greater equality and supported their agenda. These scholars also tended to be critical of farm women for espousing social feminism rather than pursuing an equal rights program. More recent work denies farm men were less partriarchical than other men, highlights their opposition to farm women, and is more sympathetic to the latter since it focuses on their equal rights work and downplays or reinterprets their social feminism.

Both views have merit and weaknesses. As the newer studies show, the UFA did not grant women equality in the organization, but as the older literature argues, the UFA supported the UFWA agenda. The older school inaccurately portrays women as more or less content with their status, while the newer school sometimes exaggerates by depicting them as strongly challenging gender-based control. These polar images reveal, at best, the mindset of only the most traditional or radically "feminist" farm women.

Most women were concerned about gender issues, as the newer scholarship
contends, but they also, as the older writing stressed, believed in inherent gender differences and felt their main role was motherhood. They did not use maternal discourse primarily to gain acceptance for women's rights. They knew how to garner support for their agenda by appealing to traditional values, but they also espoused those values. Downplaying women's conservatism and belief in domestic ideals, while emphasizing their commitment to female autonomy and rights, or understating their pursuit of greater gender equality, misrepresents their outlook. Farm women saw no contradiction between their equal rights and traditional causes. Moreover, while their class identification was usually primary, and their gender allegiance secondary, no rigid ranking can be posited for these or other priorities since their relative importance varied according to the issue and context and women's personal desires. Some women were part of the movement mainly for fellowship or to improve their communities.

From the earliest UFA days, women sometimes attended local meetings, occasionally participated in discussions, and helped with social activities. By 1914, a few women were UFA members. Some women joined the UFA even after the UFWA was formed, often intending to start a UFWA union later. Many UFA locals, however, remained all male, and the number of women in mixed sex unions was usually a quarter or less of the membership. Nevertheless, many mixed locals elected at least one woman officer or convention delegate.

Many men appreciated women's contributions. "The union is so deeply indebted to them," one farmer commented. UFA president James Speakman knew the value and hardship of domestic work. Noting that housekeeping had often made his "back ache worse than a day's hoeing," he encouraged men to buy more labour saving devices. The UFA later endorsed a UFWA demand for the removal of duties on such equipment. Farmers were also aware of the importance of women's outdoor work. Rice Sheppard acknowledged that, without women's unpaid assistance, most successful male farmers would have failed - which is why he seconded the motion that carried at the 1912 convention calling for a women's section. The resolution stated that farm women were "sharing with the men the burden of the struggle for better conditions."

Such recognition of wives' work in the UFA, home, and on the farm, prompted some men to support women in the movement and their demands. It was not just
fairmindedness, although this was not absent. Nor was it simply that men could no longer justify inequality by appealing to separate spheres - since women had blurred those spheres by doing "men's work" on the farm.\(^{35}\) It was also a matter of self-interest. Men knew that if they did not welcome women and back their agenda, they would not have their wholehearted help in the movement. Furthermore, Christian and democratic ideas about justice influenced farm men's attitude,\(^{36}\) as did ideology. While left-wing groups were less supportive of women's rights than scholars used to think,\(^{37}\) UFA radicals were generally more in favour than other males. Women's arguments also won over UFA men. Direct exposure to women's claims helped UFA men adopt more progressive views than they otherwise would have.

Assumptions about gender further prodded UFA men to support women. Both sexes sensed that organized women would have a positive moral influence in a frontier society. They also believed that women, if enfranchised, would protect the home,\(^{38}\) house clean politics, and be non-partisan owing to their lack of political entanglement and ethical superiority.\(^{39}\) A few felt it only just that women have the vote;\(^{40}\) many hoped enfranchised rural women would increase agrarian political power. For these reasons, the UFA called for female suffrage from 1913\(^{41}\) until it was granted provincially in 1916 and federally in 1918.

UFA men also supported women's other demands, including for property rights. In 1915, the UFA asked for legislation to provide "a legal share to every married woman in the division of the estate" and to ensure "that no deed or mortgage be legal without the wife's signature."\(^{42}\) The province passed a flawed Act\(^{43}\) UFA secretary Woodbridge described as not in "the form ... we asked for,"\(^{44}\) but enacted a better law in 1917 granting the wife a life estate in the homestead while barring her husband from disposing of it without her written consent.\(^{45}\) The UFWA was not satisfied and asked for a law to make the wife's signature necessary for all land transfers, a request the UFA made to the government.\(^{46}\) The UFA/UFWA also demanded that wives be protected from losing more than a third of the family property by will.\(^{47}\) In addition, the UFA supported UFWA calls for equal parental rights,\(^{48}\) the municipal vote,\(^{49}\) and legislation regarding domestic abuse.\(^{50}\) The UFA, in fact, adopted all the resolutions the women's section presented for its approval during the war.\(^{51}\)
Class and gender incentives for early agrarian support for female suffrage. Farmers believed enfranchised farm women would break corporate power, "clean" politics, and purify society. SOURCE: Guide, Sept. 21, 1910, p. 21
This did not, however, lead to equality in the movement. Although UFWA women could vote in the UFA convention, and the UFWA organized its locals and conventions, the UFA controlled what the women's section demanded of governments by screening its resolutions and lobbying on its behalf. There was also no pay equity. The UFA president received a salary but the UFWA president did not; the UFWA secretary was paid less than her UFA counterpart; and UFWA officers received less for their expenses than UFA officers, at least before 1918.

Women rarely protested these inequalities; they were used to such treatment elsewhere and wanted to maintain class solidarity, which is why they joined the UFWA rather than the multi-class Women's Institutes. They believed "the farmers' battles are the battles of the farmer's wife." Convinced of this, Irene Parlby recoiled when she learned about the upper middle-class Toronto based Women's Party formed in 1918. Née Marryat, Irene came to Alberta from England in 1896 and married Walter Parlby, a local rancher, the following year. She was secretary of the Alix Country Women's Club in 1914, which became the first UFA Women's Auxiliary local; UFWA president, with a brief interruption, from 1916 to 1920; and Minister Without Portfolio in the UFA government from 1921 to 1935. She was also one of the five women involved in the famous Persons Case. Parlby believed the tariff and other policies the Women's Party supported had caused farm women's hardship. Beyond this, the idea of a gender based party offended her belief that the sexes should work together because of their complementary traits:

We value the privilege of working on equal terms with the men of our organization. We have heard so much of the horrors of a man-governed world ... but heaven defend us from a world governed solely by women. "Man and woman He created them," not to work in isolated groups, but as the helpmate of one another, and the two points of view are necessary for sanity and wisdom.

This class focus did not weaken women's equal rights agitation. Fully a third of the UFWA convention resolutions during the war were about women's rights. As Nanci Langford has pointed out, women saw no contradiction in working for their class and sex, especially since the UFA endorsed their equal rights demands.

They also felt no inconsistency in agitating for greater gender equality and
believing in the primacy of motherhood. Irene Parlby reflected this equal rights and maternal feminist outlook. Though an ardent women's rights activist and critic of sexist attitudes, she always believed "women's most important place" was "not in the polling booth, or in the Legislature, but in the Home, as the Mother of the Race." Feeling that social problems would be solved only if women instilled ideals and integrity in their children, she was "forcibly against women with young children running for public office."

Leona Barritt, first Auxiliary and UFWA secretary, was of like mind. Born in Nova Scotia, Barritt was a teacher and convenor of the UFWA school committee. Like Parlby, she insisted more than once that "we are first and last homemakers.... The future citizens are being molded in our homes." Barritt and Parlby used this discourse mainly with other women; it was not a ploy to soften men up for equal rights demands. They used it because they believed it, and because it encouraged other women to join and work for the UFWA.

Women's maternal ideology led them to organize and supervise youth clubs and the junior UFA/UFWA, and, like other middle class women, to monitor teens closely. They acted as chaperones at the rural youth conferences for "girls" age sixteen and over and called for supervised dormitories at the agricultural schools. Fearful of sexual danger, the 1918 UFWA convention demanded stiff punishment for abduction of girls "for immoral purposes." Irene Parlby called on unions to donate to the Travellers' Aid which saved young women visiting cities from "horrible fates."

Maternal ideology also told women that, as mothers, they knew how to conserve food. Because of this, some felt that a woman should have been appointed to assist the Food Controller, an official charged with promoting food conservation for the war effort. In 1917, the Controller asked women to sign pledge cards to restrict food consumption. Parlby mildly endorsed the idea, but most farm women were indignant and opposed signing until food profiteering and liquor distilling were stopped.

Women also took a leading interest in world peace, supposedly because of their maternal instinct to protect. Barritt described a UFA motion on peace as "perhaps ... nearer to our hearts" than requests for suffrage and women's property rights. Most prairie farmers opposed militarism, believing they were isolated from danger and that war
stemmed from high tariffs. They described the pre-war arms build up as unChristian, a project of armament trusts, and a waste of tax dollars. Some felt that preparing for war invited hostility and that nations with few defences were safe from attack. The 1913 UFA convention demanded that the question of naval aid to Britain be submitted to a referendum. Despite this stance, farmers supported the war effort once hostilities broke out, although the UFA/UFWA never adopted a crude jingoism; it called for a peace to satisfy "all legitimate national aspirations."

Both sexes felt that women's influence could help make a lasting peace; they were more peace-loving than men whose "brute instinct" and "combativeness" had led to war. Barritt believed women should be represented at the peace conference and should hold international meetings to foster public distaste for militarism. Women did not, however, feel male traits were all bad. Well-known author, women's rights activist, and former Manitoba farm woman Nellie McClung told the 1917 UFA convention that men's destructive element made them pioneers and enabled them to overcome adversity. What was needed, farmers felt, was that women's peacemaking, moral, and constructive tendencies be more strongly felt in the world to balance male influences.

Such expressions of maternal ideology "built" the movement by attracting women to it and encouraging the support of men who were assured that organized women aimed to protect the home and "mother" a war-torn world. Women suggested that even gender causes like the dower and suffrage would promote these ends.

Women's maternal ideology led them to promote causes that shaped and reflected a social ethic - a belief in reform through government action - which stemmed primarily from the Great War. Fearing the soldiers' sacrifices might be in vain, farmers felt the state must create a new society through prohibition, health care, eugenics, social welfare, and progressive taxation. Farmers "built" the movement to press governments to implement these measures. Moreover, the UFA appreciated women's support for these causes and reciprocated by supporting the UFWA and its agenda, including its gender rights demands.

The UFA/UFWA believed that prohibition, which the UFA first endorsed in 1913, would justify the war by regenerating social morals. Other war-inspired motives included fear about the soldiers' health, desire for an efficient war effort, and desire to
OLD FRIENDS MEET

SOURCE: Guide, Aug. 26, 1914 (cover)
Farm women argued that masculine traits of aggressiveness and combativeness had led to war. Spirituality and the finer aspects of civilization were thought to reflect feminine influences. SOURCE: Guide, Oct. 7, 1914, p. 9
control "enemy aliens," and to share a sense of wartime sacrifice. Some women supported prohibition because they had been beaten or seen resources wasted by inebriated husbands. Religious beliefs and the high frequency of drunkenness on the frontier also reinforced prohibition sentiment. Believing in the virtue of their cause and gender, women took a leading role with the UFA and temperance organizations getting signatures for a petition that led to a 1915 referendum on the sale of liquor in which prohibition won. Subsequently, the UFA/UFWA and other groups called for a national ban on the manufacture and importation of liquor, which the government effectively imposed in 1917-18.

Farmers felt the new society to emerge from the war must provide better health care. Certainly, the casualties of the war highlighted the need to preserve life. Convinced they were healers by nature and that the "care of the race" was their "job," and prompted by a lack of rural medical service, women took the lead. At Irene Parlby's initiative, the Executives of the Rural Municipalities and the UFA/UFWA drafted a plan for rural districts to build and operate hospitals, financed by municipal taxes. The 1917 UFA convention approved the plan, the government dutifully passed an act based on it, and hospitals were soon organized. The UFWA also asked for rural medical inspection, and in 1918, the UFA/UFWA conventions endorsed a proposal for a provincial health department. The province created a department that year, and hired public health nurses, thanks in part to UFWA requests. Farmers' social ethic, a product of the Great War, had helped to establish Alberta's health care system.

Farmers feared that because of the war, the "race" was losing "its strongest and most physically fit," and endorsed eugenics solutions to keep Canada racially virile. This was the dark side of their social ethic - their desire for social improvement through state action. Eugenics was a pseudo-science which argued that social problems, mental illness and retardation, and race degeneration stemmed primarily from "defective genes." Seeing this as another "phase of public health" they were responsible for, women demanded that the "feeble minded" be segregated and that the "mentally and physically unfit" be prevented from marrying. The UFA gladly endorsed these requests. To control the number of "mental defectives," the UFWA later called for sterilization.

It has been argued that most Canadian eugenicists were health professionals and
Getting ready for the Prohibition Referendum in Alberta, on July 21

SOURCE: Guide, June 16, 1915, p. 6

WHAT HAPPENED IN ALBERTA ON JULY 21, 1915

that class fears largely explain the popularity of eugenics.\textsuperscript{94} Class concerns were certainly present in farmers' belief that "mental deficiency" caused "drunkenness, criminality, pauperism, prostitution, and illegitimacy."\textsuperscript{95} Some farm women also believed eugenics measures would protect mentally handicapped girls from exploitation.\textsuperscript{96} Ignorance about mental illness fueled eugenics hysteria.

Support for eugenics also flowed from trepidation about the consequences of immigration. Farmers believed thousands of immigrants with "congenital defects"\textsuperscript{97} had slipped by medical examiners and were a "detriment to our nationhood."\textsuperscript{98} There was surprisingly little Anglo-Celtic nativism in such outbursts: farmers did not believe any ethnic group was more prone than others to hereditary defects or was more responsible for Canada's problems - unless it was the British, who, it was suspected, had dumped their undesirables at Canada's gate.\textsuperscript{99}

Farmers' belief in eugenics was based on an ill-defined fear that Canada would degenerate in physical strength and mental and moral vitality if more "misfits" were allowed into the country and if those present were allowed to propagate. Civilization might decline, and progress - social, economic, political, and cultural - might be arrested, especially since the nation's fittest were dying overseas. There was a class bias in this fear since "misfits" were often workers, but farmers were less focused than the urban middle class on how "undesirables" created an underclass with its attendant social problems; they were more focused on the racial implications of hereditary defects - how those defects might drag all classes, including farmers, down.

Leading the prohibition, health, and eugenics campaigns, women also developed the movement's social ethic - its belief in reform through state action - through their war related charity work. Seeing such work as social "mothering," they made packages for soldiers, bandages and garments for the Red Cross, and sent goods to convalescent homes. Members of both sexes gave to several war funds through central office starting in late 1914. By September 1918, UFA/UFWA locals had donated almost $22,000.\textsuperscript{100} Much of this was raised at dances, socials, concerts, auctions, and from the sale of farm products. Collections were also taken at UFA Sunday services for the YMCA military fund.

This war relief work built farmers' social ethic by making them aware of
widespread distress, and of the inadequacy of volunteer effort for dealing with the problem. UFA/UFWA members thought it unjust that the wealthy did not have to make financial sacrifices while farmers did their "bit" and "worthy" families of soldiers were reduced to charity. The UFA proposed a social welfare measure - that the Patriotic Fund be raised by a tax\textsuperscript{101} - to ensure that all paid their share.

Convinced that industrialists, middlemen, and other "profiteers" were growing wealthy from war production, farmers' social ethic led them to demand "conscription of wealth" through land value, graduated income, corporate profit, and inheritance taxes. They also called for public ownership of railways and other industries.\textsuperscript{102} Pragmatic self-interest, radical ideology, toryism, and the "new liberalism,"\textsuperscript{103} shaped these requests.

Thus, to ensure the war was not in vain, the movement, led by women seeking to "mother" society, developed a social ethic which called on governments to reform society through prohibition, health care, eugenics, welfare and taxation policies. The movement was "built" as farmers joined the organization, recruited others, and otherwise worked to see these measures implemented. Moreover, women's agitation in these areas promoted their acceptance in the movement and inclined men to support their whole agenda.

Believing social redemption could atone for the shedding of blood overseas, farmers embraced the social gospel which promised to realize "the Kingdom of God in the very fabric of society."\textsuperscript{104} As a social religion, it was consistent with the UFA/UFWA's co-operative ethos.\textsuperscript{105} Still prevalent in the movement, however, was the evangelical notion that character development and moral improvement were crucial for social regeneration.\textsuperscript{106} Farm women sought to instill these virtues in youth, partly through organized play and field days.\textsuperscript{107}

Nevertheless, the social gospel was coming to the fore. Relatively weak in the movement before the war, it expressed farmers' yearning for a new heaven and earth to emerge out of the Armageddon in Europe. H.W. Wood, UFA president from 1916, popularized this vision. A former Campbellite, Wood rejected his evangelical roots and imposed his own meaning on the gospels and book of Revelation. These, he argued, were not about personal salvation and the final judgement, but about the creation of a true democracy on earth. Like Hegel, Wood believed the essence of the universe was spiritual and that the solution to social problems was "spiritual rather than intellectual."\textsuperscript{108} To
bring about a perfect society, he felt the church must infuse a "spirit of unselfishness" into all relations, especially trade relations, replacing the spirit of selfishness which then reigned in human affairs. To ministers preaching on UFA Sunday, he advised:

Don't be afraid to enter into a frank discussion of trade, politics, social affairs in all their aspects. Tell them how the world has persistently refused to recognize the spirit element in trade, political and all other reforms. That all real human reform is a matter of substituting the spirit of unselfishness for the spirit of selfishness.... Tell them that the only real thing Jesus ever taught us to pray for was this reorganized, regenerated, perfected civilization. Tell them how this regeneration deals with every element of civilization, trade, politics, labor.109

Partly influenced by Wood, other farmers increasingly used social gospel rhetoric. Irene Parlby averred that co-operation was "a thing of the spirit of unselfishness."110 Parlby, Wood, and P.P. Woodbridge also articulated a popularized idealism that was part of the social gospel, arguing that farmers must visualize "the city on the hill," a "perfect ideal," to motivate them to attain their goals.111

The social gospel "built" the movement and its social ethic by attracting farmers and inspiring them to work for the organization to create, partly through state action, the society they envisaged - the kind of nation and world the soldiers had died for. Though a few social gospellers like Wood were suspicious of government intervention, most believed it could inaugurate "the city on the hill."

Shaped by the social gospel and a need to make good the soldiers' sacrifices, the movement's social ethic also evolved from war related state intervention. As the government supervised war production, imposed direct taxes, controlled food and fuel, and nationalized railways, farmers saw how the state could benefit society. Their experience with government handling of the wheat market confirmed this conviction, and, according to Paul Sharp, weakened their "faith in the laissez-faire doctrine."112 It is hard to see how the UFA's pre-war demands for a government pork plant and chilled meat system, and state elevators, terminals, banks, hail insurance, and abattoirs constituted faith in laissez-faire; nevertheless, farmers came to support a more activist state during the war, partly because of the government's control of wheat marketing.

Events leading to that control began in 1917 when the government passed an Order in Council allowing free trade in wheat between Canada and the United States,
thereby equalizing wheat prices between the two countries. Meanwhile, the 1916 crop was of poor quality, so there was insufficient higher quality wheat to meet the futures contracts the Allies had bought. Wheat prices, consequently, rose sharply. To prevent future price disruptions, Ottawa created the Board of Grain Supervisors in June to control grain prices and the industry. The Board had grain trade, labour, and farmer members, including UFA president Wood. It fixed the price of wheat at $2.40, and, with an American price controlling body, set uniform prices in the two countries for the 1917 and 1918 crops.

Many farmers, initially upset with price fixing, felt that, if the Board set a maximum price, the government should also control the prices of other goods, including those used in wheat production. Farmers soon accepted price fixing, however, for its price predictability, and requested a minimum price for hogs. They also asked the government to organize the country's labour power, and to help them increase grain production by financing, organizing, and buying machinery and providing seed. A conference of UFA and livestock producers proposed state aided marketing and the conscription of vacant land for grazing. Wartime experience had clearly expanded farmers' belief in state intervention, and by extension, their social ethic.

Farmers' belief that the single tax would redistribute wealth was a casualty of the war. Ninety percent of Albertans responding to a 1913 Guide survey favoured raising all state revenues by a land value tax and land surtaxes - single tax inspired measures; the 1915 UFA convention defeated a motion making almost identical single tax demands. Farmers realized that Henry George's elixir would do little to attack corporate war profits. Moreover, the war, and the recession which began in 1913, made land speculation, a key reason for a single tax, less profitable. Farmers also discovered that absentee owners could be beneficial: their land was free range, and they paid nearly half the local taxes. As well, farmers feared a single tax might raise their tax liability.

Political reform seemed a more promising avenue to pursue. The Dominion government's frequent use of the Order in Council to prosecute the war effort offended farmers' democratic culture, a culture rooted in the democratic structure and reality of the UFA/UFWA. Despite greater executive influence owing to the movement's growth, the number and complexity of war related and other issues it faced, leadership, and
sometimes apathy, the UFA/UFWA remained a grassroots controlled movement.

Apathy was occasionally evident when the UFA convention gave resolutions it might have dealt with to the officers to handle. During the war, the delegates turned a quarter of the resolutions over to the officers. Usually this was reasonable as the delegates did not have the expertise to pass on the questions at hand, although when the 1914 convention referred resolutions on credit, hail insurance, and a pork plant to the directors, it might have provided more direction. A couple of times, liberals referred resolutions to the officers so that radicals could not gain support for their view on the floor.

Another possible complication for democracy was the number of resolutions the officers submitted to the conventions. In 1918, twelve of the first fourteen resolutions on the UFA program were from the Board. This was not, however, executive control of the agenda; the officers had been working on key issues, and many of their resolutions simply sought delegate direction on their proposals - which was the democratic thing to do.

It has been argued that executive control was apparent in the UFA officers' initiation of major policies. UFA/UFWA leaders spearheaded initiatives such as rural hospitals, a new hail insurance plan, and the amalgamation of the farmer elevator companies. It is hard to see, however, how this constituted executive control. No mass hypnosis was used to get the 1917 convention to agree unanimously to the elevator companies' merger. The hail insurance scheme the directors recommended was debated at great length before the 1918 convention approved it; it was not rubber stamped by a dupable rank and file. The same can be said about the UFA/UFWA's other major policies.

Notwithstanding, officers could affect convention decisions. President Wood convinced the 1918 convention it was a bad time to provoke the banks by calling for a usury law. At the same time, there were limits to officers' influence since most unions told their delegates in advance how to vote. Moreover, sometimes delegates defied the leadership. The 1915 convention refused to support a leader's amendment that would have annulled a resolution it passed implicitly criticizing UFA officers for holding office in the Co-operative Elevator Company.
Furthermore, delegates did not blindly endorse officers' reports. The 1916 convention rejected the legislative committee's report as inadequate and instructed the committee to meet again and draft a definite credit proposal - which it did.\textsuperscript{127} In 1918, the convention told the committee to report on the province's response to all UFA/UFWA resolutions - which it also did.\textsuperscript{128}

Despite this grassroots control, the officers' authority increased during the war because of the organization's growth and the complexity and number of issues and resolutions facing it. The 1917 constitution empowered the Executive to sort resolutions according to their importance and to consolidate similar ones for the convention.\textsuperscript{129} The Executive also appointed a committee to influence locals to amend resolutions it felt were inappropriate.\textsuperscript{130} By 1917, the Executive could make any rules, consistent with the constitution, to manage the association's affairs and could delegate powers and duties to local boards.\textsuperscript{131} In 1916, the Board of Directors gave the Executive authority to pass on any matter if it did so unanimously, subject to the directors' review.\textsuperscript{132} Moreover, the Executive and Board continued to appoint the general secretary and important committees, and supervised the general office and district associations.\textsuperscript{133}

Farmers made constitutional changes that checked this centralization of power and strengthened UFA/UFWA democracy. These required the general secretary to send to the locals, by specific dates, all resolutions to come before the convention\textsuperscript{134} so members could discuss them and instruct their delegates accordingly. Members also ensured the officers followed convention instructions\textsuperscript{135} and acted responsibly on resolutions the delegates did not have time to discuss.\textsuperscript{136} Locals whose resolutions were crowded out of the 1914 convention made sure theirs were the first considered by the 1915 convention.\textsuperscript{137}

Thus, despite Executive control in the organization, the movement remained grassroots controlled, a contrast, farmers felt, to Ottawa's rule under the War Measures Act. Accordingly, they demanded an immediate end to "the growth of government by order-in-council."\textsuperscript{138} To check the power of corporations and party hacks over the party system, they called for the abolition of patronage and for exams for civil service positions.\textsuperscript{139}

Farmers continued to believe direct legislation would create a direct democracy
like the UFA/UFWA, but their ardour for this measure was waning. Alberta's Direct Legislation Act of 1913 was only usable when there was overwhelming support for an issue. Only prohibition, owing to wartime idealism, attracted such support. Under the provisions of the Direct Legislation Act, a petition was circulated in 1915 for a referendum on the sale of liquor. The referendum was held and prohibition won, though this "outburst of popular liberty" cooled some farmers' enthusiasm for direct legislation as they thought it had served its purpose in banishing the bar. They thus lost their sense of urgency to have the Act improved. Since 1913, the UFA Board had pressed for amendments, but unions failed to respond to a post-prohibition appeal to endorse the directors' proposed changes. The government, as a result, did nothing, and the Act remained essentially unworkable. The UFA/UFWA still officially supported direct legislation, but less fervently; farmers no longer saw it as a panacea.

Instead, many demanded proportional representation which promised to ensure the representation of parties and groups in governments in proportion to their electoral support. UFA secretary Woodbridge popularized this reform in the Guide in 1916, many locals studied it, and, in 1917, the UFA began to use the system to elect its officers. The UFA also asked the province to adopt it for provincial elections.

In trying to create a more democratic political system, the UFA/UFWA built its culture of opposition in the context of war related challenges. This culture was grounded in a belief that farmers' woes stemmed from "legislation which is the achievement of privilege," a conviction that grew with revelations of graft, and as governments, especially Ottawa, argued they could not meet "contentious" farmer demands in a time of national crisis or spend on agrarian proposals that did not help the war effort. Farmers perceived that governments were using the war as a pretext to favour big business at their expense.

Farmers' failures as a pressure group confirmed this suspicion. They were particularly frustrated when the wartime collapse of railway construction left branch lines unfinished and settlers' requests for extensions unmet. Farmers on the Canadian Northern system faced car shortages from 1915 to 1917, prompting the UFA to call for improved car availability. Freight rates were a central issue for all producers; they were bitterly disappointed with a Railway Board ruling against equalized freight rates in
1914, \textsuperscript{152} and incensed with a 15\% increase it approved in 1917.\textsuperscript{153}

The war also boosted farmers' anti-tariff campaign. Combining patriotism with self-interest, they argued that free trade with Britain would be "a fitting expression of imperial unity,"\textsuperscript{154} and asked that the duty be removed from farm machinery so they could produce more for the Allies.\textsuperscript{155} Believing the tariff had been raised "under cover of the necessity of war,"\textsuperscript{156} they also endorsed a Free Trade League organized by the Guide editor to counter protectionist propaganda and support candidates pledged to "fiscal reform,"\textsuperscript{157} demonstrating the strength of low tariff support in the West.\textsuperscript{158}

Reflecting their social ethic, farmers believed the tariff caused poverty\textsuperscript{159} and rural depopulation.\textsuperscript{160} As always, they opposed bonusing, especially as Ottawa appeared willing to support the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific railways. UFA locals condemned a federal proposal "to give to Mssrs. Mackenzie and Mann a free gift of $25,000,000."\textsuperscript{161}

Though frustrated over the tariff and railway issues, farmers had some federal political successes during the war. Agrarian opinion was partly responsible for the reduction of patronage and the enactment of prohibition and female suffrage. But apart from these and a few minor achievements, farmers had little success with a government focused on winning the war.

More surprising was the UFA/UFWA's record with the provincial Liberals. Although the organization helped bring about provincial prohibition, suffrage, health measures, mothers' pensions,\textsuperscript{162} and the Dower Act, there were limits to the government's responsiveness because of wartime fiscal restraints, its Members' business background, its link to the federal Liberals, and the influence of non-agrarian groups. The results of the legislative session of 1916 challenge some scholars' notion that the Liberals bent over backward to accommodate the UFA.\textsuperscript{163} Of twenty-three UFA convention demands, the province met only two: one on the sale of gopher poison by UFA locals, and another on brand inspection.\textsuperscript{164} Nothing was done about resolutions on such matters as domestic violence, co-operative credit, and hail insurance.\textsuperscript{165} Moreover, the government amended the Co-operative Societies Act against the UFA's wishes.\textsuperscript{166} Later years were better for the UFA/UFWA, but the legislative report to the 1919 convention shows that the province effectively acted on only three of twenty-five 1918 convention resolutions.
presented to it. Not one UFWA request was met.\textsuperscript{167}

The agrarian myth told farmers that, as the "backbone of the nation," they deserved better,\textsuperscript{168} a belief which strengthened their antagonism to groups allegedly behind their legislative disappointments. In 1918, some of those interests played on wartime stress and patriotism to slander farmers. UFA president Wood expressed considerable truth when he commented:

I have just read in the Financial Times ... a tirade against the Canadian farmers, which, for ... false malediction certainly reaches down to the very depths.... This editorial is entitled "Still he wants more": -

"The ... farmer has just put over 75 per cent of the world's war profits into his jeans - pardon, into the pockets of his dress pants; he spends his winters abroad; lets the other fellow pay his war taxes, pensions, Red Cross and Patriotic Funds, etc., etc., ... wants government ownership of railways so that the tax-payer will provide lower freight rates for crop moving; wants everything he consumes ... put on the free list....

"The farmer is the most prosperous individual on the face of the Dominion.... But he is not satisfied."\textsuperscript{169}

Such comments, written in the context of a crop failure and the banks' reluctance to lend to producers,\textsuperscript{170} raised farmers' class consciousness to a fevered pitch.

But farmers had a culture to support them. The agrarian myth told them that, whatever others said, the nation depended on them "for its greatness."\textsuperscript{171} Other aspects of their movement sustaining culture were celebrated in a June 1918 issue of the Guide and especially in Hopkins Moorhouse's Deep Furrows\textsuperscript{172} which was widely discussed in the UFA/UFWA. These and other texts spun a tale of the origins and growth of the western farm movement which fostered class solidarity and pride - and that sense of historical legitimacy movements crave. "Read 'Deep Furrows,'" wrote one local secretary, and "look back at our past experience, and now look into our future."\textsuperscript{173}

This culture did not lead farmers to believe that politicians were ultimately to blame for producers' woes. Farmers felt that "the people will have just as good a government as they are entitled to."\textsuperscript{174} The character of a democracy, H.W. Wood argued, depended "on the citizenship standard of the people."\textsuperscript{175}

This notion of citizenship told farmers it was their duty to improve society and their own situation through politics. Before war's end, liberals believed this meant nominating and electing good candidates in the old parties, and "building " the
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SOURCE: Guide, June 26, 1918, p. 58
UFA/UFWA into an effective political pressure organization. Like men, women were feeling "the surge of desire ... to grow out into the larger life of citizenship," especially after the federal franchise "awakened" them "to a realization of their civic responsibilities."

Farmers' belief in citizenship developed, with their successes and the movement's growth, a sense of confidence and possibility rooted in a feeling that the war was paving the way for a new era. Irene Parlby told the 1918 convention:

Civilization such as it is, is standing at the cross-roads; in every heart there is a barely conscious feeling of expectancy. In the silences it seems to us as though great things were stirring in the womb of time; we almost seem to hear the rustle of great events rushing to us through space. What is this old world about to bring forth?

At this and other conventions, both sexes caught a "vision" of the movement's "possibilities for usefulness and service." The 1916 convention was especially uplifting. UFA vice-president Dunham exhorted the delegates to work "with a new zeal," assuring them they were "the veritable rocks composing the foundation of this new Canada." The women heard equally engaging addresses. Several wrote that "the inspiration of that gathering kept their souls warm." Many men similarly described the energizing effect of the convention, right down to the locals' work.

What inspired farmers was that the UFA/UFWA helped them feel good about themselves. To a people who thought others saw them as helpless hicks, it was intoxicating to believe they were "part and parcel of one of the greatest organizations the world has ever seen" - a movement committed, not just to class betterment, but to national regeneration:

To be a U.F.A. member is to belong to a movement which is rapidly making Canadian history. Every member has a right to a thrill of justifiable pride ... for the story of the organized farmers is one of the brightest pages in our national record - the abolition of the liquor traffic, and of the patronage evil in public affairs, the enfranchisement of women, the agitation for a more equitable distribution of the burden of taxation, the growth of co-operation in community and business life - these are some of the outgrowths of the activities of our ... organization.

Farmers "built" the movement as they gained a sense of "the strength of our organization," "a power which if rightly directed must mean the dawn of a brighter
Delegates of the 1918 UFA convention. A few women are in the picture. SOURCE: Glenbow Archives, PE-132-1
tomorrow ... when the social evils under which we writhe ... are banished.\textsuperscript{187} This utopian vision often had social gospel overtones. H.W. Wood concluded a UFA Sunday sermon "with a description of the New Jerusalem, a picture of the world as it will be when his Kingdom had come."\textsuperscript{188} Irene Parlby's idea of the good society revealed her class and gender concerns. Farm women, she mused,

look forward to the day when no farm woman or man or child will call in vain for nursing or medical aid, when all farm boys and girls will continue their education until at least 16, with some possibility of continuing their studies after that, when every district will have its community hall and a possibility of good entertainments... They look forward to the time when the tariff walls will cease to deprive them of so many things ..., when co-operation will bring them the just fruits of their toil.\textsuperscript{189}

Before the war, farmers had gained self-respect. Now they were confident they could inaugurate a new society to justify the soldiers' sacrifices.

More and more farmers felt that direct political action was needed to create this society. Their oppositional culture and growing anti-partyism - fueled by wartime graft - led them to conclude that only non-party candidates, nominated, financed, and controlled like convention delegates, would support farm interests.\textsuperscript{190} They advocated running independents or forming a new party or movement to gain a balance of power.\textsuperscript{191} As before, most political activists were radicals, seeking a farmer-labour political alliance based on the two groups' alleged common interests as victims of plutocracy.\textsuperscript{192} Only direct politics could "emancipate" producers from the "bondage of trusts," making them "free men."\textsuperscript{193}

The wartime political movement began in earnest with a 1915 UFA convention debate on a motion proposing that the UFA nominate political candidates. After heated discussion, the delegates told the directors to ascertain the locals' views.\textsuperscript{194} The few unions that replied generally favoured the idea of UFA candidates. At the same time, locals were seeking guidance about the next election.\textsuperscript{195} In response, the Executive threw the whole question back to the unions, asking them to elect representatives for district conventions to be called by central office if enough locals appointed delegates. Each convention would decide what form of political action, if any, members in its constituency would take. The Executive stipulated that if members did not make the effort to hold conventions, it would "conclude that the U.F.A. is not ripe for ... political
Few locals responded and the 1916 annual convention settled the matter by defeating a motion favouring independent political action.¹⁹⁷

Most UFA leaders breathed a sigh of relief. Vice-president H.W. Wood felt, based on his study of American farm associations, that direct politics would destroy the UFA. General secretary P.P. Woodbridge, who believed farmers' salvation lay in co-operative enterprise, agreed.¹⁹⁸ Their arguments influenced some members, although UFA officers like Rice Sheppard favoured independent action. President James Speakman may have sided with Sheppard, but was publicly non-committal.

Even liberal UFA/UFWA farmers, however, soon began to consider UFA political action, especially as the old parties refused to endorse the revised Farmers' Platform of 1916, and as the Non-Partisan League, an agrarian political movement, came to power in North Dakota that year. The Guide hailed this victory and admonished western farmers to take independent action themselves.¹⁹⁹ Such a stance by the movement's official organ could not help but affect the UFA/UFWA.

The League would be more than a distant example of what farmers could accomplish politically. Shortly after its win in North Dakota, it was organized in Saskatchewan, and in late 1916, in Alberta. In 1917, the Alberta League obtained its own organ, the Non-Partisan, edited by William Irvine.²⁰⁰ The League quickly became the voice of radical Alberta agrarianism; most radical UFA/UFWA farmers joined it while retaining their membership in the older organization. They were drawn to the League's program which included government ownership of banks, utilities, and major industries, and social welfare measures like state funded health care. But the League's great attraction was its commitment to political reform and independent politics.

The victory of two Alberta League candidates in the June 1917 provincial election sent shock waves across the country. One winner was temperance leader Louise McKinney; the other was UFA vice-president James Weir, an ex-Conservative and ex-newspaperman with a chip on his shoulder the size of a railway tie. Their victories stemmed from their qualities as candidates, dissatisfaction with the Liberals' record, strong League leadership, and farmers' growing class consciousness and confidence. The League was quickening the agitation for direct action even in the UFA/UFWA. Might not this newly ignited prairie fire consume the whole province in the next election?
The breakdown of the party system under the stress of the Great War appeared to open the door for the League federally, and in the long run did much to aid the agrarian political movement. Cultural tensions about French-Canadian participation in the war, evident in disputes over Ontario's Regulation 17 and the Manitoba School Act, cracked the Liberal party; conscription completed the rupture as prominent Liberals, including Alberta premier Arthur Sifton, formed with the Conservatives in late 1917 the Union government to impose compulsory military service.\textsuperscript{201}

But the apparent death of the old party structure did not provide the opening for the League that might have been expected. The Union government convinced most farmers it was the long-awaited "non-partisan" administration that would purify politics. The West, therefore, with a promise of exemption from conscription for farmers, and with United Grain Growers' president T.A. Crerar in the cabinet, went solidly Unionist in the 1917 election. The four Alberta League candidates were annihilated. Their criticisms of the Union government as a "union of a pack of timber wolves,"\textsuperscript{202} and their shrill demands for the conscription of wealth, had led to suspicions of disloyalty.\textsuperscript{203}

Thus was the League fire dampened, though not put out; the agrarian political movement in Alberta checked, though not stopped. But ironically, the Union government, having headed off the independent political movement, would be a major catalyst of the post-war political revolt.

While farmers' wartime idealism attracted them to the Union party, they also voted for it because they wanted a government of the best talent to win the war. Their patriotism was displayed by the 3000 or more UFA men who volunteered for overseas service,\textsuperscript{204} and by the thousands of dollars and the tons of clothing and other items UFA/UFWA locals made and donated for war relief. A number of northern UFA locals also formed units of the "U.F.A. Home Guard" which Rice Sheppard organized for home defence and to relieve soldiers for overseas service.\textsuperscript{205}

Farmers thus felt they were doing their "bit" to win the war. But was Unionism, which had risen from the ashes of partyism to win the war and launch a new era of clean politics, fulfilling its promise? At first it seemed it was. The government quickly enacted conscription, prohibition, suffrage, and direct taxation, and eliminated the worst forms of patronage. But was it enough to satisfy the UFA/UFWA? Many farmers believed the
Farmers believed the Union government would win the war and implement many of the planks of their Platform. SOURCE: Guide, Oct. 24, 1917, p. 6
At first the Union government appeared to fulfill its promise by implementing national prohibition. SOURCE: Guide, Jan. 2, 1918, p. 6
Wartime Elections Act, which disfranchised certain immigrants, violated "British justice," and were angry the government did not implement their Platform's taxation planks.

One act in particular convinced most farmers that Unionism was not what it had promised to be. In May 1918, military events led the government to draft farmers aged 20 to 22. Producers considered this a breach of faith; having been promised exemption from military service, they had bought more equipment, land, or stock to increase production. Now that their sons were going to be conscripted, where would they find the necessary labour for their expanded operations? The UFA office was flooded with letters and resolutions from members and locals condemning the cancelation of exemptions. Mass protest rallies were held. The Executive sent a resolution to Ottawa recognizing that the order would not have been issued "had not the need for men been imperative," while holding the government responsible for any resulting loss of food production.

Many Alberta farmers, including two UFA Board members, were incensed with this resolution, believing it let the government off the hook. To avoid a split in the organization, the Board endorsed a memorial that better expressed farmers' sense of grievance. It asserted that "the government cannot fully have appreciated the far-reaching effects of the measures taken," and warned that the situation called "for the greatest possible wisdom in council ... to maintain that hearty support that a loyal people owe to a government in a time such as this."

That done, the potential rupture in the UFA/UFWA was averted. But the break between farmers and the Union government never healed. James Miner, a Non-Partisan League and UFA member declared ominously: "It is now known what they can expect from us next election time." The agrarian revolt was about to begin.

Yet a number of liberals, including president Wood, still believed direct politics would kill the UFA/UFWA and that the movement would have its greatest political effect through organization and pressure politics. In a letter published in late 1918 in several farm periodicals, ex-UFA vice-president Dunham articulated this view:

The lesson for us to learn from the history of the prior farmers' organizations on the continent is that the influence they exerted in political affairs by themselves going into politics as a party could have been exerted just as well, and probably better, had they ... remained out of
Farmers believed that if the government conscripted men, it should conscript wealth by implementing the taxation planks of the Farmers’ Platform. SOURCE: Guide, July 18, 1917, p. 6

The Union government caused an irreparable breach between itself and farmers by canceling their exemption from conscription. SOURCE: Guide, May 22, 1918, p. 6
politics, and as an organization ... impressed upon public opinion, and through public opinion on the parties existing, the principles for which they stood.\(^{214}\)

The political activists quickly replied. Quipping that Dunham was a lawyer who "mostly over the long distance telephone," League MLA James Weir argued that only independent politics could ensure that farmers were not saddled with the war debt.\(^{215}\) Rice Sheppard pointed out that farmers had made little progress politically with major issues and suggested that a way could be found for the UFA to enter politics without harming the organization.\(^{216}\) Another farmer simply asked: "What good is the ballot if we have no option but to vote for men whose interests are directly in opposition to our own?"\(^{217}\) The day of Dunham, James Bower, and P.P. Woodbridge, and the old H.W. Wood, the day of movement building and pressure politics was about to end.

Shaped by the Great War, the movement was fully "built" from 1914 to 1918 as it developed its culture, doubled its membership, and formed a women's section. Women worked for the movement to further their class and gender interests, and to protect the home. The UFA, recognizing women's work on the farm and in the movement, supported their agenda, including their equal rights demands, although it never granted them equality. Women's promotion of causes reflecting their maternal ideology developed a social ethic - a desire for reform through state action - informed by the social gospel, wartime government intervention, and fear the war might be in vain. War related state policies and practices, and their contrast to UFA/UFWA democracy, strengthened farmers' opposition to the party system. This, with their social ethic, commitment to citizenship, and sense of possibility - tinged with wartime idealism - led them to "build" the movement to create a just and democratic society, first through pressure politics, and possibly through direct action.
ENDNOTES

1Glenbow Archives (hereafter GA), United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Annual Convention (hereafter MR), 1918, pp. 283, 285.

2Of the 171 unions formed from the beginning of 1914 to May 1915, 141 were organized locally; only 16 were organized by directors and 14 by paid organizers (GA, United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Executive and Board Minutes and Reports (hereafter Executive), 1915, p. 34).


6Ibid., May 8, 1918, p. 10; July 17, 1918, p. 10; Oct. 23, 1918, p. 11.

7Membership statistics conflict in different reports. These estimates are based mainly on MR, 1918, p. 55; 1919, p. 28; 1920, p. 32.


9Ibid., 1916, p. 25.

10Ibid., 1916, p. 25; 1917, p. 49; 1920, p. 110.

11Ibid., 1917, p. 49; 1918, p. 55; GGG, Dec. 18, 1918, p. 11.

12MR, 1913, p. 34.


14MR, 1914, p. 39.

15Eva Carter, Thirty Years of Progress: History of United Farm Women of Alberta (n.p., 1944), pp. 18-19; GA, United Farm Women of Alberta, Film BR, Convention, Executive, and Board Meetings (hereafter UFWA Meetings), p. 2; MR, 1916, pp. 74-75.


Here patriarchy refers simply to gender inequality and male control of women's labour. For a discussion of this subject, see Carolyn E. Sachs, The Invisible Farmers: Women in Agricultural Production (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983).

This literature includes Catherine Cleverdon, The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada: The Start of Liberation, 1900-1920 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950, 1975 reprint); Barbara J. Nicholson, "Feminism in the Canadian Prairie Provinces to 1916" (M.A. Thesis: University of Calgary, 1974); Robinson, "Agrarian Reformers."


In the 1970s, Susan Gunn, UFWA president from 1925-29, and a prominent UFWA leader in the period of this study, wrote: "Let me emphasize that we never thought of ourselves as a feminist movement per se. We were an organized group of women working hand in glove with our men for better economic conditions" (Provincial Archives of Alberta (hereafter PAA), Susan Gunn letters, Acc. 83.507, Gunn to Robinson, Oct. 31, 1977).


Langford, Politics, Pitchforks, and Pickle Jars, chap. 4.


Ibid., Nov. 17, 1915, p. 12.

MR, 1918, pp. 31, 181, 183.


MR, 1912, p. 56.


Indicative of a Christian motive for endorsing women's rights was one UFA man's argument that demanding homestead rights for British women alone and not for other women was unChristian (GGG, July 26, 1911, p. 17).


GGG, May 31, 1911, p. 21; Jan. 8, 1913, p. 9; Mar. 18, 1914, p. 11.

Ibid., May 22, 1912, p. 27; Sept. 10, 1913, p. 9; Robinson, pp. 88-90.

GGG, Jan. 8, 1913, p. 9; Nov. 12, 1913, p. 10.

Robinson, p. 82.


The Act forced a woman to file a caveat with the lands registrar to prevent her husband from selling, mortgaging, or leasing the home without her consent (GGG, Apr. 28, 1915, p. 12; Cavanaugh, p. 212).

GGG, May 19, 1915, p. 11. Though Woodbridge apparently did not think the Act was very good, other UFA men saw it as a step forward (MR, 1916, pp. 37, 39).

GGG, May 9, 1917, p. 24; Cavanaugh, pp. 214-15.
MR, 1918, pp. 315, 215; Executive, 1918, p. 41.

MR, 1918, pp. 315, 217, 317; Executive, 1918, p. 41.


Ibid., 1917, p. 141; Executive, 1917, pp. 175, 177.

MR, 1916, p. 113. The resolution asked that "a clause be placed on the statutes of Alberta whereby a man can be punished before his wife is driven to do any such violent act similar to [that of] Mrs. Hawkes."

The only partial exception to this occurred at the 1918 convention when a UFWA resolution asking for a law so a wife could not be denied "a larger share by will than she would have been deprived had her husband died intestate" elicited "considerable discussion." The convention agreed to have the Board "adjust" this resolution with the UFWA Executive (MR, 1918, pp. 315, 217, 317). One of the very few resolutions the UFWA did not ask the UFA to consider was a request that women receive equal wages for equal work (MR, 1918, p. 319). The women may have felt the UFA would not endorse this demand.

The constitution stated that the UFWA could not "petition Parliament or the Legislature independently of the Central" (UFA constitution, 1917, p. 16).

Starting in 1917 (MR, 1918, p. 39).

Finkel, p. 79.

Early in 1918, the UFA Board decided that directors would be paid six dollars a day when on UFA business, but a month later, the secretary was instructed to pay Irene Parlby only two dollars a day for her UFWA work in 1917. It was later decided, however, to allow Winnifred Ross a director's expenses while on UFWA organization work (Executive, 1918, pp. 32, 37, 101). In 1919, UFWA directors were all given the same per diem allowance as their UFA counterparts (Executive, 1919, p. 207).

Farm and Ranch Review (hereafter FRR), May 20, 1918, p. 596.

The following biographical information is largely taken from Barbara Villy Cormack, Perennials and Politics: The Life Story of Hon. Irene Parlby, L.L.D. (Sherwood Park, Alberta: Professional Printing, Ltd., 1968); Clare McKinlay, "The Honourable Irene Parlby" (M.A. Thesis: University of Alberta, 1953); FRR, Mar. 20, 1915, p. 182.

GGG, Dec. 11, 1918, p. 34.

Ibid., Dec. 4, 1918, p. 25.
Resolutions on matters internal to the organization were not included in this calculation and only resolutions the conventions voted on were counted. A further indication of women's concern about equal rights was the UFWA secretary's report to the 1917 convention noting she had received inquiries nearly every week about women's legal status (MR, 1917, p. 131).

Langford, pp. 33-34.


Ibid., pp. 126-129. Speaking to a local group of women a year and a half later, Parlby again "emphasized the influence women had in fashioning the characters of the children" (GGG, July 18, 1917, p. 10). A biographer of Parlby concluded that "first and foremost the home was Irene Parlby's concern" (Cormack, p. 59).


MR, 1918, p. 17.

Ibid., 1916, p. 137. See also Ibid., 1918, p. 289.

GGG, Apr. 24, 1918, p. 49.


MR, 1918, p. 313.

GGG, Apr. 3, 1918, p. 51. A number of UFWA locals responded to this call and made donations.

Ibid., Sept. 5, 1917, p. 29.

Ibid., Nov. 21, 1917, p. 10; Dec. 12, 1917, p. 35; MR, 1918, pp. 275, 291.


GGG, Jan. 26, 1910, p. 24; Sept. 4, 1912, p. 8; Jan. 29, 1913, p. 9; Apr. 15, 1914, p. 27; Aug. 5, 1914, p. 3; MR, 1913, p. 30; 1914, pp. 8-9.

GGG, Sept. 4, 1912, p. 8; Jan. 29, 1913, p. 9.
77MR, 1913, p. 30.

78Ibid., 1915, p. 33.


80MR, 1918, pp. 297, 299.

81Ibid., 1917, p. 173.

82MR, 1913, p. 40.


85MR, 1917, p. 143, unnumbered section; Stretch, p. 12.

86MR, 1918, p. 277.

87Many farm women gave birth without competent medical aid. Moreover, half of those who died in Alberta toward war's end were children under five (MR, 1918, pp. 277, 279).

88MR, 1917, pp. 27, 35, 37, 91, 93, 127; 1918, p. 49; 1919, p. 90.


90MR, 1918, p. 277.

91Angus McLaren, Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990), back cover.

92MR, 1920, p. 84.

93Ibid., 1917, p. 143, unnumbered section (indicates that the UFA endorsed all UFWA resolutions); 1918, pp. 319, 217.

94McLaren, Our Own Master Race.

95PAA, Winnifred Ross Papers, Acc. 71.420/19, address by Irene Parlby, "Mental Deficiency" (1924), p. 3.

97 GGG, July 23, 1919, p. 33.


99 Ibid., July 23, 1919, p. 33.

100 Ibid., Nov. 4, 1914, p. 13; Sept. 11, 1918, p. 11.


102 Ibid., 1917, pp. 111, 113, 115.

103 Barry Ferguson traces this strain of liberalism in Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark and W.A. Mackintosh, 1890-1925 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993). This liberalism called on the state to ensure a measure of equality of condition.


108 GGG, Apr. 18, 1917, p. 12. Wood's social philosophy became less spiritual and more material after the war.

109 Ibid., Apr. 25, 1917, p. 11.

110 Ibid., Sept. 18, 1918, p. 39.


113 The following discussion of state control of the grain trade is based primarily on C.F. Wilson, A Century of Canadian Grain: Government Policy to 1951 (Saskatoon:


117 MR, 1915, p. 49.


120 This is apparently what was done with certain radical credit resolutions (MR, 1915, p. 52; 1916, p. 113).

121 MR, 1918, pp. 105-141.


124 Ibid., 1918, pp. 105-127.

125 Ibid., pp. 201, 203.

126 Ibid., 1915, p. 13.

127 Ibid., 1916, pp. 70, 78; GGG, Jan. 26, 1916, p. 11.

128 MR, 1918, pp. 77, 79, 159. The report is on pp. 71-79. A delegate from the union demanding that the report be improved was satisfied with the 1918 report (p. 93).

129 UFA constitution, 1917, p. 9.

130 Executive, 1918, p. 92.

131 UFA constitution, 1917, p. 7.
The 1917 convention apparently approved of this measure since it endorsed the Board report describing it (MR, 1917, pp. 31, 91).

Executive, 1915, p. 45; 1916, p. 103; 1918, p. 8.

MR, 1914, p. 38; 1916, p. 74.

One of the very few times officers did not carry out the wishes of a convention occurred in 1917 when the Board failed to submit the UFA Platform to politicians to obtain their views on it. The resolution is in MR, 1917, p. 111. The directors' justification for their inaction is in Ibid., 1918, p. 47.

At the delegates' request, the officers considered resolutions sent in too late for the convention. They did so in a generally fair manner, forwarding many to the relevant authorities or UFA committee (MR, 1916, p. 116; Executive, 1916, pp. 87-92).


MR, 1917, p. 113.


Ibid., Aug. 18, 1915, p. 11.


MR, 1916, p. 87.


Ibid., 1918, p. 71.

Ibid., 1914, p. 7.

Every wartime UFA convention requested railway lines. Railways were a key issue in the North where farmers demanded a direct link to the coast (GA, Hugh Allen,
The UFWA directors endorsed the principle of mothers' pensions in early 1918 (UFWA Meetings, p. 15). That year, the government apparently provided $35,000 for such pensions (MR, 1919, p. 91).


MR, 1919, pp. 23-26. In fairness to the government, it had already responded to a few of the demands made in these resolutions; moreover, a few of the other resolutions pertained to matters that were under Ottawa's jurisdiction.


GGG, Dec. 25, 1918, p. 11.
170Ibid., Oct. 16, 1918, pp. 31, 48.


173GGG, Feb. 5, 1919, p. 10.

174MR, 1916, p. 149.


177FRR, Apr. 5, 1915, p. 223.

178GGG, Nov. 6, 1918, p. 40.


180GGG, Jan. 17, 1917, p. 35.


185Ibid., Nov. 20, 1918, p. 13. See also Oct. 9, 1918, p. 12.

186Ibid., June 10, 1914, p. 12.

187Ibid., July 31, 1918, p. 35.

188Ibid., July 12, 1916, p. 12.

189Ibid., Dec. 4, 1918, p. 94.

190Ibid., June 10, 1914, pp. 8, 14; Feb. 10, 1915, pp. 25-26; Sept. 29, 1915, pp. 9, 22; Sept. 12, 1917, pp. 24-25.

It was reported at the 1916 convention that 2500 UFA men had joined the forces (MR, 1916, p. 115). At the 1918 convention, it was noted that 216 locals had indicated 1422 of their members were in the services (MR, 1918, p. 93). Since there were three times that many locals in the UFA, it is possible 4000 or more members volunteered.

Sharp, p. 125. This Act gave women relatives of soldiers the vote and disfranchised pacifists and those of "alien" birth who had been naturalized in Canada after 1902.

212 GGG, June 26, 1918, p. 25.

213 Cited in Rolph, p. 69.


215 ANP, Nov. 8, 1918, p. 8.


217 ANP, Dec. 4, 1918, p. 10.
Chapter Six: Co-operation in the Movement

"The co-operative spirit is growing in our vicinity."\(^1\)

Lawrence Goodwyn argues that co-operative experience spawned a movement culture of self-respect and democratic possibility which led American farmers to adopt a Greenback critique of capitalism and to endorse the Populist Party.\(^2\) Critics have shown weaknesses in Goodwyn's argument about the strength of the co-op movement in Populist areas and its relationship to Populist support.\(^3\) Other scholars affirm the reality of a Populist culture but focus on its non-co-operative sources.\(^4\) Only David Laycock and Ian MacPherson assess the effect of co-operation on Canadian farmers. Laycock suggests it gave them confidence, molded their ideas about democracy, and contributed to their support for direct politics.\(^5\) MacPherson argues that the agrarian movement was linked to a larger co-op movement which sought a social consensus that was neither socialistic nor capitalistic.\(^6\)

Co-operation was not as crucial in developing protest in Alberta as Goodwyn might suggest, but, as MacPherson and Laycock contend, it was significant. Co-operative activity and ideology helped "form," "build," and "politicize" the farm movement.

The main aim of farmers' co-operative activity was to save money at the expense of middlemen and corporations. Their co-operative thinking was informed by European, especially British, co-operative experience,\(^7\) and by North American agrarianism. The Grange, the Farmers' Alliance, and the Patrons of Industry undertook co-operative buying and selling, retailing, banking, wholesaling, manufacturing, and insurance.\(^8\) Such experience, and the example of contemporary American co-ops, shaped the Alberta co-operative movement.

The failure of early co-operatives organized by Alberta radicals, especially the Equity co-op, dampened their enthusiasm for co-operation, at least for large-scale enterprises.\(^9\) Few radicals, as a result, became "utopian co-operators" who closely associated co-operative activity with socialist politics.\(^10\) Most early UFA/UFWA members were "liberal co-operators"\(^11\) who saw co-operation as a means of restoring fair capitalism in a monopoly-controlled marketplace. After the war, as H.W. Wood's notion
of class political action became popular, most pragmatists, and some utopians, became "occupational co-operators," viewing co-ops "as essentially assistants to the farmers who owned them and not as elements of a wider movement.""12

As some radicals lost faith in co-ops after the Equity debacle, they left the initiative to the liberals, so that co-operation had a conservative effect on the movement. With radicals like W.R. Ball largely abandoning co-operation, liberals could argue, with little opposition, that its purpose was simply to correct the market. They also convinced farmers to prefer co-operative over state solutions, while radicals, "politicized" by the failure of their co-ops, influenced the movement to enter politics sooner than it otherwise would have.

The greatest and most immediate effect of the co-op disaster was irreparable damage to the Society's credibility, which hastened its merger with the Alberta Farmers' Association - thus helping to "form" the movement. The Equity co-op failure also revealed the folly of trying to build large co-ops with little co-operative experience, a lesson that was not lost on several AFA directors who balked at a proposal that the Association establish packing houses and elevators. George MacDonald "thought the enterprises suggested ... were rather large undertakings for farmers who had no previous experience in managing them."13 The AFA's co-op experience was limited to buying and selling a few goods locally and helping to organize government co-operative creameries. The S of E's co-operative efforts, apart from its co-op debacle, were confined mainly to purchasing twine.

This trickle of co-operative activity became a torrent of grassroots-initiated endeavour after the UFA was formed. Of the 229 locals returning their annual reports to the UFA office for 1914, 168 reported having done co-operative business. Of these, 137 stated the amount they had turned over, the aggregate total being $287,000.14 Most UFA locals ordered carloads of such goods as twine, wire, coal, lubricants, oil, cement, lumber, building supplies, posts, hardware, machinery, chemicals, livestock supplies, clothing, and food. The savings over retail prices could be hundreds or thousands of dollars a year. Sometimes unions in a district combined to order larger quantities to save even more. Many unions made bulk purchases through local dealers rather than buy direct from manufacturers or wholesalers. Other locals arranged to have retailers sell to members at a
There were numerous forms of co-operation. Many locals shipped livestock or grain co-operatively by the car. To facilitate this, several unions operated co-operative weigh scales. A number bought seed collectively or planted co-operative seed plots to produce grain of a uniform quality so members could combine their surpluses to fill a railway car. A few set up co-operative credit schemes or made collective arrangements with banks to get cash for members for co-op buying. In such ways, co-operation was "the poor man's friend." To provide a continuous supply of meat for members, many unions organized beef rings. Several bought machinery for co-operative use.

More formal and expensive ventures were undertaken. Many locals built warehouses for co-operative purchases. A number established co-operative mills, creameries, or stores. One early store run by the Eckville and Gilby Co-operative Company joined the Co-operative Union of Canada (CUC), the main national co-operative organization. Created under the auspices of two UFA unions, the Eckville society followed true co-operative principles and did $48,000 of business in 1917.

Co-operative education informed and inspired such activity. Starting in 1910, the UFA office answered frequent requests for information on forming co-op societies, stores, mills, elevators, and on co-operation in other countries, forwarding some queries to the CUC. A number of farmers read the CUC organ, The Canadian Co-operator, which UFA secretary Woodbridge urged members to order. A local source of ideas was the Red Deer UFA Co-op which did $40,000 of business its first year selling stock, hay, and grain. The 1910 UFA convention heard a talk on this co-op which sent 200 copies of its constitution to enquiring parties. Farmers also learned about co-operation from articles and secretaries' reports in the Guide. Moreover, the UFA secretaries' conventions discussed local co-op activity.

Such discussion revealed farmers' ideologies. Radicals described co-operation as a way of fighting the "eastern capitalists" and busting the trusts. They also saw it as secondary to political action. "Buy and sell co-operatively whenever you can," John Glambeck advised, "but ... the farmer must be satisfied with nothing less than control of the government." Glambeck considered co-operation a collectivist strategy, although like most UFA/UFWA radicals, he favoured state action when it was feasible. "Farmers
should co-operate," he argued, "in all matters where government ownership or operation is impracticable."28 Farmers of the liberal wing, seeing co-operation as "self-help," preferred it to state ownership. They also averred it should "intelligently attack Monopoly" rather than "blindly attack capital." At bottom, they wanted co-operation to make the market efficient - to ensure farmers received "the highest price that the market could afford."29

Along with other groups, liberal and radical UFA farmers demanded co-operative legislation. At Ottawa in 1910, E.J. Fream called for "one uniform law regulating the operation of co-operative societies."30 A 1910 convention resolution revealed the UFA's wish to be part of a national movement based on such a law: While societies are independent of each other, they are most successful when they act together and develop in unison and sympathy a national movement and have co-operative opportunities between the members of each society, a result impossible if each society is dependent upon provincial statutes inconsistent with each other.31

Subsequently, many UFA locals signed a Guide petition for federal co-operative legislation. In addition, the 1912 convention asked the Canadian Council of Agriculture (CCA) to draft a co-operative bill "to suit the country and city people and to submit same to the federal government."32 Since no national law was forthcoming, Alberta farmers had to settle for a provincial Co-operative Trading Act, passed in 1913.33

As farmers grasped the possibilities of co-operation, they suggested the UFA undertake larger projects. The 1911 convention proposed conferring with the Grain Growers' Grain Company about starting "a Farmers' Commission House in connection with co-operative stores."34 About a dozen resolutions on co-operation were submitted to the 1913 convention. Though many were unrealistic, they exuded collective confidence, based on successful co-operative experience. Two of them read:

Whereas we, the members of the U.F.A., know that by co-operating we can carry to a successful issue anything we take in hand. Therefore be it resolved that we do build and operate at once a large terminal elevator....

Whereas ... the profits made by ... merchants ... are enormous and ... the only remedy lies in co-operation. Be it therefore resolved that we do bind ourselves in such a co-operative union wherein we may ... purchase our goods and thus get them at cost.... In time we could have a store in every railroad town.35
This feeling of co-operative expectancy led to the formation of the Alberta Farmers’ Co-operative Elevator Company in 1913. Before 1911, the UFA called for government elevators, but the UFA elevator committee found the Manitoba public elevator plan unsuitable for Alberta conditions and asked Premier Sifton in 1911 to establish a co-operative system similar to that in Saskatchewan. Sifton demurred, and the committee presented a modified plan to the 1913 UFA convention that was based on the Saskatchewan Act but provided for more farmer control and for the company to handle all kinds of farm produce. By a very large majority, the delegates endorsed this proposal. The failure of the Grain Acts to regulate the industry fully, the province’s refusal to create a government elevator system, the collapse of the Manitoba public elevators, the positive example of the Saskatchewan co-op system, and the successes of UFA co-operation - hinted at the possibilities of an Alberta co-operative elevator line.

The government dutifully drafted a bill with UFA input to incorporate the Alberta Farmers’ Co-operative Elevator Company (AFCEC) Limited. The bill was modeled on the Saskatchewan Act, but gave farmers more financial control. The province would loan up to 85% of the cost of the elevators; farmers would raise the other 15% from stock purchases. Ultimately, the Grain Growers’ Grain Company (GGGC), through which the AFCEC marketed its grain, helped financially. The AFCEC’s provisional directors were the UFA elevator committee, less George Bevington. Its first elected directors were also UFA men, including W.J. Tregillus, who became president. By the fall of 1913, 42 elevators were under construction and seven had been acquired.

While helping with the AFCEC, the UFA provided other co-operative opportunities. In 1913, it organized egg circles and marketing through the Agriculture Department, and arranged for the GGGC to sell members’ produce on commission at the Calgary public market. It also secured quotations on twine for unions, and struck a deal with a B.C. firm to sell fruit to locals at wholesale prices. By 1914, the UFA office had become a clearing house for co-op buying. Locals received price lists of a wide range of goods they could purchase through the office. The UFA also made an agreement with a cold storage company in 1916 for special rates for members, and with the Hudson’s Bay Company for locals and co-ops to buy provisions at discount prices.

The advent of the district associations - groups of affiliated unions - marked the
ELEVATOR SYSTEM OF THE ALBERTA FARMERS' CO-OPERATIVE ELEVATOR COMPANY LIMITED

SOURCE: Guide, Dec. 6, 1916, p. 4
maturation of the UFA/UFWA co-operative movement. These associations, which were formed by the grassroots mainly in the mid-to-late 1910s, helped locals co-ordinate their organizing and community work, linked the central office and member unions, and held conventions that sometimes forwarded resolutions to the annual convention. Their main purpose, however, was to facilitate large-scale co-operative activity. By the fall of 1916, 18 UFA district associations and a few unions had incorporated under the Co-operative Societies Act. By the following spring, there were some 40 incorporated UFA societies, most of which had an office and warehouse. A half dozen operated co-op stores. By 1919, there were some 65 incorporated societies in Alberta.

These societies did a considerable business. The Ponoka District UFA Association sold $168,000 worth of hogs and bought 28 carloads of goods the first half of 1917. Associations at Manville and Cardston did about $200,000 of business each in 1918 and 1919 respectively. The Blackie Co-op shipped about $1000 worth of eggs one month through an egg circle the UFWA had organized. In 1916, the Leduc Co-op marketed 154 cars of potatoes in the United States at a profit of up to $135 a car.

Most co-op associations marketed a variety of products and bought consumer and farm supplies for members. Some also ran co-operative lumber yards and a few sold insurance. But the raison d'être for many associations and some UFA locals was to sell livestock. Members' co-operative loyalty was sometimes tested as private parties bought at a loss to draw farmers away from their co-op. The aggressors often lost out as farmers "stuck" to their co-operative, believing it saved them up to 20% over private business in the long run.

Each society had its own by-laws, not all of which conformed to accepted co-operative ideas. All, or nearly all societies, followed the co-operative rule of "one man, one vote." Some paid dividends mostly on the basis of use; others, more on the amount invested, a policy not endorsed by the international co-operative movement. Some limited the stock a member could hold; others did not, which again, was a variation from normal co-operative practice. Thus, some co-ops were more co-operative, and others more capitalistic. Almost all paid profits only to shareholders, though many did business with non-shareholders. A few distributed their profits by selling at cost. Most built up reserve funds and followed the co-operative custom of selling for cash only. Nearly all
The Leduc co-op marketed potatoes in the United States.
SOURCE: Guide, Aug. 15, 1917, p.8

FOOLING THE FARMERS

Private buyers trying to entice farmers away from their co-ops. SOURCE: Guide, May 17, 1916, p. 6
followed co-operative principles closely enough to be considered part of the larger co-op movement.\textsuperscript{55}

Secretaries of successful unions argued correctly that co-operation was the key to their locals' growth.\textsuperscript{56} The opportunity of saving or making money through co-operative buying or selling attracted new members and kept existing ones in the organization. In this way, co-operation "built" the movement.

On the other hand, it occasionally killed unions\textsuperscript{57} as farmers got so caught up in co-operative trading that they lost touch with the other work of the UFA. To address this problem, the Association strongly suggested that co-op societies require shareholders to be UFA members.\textsuperscript{58} Following this logic, many co-ops did business only with UFA members, and a number paid farmers' UFA membership fees out of their patronage dividends. Other co-ops admitted non-UFA members, and often drifted away from the organization, weakening it and dividing the agrarian co-op movement into UFA and non-UFA camps.

Societies sometimes opened their doors to non-UFA members because they needed more shareholders or because their leaders had been trained in the consumer co-operative movement which opposed the idea of a co-op being for one occupational group. George Keen, secretary of the CUC and editor of the \textit{Canadian Co-operator}, shared this consumer philosophy\textsuperscript{59} and influenced a few UFA societies to admit non-UFA members. UFA co-ops which excluded non-UFA members were not allowed in the CUC and missed benefiting from Keen's advice on co-op management, while the CUC lost the chance to increase its membership and revenues.

Farmers lost other co-operative opportunities with the farmer elevator supply departments. The AFCEC began selling to UFA locals and societies in 1914,\textsuperscript{60} and, by the year ending August 1917, had handled almost 2700 carloads of goods including flour, fruit, feed, hay, salt, coal, posts, lumber, building materials, twine, and wire - worth over \$1.5 million.\textsuperscript{61} In the nine months ending May 1918, the United Grain Growers' (UGG), the AFCEC's successor, shipped almost 3700 cars to Alberta points, the turnover being nearly \$2.5 million.\textsuperscript{62}

Despite this business, a minority of farmers criticized the companies' capitalistic features,\textsuperscript{63} prompting the 1915 UFA convention to call for a "purely co-operative
wholesale society" for locals. The directors concluded this was not feasible and arranged for the AFCEC to act as a selling and purchasing agent for the UFA on specific terms. Because of grassroots protests, however, the UFA did not give the AFCEC a monopoly but allowed locals and co-ops to continue to deal with other agents.

Further criticism of elevator company wholesaling surfaced at the 1917 and 1918 UFA secretaries' meetings. Some complained that the companies' prices were high and that co-ops did not get a lower wholesale price than individuals and locals, making it hard for them, with their overhead costs, to operate. Several co-ops, therefore, bought from other suppliers, although many tried to deal with the elevator companies. It was suggested the companies act as true co-operative wholesalers to the co-ops by paying a dividend to them on their buying volume. The 1918 conventions called for a democratically controlled wholesale department, run by the co-ops, the UGG, and the farm associations, to offer low prices.

Discontent with the UGG led to a meeting of eight co-op societies in February 1919. Most, if not all, of them were, or had been, UFA co-ops, and most, if not all, the delegates were UFA men. They agreed to use the UGG as a wholesale when possible, but felt it had not yet proven itself "the ultimate buying agency for the retail co-operatives of this province." They then formed the Alberta Co-operative Union to further their interests. At a later Union meeting, greater antipathy to the UGG emerged. Critical of the Company's unwillingness to declare patronage dividends, and angry over its alleged "fierce" competition with co-ops through its mail order business and other tactics, the delegates denied membership to the elevator company.

Not all UFA members opposed the UGG or supported the Union. President Wood felt the Union was "outside the scope" of the UFA and believed locals should be "careful about contributing funds" to it. He failed to see how it could "overcome the difficulties which the U.G.G. had already been trying to overcome."

This split in the co-operative movement between anti- and pro-UGG forces spilled into the political field. The Co-op Union was a consumer movement whose leaders mostly opposed "class co-operation," believing their co-ops should be open to all. Guy Johnson, O.L. McPherson, and S. Stevenson, officers of the Union, took a similar stance in the post-war political dispute, arguing that the UFA political movement should
be open to all classes, not just farmers. Wood, on the other hand, an "occupational co-operator," was not keen about the consumer movement; he was "single-mindedly interested in building a multi-purpose rural co-operative system" under UFA direction. This agricultural "class" focus became part of his political doctrine in the spring of 1919. He argued that farmers must take political action as a class and an organization and close the door to other groups. Wood's occupational emphasis, then, like his Union opponents' broader, inter-class strategy, applied to both the economic and political fields. Both factions' ideas about co-operation and politics were inseparably linked.

The UGG reacted to the Co-op Union by trying to improve its service. In 1919, it proposed to open stores where demand warranted, financing them primarily through the local sale of stock. The stores would give patronage refunds and have some local control, although final authority would rest with the Company. The latter provision led UFA consumer co-operators to reject the plan because it smacked of the same centralized control that had made them suspicious of the UGG all along.

The 1920 UFA convention was not interested in the UGG plan either. The delegates simply told the officers to encourage the formation of co-op societies and to ask the UGG to open a co-operative wholesale. But most societies no longer wanted a UGG wholesale. Instead, fifteen of them formed a "Central Co-operative Buying Association" in 1921 to supply co-ops in the province with a variety of merchandise at low prices. The idea of a wholesale, however, was premature. The secretary of the Buying Association found many wholesalers and manufacturers "ready to give very substantial discounts if they are guaranteed the total business" of the Association's membership. He therefore recommended that "no attempt be made to establish a wholesale centre or to do any extensive co-operative buying."

The campaign for a new wholesale, the meetings of the Co-operative Union, and the criticisms of the UGG, revealed tensions within the agrarian movement - and missed chances for united action. Another missed opportunity was a failed attempt to merge several local farmer mutual fire insurance companies into a large UFA business. The 1917 convention approved the amalgamation, but the companies refused to surrender control. Farmers also failed to practice co-operation as they increasingly patronized private rather than co-operative creameries.
UFA farmers' lack of support for a proposed pork plant, and their manner of selling livestock, were among their most serious co-operative failures. The UFA continued the AFA campaign for a government meat plant and influenced the province to present a proposal to the 1910 convention which a majority of the delegates endorsed. It committed the government to build and operate a pork packing plant if farmers guaranteed to provide 50,000 hogs a year. Individual producers would sign a five year contract to indicate how many they would supply and to commit to sell exclusively to the plant or pay a fine. 80

The UFA Executive exhorted farmers to sign up quickly, 81 but farmers soon objected to the contract's terms. They protested that the payment upon delivery was too low, and that it was unfair they should have to sell all their marketable pigs to the plant. The plant proponents responded that the initial payment could be changed and that producers had to sell all their hogs to the plant to ensure its viability. 82 They also tried to influence farmers by arguing that the proposal was "co-operative," 83 or that it would help usher in the "co-operative commonwealth." 84

Despite such rhetoric, by the end of 1910, farmers had only promised a quarter of the hogs needed to construct the plant. Undaunted, the pork committee convinced the 1911 convention to agree to a new canvass, but only 4280 hogs were pledged on a pre-canvas guarantee form circulated to the unions. 85 The directors did not give up, though, and sent the 1908 Pork Commission report to the locals 86 with a "statement showing that the whole proposal is a co-operative one." 87 However, significant support for a plant simply could not be raised.

The government pork plant campaign was effectively over. The terms of the contract, the availability of local markets for hogs, 88 and farmers' growing focus on wheat production, contributed to its failure. In addition, some farmers hesitated to commit themselves to a contract since they had seen pork prices so low "they did not pay for the wear and tear on the bale of the swill pail." 89 On the other hand, high prices during the campaign made farmers "indifferent" as they could not "see the need of the proposed co-operative plant." 90 Individualism - a weak co-operative ethos - also worked against the campaign. One "lump of cussed selfishness" would not sign a contract because he reasoned that "once the plant is erected, I can easily dispose of as many hogs as I desire
Following a suggestion by the UFA pork committee, farmers began selling large numbers of stock by the carload, often through the AFCEC. The AFCEC livestock department handled 56,000 hogs and over 1100 head of cattle in the 1914-15 fiscal year, and 36,000 hogs and over 3500 head of cattle the following year. In 1915-16, the Company handled 628 cars of stock; the next year, almost twice as many.

But, as with the government plant campaign, all was not well, co-operatively speaking. Edward Carswell, manager of the AFCEC livestock department, told the 1915 UFA convention that when commission profits were prorated to shippers in 1914 in the form of stock for a proposed co-operative pork plant,

we found public sentiment decidedly against the co-operative plan. It was competition our farmers were looking for, and we were received, not as a Company of their own creation, to be supported and built up by their patronage, but as another buyer for their hogs, competing with the local buyer.

Carswell believed many farmers, particularly those belonging to the Association, considered that we were simply robbing the farmers who sold us hogs, of the 5 per cent retained in this case, and asked us to quote them a net price, the same as the other buyers were doing, without taking into consideration a future refund, either in stock in the company, or otherwise. This appeared to be the feeling in practically every point where we were doing business, and about the middle of May it was necessary, if we were to accomplish anything, to discontinue doing business on the five per cent basis and offer a net price we could pay.

Once the Company abandoned the co-op plan, its business took off. In late 1914, however, lack of capital and inexpert buying forced it to do some commission business.

By the following year, the UFA livestock committee believed farmers must sell large numbers of hogs on consignment before a co-operative plant could be established. This supply could be secured, they argued, if locals formed more district associations for stock shipping. More associations were created, but the required numbers of consigned stock were apparently not forthcoming. The co-op pork plant idea consequently slipped into oblivion. The promise of better prices from several buyers, and a still weak commitment to co-operation, spelled its demise.

As P.P. Woodbridge pointed out, that immature co-operative spirit also led to
missed opportunities with the AFCEC supply department. An English co-operator, Woodbridge settled near Calgary and joined the UFA in 1910. He was appointed to the central office the following year, and was general secretary from 1913 to 1918 when he retired because of poor health and what he believed were undemocratic tendencies and lack of concern by UFA and UGG officers for co-op societies. Always frank, Woodbridge laid out in 1916 what the unions had failed to do with the AFCEC. Noting that the handling of supplies by the elevators had killed or weakened several UFA locals, Woodbridge argued that farmers had foolishly abandoned their locals to deal with the Company individually. They should have strenthened their unions and co-ops to make them the main, if not exclusive, buyers from the elevator supply department. They then could have forced, and still could force, the department to pay patronage dividends.

While missing co-operative opportunities with the AFCEC, livestock shipping, the proposed pork plant, and mutual fire insurance, farmers' support for co-operative hail insurance and credit, the amalgamation of the farmer elevator companies, and a wheat pool, revealed their growing belief in co-operation. Before 1912, the province alone provided hail insurance for those wanting it. That year, the UFA convention, hoping to spread insurance costs around, instructed the Executive to lobby for a compulsory hail tax, and, if unsuccessful, to propose that each municipality formed under the new Act impose a hail tax if approved by a majority of its ratepayers.

Having decided to get out of the hail insurance business, the province refused to implement a province-wide tax, but agreed to insert clauses in the Municipalities Act along the lines of the convention's scheme allowing districts to levy a compulsory hail insurance tax upon ratepayer approval. Twenty-six municipalities eventually voted to receive coverage. Before 1917, the insurance was funded by a flat tax on all assessable land; that year, an additional charge was levied on crop land. Owing to this new tax, and because claimants were not paid on time, farmers became disgruntled about the whole insurance program.

The UFA Executive and the Hail Insurance Board devised a new plan providing for hail insurance in all organized districts, funded by crop land only; the tax on all assessable land would be removed. The compulsory nature of the old scheme was entirely ended as any farmer could withdraw from the program and its tax obligations. Moreover,
the tax would be imposed after the hail season so a sufficient levy could be made to pay all losses each year, and money could be borrowed to pay claims promptly.105

Since it was based on the actual cost of insurance each year and was voluntary, this was the most co-operative hail plan ever offered to farmers. The 1918 UFA convention recognized this, and one delegate used co-operative discourse to gain support for it:

If we are a co-operative body we must all join together. If there are troubles in one locality and not in another, we must all bear those troubles in order that we may get the full benefit of this co-operation.... [On] my farm ... there ... [has] not been a hail storm.... At the same time, I am willing to pay my proportion of the insurance in order that those who are hailed out can get the benefit.106

By endorsing this co-operative proposal107 and supporting the co-operative program the government later implemented,108 farmers revealed their growing belief in co-operation.

The UFA appealed to that co-operative ethos to convince members to buy private hail insurance from the organization. In 1917, the Association acted as an agent for a company under a quasi-co-operative plan, selling insurance to farmers and earning $4000 for itself.109 "A policy written through the U.F.A.," an advertisement declared, "is a step in co-operation and a blow at private control and monopoly of your business."110

The growing support for co-operation evident in farmers' thinking about hail insurance was apparent in their ideas about credit. The province's reluctance to provide these services, and farmers' co-op education and experience, cultivated this emerging feeling of co-operative possibility. Farmers made four main complaints about the banks in the early twentieth century: producers could not obtain enough credit; interest rates were too high; loan terms were too short; and collection and foreclosure proceedings were unfair.111

In 1912, the UFA called for government loans,112 and, at the convention's request, central office mailed a circular to the unions on state credit programs in New Zealand and Australia.113 Later, however, secretary Fream sent out information arguing that state loan programs might be affected by patronage or plutocratic control and that co-operative credit substituted "self-reliance and self-help for state aid."114 This, the province's refusal to provide loans, and farmers' co-operative successes and learning, had their effect. Despite resolutions submitted to the 1913 convention calling for state loans, and
Tregillus' call for a provincial bank, the delegates did not rule out any credit plan but appeared to favour legislation for co-op credit societies. Farmers were grasping the possibilities of co-operation.

That thinking continued, especially after the financial crisis of 1914 and the war made it hard to get loans or renewals, leading the 1915 UFA convention to demand a semi-moratorium on mortgages, land sale agreements, and machinery notes. The convention also endorsed co-operative credit, but turned the whole credit question over to the directors for analysis. The Board appointed president Speakman to study and report on the subject in the Guide so members could come to an informed consensus at the 1916 convention.

Born in England, James Speakman had homesteaded near Penhold, Alberta, in 1891. He supported the Patrons of Industry, joined the Alberta Farmers' Association and helped form the UFA, of which he was a director in 1910-11, second vice-president in 1914, and president in 1915 until his death late that year. An eloquent speaker, Speakman was a Methodist and an ardent backer of suffrage, prohibition, direct legislation, and free trade.

Speakman studied loan programs from around the world for his Guide articles, but as a liberal, he liked market-based plans. He argued that farmers did not want artificially low interest rates, just the lowest rates good security could obtain in the world's markets. He therefore advocated co-operative mortgage associations that would raise capital by selling debentures on the collective security of members' land. For short term loans, he proposed co-op credit societies. He had little use for the New Zealand loan scheme W.R. Ball favoured. Sounding like Fream before him, he argued that state loans were open to political influence and patronage and did not provide better terms and interest rates than co-op mortgage associations. Government loans, he concluded, did not foster "self-reliance" and "co-operation" but made people "dependent" on the state.

The UFA Board endorsed Speakman's co-op proposals, but at the 1916 convention, W.R. Ball called for state loans, another delegate wanted a government bank, and John Leedy, a former Populist governor, advocated small private banks. The delegates, however, endorsed the idea of co-op mortgage societies. Their sense of
co-operative possibility was rising.

At the 1917 UFA convention, the government presented a draft mortgage act by which the province would lend money to farmers at cost. Although the UFA had not asked for state loans for years, the delegates, aware of farmers' great need of credit, endorsed the proposal.\textsuperscript{129} The bill was enacted,\textsuperscript{130} but did not help farmers, initially because of the difficulty of selling bonds during the war to finance the loans.\textsuperscript{131} Later in 1917, the government passed the "Co-operative Credit Act" to facilitate the formation of co-op societies for short term credit.\textsuperscript{132} This also proved useless as it did not force the banks to loan to societies at advantageous rates.\textsuperscript{133} The only real help farmers got was the Cow Bill which enabled groups of producers to obtain loans for livestock on the province's credit.\textsuperscript{134} This semi-co-operative scheme reinforced farmers' belief that co-op credit could work.

As with their notions about credit and hail insurance, farmers' support for the merger of the farmer elevator companies revealed their growing commitment to co-operation. The the AFCEC, the Grain Growers' Grain Company (GGGC), and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company discussed amalgamation at their meetings in 1914 and 1915. The powerful Saskatchewan Company remained aloof, but the AFCEC, reliant on the GGGC's finances, was interested. In 1917, the possibilities of united effort prompted the AFCEC and GGGC, with the UFA convention's blessing, to form the United Grain Growers. With Lakehead terminals, 300 elevators, commission and export businesses, and wholesale warehouses, the UGG became a major force in the farm economy.\textsuperscript{135}

Farmers' belief in co-operation developed further through their experience with the Board of Grain Supervisors and the Wheat Board, and culminated in the pool campaign. Farmers had always suspected that the Grain Exchange, which operated until just before the Board of Supervisors was created in 1917, allowed speculators to manipulate prices.\textsuperscript{136} This led farmers to endorse price fixing by the Board in 1917-18. Fearing a post-war price drop,\textsuperscript{137} some farmers also supported a 1919 UFA convention resolution asking for a fixed wheat price, but president H.W. Wood convinced the delegates that fixing prices in peacetime would suggest that farmers were profiteering. The convention, therefore, simply requested legislation to control grain speculation, and
asked "that steps be taken to provide the necessary credit" for producers to hold their 
wheat until they wished to sell.\textsuperscript{138} Some locals still wanted a fixed price,\textsuperscript{139} however, 
while Wood remained adamant that a price guarantee would be a special privilege.\textsuperscript{140}

Despite protest from many farmers, the government allowed the Grain Exchange 
to reopen on July 15, 1919. Wheat prices, which were expected to fall, rose - prompting 
Ottawa to establish the Wheat Board on July 31. The Board, which had grain trade, 
milling, and farmer members, including Wood, created a co-operative pool that paid 
producers a set amount when the grain was delivered, and distributed all profits at the end 
of the season's operations.\textsuperscript{141} Many farmers were disappointed when the Board set the 
initial price at \$2.15 a bushel; some did not understand this was an advance rather than a 
final price. Wood convinced the 1920 convention that the Board was getting the highest 
possible prices at low cost,\textsuperscript{142} and was vindicated when the Board declared an interim 
payment in May. Farmers were therefore angry when the government announced the 
Board's termination in August. They demanded its reinstatement, especially as wheat 
prices fell that autumn, a decline they blamed on the return to the open market.\textsuperscript{143}

It has been suggested that farmers considered forming a wheat pool only after the 
government canceled the Wheat Board; that pooling was their second choice.\textsuperscript{144} This is 
generally true, although even before the Board's termination was announced, some 
farmers were concerned about its composition\textsuperscript{145} and wanted an investigation of the 
possibilities of pooling. The Battle River UFA/UFWA convention noted there were only 
three farmers on the Board, and asked central office to determine how many members 
would guarantee their wheat to "a farmers' co-operative selling agency, similar to the one 
now being organized in Washington."\textsuperscript{146}

The \textit{Guide} had familiarized farmers with the wheat pools in Washington, Idaho, 
and Oregon, and with the fruit pools in California. These pools bound members for five 
years to deliver all their produce to an agency which sold it and returned all profits to 
them.\textsuperscript{147} The possibilities suggested by this method, the success of the Wheat Board 
"pool," and the achievements of UFA/UFWA co-operative marketing, led the UFA 
Board, encouraged by the Bow River convention, to ask the UGG and the Saskatchewan 
Elevator Company to consider organizing a pool to deliver western wheat directly to 
European markets.\textsuperscript{148}
The termination of the Wheat Board led many farmers to support the idea of a wheat pool. SOURCE: Guide, Nov. 24, 1920, p. 6 (top); Jan. 19, 1921, p. 6 (below)
The Canadian Council of Agriculture (CCA) still hoped the Wheat Board might be reestablished for the short term, although it had favoured a voluntary pool as a permanent policy even before the Board's dissolution was announced. Consistent with this position, in October the CCA appointed a committee, which included H.W. Wood, to "enquire into the feasibility of further development of the farmers' co-operative agencies" for marketing wheat. The committee reported to the December CCA meeting that a pool was feasible if at least 60% of the western wheat acreage could be brought into a five year contract. The CCA organized another committee from the elevator companies and provincial farm associations to work out the arrangements.

Meanwhile, grassroots support for a pool swept across Alberta. During a membership campaign that began in November, canvassers reported "keen interest in a wheat pool." One claimed the prospect of a pool made "the strongest appeal in every instance." Another stated that "those of us who worked in the drive would like a chance" to get "contracts for the wheat pool, and are sure the results would be favourable." Echoing this excitement, the UFA central secretary wrote:

The sentiment for co-operative marketing has increased a thousand fold in the last few weeks. All but a small remnant of farmers have been driven to realize the hopelessness of the old political parties to help them in their economic struggle.... The farmers are massing in their might to batter down the ramparts of special privilege, and usher in a new and better era - a co-operative commonwealth.

Women as well as men were caught up in the pool movement; four resolutions on the subject were submitted to the 1921 UFWA convention. At district conventions and the UFA convention, both sexes endorsed the CCA's proposed pool, although a few farmers, mainly radicals, still called for a Wheat Board.

Outside Alberta, few farmers shared this sense of co-operative possibility. The powerful Saskatchewan Elevator Company preferred a Wheat Board as it would mean guaranteed storage and elevator fees for the Company. Other Saskatchewan farm leaders feared they could not sign up enough farmers to make a pool viable. Moreover, a commission appointed by the Saskatchewan government opposed a contract pool.

In contrast, most Alberta farmers, because of the success of UFA/UFWA cooperation, quickly endorsed the idea of a pool. The many ex-Americans in the movement were especially interested in pooling as it was popular in the United States. Ideological
liberals approved the method as self-help and a way to make "supply and demand rightly affect the price of grain." Co-operative purists were excited that a pool, unlike the UGG, would return profits according to use, not investment. Alberta agrarian culture also favoured pooling. The Alberta Farmers' Association had popularized planned marketing - feeding the market only when there was demand for grain to keep prices up. A pool could do this. It could also "control" prices - the Society of Equity strategy. A contract pool could hold grain off the market to force prices up. This prospect led Charles Harris, a UFA director and advocate of controlled marketing, to endorse the pool plan.

Alberta farmers did not give up on a pool in 1921 as Saskatchewan producers expressed opposition. The Victoria district convention called on the UFA to organize a pool, although Wood argued that no pool could be successful without Saskatchewan. The final nail in the campaign was driven in December when the CCA committee recommended shelving the pool plan, arguing it would be impossible to get 60% of the crop under contract or to enforce any contracts signed. The committee knew that most Saskatchewan farmers, who produced a majority of the West's wheat, wanted the Wheat Board reinstated.

The wheat pool was stillborn, but the possibility of creating it contributed to the UFA's political success in 1921. While the UFA and Farmers' Platforms did not explicitly call for a pool, they promised to encourage co-operative marketing. Moreover, the pool crusade generated mass excitement that rubbed off on the political campaign.

Farmers' faith in pooling did not die. In 1922, a UFA/UFWA district association proposed to handle all produce "under the pool system," with members signing a five year contract. Similarly, the Calgary Milk Producers' Association, which had been formed under UFA auspices, sought to create a milk pool. After the second Wheat Board campaign failed, Alberta farmers, primed with a sense of co-operative possibility, created the first provincial wheat pool in 1923. The two other prairie provinces followed suit in 1924, and by 1927, the western pools became, with 15,000,000 acres under contract, the "greatest agrarian co-operative in the world."

The Alberta pool agitation of 1920-23 was a highpoint of the UFA/UFWA co-operative movement. Farmers' belief in co-operation, evident in their support for co-op hail insurance and credit, and for a single elevator company, culminated in the pool
campaign. The failure of governments to provide state insurance, loans, elevators, terminals, and a wheat board; co-operative ideology and propaganda; and the success of UFA/UFWA co-operative trading, fostered this growing faith in co-operation. Co-operative ideas and action reinforced farmers' belief in education, democracy, and industrial action; their aversion to competition; their distrust of traditional politics; their non-partisanism; and their desire for political integrity, greater economic equality, and decentralized popular control of basic institutions.\[^{168}\]

Co-operation greatly shaped the "movement culture." It helped create a co-operative ethos, a deep-seated commitment to mutuality and collective self-help. Farmers' economic ties; their community work and social interaction; their practice of mutual aid; their work with the Association; their collaboration with other groups; their class battles; the tales they spun about those battles; and their radical, co-operative, and social gospel beliefs, also informed this ethos. But its foundation was the co-operative trading in hundreds of locals and societies, and through the elevator companies. Co-operation developed farmers' sense of collectivity, their ability to work as a group, and their faith in the organization. It instilled self-confidence, and suggested, in its successes, that a more co-operative and less competitive society could truly be built.

Farmers first expressed their co-operative ethos in co-operating with each other. "As to the aims of our local," wrote one secretary, "the first object ... is the working up of a spirit of co-operation and fraternity among members."\[^{169}\] Farmers practiced this ethic through activities like "co-operative gopher poisoning"\[^{170}\] or helping to load each others' railway cars to avoid demurrage fines.\[^{171}\] Supplying other members with seed before selling elsewhere,\[^{172}\] or collectively pressuring the government was also "co-operation."\[^{173}\] Even the building of a UFA hall could be described as "a triumph of our united effort."\[^{174}\] One southern UFA association sent crews north to obtain hay for the district. This too, evinced a "spirit of co-operation."\[^{175}\]

Farmers also applied co-operative discourse to gender relations. Rice Sheppard argued that UFA support for suffrage revealed "co-operation."\[^{176}\] Once in the movement, farm women aimed to "co-operate" with the UFA and other reform and women's organizations. At a tea hosted by the Calgary UFWA local and attended by members of the Women's Labor League, the Local Council of Women, the I.O.D.E., and the Women's
A LESSON IN CO-OPERATION

The essence of co-operation. SOURCE: Guide, Jan. 19, 1916, p. 6
Institute,

the key note of the remarks was co-operation. Mrs. Sears particularly brought out the fact that although we differ on many points, yet we have much in common, and if we learn to work together with a common purpose and for a common cause, we must learn to emphasize our points in common.177

Women's concern with children and education led some UFWA locals to "co-operate" with school teachers. In describing one union's efforts to do this, a Guide editor commented that "co-operation between parents and teachers is greatly to be desired and is all too often lacking. Co-operation in this, as in everything else, secures the best results."178

Women also tried to foster a group ethos in youth through junior club work. "Those who have grown ... in the fixed habits of a narrow individualism," Irene Parlby explained, "cannot be expected to throw themselves with any ardor into a movement which is the very antithesis of individualism. That is one reason why we urge the formation of junior branches, that the farm boys and girls may ... learn to ... co-operate."179 Margaret Gunn believed the Junior UFA trained youth for "future service in the new co-operative community."180 In addition, farm women sought "closer co-operation" with state agencies, including the Departments of Education and Extension.181 They even felt that "co-operation" with "non-English speaking people" was a "realizable ideal."182

Farmers' co-operative ethos led many of them to believe that co-operation could be the animating principle of all relations - between ethnic and other groups, classes, races, churches, regions, nations, and the sexes. As Gunn wrote years later:

We visualized society in all its ramifications across national boundaries, creeds, and tongues being transformed through the substitution of co-operative endeavor instead of competition as the dominating factor in society.183

Molded by farmers' Christian beliefs, "co-operation" became a fundamentally moral principle; its defining essence was the "virtue of unselfishness"184 which was the only hope for world peace. Irene Parlby declared in 1918:

Today the world is bleeding to death in its efforts to conquer a false ideal of nationalism, but the only true nationalism, the only true internationalism is a spirit of mutual sympathy and understanding among
THE JONAH MAN OF THE FARMERS' ORGANIZATION

Farmers' growing co-operative ethos. SOURCE: Guide, Apr. 12, 1916, p. 6
all the people, in other words, the spirit of unselfishness which is the essence of the thing we call co-operation. Until we can bring about the birth of that new spirit among the nations, until we can grow it in our homes, our own communities, our own Dominion, [we might] as well cry out to the tides to cease their flowing ... as bid wars to cease!\textsuperscript{183}

H.W. Wood argued that the groups and nations of the world, once fully organized, would be forced to co-operate, the only alternative being mutual destruction.

Farmers never clearly articulated how a co-operative society would be created. Many liberals believed it would emerge from a truly competitive capitalism in which the market determined wages and prices without monopolistic interference. Many radicals felt it would require the nationalization of all utilities and major companies. Co-operative enthusiasts thought it would come through an economy dominated by co-ops.

Irrespective of their exact views on the co-operative commonwealth, the prospect of creating a more co-operative and less competitive society captivated many farmers' imaginations. It gave them a sense of purpose and helped them believe their agenda would benefit all. This generated great excitement and commitment, mobilizing farmers to work for the movement - and ultimately to take political action.

Co-operation shaped the Alberta farm movement. The Equity co-op failure encouraged the "forming" of the UFA; thereafter, co-operation "built" and later "politicized" the organization. While farmers missed co-operative opportunities, co-operation appealed to their pocketbooks and bestowed movement confidence, an ethos of collectivity, a vision of a co-operative society, and a sense of excitement. This attracted farmers to the movement, motivated them to work for it, and contributed to the agrarian revolt. Co-operation, thus, was integral to all three movement phases. It helped "form," "build," and "politicize" the movement.
ENDNOTES

1Grain Growers' Guide (hereafter GGG), Apr. 27, 1910, p. 17.


5David Laycock, Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies, 1910-1945 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), pp. 87-88, 123, 283.


7MacPherson, Each For All, pp. 3-7.


9For more detail on this see chapter one.

10MacPherson, Each For All, p. 46.
11Ibid., p. 106.

12Ibid., p. 47.

13Saturday News, Aug. 3, 1907, p. 5.

14Glenbow Archives (hereafter GA), United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Executive and Board Minutes and Reports (hereafter Executive), 1915, p. 34.

15Regarding the Patrons, see Wood, A History of Farmers' Movements, p. 118.


17In 1918, UFA general secretary Woodbridge named six farmer co-op stores he knew of (National Archives of Canada, Co-operative Union of Canada (hereafter CUC), MG 28 115, Vol. 21, General Files U-1918, Woodbridge to Watson, Feb. 20, 1918). Local secretaries' reports in the Guide indicate that a few other stores were formed after the war.


19GA, United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Annual Convention (hereafter MR), 1911, pp. 16-17.

20Co-operator, Aug. 1911, p. 8; Nov. 1911, p. 8.


22GGG, June 1, 1910, p. 16.

23MR, 1910, p. 32.

24GGG, Mar. 2, 1910, p. 26. By 1913, farmers were also writing to the Eckville co-op manager for advice (Co-operator, Mar. 1913, p. 16).

25GGG, Apr. 24, 1912, p. 16.

26Ibid., Dec. 3, 1913, p. 9.

27Ibid., July 6, 1910, p. 12.
28Ibid., July 4, 1911, p. 10.
29Ibid., Feb. 16, 1910, p. 10.
30Ibid., Dec. 28, 1910, p. 11.
31MR, 1910, p. 21.
32Ibid., 1912, p. 55.
33Ibid., 1914, p. 14.
34Ibid., 1911, p. 41.
35Ibid., 1913, p. 31.

37MR, 1913, p. 25.
40GGG, Oct. 15, 1913, p. 4.
41Ibid., Sept. 17, 1913, p. 14.
42Ibid., Sept. 3, 1913, p. 16.
43Ibid., June 4, 1913, p. 11.

44Queen's University Archives, T.A. Crerar Papers, Coll. 2117, Box 181, File 6, UFA, Woodbridge, Official Circular No. 8, Nov. 2, 1914; Box 194, Pamphlets, United Farmers of Alberta.
45MR, 1917, pp. 39, 41.
46Executive, 1916, p. 142.
Most of these societies involved UFA/UFWA locals.

Many of these societies involved UFA/UFWA locals.

The proposed by-law form the central office sent to UFA associations also made this suggestion, although it indicated that a co-op board could admit non-UFA members (UFA Fonds, Box 1, File 12, "Incorporation Procedure").

He strongly expressed himself against any form of "class conscious co-operation" (Co-operator, Dec. 1912, p. 11).

The main criticism was that the companies refused to pay patronage dividends.

MR, 1915, p. 36.

Ibid., 1916, pp. 15, 17; Executive, 1915, pp. 8-9, 13-14, 19-20.

Report of UFA Secretaries' Conventions, 1918, Second Day's Proceedings,


70Ibid., Vol. 23, General Files, W-1919, Woodbridge to Keen, Apr. 19, 1919; MacPherson, Each For All, p. 54.

71Executive, 1919, p. 177.

72MacPherson, Each For All, p. 107.

73Ibid., pp. 54-55.

74MR, 1920, p. 62.

75Executive, 1920, p. 58.

76GGG, Feb. 2, 1921, p. 15.

77Ibid., Nov. 9, 1921, p. 17.


79Some of these were government co-operative creameries which expired during the war owing to lack of business (GGG, Nov. 28, 1917, p. 9; Nov. 24, 1915, p. 12).


81GGG, Apr. 13, 1910, p. 16.


83Ibid., June 22, 1910, p. 17.

84Ibid., Apr. 13, 1910, p. 23.
\[85\text{MR}, 1911, \text{pp. 3, 28, 37-38; 1912, p. 34.}\]

\[86\text{GGG, Aug. 20, 1913, p. 11.}\]

\[87\text{Ibid., 1912, p. 61.}\]

\[88\text{GGG, May 24, 1911, p. 15; Aug. 3, 1910, p. 17; June 21, 1911, p. 16.}\]

\[89\text{Ibid., June 21, 1911, p. 17. Quotation in Ibid., Apr. 13, 1910, p. 23.}\]

\[90\text{Ibid., June 15, 1910, p. 16.}\]

\[91\text{Ibid., Mar. 16, 1910, p. 16.}\]

\[92\text{MR, 1914, pp. 22-23.}\]

\[93\text{GGG, Nov. 24, 1915, p. 14; Nov. 22, 1916, p. 16; Dec. 6, 1916, p. 5; Nov. 28, 1917, p. 36.}\]

\[94\text{MR, 1915, p. 15.}\]

\[95\text{Ibid., pp. 15-16.}\]

\[96\text{Ibid., p. 16.}\]

\[97\text{GGG, May 19, 1915, p. 7; Patton, p. 127.}\]

\[98\text{MR, 1916, pp. 41-45; 1917, pp. 81, 83.}\]

\[99\text{GGG, Apr. 17, 1918, p. 29; CUC, Vol. 21, File W-1918, Woodbridge to Keen, May 26, 1918; Vol. 23, File W-1919, Woodbridge to Keen, Apr. 19, 1919; MacPherson, Each For All, p. 54.}\]

\[100\text{GGG, Nov. 22, 1916, p. 12.}\]

\[101\text{MR, 1912, pp. 41-42.}\]

\[102\text{Ibid., pp. 51, 55-56.}\]

\[103\text{Ibid., 1913, pp. 19-20; GGG, Mar. 6, 1912, pp. 17, 24-26.}\]

\[104\text{GGG, Sept. 6, 1916, pp. 20-21; May 9, 1917, p. 25; Dec. 12, 1917, p. 10.}\]

\[105\text{MR, 1918, pp. 43, 105-113.}\]

\[106\text{Ibid., 1918, p. 123. For similar statements, see pp. 115-119.}\]
107 Ibid., pp. 123, 127.


109 GGG, Oct. 17, 1917, p. 13. The UFA could not secure an agency in subsequent years because of opposition from line companies (MR, 1919, p. 16).

110 GGG, June 6, 1917, p. 12.


112 The 1912 convention demanded government loans (MR, 1912, p. 52). Later in the year, most locals endorsed a resolution calling for provincial government loans at three to five percent interest. The resolution is found in GGG, Apr. 3, 1912, p. 20. Examples of locals endorsing same can be found in Ibid., May 1, 1912, p. 14; May 8, 1912, p. 20.

113 The convention's instructions can be found in MR, 1912, p. 52. The circulars were reprinted in the GGG, Aug. 28, 1912, p. 12; Sept. 4, 1912, p. 10.


115 MR, 1913, pp. 35-36. The resolution asked the government to "enact legislation enabling farmers to form co-operative credit associations, or to take such other steps as may be necessary to enable them to secure cheap and extended loans over a period of years with a small annual installment of principal and interest."


117 MR, 1915, p. 47.

118 Ibid., p. 35.


120 Ibid., Dec. 29, 1915, p. 12.


126 MR, 1916, p. 78.

127 GGG, Mar. 8, 1916, pp. 7, 33-36.

128 MR, 1916, p. 78.

129 Ibid., 1917, pp. 147-169, 105, 107.


131 Ibid., Jan. 16, 1918, p. 18.

132 Ibid., May 2, 1917, p. 36.

133 Ibid., Mar. 10, 1920, p. 49.

134 Ibid., pp. 54-55.


137 Rolph, Henry Wise Wood, pp. 120-121.

138 GGG, Jan. 29, 1919, pp. 33, 48. The quotation is on p. 33.

139 Ibid., Apr. 2, 1919, p. 10; Apr. 16, 1919, p. 10; May 21, 1919, p. 12.

140 Ibid., Dec. 31, 1919, p. 3.

141 Rolph, pp. 121-122.


143 Rolph, pp. 124-126.
144 Ibid., p. 126; MacPherson, Each For All, p. 71.


146 Ibid., June 30, 1920, p. 37.

147 Rolph, pp. 126-127.

148 Executive, 1920, p. 68.

149 GGG, Nov. 3, 1920, p. 29.

150 Ibid., July 21, 1920, p. 3.

151 Ibid., Nov. 3, 1920, p. 29.

152 Ibid., Dec. 15, 1920, pp. 3-4; Jan. 26, 1921, p. 35.

153 Ibid., Dec. 22, 1920, p. 16.

154 Ibid., Nov. 17, 1920, p. 18.

155 Ibid., Dec. 29, 1920, p. 16.


157 Ibid., Jan. 12, 1921, p. 21.

158 The UFA convention resolution can be found in MR, 1921, p. 61. Two UFA/UFWA district conventions' support for a pool can be found in GGG, Dec. 1, 1920, p. 14; Jan. 5, 1921, p. 4.

159 GGG, Jan. 19, 1921, p. 16; June 15, 1921, p. 4.

160 Rolph, pp. 127-129.


162 Executive, 1921, p. 82.

163 GGG, Dec. 28, 1921, p. 3.


MR, 1922, p. 131.

Rolph, p. 159.

MacPherson, Each For All, p. 213; Laycock, pp. 29, 61, 64.

GGG, May 1, 1912, p. 14.


Ibid., Sept. 6, 1911, p. 24.

Ibid., Oct. 23, 1918, p. 11.


Ibid., July 31, 1912, p. 15.

UFA Secretaries' Conventions, 1919, p. 28.

GGG, May 21, 1913, p. 8.

Ibid., Sept. 14, 1921, p. 39.


Ibid., June 22, 1921, p. 19.

Ibid., Feb. 23, 1921, p. 33.

Ibid., Apr. 10, 1918, p. 47; MR, 1917, p. 133.

MR, 1918, p. 317.


Chapter Seven: Education in the Movement

"A thinking man cannot be kept in slavery."^1

-W.J. Tregillus

Education, and farmers' belief that through it they could solve their collective difficulties and reform society, helped "form," "build," and "politicize" the movement. Farmers used various forms of formal and informal education, including that supported by corporations and the state, for these purposes.

Farmers' commitment to self-education reflected a European and North American popular tradition. Since the early nineteenth century, people had studied their economic and political problems and sought solutions through farm, co-operative, socialist, labour, and church organizations. This practice, and the rise of mass education, fostered a widely held belief in learning for self-improvement.2 The Grange, the "tap-root" from which many farm associations developed, was very committed to education, "for ourselves and for our children."3

Education helped "form" the pre-UFA farm movement.4 The Edmonton Bulletin became the first major educational agency for farmers in Alberta. It described the evils of the CPR, the grain trade, and other monopolies; followed the early western farm movement; and admonished farmers to establish co-ops. Moreover, it supported the Edmonton Agricultural Society, from which many farm leaders emerged, and the Patrons of Industry. It also provided coverage of other Alberta farm organizations and a forum in which farmers could air their views. In these ways, the Bulletin developed the early movement.

The pre-UFA farm associations had educational objectives, albeit limited ones. The Edmonton Agricultural Society was devoted to farm instruction. The Patrons of Industry introduced farmers to independent political action. The Alberta Farmers' Association taught them about pressure politics and how to improve their production and marketing. The Society of Equity indoctrinated farmers about organization, controlled marketing, government ownership, and a farmer-labour alliance. Through such education,
early organizations brought farmers into a movement, helping to "form" it.

Education then "built" the UFA/UFWA. The organization's wide-ranging educational goals, stemming from its predecessors' varying agendas, attracted many farmers, making the UFA/UFWA grow. At the same time, members were motivated to "build" the movement as they developed their critical faculties and belief in education. Expressing this belief, W.J. Tregillus mused:

Surely we are wearing bonds that we should burst ... and this can be accomplished by removing the cause of our bondage - lack of knowledge. Knowledge is power, gives light, independence, and freedom; while lack of knowledge - ignorance - is weakness, darkness, dependence, and bondage.¹

Farmers believed education could enable them to solve their community, economic, and political problems.

The unions were the foundation of UFA/UFWA education; some locals did little besides educate members.⁶ Unions were "schools of progress"⁷ - "the greatest little thinkeries you ever saw."⁸ At meetings, usually held once or twice a month, farmers "secured education and information which would otherwise be out of their reach"⁹ on such subjects as farm husbandry, community matters, laws, co-operation, economics, the movement, and civics. Women's locals studied these and other matters including health, schools, child rearing, and household efficiency. In the Grange tradition, the only forbidden topics before 1912 were religion and "party politics."¹⁰ But who could say where party politics began and education about the "evil effects of legislation"¹¹ ended?

Locals used many means to educate. Most often, farmers simply discussed issues, listened to presentations, or held debates. Some locals developed unique educational strategies. Two UFA unions exchanged speakers,¹² and one UFWA local, busy with war work, gathered press articles for discussion.¹³ Another UFWA union used its roll call as an educational device:

In May each member answered her name by telling briefly of some labor-saving idea which she had tried and found helpful. In June we each answered with a current event, and it is surprising how interesting and helpful this can be made, and how much general knowledge can be gathered in a few minutes.¹⁴

Unions also studied books and material central office provided, including
brochures on specific subjects and routine circulars. The latter contained news of general interest, resolutions other locals had passed, and articles such as those written by the legal department to inform farmers about "matters of law pertaining to everyday business." Questions and the department's answers also appeared in the circulars.

The partially realized aim of UFA/UFWA education was to enlighten farmers and teach them to think and express themselves clearly. While limits remained to members' understanding of issues, local secretaries often noted that previously quiet members contributed credibly to discussions, having gained knowledge and confidence. To help women, who were especially unaccustomed to public speaking, some UFWA unions used methods like those of the Blackie local which got women to talk by such devices as putting under a sandwich a little slip of paper on which was written a subject such as "Gardening," "The best food for chicks," ... and it was explained that each lady was expected to say a few words on the subject of her paper. This ... [made] members more confident of their speaking ability.

UFA/UFWA picnics could also educate. Many featured prominent UFA/UFWA leaders who spoke on the movement's work. In addition, farmers shared ideas at picnics. Sometimes they talked "crops and politics until the speaking began from the platform."

Co-operation was a further source of education. Literature and UFA/UFWA co-operative enthusiasts taught farmers about co-op principles. Farmers also learned from co-operative experience. Dealing with wholesalers, manufacturers, and bankers brought them into "contact with many of the causes" of their "oppression." Moreover, co-operation "educated" them about "better business methods." One co-op had members accompany livestock shipments so they could understand co-operative marketing.

Farmers frequently "emphasized the educational benefits" of conventions. At the annual UFA/UFWA conventions and those of the secretaries and district and constituency associations, delegates took information from the addresses and discussion back to their locals. Owing to their importance, the minutes and reports of the general conventions were widely distributed.

Farmers got "lots of good education" from the Grain Growers' Guide, the official organ of the three prairie farm associations. The Guide had articles on every topic concerning farmers, from co-operation to reform nostrums to national affairs, as well as
letters to the editor. In addition, each prairie association had a section in which it published notices, articles, circulars sent to the unions, and local secretaries' reports. During the war, another section appeared containing reports from locals of the three prairie women's associations, and still another containing articles and letters by western women dealing with issues of particular interest to them. By 1920, the Guide's Alberta circulation was 22,000, despite complaints about insufficient space for Alberta news and lack of democratic control of editorial policy.

Some scholars argue that the Guide and the movement indoctrinated farmers. Strictly speaking, indoctrination means convincing persons to espouse beliefs unquestioningly by discouraging them from thinking critically or considering opposite views. In this sense, farmers were indoctrinated to believe, despite contradictory evidence available at the time, that grain prices fell sharply after harvest and that speculators used futures trading to filch producers' profits. The movement taught farmers these "truths," without presenting all the facts, to highlight the evils of the grain trade and farmers' heroic efforts, through organization, to protect themselves. E.J. Fream and J. Speakman arguably indoctrinated farmers to endorse co-op credit rather than state loans. This was not exactly indoctrination, however, as both men tried to present the case for government loans, while proponents of such loans were free to argue their position in the Guide and conventions.

Farmers naturally opposed indoctrination by corporate interests. The 1913 convention believed these interests were promoting militarism and tariffs through misleading information in the press and were causing schools and colleges to hire protectionist instructors who taught "false" economics. The convention committed members to inform the Executive of any such indoctrination they discovered.

Farmers tried to avoid indoctrination within the movement by encouraging the expression of different opinions. Guide editor G. Chipman published material that opposed his position, including letters by land speculators and tariff protectionists, and gave the Manufacturers' Association space to air its views. Chipman did not indoctrinate farmers by allowing only one perspective. Nor did the UFA editor of the Guide's Alberta page. Commenting on a letter on that page, he argued that "the more criticism ... we receive the better it will be for the association." Such criticism of
UFA/UFWA leaders' and others' ideas appeared in every edition of the Guide. The locals and conventions also invited dissent, believing that "dissatisfaction is the law of progress" and that "only by contradiction can we see all sides of a question in full and decide with full knowledge."36

The locals, conventions, and the Guide, then, provided a "free social space" in which farmers openly discussed issues and came to a consensus - which prompted them to "build" the movement. By learning about and agreeing on key questions, they were motivated to organize and support the UFA/UFWA to bring about the changes they desired. That they were sometimes wrong did not hurt the movement; what mattered was that they felt they were right and knew fellow producers stood with them.

Farmers used all kinds of education, including that supported by outside agencies, to build the movement. Jeffrey Taylor argues that state education weakened agrarian radicalism in Manitoba.38 In Alberta, state and business supported education had a similar effect in some respects, but farmers mostly used these and other forms of education for their own purposes, including for protest.

Alberta farmers had learned, partly from state and corporate propaganda, that the West was a land of agricultural prosperity. They used this image for their own purposes, initially to attract prospective settlers and UFA/UFWA members to their districts. Then, as they suffered economically, they blamed governments and corporations for keeping them from enjoying the land's bounty. Moreover, as some realized they had been induced to immigrate with "highly rose-colored literature," they demanded state aid.39

Farmers also reacted strongly to state and corporate propaganda articulating the agrarian myth. They were neither flattered nor pacified; they employed such rhetoric to demand change. "If the farmers are the backbone of the country ... as the politicians tell us," John Glambeck asked, "why then are not conditions made more bearable for the farmers?"40

As with state and corporate propaganda, farmers used Chautauquas for their own purposes. Originating in the United States, Chautauquas were tent meetings supported by "personally interested business and professional men" which provided high quality oratory, music, drama, and other entertainment. The programs aimed to educate audiences about science, literature, art, history, sociology, and government. There were
Farmers used the garden myth propagated by government and corporate immigration literature for protest.  
forty meetings in the Canadian West in 1917, and about twenty in Alberta in 1918. Whatever the interests of the organizers and businessmen involved, Chautauquas became, to an extent, UFA/UFWA events. They required much local work and sponsorship, which UFA/UFWA members provided. Moreover, in 1918, UFA president H.W. Wood was a keynote speaker at some 50 western Chautauquas. He preached his unorthodox social theory, declaring that the "false laws of ... competition and autocracy ... have been the ... base of civilization ... and until they are wiped out, there can be no perfect society." His addresses were a "stimulant to our organization," especially as UFA unions were allowed to use Chautauqua tents afterwards to recruit new members. In 1921, UFA unions around Medicine Hat organized their own Chautauqua which included music, recitations, dialogues, and lectures, but the "most successful feature" were debates between locals.

A.E. Ottewell, director of the University of Alberta Department of Extension, spoke at the Medicine Hat Chautauqua. This Department had the greatest educational influence of any government agency on the UFA/UFWA. It did not, however, have the conservative effect that Taylor argues the state had on Manitoba agrarianism. Rather, farmers used the Department's resources for their own purposes.

U of A Extension work began in 1912 amid controversy about the University's necessity and location, and during an attempt to establish a rival institution in Calgary. The Department of Extension was formed to gain support for the University by showing its benefit for all Albertans - thus ensuring its survival. Since the Department needed public approval, its material had to be popular; it had no interest in trying to impose a "dominant" agrarian ideology on farmers. In fact, a Faculty of Agriculture was not created until 1915, and its role in Extension work was minor until well after the war. The Extension Department, therefore, unlike its counterparts in other provinces, gave farmers the liberal education they wanted on a variety of topics.

The Department had a major educational impact in Alberta. During its 1914-15 session, it reached an estimated 50,000 people through its various activities; by 1920, it was reaching almost 140,000 people. Some 260 lectures were given to 28,000 people in 1914-15 alone. Speakers included J.S. Woodsworth, although Department members gave most of the talks which covered social, historical, literary, scientific and other
The Department of Extension and Rural Development in Alberta was established in 1913 to provide educational and informational services to farmers and rural communities. It produced a weekly bulletin of news and information, issued booklets, including 2000 copies in 1916-17 of "The Legal Status of Women" by Henrietta Edwards of the National Council of Women. A number of UFWA locals used this pamphlet to learn about and protest their status.

The Department also loaned travelling libraries of 30 to 40 books on such subjects as "literature, history, science, travel, poetry, biography," geography, and rural life. In the year ending June 30, 1921, 60 UFA and 26 UFWA locals had borrowed libraries. UFA/UFWA unions were "the principal agency for serving their communities with library facilities." Starting in 1914, an open shelf service provided pamphlets on current events and books on science, social science, education, rural life, and farming. By 1916, it also issued study guides on such topics as children, home economics, rural problems, and immigration.

The provision of debating material was the Department's most important service for the UFA/UFWA. This service was unique in Canadian higher education, and it made the Alberta "state's" influence on the farm movement unique. None of the debate packets has survived, but they apparently "attempted a balanced argument" on a wide range of social, economic, and political issues. UFA/UFWA locals held thousands of debates based on Department material. In the three sessions starting in 1914, 638, 898, and 955 packages were sent out, many to UFA/UFWA locals. The fourteen most requested packets in order of preference in the 1915-16 session were women suffrage, the war, rural life, the tariff, compulsory military training, consolidated rural schools, home economics, science, literature, capital punishment, magazines, education, debating, and co-operation.

Some Extension packages worked against UFA/UFWA radicalism, principally those dealing with rural sociology and agricultural and home economics. These promoted a conservative agrarianism, but they were not frequently requested and therefore cannot have had much influence. On the other hand, the absence of material on more radical solutions may have had conservative implications. In particular, there was no packet on state loans, but the one on co-operative credit may have prodded some farmers to prefer this solution over the New Zealand government loan plan.

Other packages may have convinced some farmers to support such reforms as
consolidated schools, but the main effect of Department debating material was to arm farmers with arguments in favour of their existing beliefs. Packets like those on suffrage and the tariff served this purpose. Others, such as the ones on co-operative trading, provided practical tips. Farmers used still other packets to strengthen their commitment to measures the "state" opposed, such as prohibition and direct legislation. Such packages, and others including those on government railways, and the "limitation of inheritance," helped farmers to study their Platform. The UFWA Executive informed members that information on some of its "planks can be obtained through the Department of Extension." Overall, Department debating material was less a means by which the state indoctrinated farmers and more a resource they used for their own ends. It is significant that, while studying packets relating to their Platform, and debating political issues with such packages as "parliamentary vs. presidential government," farmers rejected the party system and called for a new polity.

Farmers also studied to farm better. This was agrarian tradition; the Grange had made "instruction in the art and science of husbandry" a major aim. Similarly, the Alberta Farmers' Association was involved in seed fairs and stock shows, and its constitution, like that of the UFA, required members to discuss "the production ... of grain and live stock." UFA officer Daniel Warner invoked this clause in speaking to locals on moisture conservation. Other UFA leaders occasionally wrote articles for the Guide about farm production and suggested related topics for discussion. Central office sometimes included notes on the subject in its circulars.

It was not a case of leaders trying to get a slovenly rank and file to adopt modern farming techniques; farmers were keen to learn new methods, and by helping them with this, the UFA/UFWA attracted new members and was "built." In 1910, general secretary Fream responded to many enquiries for "information relating to agriculture, from the growing and harvesting of flax ... to securing rules for the holding of plowing matches." Unions heard papers and lectures and held debates and discussions on every agricultural topic. They also formed stock and agricultural societies and held fairs. One union wanted to see "articles ... appear in THE GUIDE on such problems as ploughing vs. discing for second crop on breaking." Ideology determined the importance producers ascribed to farm improvement.
Believing strongly in self-help, liberals viewed agricultural efficiency as an individual, if not a moral responsibility, and a key determinant of farm income. Radicals like W.J. Tregillus generally felt that even if farmers adopted the latest methods, they would not benefit much because of corporate economic and political control. Still, Tregillus did not consider agricultural education unimportant.

Many farmers looked to, and used, the state to help them improve production. UFA locals lobbied for experimental and demonstration farms and Schools of Agriculture and obtained literature from these and the Department of Extension. They also held government sponsored seed fairs and institute meetings. Along with UFWA locals, they secured government agricultural experts as speakers and visited demonstration trains. The 1918 UFA convention called for county agent farm instructors.

Farmers' autonomous use of state and corporate expertise was particularly evident in their reaction to the mixed farming gospel preached by the press, railways, and departments of agriculture. Parts of Alberta were well-suited to mixed agriculture, but many farmers, especially those on the plains, found it uneconomical to diversify as much as the experts suggested, and only did so to the extent it was useful.

Initially, the experts had more luck convincing farmers to adopt the methods of the Dry Farming Congress. Organized in the United States in 1906, the Congress, which was supported by boards of trade and railways, met annually in western cities to discuss dry farming techniques and to hold grain fairs. Those attending included politicians and representatives of farm and state agricultural bodies. The UFA endorsed the Congress, especially after Alberta won prizes in 1911 and Lethbridge hosted the 1912 Congress. Farmers applied the dry farming methods of the Congress and various state agencies; the methodology was familiar and seemed to work most years. But as drought entrenched itself in the South after 1916, dry farming failed, and many farmers called for irrigation and lost faith in the Congress. Once again, they used an outside educational resource for their own ends: when it held promise, they embraced it; when it began to fail, they looked for alternatives.

Educational agencies, then, including state and business supported ones, did not unduly influence farmers to adopt new techniques. Like other business people, most farmers believed increased efficiency would improve their competitiveness and profits,
Farmers only adopted mixed farming to the extent it helped them. They were not impressed with self-proclaimed mixed-farming experts like federal Minister George Foster. SOURCE: Guide, May 6, 1914, p. 4
and like them, used government services to maximize their output. In particular, they sought practices that could help them avoid losses. And while they knew technique would only help them so much, nothing could be gained from poor farming. It was also evident that bad farmers were worse off than good ones.

The University of Alberta Agriculture Faculty, established in 1915, the six provincial Schools of Agriculture, three of which opened in 1913, and the Calgary-based paper, the Farm and Ranch Review, also advised farmers about farm practice. Like many North American agricultural colleges, they admonished farm men and women to adopt industrial methods of production, management, and marketing in their respective spheres.*¹*¹

This emphasis on business efficiency as the solution for farmers' problems, rather than state ownership or independent politics, challenged agrarian radicalism; however, its effect on the UFA/UFWA was not great. Many farmers read the Review, but it was not the movement's official organ. And while farmers sought information from the Schools and Faculty of Agriculture, only a few hundred students a year attended them before the 1920s,¹⁵ and few were UFA/UFWA members. Fewer still became movement leaders. The state did not control, or "sanitize," the UFA/UFWA through agricultural education in the period under study.

At the same time, farmers learned some concepts taught in agricultural colleges by studying the country life movement in books and the UFA/UFWA. But as with other educational sources, farmers used country life ideas for their own purposes.

The country life movement of the early twentieth century began in the United States but soon crossed the border. Its advocates included agricultural instructors, journalists, teachers, businessmen, clergymen, and farmers. Believing the agrarian myth that farmers were the moral and economic basis of a nation, country lifers feared the consequences of rural depopulation. They argued that rural decline stemmed from poor farm husbandry and management, overwork, social isolation, exploitation by middlemen and monopolies, bad laws, and a lack of credit, amenities, and entertainment. Moreover, parents were not meeting the needs of youth, churches were paying insufficient attention to the social needs of rural communities, and, above all, schools were educating children away from the farm.¹⁶
Farmers were not brainwashed by corporations and government agencies to adopt certain methodologies or to believe that better production would solve all their economic problems. SOURCE: Guide, Nov. 24, 1915, p. 6
Country life solutions included surveys to assess problems and formulate plans; agricultural education and efficiency; co-operative trading and credit; improved rural roads, facilities, and services; agrarian organization; and labour saving devices. Parents were to provide social occasions for youth and give them a stake in the farm. Churches were to federate or work together, stress rural reform, and serve as social centres. Schools were to organize gardens and teach nature study to create interest in rural living. They were to be vocationally oriented, teaching home economics and all subjects in relation to agriculture. Consolidated schools would best facilitate these reforms.\textsuperscript{87}

Country life ideas became prominent in the UFA/UFWA starting in the war years. The collapse of immigration raised fears about rural depopulation - a key country life concern - especially as the exodus began from the dry-belt after 1916. Farmers were also aware of the national trend towards urbanization and believed it would increase their tax burden and weaken their political power. Country life ideology "built" the movement by attracting farmers wanting to reverse these patterns.

Many locals studied country life subjects.\textsuperscript{88} General secretary P.P. Woodbridge recommended discussion topics based on the principles advocated by Horace Plunkett, the widely respected Irish agrarian reformer: better farming, better business, and better living.\textsuperscript{89} The Canadian Council of Agriculture's study guide, used by many UFA locals, suggested similar themes as "proposed solutions" for the "Country Life Problem."\textsuperscript{90} Better farming meant using the latest methodology. Better business meant effective farm management: farm men would allocate resources efficiently and keep accounts; women would keep records of household expenditures and organize their housework - like a factory - to save labour power. Better business also meant improved marketing, applying the laws of rural economics, and trading co-operatively. Better living meant enhanced social opportunities, and, especially, rural school reform.

Consistent with country life teaching, farmers believed the "whole of the rural problem" stemmed from inadequate schooling.\textsuperscript{91} Country schools in Alberta were ill-equipped and teachers were poorly trained. They received little support from parents and trustees, taught several grades in a single room, and often left before the end of term. Moreover, only about ten percent of rural students attended high school as late as 1917, compared to sixty percent of urban pupils.\textsuperscript{92}
Following the country life movement, farmers believed consolidated schools could solve many of these problems. Such schools would be better-equipped and could afford good teachers who would instruct graded classes, including high school classes. Partly in response to UFA requests, a law was passed in 1913 providing for these schools in districts voting for them. By the end of 1917, there were 44 consolidations in effect or being organized; by early 1920, 64 districts were operating. Starting in 1919, the province also provided loans to normal school students and grants to encourage high school instruction and the construction of teacherages and two room schools - measures the UFWA approved.

The UFA/UFWA also called for greater centralization and standardization of education. The "state" did not impose these things on farmers; they wanted them. They demanded more thorough and frequent provincial inspection of schools, higher teacher qualifications, and stricter attendance laws. Many sought municipal rather than local school boards. Farm women were glad the province improved teaching standards and inspection in 1920, but they wanted "more and closer" inspection. The year before, the UFWA requested "the standardization or nationalization of education with uniform text books."

Since many UFA/UFWA educational reformers were, or had been, teachers, they endorsed most demands of the Teachers' Alliance, the provincial association of teachers. Some farmers even supported higher salaries to attract better teachers to rural schools, though they generally opposed the Alliance request for a minimum salary, preferring that remuneration be based on service and qualifications. To pay for higher costs of education, they proposed a school tax on all land.

Like country lifers everywhere, UFA/UFWA farmers requested curriculum changes. They called for nature study since "the love of nature is the first qualification for a happy agriculturalist." They demanded practical farm instruction, including school gardens, and teachers who could prepare pupils for rural life and instill in them a sense of "the dignity of the science by which they live." UFA/UFWA school reformers also espoused the "new education" which sought a "curricular shift from classical to practical and scientific training." One farmer argued that a rural high school program must be rooted in the agricultural community, and all that belongs to it.
Instead of compelling a pupil to "plug" dead languages and "cram" history, classics, and higher mathematics, instruct the boys in animal husbandry, field husbandry, economics, sociology, farm mechanics, and farm management; and instruct the girls in domestic science, home economics, home nursing, and all other phases of everyday rural life.  

UFA/UFWA country lifers believed all subjects in rural schools should relate to farm life. Leona Barritt suggested that rural teachers be given a book applying lessons about length, area, and volume to such objects as "grain bins, elevators, silos." Barritt also supported "child centred" education and John Dewey's idea that children should learn by doing. She endorsed the Ontario system which taught agriculture without texts and which considered individual development "of more importance than the giving of information." She and the UFWA also felt students should learn about country life ideals.

Such school reform agitation "built" the movement by drawing farmers seeking to keep youth on the land. With the same end in view, UFWA country lifers provided recreation for youth, argued that young people should have ownership in the farm, and organized youth competitions in farm production.

Women also believed, in country life fashion, that education in the junior UFA/UFWA would give youth "a correct vision of farm life" so they would "accept farm life as a permanent calling." The junior section grew out of rural youth clubs formed during the war as literary or debating societies. A UFWA officer was appointed to oversee these clubs in 1916, and a committee on "young people's work" was created two years later. Little was done to recognize the clubs officially, however, until 1919 when the UFWA convention and UFA Executive adopted a junior section constitution. By early 1920, some twenty junior locals, having officers and holding regular meetings, had reported to central office; a year later, there were some sixty junior branches, some same-sexed, some mixed-sexed, with a membership of about 1200, ranging in age from about ten to twenty-five.

A youth culture emerged among the juniors based on community service, the development of citizenship and leadership, and the aims of the movement. It also included a motto, a watchword, a yell, official colours, a slogan, a pledge, and songs such as:
We want boosters for our army,
There's a work for you to do;
Help push on this worthy cause,
Join us now without a pause,
Come and be a jolly, joyous junior too!

Juniors held debates, spelling matches and skating parties; did charity and local work; put on socials, concerts, dances and plays; played sports and games; acquired sporting and leisure equipment; camped, hiked, and sewed; formed bands, raised gardens, and studied various subjects, including scientific agriculture and household economics.

The highlight of the year for the junior section was Farm Young People's Week, an annual conference first held in 1919 at the initiative of the UFWA. Each year, 100 to 200 "boys" and "girls" age 16 and over attended for recreation, education, and to acquire "a genuine farm culture." The 1919 group heard talks on rural life and citizenship, some given by UFA/UFWA leaders, and on literature, spiritual values, and nature study. In addition, the "boys" were given farm instruction, and the "girls," folk dancing lessons. Later conferences had a similar program and included junior UFA/UFWA business meetings. The 1920 meeting elected a junior committee to assist an adult committee in directing the junior section. The 1921 meeting created an official junior organization that replaced the junior committee with an elected junior Board of an equal number of male and female directors. A president and vice-president, L. Kindt and D. Cameron, were also elected. They organized several locals later that year, although UFWA women formed most junior locals.

UFWA women felt the junior UFA/UFWA had great educational value. They believed that through meetings, juniors learned "to express themselves clearly, definitely, and concisely," and that by means of papers, talks, and debates they gained "invaluable training for future leadership." Moreover, they hoped the junior section would provide "a continuous army of men and women trained to take up the responsibilities of leadership in the local communities, at the head of our organization, in the political fields." Margaret Gunn argued that junior activity inculcated a co-operative ethos:

All this co-operative study, co-operative work, co-operative play, is merely building for the future co-operative community. Boys and girls trained in this group activity are learning ... how to work with others to mutual advantage, are practicing the co-operative principle and are discarding the competitive system.
Farm Young People's Conference, 1919. The Leavitt Junior UFA band is in the centre. SOURCE: Glenbow Archives, NA-4338-4
To teach business skills to juniors, women used "dollar contests," giving each member of a junior branch a dollar with which to make as much money as possible through farm related activities. Whoever made the most by a set date won. One such contest apparently taught juniors

that thinking before investing, that making a definite plan before starting brought the best returns. It taught them that only by keeping track of everything can the real results of their labor be ascertained. They learned that by purchasing a small quantity of pure seed the crop turned out better than when a larger quantity of just any old seed had been sown. It taught them that one who grew his potatoes under the proper conditions ... and dug them when new potatoes were a luxury, received more for his crop than if he left them ... until everybody was digging them.126

All such junior educational activity "built" the movement. It drew young people into the movement, and attracted and inspired women, who, imbued with country life ideology, sought to keep youth on the land. "If country life makes a powerful appeal to those of teen age," Gunn promised, "it is not likely they will be drawn to the city by "tinsel show and a' that."127

Country life ideology and education also politicized the movement. Despite the anti-political thrust of country life teaching, it did not have that effect on the UFA/UFWA. Farmers quickly realized that many country life reforms required political action, even independent action. Government aid was needed to establish the schools and rural facilities the country life movement called for; sweeping tariff reform was required to enable farmers to buy the labour saving devices, household conveniences, and farm machinery country lifers said farmers needed to be efficient; lower tariffs were necessary if farmers were to have the time and money to provide youth with healthy recreation so they would not drift to the cities.

Country life education also politicized farmers by bolstering their self-confidence. It told them they were scientific "professionals" and led them to demand reforms consistent with this status. Furthermore, to the extent they met the requirements of country life teaching, they found its promises wanting. They had improved rural schooling and educated youth about the benefits of farm life; they had built a great co-operative movement; they had organized themselves effectively; they had become better farmers and business persons - but still they were not prosperous and contented with
country life; still, young people left the land. Farmers soon concluded that direct political action was needed to realize their country life ideals.

New educational sources also politicized the movement. In 1919, the Western Independent became the voice of the UFA Political Association, a body which oversaw the organization's political activities. Edited by William Irvine, the Independent influenced many farmers to favour direct political action. UFA support for the paper ended, however, after the Association was dismantled in early 1920. At that time, central office began preparing bulletins for the directors which raised their political consciousness by criticizing the old parties and highlighting attacks on the farm movement. The following year, an educational department was created which did research, prepared pamphlets and articles, and became a political arm of the organization. During the Medicine Hat by-election of 1921, it took charge of publicity for the UFA constituency association. During the provincial election, it devoted itself almost entirely to politics, providing information on provincial affairs and electoral conduct. For the federal election of that year, it sent out a description of the Elections Act and handled correspondence about the election, including voting qualifications for women - while issuing pro-UFA political literature.

Having decided to enter politics in 1919, the UFA/UFWA emphasized the need for education in citizenship. This meant that farmers should learn about social, economic, and political matters and their responsibilities as voters. They did so through formal study, political skits, and the practice of parliamentary procedure in their locals. They also formed ideas about citizenship from the teachings of leaders like H.W. Wood, and from their experience with delegate democracy. They learned that just as they chose and instructed their convention delegates and paid their expenses, so they must select and instruct their political Members and finance their campaigns. UFWA leaders felt that education in citizenship was especially necessary for women, given their lack of electoral and political experience:

Farm women for centuries had remained out of public life and suddenly found themselves possessed of all citizenship rights and responsibilities.... How were women to be educated to meet these responsibilities intelligently? Only by participation in public life and the forming of groups to discuss and consider matters of vital importance to them.... Here was a great ... training school for citizenship.
Lucy Peterson, district director for Lethbridge, admonished women to educate themselves about "our public administration and present day questions, so that when we vote we can register an opinion instead of just writing an X beside a name."\textsuperscript{131}

The UFA/UFWA also educated farmers for direct political action. Political conventions, described by H.W. Wood as political "schools,"\textsuperscript{132} were first held in the federal and later in the provincial constituencies. The delegates, from locals within the constituency boundaries, debated how to take political action, when to nominate a candidate, and other political as well as non-political matters. Wood argued:

> If the representatives of the various locals in a district will come together in annual convention each year and discuss political affairs for two days, they will develop an understanding of political affairs and a capacity for dealing with them a hundred times more rapidly they have ever done before.... This is ... designed to educate the people in regard to the political problems and co-operative methods necessary to the solution of them.\textsuperscript{133}

UFA political candidates were educated for their task. Most had experience in local and school politics, and many had been prominent movement leaders. UFA Premier Herbert Greenfield, for one, was a founder and president of the Union of Alberta Municipalities, a school trustee, chairman of the local council of his district, vice-president of the Alberta Educational Association, and in 1919, he was elected to the UFA Executive.\textsuperscript{134} Like many farmers, Greenfield had also received leadership training in his UFA local. Many unions followed, to some extent, the practice of one woman's local in which the secretaries hold office for only one year. After they have had that experience they will always take part in the proceedings. Half of our local is trained as leaders, so that the affairs of the local are carried on whether our president or secretary is any good or not.\textsuperscript{135}

In light of such experience, and the UFA's decision to take political action, the 1919 secretaries' conventions suggested that central office advise the locals of the advantages of periodically changing their officers.\textsuperscript{136}

Locals held mock elections to teach members about the electoral process and proportional representation. Some locals took a direct part in municipal elections. After 1918, most studied the Farmers' Platform and such topics as "the political situation," or
such books as J.D. Hunt's "The Dawn of a New Patriotism." The results of women's political education were evident in the Medicine Hat by-election:

Women speakers took part in the campaign and proved to be successful campaigners. Workers in that campaign stated that each audience addressed was composed of women as well as men and more than one speaker was questioned by women in an intelligent and frank manner. In many districts women called special meetings in order to go over voters' lists to see that no names were omitted.¹³⁷

Education had politicized the UFA/UFWA. It gave farmers the political know-how and confidence to take independent action.

Education developed the Alberta farm movement. It attracted farmers to the UFA/UFWA and its predecessors, helping to "form" and "build" the movement. It also built the movement by enabling farmers to come to a consensus on key issues, prompting them to act. They used various educational agencies and ideologies, including those supported by corporations and the state, for their own purposes - to develop their agenda, to improve profits, to keep youth on the land, and to build their organization. Education ultimately politicized farmers, spurring them to take independent political action, while training them for it.
ENDNOTES

1Grain Growers' Guide (hereafter GGG), Apr. 19, 1911, p. 9.


4For detailed information on the pre-UFA Alberta farm movement, see chapter one.

5Glenbow Archives (hereafter GA), United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Annual Convention (hereafter MR), 1912, p. 9.

6A good example of such a local was the Winona union. See Provincial Archives of Alberta, Acc. 66.119, Item 10, Winona Local Minute Book.


9GGG, Oct. 26, 1910, p. 16.

10UFA constitution, 1911, p. 17. Regarding the Grange precedent, see Wood, A History of Farmers' Movements, p. 27.

11UFA constitution, 1911, p. 2.

12GGG, Apr. 12, 1916, p. 15.

13Ibid., May 29, 1918, p. 44.

14Ibid., Sept. 1, 1920, p. 28.

15MR, 1917, p. 75. The department was created in 1917.


17UFA Fonds, Box 1, File 13, Reports of UFA Secretaries' Conventions, 1919, p.
32. An example of another local using a similar strategy can be found in GGG, Feb. 4, 1920, p. 44.

18GGG, June 8, 1910, p. 16.

19MR, 1917, p. 53.

20GGG, July 7, 1915, p. 23.

21Ibid., Oct. 10, 1917, p. 28.

22Ibid., Mar. 1, 1911, p. 18.

23Regarding the educational value of the secretaries' conventions, see GGG, Nov. 17, 1920, p. 18. The educational value of the district conventions was such that the 1921 annual UFA convention endorsed "the holding of smaller district conventions with a view of extending educational work and exchange of speakers" (MR, 1921, p. 47).

24In 1919, 20,000 copies were printed (MR, 1920, p. 26).

25GGG, Mar. 29, 1911, p. 12.

26GA, United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Executive and Board Minutes and Reports (hereafter Executive), 1920, p. 38.

27Reports of UFA Secretaries' Convention, 1917, p. 12.

28Ibid., 1918, First Day's Proceedings, Calgary, p. 12. In 1917, the UFA Executive criticized the Guide for not replying adequately to attacks on farmers and for not giving enough recognition to the UFWA (Executive, 1917, pp. 236-237).


31This credit debate is examined in some depth in chapter six.

32MR, 1913, p. 39.
33These appeared periodically in the "Mail bag" section.

34GGG, July 31, 1918, p. 3.


36Ibid., Mar. 31, 1920, p. 22.


38Jeffrey M. Taylor, Fashioning Farmers: Ideology, Agricultural Knowledge and the Manitoba Farm Movement, 1890-1925 (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1994).

39Alberta Non-Partisan (hereafter ANP), Nov. 23, 1917, p. 10. See also chapter one of this thesis.

40MR, 1919, p. 76.

41ANP, Mar. 15, 1918, p. 10.


43Ibid., p. 25.

44Ibid., May 1, 1918, p. 10.

45Ibid., Dec. 5, 1917, pp. 25, 40; MR, 1921, p. 54; Sheilagh S. Jameson, Chautauqua in Canada (Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute, 1979), pp. 3-5. UFA vice-president S.S. Dunham played an important part in getting the 1917 Chautauqua started in Alberta.

46GGG, Aug. 28, 1918, p. 11.

47Wheat Pool Fonds, Box 65, File 818, newspaper clipping, July 20, 1918, "Good Programmes at Chautauqua." The title of Wood's address was "Democratic Organization" (GGG, Aug. 28, 1918, p. 11).

48GGG, Aug. 28, 1918, p. 11.

49Ibid., May 1, 1918, p. 10.

50Ibid., May 4, 1921, p. 22.

Ibid., p. 9.

Ibid., p. 88.

Ibid., p. 59.


Clark, pp. 97-98.


Clark, pp. 77-78, 105.

GGG, Mar. 10, 1915, p. 15.


GGG, Sept. 21, 1921, p. 23.

Clark, p. 56.

UAA, Annual Report of the Department of Extension for the year ending June 30, 1921, p. 4.

GGG, Sept. 28, 1921, p. 15.

Clark, pp. 80-81.

Ibid., p. 58.

Ibid., p. 54.


There were packages specifically on "economics," "political economy," "marketing," "sociology," "household science," "co-operation," and "home economics," but only the latter two were at all popular (Department of Extension Reports, 1914-16).
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71 GGG, Jan. 12, 1921, p. 18.

72 GA, United Farm Women of Alberta, Film BR, Convention, Executive, and Board Meetings, p. 16.

73 GGG, Mar. 30, 1921, p. 20.

74 Wood, p. 45.


77 MR, 1911, p. 17.

78 GGG, Sept. 14, 1910, p. 17.

79 MR, 1911, pp. 4-5.

80 Ibid., 1912, pp. 8-9; 1913, p. 7; 1914, p. 10.

81 MR, 1918, p. 139.


85 As late as 1921, the combined registration of all six Schools of Agriculture was 460 (GGG, May 4, 1921, p. 8).


87 Ibid.

88 This is evident from the local secretaries' reports in the Guide.
The Minister of Education provided this figure of sixty percent at the 1918 convention and also indicated that ten to fifteen percent of country students received high school education (MR, 1918, p. 263). Two years later, Leona Barritt, the UFWA education convenor, stated that "according to Alberta statistics," less than two percent of rural students in the province attended high school (MR, 1920, p. 102).

Convention resolutions favouring consolidated schools appear in MR, 1910, p. 30; 1912, p. 55; 1913, p. 36.

MR, 1918, p. 267.


Ibid., Apr. 14, 1920, pp. 7, 43; Oct. 12, 1921, p. 31.

MR, 1920, p. 115.

Ibid., p. 57; 1922, p. 155.


MR, 1921, p. 104.

Ibid., 1919, p. 95.

Executive, 1920, pp. 1-2; 1921, pp. 8, 101.

GGG, Jan. 26, 1921, p. 3; June 16, 1920, p. 24.

Executive, 1920, pp. 30, 49.

GGG, Jan. 26, 1921, p. 3; MR, 1920, p. 56.

MR, 1919, p. 89.

GGG, Nov. 19, 1919, p. 17.

Taylor, Fashioning Farmers, p. 63.


113 MR, 1920, p. 117.

114 GGG, May 12, 1920, p. 44.

115 Ibid., Mar. 9, 1921, p. 10.

116 MR, 1919, pp. 84-85; 1920, p. 96; 1921, p. 96; 1922, pp. 29, 124; Farm and Ranch Review, July 5, 1916, p. 544; GGG, Oct. 12, 1921, pp. 12, 25; UAA, Department of Extension Directors' Files, 1913-51, RG 16, Acc. No. 74-23, Box 1, File 14, "The History of the Farm Young People's Week at the University of Alberta," pp. 3-4.

117 GGG, May 12, 1920, p. 44.

118 Ibid., Mar. 9, 1921, p. 39.

119 "History of the Farm Young People's Week," pp. 4-5.

120 GGG, Apr. 9, 1919, p. 66.

121 Ibid., Aug. 20, 1919, p. 35.


124 Ibid., Feb. 23, 1921, p. 33.

125 MR, 1920, p. 100.


127 MR, 1920, p. 100.

128 GGG, Dec. 28, 1921, p. 16.

129 Ibid., Dec. 28, 1921, pp. 16-17.

131 GGG, June 30, 1920, p. 29.

132 Ibid., May 7, 1919, p. 7.

133 Ibid.

134 Ibid., Aug. 17, 1921, p. 17. For similar background information about other UFA/UFWA leaders, see Ibid., p. 23; June 15, 1921, p. 7; Oct. 12, 1921, p. 3.

135 UFA Secretaries' Conventions, 1919, p. 17.

136 Ibid., pp. 18, 39.

Chapter Eight: The Movement Politicizing, 1919-1921

Ye farmers of this mighty land,
Organize, oh, organize;
Its bulwark ever more to stand,
Organize, oh, organize.
For with the flag of right unfurled,
In spite of darts against you hurled;
You still must feed this hungry world;
Organize, oh, organize.$^1$

- Official UFA/UFWA campaign song$^2$

During the war, the Alberta farm movement was fully "built." It gained a large membership and a women's section, and developed its movement culture, which moved it toward direct politics. From 1919 to 1921, the UFA/UFWA was "politicized." Farmers committed the organization to independent political action, were prodded to take such action by their culture and understanding of events, gained women's political support, created political structures, and launched the agrarian revolt - the movement's culmination.

The 1919 UFA convention made the fateful decision to allow UFA/UFWA political action. The resulting political excitement contributed greatly to the movement's growth from some 18,000 UFA, UFWA, and junior members in early 1919 to over 37,000 by the end of 1921. In 1919 alone, UFA membership swelled from around 16,500 to over 25,000, while UFWA membership more than doubled from over 1400 to 3000. By the end of 1921, there were some 31,000 UFA, 4500 UFWA, and 1450 junior members.$^3$

Believing "every additional member linked up with our great organization is another step toward success at the polls,"$^4$ the movement made unprecedented recruiting efforts after the war. Progress was hampered in parts of the South, however, as crop failure and low product prices prevented many from paying membership dues, and forced thousands to leave the region for good or to search for temporary work.$^5$ Notwithstanding, UFA/UFWA support remained strong in southern constituencies$^6$ as hard times seemed "to bring in more members and arouse keener interest."$^7$ Southern
The movement politicizing. SOURCE: Guide, April 6, 1919, p. 6 (top); Jan. 28, 1920, p. 6 (bottom)
farmers hoped the UFA could organize a wheat pool and force governments to lower producers' costs and assist with irrigation. And was not diversion and a sense of community needed in difficult times? The UFA/UFWA met these needs too. In the far North, the movement benefited from new settlement, including that by veterans, although poor railway service ultimately hindered population and UFA/UFWA growth.

While locals continued to do most of the recruiting, the Association played an important role. The directors formed many new unions, in concert with paid organizers and constituency association officers. UFWA president Irene Parlby urged farmers to join the movement by using labour discourse. She described the UFA/UFWA as a protective union and fighting force, and called non-UFA/UFWA farmers "scabs."

The Association also orchestrated recruiting drives. During the "fall drive" of 1920, a mass of unpaid canvassers collected $6.00 from farmers for a Guide subscription and membership in the UFA/UFWA and its political associations. "I am going to make another call on some of the farmers," one canvasser pledged, "and am going to try again and again until I get them into the U.F.A." While fully achieving its goal in only one constituency, the drive raised over $100,000 and secured many new members.

Growth threatened democracy in the organization, but rank and file supremacy was maintained. That democratic control was temporarily weakened when president Wood, not wanting radicals on the Executive, convinced the 1919 UFA convention to end the election of officers by proportional representation. The 1920 convention, however, reasserted its democratic prerogative by reintroducing the election of the Executive on the proportional system. One delegate argued it would have been "impossible" for the leadership to manipulate the convention that year as it would be most difficult to find a set of men with more determination and intelligence; ... the delegates, as a rule, had a good grasp of the question before the house and voted to the best of their judgement.

Also weakening post-war UFA democracy was the large number of local resolutions that were "handled too hurriedly" or were "crowded out ... of the convention" and the "growing tendency towards substitution of executive resolutions for ... several locals' resolutions." These problems were largely solved beginning in 1920 as the constituency conventions, at the UFA Board's suggestion, screened and consolidated their
locals' resolutions before submitting only relevant ones to the annual meeting. Now
district conventions of local delegates, rather than just the Executive, determined which
resolutions the general meeting considered and in what form. Grassroots control over the
annual convention agenda had been restored.

While preserving democracy in the UFA convention, farmers ensured their
political platforms were democratic. In 1919, William Irvine of the Non-Partisan League
argued that the Canadian Council of Agriculture had unilaterally drafted the Farmers' Platform and imposed it on farmers. H.W. Wood responded:

I want to correct Mr. Irvine who has put us in the position of handing
down a platform developed from above. That platform began to develop
right in our own locals and the best of the many ideas sent in were taken
and were afterwards discussed and ratified at our convention.\(^2^0\)
The Council drafted planks consistent with resolutions passed by the western farm
association conventions and submitted the Platform and proposed amendments to the
conventions which made changes and additions.\(^2^1\) The UFA/UFWA provincial political
platform was created by a similar process. Following a 1921 convention directive, a
committee of delegates from the federal political associations, not the central Executive,
drafted a platform for members to discuss. The provincial constituency conventions later
adopted the platform, in a few cases with slight amendments.\(^2^2\) Farmers did not simply
endorse their platforms; they constructed them democratically.

Farmers also took democratic political action, prompted by their post-war notion
of citizenship. Before the war, most felt they could improve society and their own lot
through the old parties. As this strategy proved ineffective, farmers' belief in citizenship
told them that, to succeed politically, they must get involved in every facet of the political
process - which meant independent political action. They began by holding political
conventions in federal and later in provincial constituencies where at least ten percent of
the locals requested same.\(^2^3\) The delegates, representing individual unions, elected a
chairman and appointed committees, set and voted on an agenda, and formed a
constituency association and elected its officers. Later conventions nominated political
candidates and adopted a political program. Each association ran its candidate's campaign
and financed its activities by assessing the locals in its constituency. Associations also
appointed scrutineers and ensured that UFA voters got to the polls.

All this was done by the grassroots, not the leadership - farmers' sense of citizenship responsibility demanded nothing less. H.W. Wood spoke to the 1921 Medicine Hat federal convention only after the delegates had chosen their UFA candidate. He later described the impossibility of the UFA central controlling the 1921 provincial political campaign, and the role of democratic "citizenship" in what transpired:

This provincial election was sprung in order to take us by surprise. We had no political organization in the ordinary sense of the word. But we had something better ... an intelligent citizenship.... The result was that when the election was announced the people organized themselves. Within ten days every constituency in the province had formed its own organization. I had nothing to do with this organization work, and the central had nothing to do with it. We could not have made a beginning on such an enormous task in such a short time. To say that the thing was handled from above is nonsense. Every local, every constituency, exercised a free and unhampered choice under the most democratic conditions. The central had no hand in the selection of candidates, and to say that I "hand-picked" them is absurd. Why, half of them were men I had never heard of before the election.

Farmers' concept of citizenship responsibility and their experience with UFA/UFWA democracy led them to believe that just as locals instructed delegates about voting at conventions, constituents should "dictate" to their UFA Members. And if constituents were to control representatives, Members had to be free to vote against a bill without fear of defeating the government. This idea, popularized by the Non-Partisan League, became a plank in the UFA platform which made a "powerful appeal to the electorate." It promised to break cabinet control and render the "elected representative answerable directly to the district organization that elected him." Farmers also believed UFA Members should report to constituents after each legislative or parliamentary session like convention delegates reported to their locals. To provide further accountability, many UFA candidates, like UFA officers, were asked to sign recalls.

While "politicizing" themselves by devising a new political model based on "citizenship" and UFA/UFWA experience, farmers demanded political reform consistent with their democratic beliefs. Radicals in particular, reflecting their commitment to civil rights, called for the repeal of the Wartime Elections Act, opposed the deportation of persons without trial, and condemned restrictions on freedom of the press. Farmers
also requested Senate reform and the publication of campaign contributions.35 "Tell me from what sources the secret campaign funds of the political parties in power come," declared one future UFA M.L.A., "and I will tell you what invisible forces control the government."36

Reflecting this disdain for the old parties and their methods, the UFA/UFWA attracted many voters by eschewing mudslinging and trying to use reasoned arguments to focus on their program. Wood explained what he and Irene Parlby did during the 1919 Cochrane by-election:

Now they [the Calgary Herald] suggest that Mrs. Parlby and myself at Crossfield gave a "clean bill of health" to this government. Bless your heart, we are not veterinarians, and we did not examine it.... We went up there on another mission. We did say that the Honorable Chas. Stewart [the Premier] was an honorable, upright citizen, doing the best he could under difficult circumstances, and I reiterate that. If I have got to tear down the character of an honorable man to build up something that I want, I am not going to build it up. If we have not got better material than personal slander, we had better, as a representative of the government at Edmonton told the U.F.A. convention in 1912 - "Go home and slop your pigs."37

In similar vein, a UFA director argued that Robert Gardiner won the Medicine Hat by-election partly because he "discussed the issues involved and left out personality and recrimination."38

Such political victories were dependent on the electoral support of women which the UFA encouraged by giving them a measure of equality in the political movement, by backing their post-war agenda, and by working more actively to get them into the organization. UFA men believed the UFA/UFWA would train farm women to resist partyism and vote for their class.39 Furthermore, they felt that organized women's spiritual qualities would uphold the movement's ideals, keeping it from becoming materialistic.40

Therefore, while some men remained indifferent to recruiting women, or "did not know how,"41 UFA officers and unions organized unprecedented numbers of UFWA locals and encouraged women to join the UFA.42 Many UFA unions also helped UFWA locals with financial and other aid.43 "We owe our heartiest thanks to the men of the community," wrote one UFWA secretary, "who have always been ready with both the
encouraging word and the open pocketbook."^{44}

Despite these efforts, women's inability to pay membership fees and limited access to transportation, competition from other women's groups, home duties, and sometimes, husbands' opposition, kept UFWA membership well behind that of the UFA. Some women did not join the UFWA because there were too few of them to form a local or because they preferred staying in UFA unions.\(^{45}\) Many of the latter formed "women's committees" which received UFWA literature and did much the same work as UFWA locals.\(^{46}\)

There were unexpected benefits for the UFA in having women in the movement. Sometimes UFWA locals revived UFA unions by holding joint socials which drew back old members and attracted new ones.\(^{47}\) Moreover, a few UFWA women organized UFA unions.\(^{48}\)

Both sexes spoke of the organization as an integrated whole, not as two separate gender-based sections.\(^{49}\) Practically, this meant that women, being members of the one organization, whether the UFA or UFWA, could vote in UFA conventions, but men could not vote in UFWA conventions\(^{50}\) or join UFWA unions, even though "one or two women's locals had been desirous of taking in men members."\(^{51}\)

At the same time, discrimination toward women declined as the UFA, wanting women's support for UFA politics, granted them a measure of equality in the political movement. UFWA locals were given the same right as UFA locals to elect delegates for the political association conventions.\(^{52}\) But while the proportion of prairie farm women attending political conventions was highest in Alberta, UFWA unions were generally underrepresented compared to UFA locals, as many wives felt it "next to impossible ... to leave their homes ... for the necessary length of time."\(^{53}\) Notwithstanding, women were elected vice-president of nine of the twelve political associations in 1919,\(^{54}\) and Emma Root was named to the UFA Provincial Political Association Executive.\(^{55}\) Furthermore, several associations elected an equal number of male and female directors starting in 1920,\(^{56}\) and appointed women to committees.\(^{57}\) All in all, given their comparatively small numbers in the organization, women were fairly well represented in the political movement leadership, but they were not given top positions - if they wanted them.

They were not, however, always happy with their status. Though not endorsed, a
resolution moved at the 1920 UFWA convention called for the removal of the constitutional clause prohibiting the UFWA from petitioning governments "independent of the central." Sometimes women resented the UFA's making decisions without their input. The 1920 Battle River UFA/UFWA constituency convention protested that the UFWA had not been consulted about the dissolution of the Provincial Political Association.

Despite such complaints, women were generally satisfied with the UFA because, wanting their political support, it lobbied for their demands. The UFA endorsed women's requests for equal homestead, inheritance, divorce, and guardianship rights, and for restrictions on husbands' right to dispose of property without their wives' consent. The 1921 UFA convention approved a UFWA demand that men be held financially responsible for their illegitimate children. The very few UFWA resolutions the UFA did not support included a request for drought insurance and others dealing with relatively unimportant non-gender issues.

The UFWA accepted UFA screening of their resolutions and invited constructive criticism of them. Irene Parlby indicated to the UFA Board that women wanted their resolutions "considered carefully by the Men's convention"; they did not want the UFA to endorse them "merely because the women had passed them."

UFWA respect and support for the UFA and the political movement were reinforced by conflicts with other women's groups. In 1919, the Graduate Nurses Association opposed a UFWA request that nurses be trained and licensed as midwives for districts without doctors. The nurses did not want this work and feared offending the medical profession. The UFA, however, endorsed the UFWA position, strengthening farm women's belief that the organization would implement their agenda if elected. Their commitment to the UFA grew as the state-assisted Women's Institutes competed with the UFWA for members. Parlby argued that opposition to the UFWA "had been a determined and growing" Liberal policy that was "dividing the women of the country into two hostile camps."
The solution was to back UFA politics and turn out the government.

Farmers used gender discourse to encourage each other to do this. Rice Sheppard argued that manliness required "men" to take direct political action for their family and nation:
God expects us to be men, and ... we are commanded to feed and care for our families.... Let us ... change conditions.... Let us be free from all party ties and prepare to stand as men to work for ... all the people.... Only by Independent Action can the peoples of our Dominion rise to the higher plane of justice.  

UFWA leaders exhorted women to fulfill their prime duty of protecting the family, and to "clean" politics - a "mess" men had created - by supporting UFA politics. Their lack of political entanglement would ensure success.

Assumptions about gender shaped the movement's post-war social ethic - its belief in reform through the state - which " politicized" farmers as they concluded their proposals required direct political action. Believing it was their social maternal duty, UFWA women helped the Red Cross distribute clothes and raise money for drought victims in the South. Such work - and the widespread nature of hardship in the dry-belt, along with low product prices, short crops, and a sense that plutocrats had grown fat on the war - convinced farmers that governments must promote greater equality of condition. "We are trying to build," wrote one UFA officer, "a democracy ... set up by the farmers ... which ... will transform the economic status of the farmer, the worker, the tradesman, and will bring a fairer division of the wealth that is created." To that end, the 1919 UFA convention went beyond the Farmers' Platform to call for a " sharply" graduated tax of up to two percent on incomes of $2000 a year, increasing to fifty percent on incomes over $100,000. The organization also opposed a proposed tax on small incomes.

Influenced by women's desire to "mother" society, farmers' social ethic led them to endorse social welfare measures to protect the family. In 1919, the UFA endorsed a UFWA demand for mothers' pensions. When the province introduced an Act to assist impoverished widows and needy wives with insane husbands, the UFA/UFWA Boards asked that deserted mothers and mothers with invalid husbands be eligible. The Battle River constituency convention admonished governments to improve the condition of pregnant women and women with young children, and called for better screening and inspection to protect adopted children.

The obvious need of veterans for government aid strongly developed farmers' social ethic. The Farmers' Platform called for state insurance for high risk unpensioned veterans, training for those unfit to return to their former jobs, and assistance for those
wishing to farm.\textsuperscript{76} The UFA/UFWA generally did not approve Ottawa loaning money to veterans to buy farm land,\textsuperscript{77} preferring it commandeer land from speculators to provide homesteads for ex-soldiers and war nurses.\textsuperscript{78} In addition, the UFA called for veteran bonuses\textsuperscript{79} and monies for dependent parents of deceased soldiers,\textsuperscript{80} while the UFWA proposed generous pensions for disabled soldiers and their families.\textsuperscript{81}

The UFA/UFWA was "politicized" as farmers felt their proposals for veterans, taxation, and social welfare required independent politics, a conclusion strengthened by social gospel convictions. Farmers believed political action would inaugurate the Kingdom of God by ensuring the state brought in reform. Despite the secularization of society, a debate in the columns of the \textit{Western Independent} revealed that most farmers believed Christianity could have a beneficial effect on the movement, society, and politics. One contributor wrote:

"Should the U.F.A. enter religion the same as politics" - I would say most assuredly! and all the better for religion, and if at the same time a larger element of religion enters the U.F.A., the benefit will be mutual. The effect of this will be seen in the legislation of the future.\textsuperscript{82}

Evangelicalism also "politicized" farmers even though it suggested, in the words of Irene Parlby, that "social evils were traceable to bad home conditions" and that moral teaching and a healthy family life, not legislation, were the basis of a regenerated society.\textsuperscript{83} What was wrong with politics, in Parlby's mind, was that there were not enough men "of strong moral and independent characters in the legislatures at any one time." The old parties hated persons of integrity, preferring "the machine type of man or woman who will meekly keep to heel." Only UFA political action would allow farmers to choose candidates for their "moral worth, strength of character, and ability."\textsuperscript{84}

Evangelicals, and especially social gospellers, developed what Franklin Foster calls a "millennial-like vision of a possible future society." Farmers' religious ideals, liberal ideas about social perfection, social Darwinian notions about societal progress, faith in self-education, the reform ethos of the age, the UFA/UFWA's successes and growing power, and a desire to ensure that wartime sacrifices were not in vain, spawned this feeling that an ideal society was about to emerge out of the old corrupt order.\textsuperscript{85} "I believe we are entering the dawn of a new era," declared one future UFA M.P., "and that it is the earnest desire of the United Farmers ... to act in sympathy with all other
democratic forces in the spirit of true co-operation, and go into the new day together.\textsuperscript{86}

Agrarian political successes heightened this sense of expectancy. "In view of the great news from Ontario," wrote one local secretary, "this should be an opportune time for holding 'revival meetings.' Interest in the organization is being much stimulated."\textsuperscript{87}

Foster contends that UFA/UFWA millennialism was mainly "civil millennialism" which saw man building "the new world; he would be following God's laws but there would be no direct Divine intervention needed."\textsuperscript{88} This was certainly the millennialism of H.W. Wood and William Irvine who believed God was synonymous with the natural laws driving social progress. Most farmers, however, felt that a personal God would help usher in the new day. Still, Wood's use of Biblical metaphors, his apocalyptic imagery, his depiction of "us" versus "them," and of the conflict between good and evil, reflected a general millennialist outlook that rang true to many farmers. Describing the impending struggle between the "people" and plutocracy, Wood declared:

\begin{quote}
The conflict is just beginning, and the people will utterly fail unless they mobilize their forces and stand as a solid wall of citizenship in defence of their rights.... It will be the epic of ages. God will marshall and direct the forces of the people; Mammon the forces of the beasts. Either Mammon will be overthrown and the beasts destroyed, or the people and the beasts both go down together and God stand on the wastes of social isolation.\textsuperscript{89}
\end{quote}

This outlook, and farmers' social gospel and evangelical beliefs, contributed to the agrarian revolt. A quantitative study found that areas with "high proportions of Protestants tended to give disproportionately strong support" to UFA candidates.\textsuperscript{90}

The revised Farmers' Platform also "politicized" the movement. Issued in late 1918, and called the "New National Policy," it was more than farmers' wish list; it was a symbol of the movement, a rejection of things as they were, and a vision of what Canada could be. Farmers believed the old National Policy benefited industrialists at the expense of the many, but the New National Policy, with its low tariff, progressive taxation, and welfare planks, would help the masses; it was the country's first truly democratic program. Although the Council of Agriculture announced the Platform with "no expectation that on the strength of it a demand for direct political action would be made,"\textsuperscript{91} its impact on the 1919 western farmers' annual conventions was striking, as the \textit{Guide} noted with some exaggeration:
When the series of recommendations which constitute the Farmers' Platform ... were placed before the farmers' conventions of last winter, they were seized upon with avidity, and made the basis for a new party movement. The delegates at those conventions, with united voice, declared that they had waited long enough upon the two old parties. If the measures advocated in the Farmers' Platform were to be realized at all, it was felt that steps must be taken to launch a new party which would be free from old centralized autocratic influences, and whose elected representatives in parliament would stand uncompromisingly by the New National Policy.\footnote{92}

A UFA poem is suggestive of the Platform's politicizing effect on the movement:

The platform that we now endorse  
Must rule the vast domain;  
Stand firm and fast, ye leaders all,  
For good and not for gain.  
Let party politicians be  
Submerged in farmers' laws;  
Democracy shall reign supreme  
For every noble cause.\footnote{93}

The policies of "party politicians" further "politicized" farmers. During the war, the movement's lack of legislative success built farmers' sense of class opposition, pushing them toward independent politics. After the UFA endorsed such action in 1919, the provincial Liberals, hoping to head off the revolt, met many UFA/UFWA demands. But farmers' culture and determination to justify UFA politics led them to see government responsiveness as expediency or evidence of growing agrarian political power - which strengthened their political resolve. On the other hand, they condemned the government when it did not meet their requests. It was a no-win situation for the Liberals.

Largely at the UFA/UFWA's behest, the province improved rural schooling and spent millions on railways and telephones. In 1921, a UFA demand that an oil pipeline bill include a common carrier clause led to the bill's withdrawal.\footnote{94} The government also granted equal intestate inheritance rights for women, and equal parental rights in the guardianship and estate of infants.\footnote{95} These successes built farmers' political confidence, while the province's refusal to form a road commission,\footnote{96} or to ensure that a wife's signature was required for land transfers,\footnote{97} sharpened their political edge.

The government's handling of prohibition did much to raise farmers' political
consciousness. The UFA/UFWA demanded stricter enforcement of the law and control of abuses such as doctors overprescribing alcohol as medicine. In 1920, the organization called for a plebiscite on the importation of liquor into the province. A plebiscite was held, and the dry forces won, thanks largely to UFWA campaigning. But growing public support for the sale of liquor rendered the province unwilling to enforce prohibition effectively, suggesting to farmers that the Liberals "should be thrown out, neck and crop."

The government's health policies led farmers to the same conclusion. The influenza epidemic of 1918-19 revealed "the total inadequacy of medical and nursing aid in the rural districts." The UFWA therefore asked the province to provide a short course in nursing and yearly medical inspection of schools. Irene Parlby suggested that municipalities be permitted to hire doctors and nurses. The UFA called for the enforcement of quarantines, higher hospital grants, a cap on medical fees, and state funded doctors for outlying areas. The government responded by sending out nurses to look after maternity cases, and to inspect schools and do general health work. It also increased the hospital grant and allowed districts to engage a doctor. Many farmers were not satisfied, however; they believed such legislation showed that "the state under our present political system will only creep along as public opinion and political expediency permits."

Government debt further undermined the Liberals' credibility. Farmers believed the old parties, being reliant on patronage, would not impose the "rigid economy" they demanded. "The debt of the Province ... is $34,635,200," the Independent noted. "Is it not time for a business administration?"

The government's response to farmers' debt and credit problems also tarnished its image. Frontier and wartime conditions produced high debt loads and interest rates for Alberta producers; declining product prices, drought, and tight money after the war drove many to the wall. Farmers were angry the government did not follow Manitoba's lead by forcing the banks to lend to co-op credit societies at low rates. Only in 1921, on the eve of an election, did the province agree to guarantee bank loans made to credit societies.

Farmers were also upset with the province's response to the farm mortgage crisis. Foreclosures and threats of seizure were endemic in some districts. Thousands of
producers lost their farms. Some farmers called for a moratorium, but most simply wanted the government to implement the 1917 Farm Loan Act by which it would finance mortgages by selling bonds. The province hemmed and hawed and did nothing.

The government's lack of credit aid "politicized" even liberal farmers and made them receptive to American soft money doctrines and the social credit ideas of C.H. Douglas and Arthur Kitson. Farmers came to believe that financiers controlled credit and money, and had brought on the post-war price decline. Disillusioned with the province's unhelpfulness, and influenced by UFA radical credit experts like W.R. Ball and G. Bevington, farmers demanded state banks. In 1919, the UFA convention called for provincial government banks, and in 1921, with produce prices plummeting and the dry-belt shriveling, farmers requested the "nationalization of our banking and credit system." The desperation behind these demands fueled the agrarian revolt as farmers sought credit relief through political means.

Dry-belt farmers were also dissatisfied with the province's irrigation policies. By 1919, certain districts had seen three consecutive years of drought. Lethbridge area farmers responded in 1920 by forming the northern irrigation district. The province provided inadequate credit support which prompted the UFA to demand a full loan guarantee. The government consented, and the project was soon organized, but some farmers resented that the Liberals had taken so long to act.

In the far North, railways were the key political issue. Railway rates were high, and service, particularly on the badly maintained Edmonton, Dunvegan and B.C. line, was poor. Moreover, many farmers were far from any railway. Northern locals and conventions, with the support of the larger UFA, demanded lower rates, better service, more extensions, and a west coast link. There was some improvement after 1920 when the CPR assumed operation of the E.D. and B.C., and the province took over the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway, but northern farmers were exasperated, having waited years for help and promised lines that never appeared. So angry were they that when the 1921 election was called they resolved: "Let's make a clean sweep; things couldn't be worse."

Across the province, farmers suspected the government favoured urban over rural areas in its education, road construction, and taxation policies. They were particularly
angry that the province imposed the supplementary revenue tax at a higher rate on rural than urban land. They were also upset that it failed to keep its promise to maintain their political power by introducing proportional representation.

As their political strength grew, farmers became truculent. UFA officer W.D. Trego was indignant that the Minister of Municipal Affairs refused to amend the Hail Insurance Act as the 1920 UFA convention had demanded. "This raises the question," Trego asked ominously: "Who is this minister - a servant of the people or a dictator of the people?" "If this is the kind of service we are to get from the present incumbants in office," Trego concluded, there was no reason for delaying UFA political action "beyond the next provincial election." As time went on, the government found it nearly impossible to neutralize UFA/UFWA criticism. The Independent argued that the UFA's growing political influence did not mean the Liberals had undergone a "sound conversion"; they were merely playing "another phase of the old political game."

The UFA/UFWA was in revolt against "partyism" as well as Liberal policies. A railway scandal involving the provincial government in 1910, Alberta's pre-1905 tradition of non-party government, the Non-Partisan League's agitation for a "non-partisan business administration," and the collapse of the provincial Conservatives, many of whom supported the UFA, proved fatal to the government and party system.

If the provincial Liberals were doomed in many farmers' eyes, more so was the Dominion government. At least the Liberals had passed a fair amount of pro-UFA/UFWA legislation after the war; the same cannot be said of the governing Union/Liberal-Conservative party in Ottawa. Articulating many farmers' frustration, John Slattery, a UFA/UFWA political association secretary, argued that farmers had been "begging for economic justice for years," and concluded that direct political action was needed. The cancelation of the Wheat Board in 1920 brought many farmers to that conclusion. It indicated, one future UFA M.P. warned, that the government's political campaign against them would be "merciless."

Post-war protectionism also suggested that farmers could expect little from the government. Having endured increased duties during the war, they believed they were now entitled to lower tariffs. At the same time, they were angry that protected manufacturers wanted their inputs on the free list. They were incensed when, despite
their arguments before the Tariff Commission, Ottawa raised tariffs in the 1921 budget. The previous budget had already "politcized" farmers, throwing down the gauntlet to the ... the supporters of the New National Policy. The government is determined to maintain protection ... to secure the war profiteers in ... their ill-gotten gains, and to compel the workers of Canada to carry the burden of the war debt. The challenge will be taken up at the earliest opportunity.

The defeat of a motion in Parliament to ratify the Reciprocity Agreement of 1911 further incited farmers' ire. What was particularly galling to them was that sixteen western Members representing pro-reciprocity constituencies voted against the pact; had they voted for it, the resolution would have carried. Constituents' wishes had clearly been sacrificed to party discipline. The Guide warned:

Another election is coming, and reciprocity will no doubt be an issue again. The voters will remember when they come to select their candidates and to record their votes the action these "representatives" took when they had an opportunity to secure wider markets for the produce of Canadian farms.

That year, when the American Congress imposed heavy duties on Canadian wheat and livestock, farmers' cup of wrath ran over.

They did not turn to the federal Liberals for relief. Had not the party's protectionist wing worked against reciprocity in 1911? Moreover, the Guide noted that prominent Liberals had made pro-tariff remarks in Quebec in 1921. It was clear to farmers that corporate interests dictated both parties' tariff policies.

Broader foreign policy issues also "politicalized" the movement. Farmers were against any move to strengthen the Imperial link without public approval. Influenced by Queen's University political economist O.D. Skelton, they sought national self-determination. Their Platform declared:

We believe that further development of the British Empire should be sought along the lines of partnership between nations free and equal.... We are strongly opposed to any attempt to centralize Imperial control. Any attempt to set up an independent power to bind the Dominions, whether this authority be termed parliament, council, or cabinet, would hamper the growth of responsible and informed democracy in the Dominions.

The Guide repudiated what it believed was the government's policy of weakening
The final defeat of reciprocity and the imposition of an emergency tariff by the Americans in 1921 politicized farmers.

SOURCE: Guide, June 1, 1921, p. 6
TARIFF POLICY OF LIBERAL PARTY

Spectator: "That fellow makes a great noise and is always going but he never gets anywhere."

SOURCE: Guide, August 30, 1916, p. 6
Canada's status won at the Peace Conference, arguing that this was one of the "real issues" of the 1921 election.\textsuperscript{145}

Farmers were strongly critical of militarism and navalism. "Do we want to build expensive war ships ... with the financial position that this country is in?," T.A. Crerar asked the UFA convention.\textsuperscript{146} Farmers also opposed compulsory military training,\textsuperscript{147} believing it cultivated a taste for war. The \textit{Independent} argued that the government's defence policies would be "one of the main reasons for turning it out."\textsuperscript{148}

Poor railway service hurt the political fortunes of the federal and provincial governments. Farmers clamoured for more branch lines, and the completion of all lines started before the war.\textsuperscript{149} With the bankruptcy of the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk Pacific, however, and the onset of depression in 1920, little railway extension was undertaken. The construction of the Hudson Bay Railway was also frustratingly slow.\textsuperscript{150}

Farmers felt that greater state involvement in major industries would solve such infrastructure problems. The Farmers' Platform called for

public ownership and control of railway, water, and aerial transportation, telephone, telegraph, and express systems, all projects in the development of natural power, and of the coal mining industry.\textsuperscript{151}

The 1920 convention opposed the alienation from the Crown of such resources as timber, gas, and oil, and asked the government to develop these "in the interests of the people."\textsuperscript{152} Farmers believed state ownership and operation of resources and key industries would lower consumer costs and create more revenue for the government so the tariff could be lowered. The issue took on a sectional flavour as farmers called on Ottawa to hand over control of resources to the prairie provinces.\textsuperscript{153}

The call for government control of major industries was an expression of farmers' demand for a more activist state, a demand stemming from wartime experience with state intervention, from radical and the "new" liberal ideology, and from expediency. Although some were uncomfortable with this trend, most farmers supported state assisted wheat and livestock marketing, government control over land speculation,\textsuperscript{154} and even such measures as a cap on milling company profits.\textsuperscript{155} While the old parties met such requests to a degree, many farmers concluded that independent political action was needed to create the activist state they wanted.
Furthermore, farmers' changing perception of the state "politicized" them. Before and during the war, they generally saw government boards and commissions as expert, non-partisan, and impartial arbiters between groups. The early work of the Grain and Railway Boards seemed to validate this view. But farmers increasingly believed such agencies worked in the interests of politicians or plutocrats. The Railway Board's approval of a freight rate hike of 35% in 1920, and its refusal to hear a UFA presentation on the effect of high railway rates on agriculture, "dissipated" farmers' faith in that body. By 1921, farmers also felt the Grain Board should be investigated. Given their cynicism about such boards, farmers naturally opposed the idea of a permanent commission to help the government determine tariff policy.

The problem with commissions and boards, farmers felt, was the party system; the old parties corrupted them through patronage. If honest and competent persons were put in these agencies, they would be effective. But only a non-party government would appoint such commissioners and not try to influence them in their work.

Disappointed with government policies, commissions, and boards, farmers were angered by the parties' political tactics. At two UFA/UFWA political constituency conventions in 1919, the provincial Liberals suggested that they and the UFA nominate joint candidates. The delegates saw this as a ploy to co-opt UFA political action and turned down the proposals "amid hilarious applause." Farmers were also offended by the amount of money the parties used in their campaigns, and by their use of such practices as padding voters' lists.

Clause ten of the 1920 Franchise Act, an apparent federal attack on non-party political organizations, raised farmers' anger another notch. The clause stipulated that only associations incorporated solely for political purposes could provide money for political use. Farmers "bitterly" condemned this as a pernicious attempt to bar them from taking independent action. And while the UFA took steps to protect itself from a legal challenge under the Act, the clause suggested the government would do anything to hamper farmers' political efforts.

Farmers faced another "politicizing" challenge in 1920 when a number of companies, at the behest of a former manager of the Manufacturers' Association, cancelled their advertising in the Guide because of its tariff stance. UFA/UFWA locals
Farmers’ loss of faith in commissions. In the 1916 cartoon (top), commissioners are presented as workmanlike representatives of the people. In the 1920 cartoon (bottom), the Railway Board is depicted as a bloated plutocrat: farmers now suspected that corporations influenced commissions by controlling the parties. SOURCE: Guide, Mar. 15, 1916, p. 6; Sept. 15, 1920, p. 6
saw this as a barefaced "attack on the freedom of the press" and on the agrarian political movement, and they resolved not to buy from manufacturers boycotting the paper.\footnote{167}

A poem by Herne Liddell captured the politicizing effect of clause ten and the Guide boycott on the UFA/UFWA:

\begin{verbatim}
...But when we form a party
At politics to play,
They up and do their darndest
To block the right-of-way.
They class it class distinction,
And other nasty things;
And bring up bills in Parliament
To clip the farmers' wings.

And when a farmers' organ,
that's called the G.G. Guide
Begins to quote opinions
Of farmers far and wide,
They start a little boycott,
That boodle-bird's brigade,
And ask their friends to please refuse
Their advertising trade....

The moral of this ditty
Is mighty plain to read,
They deal us lots of taffy,
But that ain't what we need.
So think it over farmers,
Too long we've been the goat;
And when the next election comes
Let's take and use our vote.\footnote{168}
\end{verbatim}

The 1921 Grain Enquiry, which focused on alleged illegalities involving the United Grain Growers, further "politicized" farmers. They quickly concluded it was a thinly veiled attempt to discredit the Company, its president T.A. Crerar, and the national political farm movement he headed.\footnote{169} Crerar debunked the Enquiry's accusations,\footnote{170} leading farmers to believe the Meighen government was unfit to govern - if it had to resort to such tactics to stay in power. Meighen sank still lower in farmers' estimation when he called Crerar and H.W. Wood "Bolshevists" and "enemies of the state."\footnote{171}

Economic adversity hardened farmers' political resolve. Higher prices for what they bought, and the post-war drop in the prices of grain and livestock, created severe hardship.\footnote{172} Citing data showing these trends, and arguing that farmers were operating at
The Farmers Can Make the Boycott a Boomerang

The 1921 Grain Enquiry raised farmers' ire against the federal government and "partyism."

SOURCE: Guide, Nov. 23, 1921, p. 4
"Polling" the Farmer's Vote


The Mud Slinger

a loss, Donald Cameron blamed the party system:

In the face of such evidence, and much more like it, so apparent to the average thinker, our politicians and their subsidized party press do not seem to understand the fundamental principles underlying the new movement for political emancipation that is now rocking their old worn out structure of party politics to its foundations...

We must destroy this party system, not only in the federal field, but in the provincial field as well.\textsuperscript{173}

Many farmers believed speculators and corporations had brought on the price squeeze, which was all the more reason to take direct political action:

Red lodge would like to know why the price of grain went down so quickly and freight rates went up; and why it still takes $7.50 to $8.00 to buy a sack of flour, and $1.50 to $1.75 for a 20 pound sack of rolled oats, although we are being paid 35 cents to 40 cents at the local elevator. And why it takes the price of two cow-hides to buy a pair of shoes, and many other strange things need explanation.... If ever, now is the time for the farmers to unite and organize and see if they can have a hand in legislation.\textsuperscript{174}

In some districts, climatic disaster inclined farmers to support UFA politics. Describing the "starved cattle and farmers without feed" he saw in 1920, John Glambeck admonished producers to "organize, both economically and politically in order to retain more of their products in good years so that they may have something to fall back on in lean years."\textsuperscript{175}

Movement confidence emboldened farmers to take political action. This self-assurance stemmed from study of "the political situation and the Farmers' Platform";\textsuperscript{176} from agrarian political victories; from legislative and co-operative successes which suggested that farmers had only "begun to act in a 'collective capacity'";\textsuperscript{177} and from rousing speakers: "Boy howdy, didn't he shoot the ginger into us?"\textsuperscript{178} Above all, the incredible growth of the movement imparted a sense of power. "A feeling grew out of the strength of the organization," one prominent UFA man recalled years later. Farmers felt "they could do greater things if they were in charge themselves."\textsuperscript{179} So armed, they launched the greatest agrarian revolt in North American history.

The 1919 convention permitted UFA political action and instructed the central to call political conventions in federal ridings upon request of ten percent of the locals in the
Farmers suspected that financiers controlled price trends through their control of credit. This perception helped bring on the agrarian revolt. SOURCE: *Guide*, Mar. 9, 1921, p. 6

Post-war price spreads politicized farmers. SOURCE: *Guide*, June 8, 1921, p. 6
Low prices for a variety of farm products politicized farmers and was a factor in the agrarian revolt of 1921. SOURCE: Guide, Nov. 30, 1921, p. 6
Soon after, the Non-Partisan League approached the UFA Executive about a possible merger. A joint committee was appointed which endorsed, with a few amendments, an agreement the League had drafted as a basis for amalgamation. The agreement was later considered by the UFA/UFWA constituency conventions, which, as stipulated by the annual convention, determined how, or whether, they wished to take political action.

The agreement proposed a non-party "business administration" in which all schools of political thought would be represented. It favoured provincial as well as federal action and insisted that farmers meet all costs of their political activities. It suggested opening a separate UFA political office and asked that the UFA/UFWA constituency conventions adopt platforms clause by clause. The League promised to cast its lot in with the UFA if its constituency conventions accepted these principles.

The conventions were held in all federal constituencies by mid-1919. Most approved the joint committee agreement in its essentials. A number endorsed the Farmers' Platform; others committed their members to study the Platform with a view of adopting a program later. In two conventions, League supporters tried to get "League" included in the constituency association's name, but only the Macleod convention agreed to this.

The main point of contention in the conventions was whether the political movement would be restricted to UFA/UFWA members or open to anyone who believed in the UFA cause. League supporters, who were mostly radicals, and a few others, called for the "open door," averring that a strictly UFA political movement could not attract enough voters. H.W. Wood disagreed, and insisted that broadening out would weaken the movement by diluting its central focus - class interest - and by permitting the infiltration of political manipulators. This view prevailed at the conventions, owing to Wood's influence and farmers' class consciousness.

Nevertheless, the movement never ruled out involvement in UFA politics for non-farmer UFA/UFWA members such as teachers and clergymen. The Calgary East and West convention even allowed persons of other classes to become "associate members" of its political movement - though with fewer rights than regular members. Some conventions permitted their constituencies to nominate non-farmer UFA political
candidates, but others stipulated that their candidates must be "bona fide farmers" to ensure that no professional politicians were endorsed.

The conventions were major events in the "movement politicizing," as was the UFA/UFWA's absorption of the League in mid-1919. Though the UFA/UFWA would not endorse a wide-open multi-class political strategy, the League was satisfied the conventions had adopted most of the joint committee proposals. With the merger of the rival organizations, the political movement could grow and develop undivided. Had the two remained apart, fighting one another, agrarian politics in Alberta would have been seriously weakened, as the farm movement would have been if the AFA and S of E had failed to unite to form the UFA.

The conventions over, the constituency associations created the UFA Provincial Political Association (UFAPPA) to co-ordinate their political work. Since many former League members were elected to the Association Board, it advocated the open door political strategy, despite the UFA constituency associations' endorsement of Wood's closed door policy.

The result was another run-in with Wood during the October Cochrane by-election, the UFA's first political test, in which the organization's candidate, Alex Moore, challenged the Liberal standard bearer, E.V. Thompson. During the campaign, Wood first enunciated his group government theory, arguing that occupational groups should replace parties in Parliament and the legislatures. This was an extension of his desire to keep the UFA/UFWA political movement for members only. Other economic groups would do likewise and elect their own representatives. League MLA James Weir, and UFAPPA members, including Guy Johnson, publicly repudiated Wood's ideas. Despite this, and the support of prominent Liberals for Thompson, Moore won.

It was a landmark victory for the UFA; had Moore lost, the political movement would have stalled. Soon after, another important step in the "movement politicizing" occurred when William Irvine, the Independent editor and main spokesperson for the open door plan, joined the Wood camp and convinced many radicals to support Wood's doctrines. Radicals and liberals now had a common political ideology on which to unite.

Some opposition to Wood's position continued, however, although the issue was resolved at the 1920 annual convention where Wood accused the UFAPPA of telling him
during the Cochrane campaign he "could not talk about the great principle of group
government and group organization." UFAPPA president O.L. McPherson countered that
he had not objected to Wood's expressing his views, but was upset he had reportedly
stated them as the UFA's official position before the annual convention had declared on
the question.\textsuperscript{189} The election of the UFA president settled the matter. The contestants
were Wood and Archie Muir, vice-president of the UFAPPA and an open door advocate.
Wood won by a five to one margin,\textsuperscript{190} and the convention endorsed his principle of
economic group organization for politics.\textsuperscript{191} It also passed a resolution that weakened the
UFAPPA by subordinating it to the UFA Board. The UFAPPA, as a result, decided to
disband, handing responsibility for co-ordinating the constituency associations' political
work to the central.\textsuperscript{192} All in all, it was a decisive victory for Wood, class politics, and
group government.

In 1921, the "movement politicizing" reached fruition. The annual convention
recommended provincial political action in every constituency and endorsed the choice of
T.A. Crerar by the independent farmer Members of Parliament - the nucleus of the soon
to be Progressive Party - as their leader.\textsuperscript{193} Then in late June, the UFA candidate Robert
Gardiner won the Medicine Hat federal by-election by over 9700 votes,\textsuperscript{194} giving farmers
unshakable political confidence just as the provincial Liberals called an election for July
18. The UFA/UFWA quickly organized itself in some 30 new ridings and placed 44
candidates in the field\textsuperscript{195} - and won 38 of 61 seats. This victory spawned a new wave of
excitement that carried into the federal election of December which saw all ten UFA
candidates and both the labour and independent candidates endorsed by the UFA elected.
In most urban-rural ridings during the elections and the Medicine Hat by-election the
UFA and labour agreed to run and support only one class of candidate. Only in one
constituency did the UFA and Labor party pit candidates against each other - to the
detriment of the labour candidate.

The agrarian political fire, most intense in Alberta, was aflame across the
prairies, and even in Ontario and B.C. In the federal election, the Progressives, including
the ten successful UFA candidates, won sixty-five seats. The provincial farm
organizations had essentially conducted their own campaigns. Some members of the
Canadian Council of Agriculture had tried to tie the provincial political movements
Cutting out the Weeds in Medicine Hat

SOURCE: Guide, June 22, 1921, p. 6

Nailing the Colours

SOURCE: Guide, Aug. 17, 1921, p. 6
together, and a loose co-ordinating committee was formed. But UFA president Wood, who was also CCA president, successfully blocked all attempts, including those by Progressive leader T.A. Crerar, an open door advocate, to create a centrally organized national party. Wood and other western farmers, especially in Alberta, were determined to have direct democratic control over their political movements.

From 1919 to 1921, the UFA/UFWA was " politicized." It committed itself to independent politics, gained women's political support, and created political structures. The organization's growth, its democratic ethos, its sense of citizenship responsibility, its social ethic and Platform, and its religious ideas, prodded farmers to pursue this political course. So did state actions, economic adversity, political victories, and eventual consensus on political strategy. Under these influences, farmers launched what would be the most resilient agrarian political crusade in North American history.
1918 UFA Board. Seated, starting second from the left, are P. Baker, first UFA vice-president; Irene Parlby, UFWA president; H. W. Wood, UFA president; Winnifred Ross, UFWA vice-president; Leona Barritt, UFWA secretary; W. D. Trego, second UFA vice-president. In the second row, third from the left, is Strathcona pioneer and fourth UFA vice-president Rice Sheppard. Third from the right is ex-Kansas Populist governor and third UFA vice-president J. W. Leedy. On the far right is fur trader – farmer W. F. Bredin. Third from the left in the rear row is UFA secretary P. P. Woodbridge. Second from the right is H. E. Spencer, a future UFA M. P.

SOURCE: Glenbow Archives, NA-447-1
The 1921 UFWA Board. In the front row, starting from the left, are Jean Field; Susan Gunn, first vice-president; Marion Sears, president; Mrs. O. S. Welch, second vice-president; Mrs. J.B. Kidd, secretary; Etta Wood (wife of H. W. Wood). SOURCE: Glenbow Archives, NA-3972-1
ENDNOTES

1 Grain Growers' Guide (hereafter GGG), July 16, 1919, p. 41.


3 Glenbow Archives (hereafter GA), United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Annual Conventions (hereafter MR), 1920, pp. 25, 110; 1921, pp. 33, 119; 1922, p. 74. Membership data conflict in these and other sources. The figures provided are conservative estimates.

4 GGG, Mar. 23, 1921, p. 22. See also July 2, 1919, p. 7; Sept. 17, 1919, p. 8.

5 MR, 1920, p. 18; 1922, p. 115; GGG, Jan. 8, 1919, p. 12; Apr. 28, 1920, p. 23. David Jones provides a fine analysis of the depopulation of the South in Empire of Dust: Settling and Abandoning the Prairie Dry Belt (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1987).

6 The southern constituencies were East and West Calgary, Bow River, Macleod, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat. These constituencies contained 43.3%, 42.1%, 47.4% of the total UFA membership in 1919, 1920, and 1921 respectively, and 46.5%, 47.3%, and 50% of the total UFWA membership those years. The Medicine Hat and Lethbridge constituencies, which contained the dry-belt and saw massive depopulation after the war, accounted for 17.3%, 20.3%, and 19.9% of the total UFA membership in 1919, 1920, and 1921, and 16%, 20.2%, and 22.2% of the total UFWA membership those years. Calculations are based on the tables in MR, 1920, pp. 32, 110; 1921, pp. 33, 119; 1922, pp. 64, 144.


8 There was a strong correlation between the amount of organization work directors did and the growth or decline of UFA/UFWA membership in their constituencies. This can be seen by comparing the directors' reports in MR, 1920, pp. 16-23, 85-89; 1921, pp. 18-24, 85-91; 1922, pp. 20-28, 113-119, with the constituency membership figures in Ibid., 1920, pp. 32, 110; 1921, pp. 33, 119; 1922, pp. 64, 144.


10 Drives were held each year from 1918 to 1920.


13Ibid., Feb. 2, 1921, p. 18.
14MR, 1922, p. 53.
15GGG, Jan. 29, 1919, p. 31.
16Ibid., Jan. 28, pp. 13-14.
17Ibid., Feb. 25, 1920, p. 43.
18Ibid., Dec. 10, 1919, p. 46.
20Alberta Non-Partisan (hereafter ANP), June 5, 1919, p. 9.
21GGG, Jan. 29, 1919, p. 33; July 2, 1919, p. 79. That the UFA did not rubber stamp the Platform was evident in its refusal to endorse the Canadian Council of Agriculture's proposal to add a plank favouring personal naturalization (Ibid., Jan. 28, 1920, pp. 16-17).
22MR, 1921, p. 48; GGG, Aug. 17, 1921, p. 22.
23Ten percent was required for a federal constituency convention; twenty percent for a provincial constituency convention.
24GGG, Apr. 6, 1921, p. 9; Apr. 13, 1921, p. 3.
26GGG, Oct. 8, 1919, p. 12.
27To this end, farmers wanted the legislature to adopt a provision whereby the defeat of a bill would not lead to the government's resignation (MR, 1921, p. 59). The threat of resignation was the chief means by which cabinets forced party Members to vote for government bills they did not approve of.
28GGG, Aug. 17, 1921, p. 22.
29Smith Fonds, File 186, clipping from Manitoba Free Press, July 23, 1921, UFA provincial platform.
30GGG, Apr. 16, 1919, p. 10.
31In politics, a recall is a provision whereby, upon petition of a defined percentage
of the constituents, a Member can be unseated.


34 MR, 1920, pp. 46, 73.


36 GGG, Apr. 6, 1921, p. 9.

37 Western Independent (hereafter WI), Oct. 29, 1919, p. 11.

38 GGG, Sept. 14, 1921, p. 23.

39 Queen's University Archives, T.A. Crerar Papers, Coll. 2117, Box 139, United Farmers of Alberta, Bulletin No. 5A.

40 UFA Fonds, Box 1, File 13, Report of UFA Secretaries' Conventions, 1919, pp. 5, 20, 44-46.

41 GGG, Mar. 23, 1921, p. 22.

42 See, for example, GGG, May 7, 1919, p. 49; Sept. 3, 1919, p. 12; Oct. 8, 1919, p. 52; Oct. 15, 1919, p. 42.


44 Ibid., Mar. 26, 1919, p. 84.


46 GGG, May 19, 1920, p. 21; Apr. 13, 1921, pp. 33-34.


49 GA, United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Executive and Board (hereafter Executive), 1920, p. 57; Report of UFA Secretaries' Conventions, 1919, p. 46.

50 Executive, 1920, p. 57.
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51Ibid., p. 29.
52GGG, May 21, 1919, p. 46.
53Ibid., July 30, 1919, p. 31.
54Ibid., Sept. 17, 1919, p. 8.
55Minutes of Provincial Political Association, p. 17.
56GA, George Gibson Coote Fonds, 1907-1956, M260, File 50, Minutes of political convention of UFA locals in Macleod riding, July 28, 1920, p. 5; GGG, Dec. 1, 1920, p. 14; Feb. 2, 1921, p. 18; Apr. 3, 1921, p. 20. In some associations, the women were designated "sub-directors," denoting a lower status. The junior UFA elected an equal number of "boy" and "girl" directors to its board (GGG, Sept. 14, 1921, p. 8).
57GGG, June 30, 1920, p. 38; Aug. 11, 1920, p. 20.
58The resolution stated that this limitation put the UFWA "at a disadvantage when working with other women's organizations" (MR, 1920, p. 120).
59GGG, June 30, 1920, p. 37.
61MR, 1921, pp. 66-67.
62Ibid., 1920, p. 65.
63These included a request for Scripture readings in schools (MR, 1919, p. 94) and another asking that two retiring officers be retained on the board (MR, 1919, pp. 94, 97).
64Executive, 1919, p. 131.
65GGG, Feb. 12, 1919, p. 49; Mar. 26, 1919, p. 84.
66Executive, 1919, p. 146.
68ANP, June 19, 1919, p. 8.
69Ibid., p. 13; GGG, June 15, 1921, p. 31; Oct. 12, 1921, p. 12; Apr. 2, 1919, p. 47.
70 GGG, July 6, 1921, p. 4.

71 Ibid., Apr. 2, 1919, p. 10. A similar statement can be found in Feb. 12, 1919, p. 11.

72 Ibid., Jan. 29, 1919, p. 33.

73 Executive, 1919, p. 165.

74 Ibid., p. 145; GGG, Mar. 5, 1919, p. 44; Mar. 19, 1919, p. 49.

75 GGG, July 2, 1919, p. 40.

76 Morton, p. 304.

77 GGG, Jan. 28, 1920, p. 19.

78 MR, 1919, p. 55.

79 GGG, Mar. 19, 1919, p. 13; MR, 1920, pp. 61, 64.

80 MR, 1919, p. 56.

81 Ibid., p. 97.

82 WI, Feb. 11, 1920, p. 13. The debate occurred in the "Letter Box" of the Independent during the first few months of 1920.

83 These arguments by Parlby can be found in MR, 1919, p. 78; 1921, pp. 113-114. The quotation is on p. 113.

84 GGG, Oct. 15, 1919, p. 44.

85 Franklin Lloyd Foster, "The 1921 Alberta Provincial Election: A Consideration of Factors Involved With Particular Attention to Overtones of Millennialism Within the U.F.A. and Other Reform Movements of the Period" (M.A. Thesis: Queen's University, 1977). The quotation is on p. iii.

86 GGG, Nov. 16, 1921, p. 15. For a similar statement see Feb. 11, 1920, p. 40.

87 Ibid., Nov. 12, 1919, p. 26. Herbert Greenfield, a future UFA Premier, similarly argued that Robert Gardiner's victory in the Medicine Hat by-election was "an expression of the new democracy which I believe has been born in Canada" (Ibid., July 6, 1921, p. 4).

88 Foster, pp. iii (quotation), 1-7.
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89MR, 1922, p. 11.


91GGG, Mar. 31, 1920, p. 7.


93Ibid., May 5, 1920, p. 22.


95MR, 1921, pp. 109-110; 1922, pp. 126-127.

96The UFA discovered in 1920 that the idea of a road commission "did not find favor among the members of the government" (GA, Henry Elvins Spencer Fonds, 1914-1963, M1165, File 21, "The U.F.A. and the Provincial Government"). The implementation of such a commission became a plank of the UFA provincial platform.

97MR, 1921, p. 111.

98Executive, 1919, pp. 176-177; MR, 1920, pp. 74, 119.


101MR, 1921, p. 94.


103WI, Mar. 10, 1920, p. 3.

104MR, 1919, p. 76.

105Ibid., p. 95.

106Ibid., 1920, p. 126.

107GGG, Mar. 19, 1919, p. 15.

There are a number of local resolutions favouring a moratorium in the Premiers' Papers, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Acc. No. 69.289, File 5A.

W.R. Ball argued that the implementation of a provincial banking system would "require independent political action" (GGG, Jan. 15, 1919, p. 26).
The Premier promised to implement proportional representation during the 1919 Cochrane by-election (GA, Alberta Wheat Pool Fonds, 1913-1965, M2369, File 821, clipping from the Edmonton Journal, Oct. 20, 1919, p. 1), but there was little support for the measure in the government which dragged its feet by appointing committees to study the issue (WI, Mar. 10, 1920, p. 8; GGG, May 25, 1921, p. 7).

WI, Mar. 31, 1920, p. 10.

Ibid., Feb. 11, 1920, p. 10.

Thomas, chap. 4.

Ibid., pp. 203-205.

GGG, June 2, 1920, p. 23.


Ibid., May 18, 1921, p. 5.

Ibid., May 26, 1920, p. 5.

Ibid., Apr. 27, 1921, p. 5.

Ibid., June 1, 1921, p. 5.

Ibid., Oct. 5, 1921, p. 5.


GGG, Feb. 18, 1920, p. 47.

Ibid., Nov. 30, 1921, p. 10.


MR, 1920, p. 69.

WI, Mar. 17, 1920, p. 5.

Executive, 1919, p. 140.

Morton, p. 305.

MR, 1920, p. 61.

Ibid., 1921, p. 63.

The Farmers' Platform argued that "owners of idle areas should be obliged to file a selling price on their lands, that price also to be regarded as an assessable value for purposes of taxation" (Morton, p. 305).

MR, 1919, p. 62.

Ibid., 1921, p. 15.

GGG, Apr. 27, 1921, p. 5.

Ibid., Apr. 6, 1921, pp. 9-10; May 4, 1921, p. 5.


GGG, June 25, 1919, p. 18; July 2, 1919, pp. 40, 89.

Ibid., Sept. 14, 1921, p. 22.

Ibid., Aug. 17, 1921, pp. 7-8.

WI, Mar. 31, 1920, p. 5.


Spencer Fonds, File 20, "Minutes of Meeting Re Incorporation for Political Purposes."


GGG, June 23, 1920, p. 37.

Ibid., Mar. 9, 1921, p. 5; June 15, 1921, p. 5.

Ibid., June 15, 1921, pp. 3-4.
Christian Leithner concluded from empirical analysis of voting data that "voters who resided in areas which produced great amounts of price-inelastic agricultural commodities (such as grains and cattle) tended, at elections between 1921 and 1930, to vote for Progressive candidates" ("The National Progressive Party of Canada," pp. 442 (quotation), 446-447).

In the context of a discussion between the UFA Executive and the Provincial Political Association about Wood's "closed door policy," it was agreed not to change the clauses of the UFA constitution stipulating that anyone "directly interested in farming" could join the organization. These clauses permitted non-farmer membership in the UFA/UFWA, and thus in the UFA political movement, since the door to that movement was through the UFA/UFWA. It was decided to leave the interpretation of the clauses "to the locals, who could then interpret them according to local conditions and the individuals applying for membership" (Executive, 1919, p. 194). With the same end in view, the 1920 Battle River convention defeated a proposed amendment to the constitution that would have limited membership in the political Association to "bona fide farmers" (GGG, June 30, 1920, p. 4).

The East Edmonton convention required only that its constituency's candidate
be a resident of the riding; a provision that he or she be a farmer was deleted (GGG, July 9, 1919, p. 8). Similarly, the Macleod Association declared that "any qualified elector" residing in the constituency was eligible for candidacy (Coote Fonds, Box 7, File 50, Constitution and By-laws of the Macleod U.F.A.P. League, p. 4).


189 GGG, Jan. 28, 1920, p. 20.

190 MR, 1920, p. 53.


193 GGG, Jan. 26, 1921, p. 7. The UFWA convention also endorsed Crerar (MR, 1921, p. 133).

194 GGG, Aug. 17, 1921, p. 6.


196 WI, Nov. 19, 1919, p. 3; GGG, July 16, 1919, p. 23; Jan. 14, 1920, p. 3; Dec. 15, 1920, p. 3; July 21, 1920, p. 3.
"Democracy may be simply defined as the people in action."^1

-Henry Wise Wood

Many scholars view the UFA/UFWA's post-war social and political philosophy as a concoction of H.W. Wood based on his class experience, reading, and American background.² A few see it primarily as William Irvine's creation, grounded in British socialism.³ These interpretations present UFA/UFWA doctrine as a foreign construct that charismatic leaders imposed on farmers, or as a reflection of their "small commodity producer" outlook. But the UFA/UFWA philosophy stemmed from more than a "great man"'s social position, education, or experience; as David Laycock suggests, it reflected a "movement culture"⁴ - which is why it inspired farmers politically. Wood, the main voice of UFA/UFWA theory, and Irvine, who helped popularize and develop it, were as much synthesizers of movement ideas as prophets.

Henry Wise Wood was born on a farm in Missouri in 1860, and settled near Carstairs, Alberta in 1905. He was a member of the Society of Equity, a UFA director in 1914, a vice-president in 1915, and president from 1916 until retiring in 1931. He was also on the Board of Grain Supervisors and the Wheat Board from 1917 to 1920, was president of the Canadian Council of Agriculture from 1917 to 1923, and president of the Alberta Wheat Pool from 1923 to 1937.⁵

Although he attended a private school and Christian University in Missouri,⁶ Wood was largely self-educated. He had a voluminous library in his Carstairs home, where, into the wee hours of the night, he read political economy, sociology, philosophy, natural history, and literature.⁷ He was also a keen observer of American farm organizations whose political forays convinced him of the dangers of third party politics.

The burden of Wood's social philosophy, which he began preaching right after the war, was that history flowed from a dialectic between the two "social laws" of competition and co-operation.⁸ Competition "acted" to force a "reaction" - the formation of larger co-operative units. These competed at higher levels, prompting the creation of
still greater co-operative units for competitive use. In this way, competition for survival and trade drove persons to form family groups, family groups to form tribes, tribes to form nations, and nations to form allied units. According to Wood,

Germany and her allies represented the greatest co-operative national unit of strength that the world has ever seen. This strength was all built by cooperation, but built for competitive purposes. Germany threw this strength competitively against certain other nations, and would have destroyed them if her opponents had not succeeded in building a greater co-operative unit of strength than Germany had built. This they finally succeeded in doing, and this greater strength reacted in the overthrow of the German strength. Thus, competition, begun by individual savages, had driven cooperation up through the various increasing units until practically all of the nations of the world were embraced in two great co-operative units. Speaking from a national and a military standpoint, competition can drive co-operation but one degree higher, when all of the nations will be embraced in one co-operative unit, and military competition will have been destroyed.⁹

International competition, thus, had become so dangerous that higher levels of military efficiency could destroy the world and were therefore unthinkable. Competition was forcing nations to pursue co-operation. But peace was impossible until the cause of war - international trade competition - was eliminated.¹⁰ War in modern times was a means by which commercial aggregates known as countries and allied units sought economic domination:

War is not an end within itself. Germany did not wage war primarily for military supremacy. Her real object was commercial supremacy....

True, the brute call to man and to nations has often been strong enough to cause them to fight for glory and power. But through the ages greed, like a great octopus, has been sending its tentacles out through the fabric of the social system, sapping the strength and the life blood of the people through the pores of trade and commerce, till it has acquired the power and arrogated the authority of a god, and is enthroned as Mammon, directing the competitive activities of the nations and the peoples of the earth. Mammon, by holding dominion over commerce, holds it also over war.... Under his edicts the nations have broken themselves against each other.... Unless his reign over the realms of trade and commerce can be broken, he will continue to lead the forces of military conflict until the war drums beat the funeral dirge of civilization.¹¹

Specifically, the economic and political control that plutocracy - powerful industrial and financial interests - had over the nations was responsible for recent wars.
But if the plutocrats' grip on commerce and politics were broken, and fair prices, wages, and free trade established between classes and countries, international commercial competition would be destroyed and world peace would ensue:

Commerce, systematically used in accordance with the true social laws of life, would be the greatest binding tie in the social system. It would draw the nations of the earth together in one great indissoluble union. It would destroy war and establish peace.12

Wood explained how plutocracy had come to dominate and how it might be destroyed by examining the dialectic of competition and co-operation in the commercial field. There, the process had been slower than in the national and military arena, because, before the industrial revolution, there was insufficient trade competition to force commercial co-operation. Manufacturing was done by artisans supplying local markets, with little selling competition between themselves - which made co-operation unnecessary.

During the industrial age, however, improved production and transportation brought industries into competition. This "acted" to drive weak firms out of business, and pushed others to "react" by creating co-operative units in the form of combines. Competition between those conglomerates became so fierce that the manufacturers, realizing their whole industry might be destroyed, turned to the only solution possible - co-operation - and the national manufacturers' associations were born.

Eradicating competition between themselves nationally enhanced the manufacturers' competitive strength toward their counterparts in other countries - leading to trade war and military conflict - while increasing their economic and political power vis-à-vis domestic occupational groups such as farmers. Because the level of organization and co-operation of those groups was so low by comparison, they could not defend themselves against the industrialists and their plutocratic allies, especially bankers, who controlled the parties and press "though the systematic use of money."13 The manufacturers exercised their control by having tariffs imposed, while financiers brought on deflation in the early 1920s to profit on money - with disastrous consequences for agriculture.14

The weaker groups were "reacting" to this plutocratic power by co-operating. Reinforcing that external pressure to combine - perhaps stimulated by it - was "a germ
developing in the human race," an innate voice of nature which had prompted individual regeneration - the development of a co-operative spirit - and was now prodding people to undertake social regeneration - the creation of a co-operative order - by defeating plutocracy. Having effectively organized as an occupational group, the manufacturers had unwittingly shown other groups what to do. Occupational interest was the only feasible basis for organizing; it was the only "viewpoint" that could bind a group together. As rivers flow to the sea via the easiest course, "class" organization was "the way of least resistance."

Wood warned that social, economic, and military advancement had recently been so rapid that if the people did not promptly organize to oppose plutocracy, civilization would veer off the path of progress into a morass of autocratic rule and warfare. Yet he never doubted the people would succeed. They would respond to the competitive force of plutocracy, and to the germ within them - to nature's call to group organization. Social and natural law could not be ignored. Once the people developed their group "intelligence" and "citizenship strength" to the highest degree through organization and education, they would "federate" their economic groups into a great co-operative and democratic force, and meet plutocracy in an apocalyptic "showdown."

When these forces are finally thus marshalled, the irrepressible conflict will be on. The conflict between democracy and plutocracy; between civilization and barbarism; between man and money; between co-operation and competition; between God and Mammon.

The victory of the people would be the culmination of the struggle for democracy that began when absolute monarchy was challenged. The war over, the democratic classes would meet on an even level with the former plutocrats - now stripped of their autocratic powers - in the commercial and political arenas to adjust, in a way agreeable to all, trade relationships, wages, and prices. The nations, no longer controlled by plutocracy, would similarly settle trade disputes. The result would be peace and a just and democratic order - the "Kingdom of Heaven."

Despite the graphic drama, the apocalyptic confrontation was not a military engagement or a rebellion. It was an economic and political fight the people would win over time by co-operatively opposing plutocracy through commercial action, and, to a lesser extent, by political means - first, within the party system, then, as Wood changed
his thinking, through group government. Wood was a gradualist, not a revolutionary. Seeing society as an organism, he believed "incessant and minute change is one of the conditions of life, but great and sudden change is disease."24

Consistent with this organic view of society, Wood felt that social progress was inevitable because it was driven by "immutable" natural and social laws:

To say that democracy will fail will be to say that the design of nature in creating a social being and bringing him into obedience to social laws has failed....

It will not fail ... because the Supreme Power that flung the numberless hosts of worlds out into infinite space, set them whirling in their fixed courses, lit them with effulgent splendor and revealed them to the eye of man, has this work in hand and will not let it fail.25

Still, there was a role for human agency; Wood argued that progress would be accelerated or hindered depending on the degree to which the people co-operated with nature's laws.26

Many aspects of Wood's philosophy, as scholars have argued, can be traced to his American background and reading of European and American works, although exact sources cannot always be pinpointed. Sometimes one can only draw parallels or suggest possible influences. Wood's belief in social laws was consistent with positivism and a tendency in late nineteenth century thought to replace theology with social science.27 His exposure to evolutionary and Social Darwinian theory clearly informed his gradualism and determinism. These sources, perhaps with his reading of Walt Whitman's poetry, helped him to see society as an evolving democratic organism.28 His vision of social progress and ultimate perfectionism reflected his liberalism and understanding of such writers as Herbert Spencer29 and Tennyson. The latter he considered "the greatest prophet of modern times."

Wood apparently learned that co-operation was the true social law and competition the false law at university in Missouri.31 His belief in social co-operation reflected the American radical tradition. Thinkers like Edward Bellamy and social gospellers like Washington Gladden considered competition "selfishness" and longed for a co-operative society.32 Social gospel ideas certainly shaped Wood's thinking about competition and co-operation and his vision of the "Kingdom of Heaven."

Wood loathed the individualistic struggle-for-existence ethic. He criticized
Darwin, Huxley, and Haeckel for failing to discern that humanity must "throw off this animal spirit" and develop a co-operative spirit.\textsuperscript{33} "Science tells us that the law of the survival of the fittest is the true primary animal law, but only the fool will tell us that it is the true ultimate social law."\textsuperscript{34} Here, Wood echoed evolutionists such as John Fiske, Henry Drummond, and Kropotkin, who, like him, saw group co-operation - between species, families, tribes, nations, and classes - as integral to survival and progress.\textsuperscript{35}

Wood's love for democracy was Jacksonian; a product of the Democratic South and a Missouri where the democratic ideals of Jefferson and "Old Hickory" reigned supreme.\textsuperscript{36} His idea about an innate democratic "germ" was an adaption of the "seed" theory which suggested that the ancient Teutons possessed racially inherited "seeds" of liberty - an inherent democratic impulse - which their descendants carried to Britain and America.\textsuperscript{37} His charge that bankers had brought on deflation is reminiscent of the "Crime of '73" controversy in the United States when financiers had influenced the government to adopt the gold standard, causing farm prices to drop.\textsuperscript{38}

Wood's Campbellite background also affected his thinking, although by the time he developed his philosophy, he no longer believed in a Christian God; his God was little more than natural and social law.\textsuperscript{39} Nevertheless, he retained his love for the Bible and believed it confirmed his theory. He convinced himself that Jesus preached co-operation as the "primary rule" of life,\textsuperscript{40} and that the Gospels and Revelation were prophesies about the evolution and ultimate triumph of democracy. Biblical influence is unmistakable in Wood's rhetoric and moral tone, and in the apocalyptic climax to which his history unfolds.

Wood's conviction that right trading relationships fostered social health came from his reading of Adam Smith and J.S. Mill.\textsuperscript{41} His idea of a dialectic between competition and co-operation was largely his own, but the notion of a dialectical process he took from Marx, Emerson,\textsuperscript{42} or M.P. Follett, whose Hegelian treatise, The New State, he knew well.\textsuperscript{43} His call for "class" organization based on economic interest may also have been Marxian in origin, while his analogy of this strategy being "the way of least resistance," akin to water flowing to the sea by the easiest course, is what one might expect from a man who studied Alberta's geological history in his spare time.\textsuperscript{44}

Shaped by these intellectual sources, Wood's social philosophy revealed his
concern for the post-war world. The war had made a deep impression on him, and he feared another might destroy civilization. He felt that if co-operation did not replace competition in social and international relations, the world might cease to be. He sought to show people how to bring about peace through democratic class organization.

Wood’s philosophy was more than a product of the war and his reading and American background, however; it embodied the "movement culture" he had imbibed as a UFA member. Many of his doctrines reflected movement assumptions; his theory was not purely his own. He was as much a preacher of UFA/UFWA ideas as he was a prophet.

A key "movement culture" notion his social philosophy expressed was a sense of opposition to corporate power. While his hostility to "plutocracy" was born in the Jeffersonian milieu of Missouri, his philosophy articulated Alberta farmers’ antipathy to metropolitan economic and political control. And while his belief in agrarian organization also began in Missouri, his theory enunciated a longstanding UFA/UFWA argument that farmers must organize to protect their interests. Well before Wood became a UFA leader - but sounding like him - W.J. Tregillus described the evolution of social organization, with a lesson for farmers:

In olden times, men fought single handed; that would be useless now. Later in clans and tribes; that also would be useless in our day. Now every civilized nation has a perfectly organized and trained army that works with the ... precision ... of a watch, and that is the kind of organization we want if we are to get what belongs to us.46

The purpose of organization in Wood’s philosophy was to mobilize class strength to establish equitable trade relationships. UFA secretary P.P. Woodbridge similarly argued before Wood outlined his theory that farmers must organize their "full strength" to force an adjustment in "their relationship with other classes" and governments.47

Wood’s belief that class competition would ultimately lead to social co-operation, while partly a product of his reading, was a further expression of UFA/UFWA culture. The movement had "built," long before Wood had influence in it, a co-operative ethos, a belief that co-operation should infuse all human relations. This notion was evident in a motion debated by the Mayerthorpe local in 1913: "That co-operation is more beneficial to the human family than competition."48 Two years later, the Edwell union heard an
address on the "History and Ethics of Co-operation." The listeners learned of the "value of co-operation and the virtue of unselfishness." Wood's argument for social co-operation was not new to Alberta farmers. Nor was his contention that democratic groups must develop their highest "intelligence" through education to fight plutocracy. The UFA/UFWA had always taught farmers that "knowledge is power."

Wood's social philosophy, then, contained several key UFA/UFWA notions. It represented a conjuncture of his experience and the movement culture which had shaped his thinking since he arrived in Alberta in 1905.

Wood's group government theory, which he first broached during the Cochrane by-election campaign in October 1919, was a modification of the political component of his social philosophy. To create a group government, the democratic groups, while continuing to battle plutocrats in the commercial realm, would cease fighting them through the party system. Instead, they would elect non-party occupational representatives according to each group's numerical strength through a proportional representation system. Small groups, to have a political voice, would support the candidate of the larger group that came nearest to representing their class interest.

Electoral co-operation between larger groups was possible on a restricted basis. One group could support another's candidate rather than split the progressive vote, but it could not endorse that candidate's program. Nor could the two groups draft a joint platform. Any such "compromise" platform would be based on superficial and ultimately divisive issues.

Moreover, there must be no merger of the groups; that would be creating a political party. Lacking a unified class interest, parties were easily manipulated by plutocracy, and were therefore corrupt and unstable. They also appealed to voters' prejudices, obstructing the development of democratic thought, and dividing voters of the same classes into opposing partisan camps - which prevented the people from uniting to fight plutocracy. The only right basis for political organization was the occupational group; only "class" education and political experience could create the "intelligence" needed to transform the weak "citizenship strength" of individual voters into a collective voting power able to resist the wiles of partyism and elect group Members.

Group government would be introduced gradually. The example of early group
Members would encourage other groups to organize and elect "class" representatives. Then, by co-operating with each other while remaining separate - not forming a party - the Members of the groups would weaken the parties - the bastions of plutocracy - and eventually drive them out of Parliament and the legislatures. This was how the democratic forces would politically defeat the plutocrats in Wood's post-1918 apocalyptic vision.  

With the parties gone, the group government Members, as delegates of their "class" embodying their groups' "intelligence," would debate issues freely to "settle class differences." If any group tried to secure unfair legislation, the others would block that attempt. All statutes would represent an agreement of the groups. Each group in competing for itself would be forced to co-operate with the others. Political co-operation would produce laws fostering equitable trade, which, with industrial action, would promote the social and world harmony Wood forecast in his social philosophy.

Wood never indicated how a group government would conduct its business without a party responsible for introducing and processing legislation. Nor did he say how a "class" Member could speak for an occupationally heterogeneous constituency. He did not, at least for the immediate future, favour replacing geographical constituencies with economic ones.

He also failed to explain how or when the democratic groups would "federate" to defeat plutocracy. He only emphasized that groups must initially keep their organizations separate from one another. He was especially leery of farmer-labour parties owing to their past political failures. Nonetheless, he encouraged democratic groups to co-operate immediately where possible, and, once they had built their "citizenship strength" to the limit, they would form a closer commercial and political association, the nature of which Wood never described. If, however, any alliance were consummated before the groups realized their full strength, their organizations would disintegrate, succumbing to the confusion, bickering, and plutocratic manipulation Wood felt followed any attempt to harmonize immature class viewpoints. How the groups would know when they had achieved their highest "intelligence" and "citizenship strength," Wood did not say.

Wood was also unclear about how decisions would be made in a group government. While he did not reject the idea of a majority vote, he likely favoured W.F.
Cooling's argument that group decisions should involve a consensus of the representatives.\textsuperscript{59} He apparently borrowed Follett's notion that a group decision should be a synthesis resulting from a dialectic of members' opposing ideas\textsuperscript{60} - witness his comment about a "reaction" of divergent views producing a "common ground of settlement":

> We are human, the same as everyone else, and I do not deny that if we were the only class organized we would make unjust demands; but other classes will organize and resist unjust demands, and out of this reaction they will find a common ground of settlement.\textsuperscript{61}

All "legitimate interests" would participate in this decision making process. Only the plutocrats would be excluded. However, once plutocracy was overthrown - once manufacturers and bankers were divested of their excessive power - the former plutocrats would be encouraged to elect group Members. The task of the democratic forces was to destroy plutocracy, not their industries which Wood believed Canada needed. Group government would force all "classes," out of self-interest, to co-operate and find solutions fair to all.

Like his larger social philosophy, Wood's group government theory reflected his reading and American background, and the historical context. Most generally, his group theory was part of the search of the age for a democratic polity which led political pluralists like Harold Laski to argue that governments should have occupational and consumer Houses,\textsuperscript{62} and Follett to affirm that neighbourhoods rather than parties should be the basic political unit.\textsuperscript{63}

The most important book for Wood's political thinking was Cooling's Public Policy. Like Wood, Cooling advocated industrial and proportional representation, although unlike Wood, he foresaw group representatives working within existing parties or forming new ones. From Cooling also came Wood's idea that group Members should embody their groups' "intelligence," and that class selfishness in a group government would impel inter-group co-operation to ensure the passage of just laws.\textsuperscript{64}

Molded by these sources, Wood's group government theory was also a pragmatic response to political developments he could not control. Before 1919, he opposed independent politics, fearing it might destroy the UFA as it had other farm bodies. He urged farmers to nominate good candidates in the old parties and to lobby for legislation rather than form a new party.\textsuperscript{65} Why did Wood eventually reject this advice to preach
class politics, and soon after, group government - a doctrine requiring the overthrow of the party system he had earlier supported?

Wood had felt the tremors of the agrarian revolt that was rumbling across the country. In January 1919, the annual UFA convention endorsed independent political action. Then, in the fall, the United Farmers formed the government in Ontario, a Grain Growers' candidate won a Saskatchewan by-election, and Alex Moore, a UFA man, contested the Cochrane by-election. Meanwhile, Non-Partisan League members were trying to open the UFA political movement to "progressive" members of all classes.

Wood knew this political uprising could not be stayed, and as a democrat, he bowed to the people's will. Yet there remained that nagging lesson of history - that third party action could kill a farm organization. Wood concluded, therefore, that the UFA must not join or create a new party - neither a low tariff party advocated by other farm leaders, nor a Non-Partisan League political movement which he felt would also become a party by virtue of its class heterogeneity. Instead, farmers must enter politics as a "class" organization, which, united by economic interest, would avoid the pattern of third party disunity and destruction. By the fall of 1919, Wood had developed this idea into his group government theory. "When I could not keep the organization out of politics," he reminisced years later, "I conceived the idea of going in as an organization instead of as a party. I conceived that group government might succeed." Group government, thus, was a pragmatic response to the agrarian revolt, a theory Wood created to save the UFA from third party annihilation. If members had not insisted on taking direct political action, he would never have devised his group plan.

Wood also believed class action and group government would save the UFA/UFWA from economic radicalism. He feared that if the League's socialist leaders succeeded in making the UFA/UFWA political movement a multi-class party, radical labourers and intellectuals would join and shift it to the left. But if farmers entered politics as a class, they would not be tempted by outsiders to support legislative panaceas - and Wood and the UFA would be able to guide the movement along a liberal path.

Beyond this, Wood's group government scheme, like his larger social philosophy, expressed aspects of the UFA/UFWA "movement culture." Group government was not an "American" construct he imposed on farmers. He was not even the first to advocate
group politics in the UFA. At the 1910 convention, Angus Macaulay proposed a system to guarantee farmers a "fair share of direct representation" in the legislature by allocating, to begin with, 14 of the 41 seats for independent farmer candidates to contest. Eventually, the independent Members "might form a government." In the meantime, given their number and the likelihood they would hold a balance of power, they would have more success procuring good legislation than if the UFA elected third party candidates in the field "anywhere and everywhere."\(^6^7\)

This proposal's resemblance to Wood's group government strategy is striking. Both aimed to reduce the field for party politics and to avoid third party action while facilitating direct action. Under both plans, farmers would immediately form an occupational bloc, influencing, and perhaps forcing, the government to act. Both envisaged farmers eventually becoming the dominant group in the legislature, although the immediate goal was to secure fair representation and input into law making.

The convention did not endorse Macaulay's proposal; the UFA had not yet been politically radicalized. Yet the plan expressed a "movement culture" sense of opposition to partyism that Wood's theory would embody. Planted in the era of non-party Territorial politics; germinating in an immigrant population lacking commitment to the Canadian parties; nourished by a provincial Liberal railway controversy;\(^6^8\) watered by the defeat of reciprocity; cultivated by scandals and a perception that the Union government, like its parents, was a tool of plutocracy; and ripened by the Non-Partisan League's agitation for a "business administration," farmers' hostility to "partyism" - a metaphor for the sordidness and inefficiency of the old parties - was ready for harvest by 1919 and found full expression in a group government theory that sought the overthrow of the party system.

While embodying farmers' opposition to parties, group government theory expressed their "movement culture" belief in direct democracy and citizenship responsibility. It required them to nominate, elect, and instruct - like convention delegates - their group representatives and possibly recall them like UFA officers. It also incorporated the idea popularized by the Non-Partisan League that Members should be allowed to vote freely, without fear of defeating the government.\(^6^9\) Group government, by its very nature, required frank input from all representatives and made no provision for a
government resigning if one of its bills was defeated.

Group government, then, like the larger social philosophy of which it was a part, reflected Wood's experience, concerns, and study, and the UFA/UFWA "movement culture" - which was itself a creative response to farmers' class position and a unique set of economic, political, ethnic, and ideological factors in Alberta.

It has been argued that most UFA/UFWA farmers had little exposure to Wood's doctrines. This is untrue. Wood explained his ideas at many local meetings, conventions, and in the press, and his notions were widely discussed and well understood by UFA/UFWA leaders, political candidates, and members. One letter commented about group government:

It is doubtful if any public issue in Alberta has ever received greater publicity, more hostile criticism and more serious consideration. And all the while the idea has steadily gained favor with the people, so that to suggest that the action of the convention [in endorsing group politics] was due to a lack of understanding of the proposition or to the personal influence of Mr. Wood is as ridiculous as it is insincere.

Because Wood's doctrines were well-known and expressed the movement's culture, they were popular and played a role in the 1921 elections. One anti-UFA local newspaper attributed the UFA candidate's victory in the 1921 federal campaign to "an unshakable confidence in the group idea." Group politics and government captured farmers' imaginations by showing how a true democracy could be realized. It also provided an effective means of electoral co-operation between farmers and labourers.

Except in rural Ontario, group doctrines had little support outside Alberta. In the foothills province, drought and extreme crop yield volatility, and high debt loads and transportation costs owing to frontier conditions and geography, created a sense of grievance that disposed farmers to believe a new political system was needed. Beyond these economic pressures, Saskatchewan and Manitoba had neither a Wood nor as high a proportion of American settlers as Alberta. Such settlers, being unattached to the British Parliamentary and party system, were more receptive to unorthodox populist political ideas than British or Canadian producers. Ex-Americans strongly backed Wood's group ideas and were influential in the UFA/UFWA.

William Irvine also influenced farmers to endorse group politics. Born in the
Shetland Islands where he imbibed labour and socialist literature, Irvine came to Canada in 1907, graduated from Wesley and Manitoba colleges in 1914, and arrived in Calgary in 1916. There he became a Unitarian minister, editor of the radical Nutcracker (1916-17), the Alberta Non-Partisan (1917-19), and the Western Independent (1919-20), the organ of the UFA Political Association. In 1920, he published The Farmers in Politics, a lucid exposition of Wood's ideas.

A few scholars argue, or imply, that Irvine more than Wood developed and popularized the idea of group organization and politics in the UFA/UFWA. "From such diverse sources as his early-found socialism," writes Anthony Mardiros, "the politics of the U.S. Non-Partisans, the ideas current among western Canadian farmers, and finally from the ponderings of Henry Wise Wood, he was able to construct a social philosophy which was in large part adopted by the U.F.A." John Hart suggests that Irvine's group government theory was not really based on Wood's, averring that it "resembled Cole's guild socialism much more than it did the ideas of Wood."

Irvine did help spread group doctrines, primarily through The Farmers in Politics, and gained support for notions implicit in group government, such as the idea that Members should be able to vote freely without fear of defeating the government. But his apologists overstate the originality of his group theory and his influence in getting farmers to endorse "class" politics.

The fact is that until the fall of 1919 Irvine strenuously opposed occupationally-based political action, and clashed with Wood at the UFA constituency conventions by arguing that the organization should open its political movement to non-farmers. Wood won over the majority of Alberta farmers, however, and Irvine, soon convinced by Wood's arguments, and sensing the direction the wind was blowing, jumped ship, realizing that continued opposition to Wood would only weaken the political movement. The eventual result was The Farmers in Politics.

This lively book reproduces all the essentials of Wood's philosophy; in no real sense is it an original work. Following Wood, Irvine describes the operation of the "laws" of competition and co-operation in history: how competition prompted the formation of successively larger co-operative units - tribes, nations, allied units - and how those same laws led manufacturers to form associations, and other classes, including farmers, to
organize for protection. Irvine's critique of the party system is also like Wood's, though it is more complete. And he makes a similar case for industrial organization, arguing that only occupational groups, rooted in class interest, could resist divisive and superficial party appeals and develop democratic thought—and in this way mobilize the masses. Additionally, Irvine presents the same arguments about group government as Wood: occupational representatives, out of self-interest, would be forced to co-operate, passing laws acceptable to all classes while blocking bills favouring any one group.

In these key respects, Irvine repeats Wood's points, though he often develops them. For example, he extends the logic of Wood's group government theory to argue that a group cabinet would consist of Members in proportion to their numerical strength in the government. Yet despite its greater detail, Irvine's group government scheme did not, Hart to the contrary, resemble guild socialism "much more" than it did Wood's plan.

Although mostly an elaboration of Wood's ideas, The Farmers in Politics certainly bears Irvine's imprint. It is set more explicitly in an organic evolutionary framework than Wood's writings. Perhaps owing to this social science emphasis, and his Unitarianism, Irvine omitted Wood's biblical depiction of an apocalyptic battle between democracy and plutocracy. And while Wood's message was mainly for farmers, Irvine appealed also to workers, placing labour into his discussion. In addition, Irvine's concept of class was somewhat different than Wood's. While calling all occupational groups classes as Wood did, Irvine sometimes adopted a more traditional class analysis, referring to the conflict of the two basic classes of capital and labour. He argued that farmers would bring peace between these two groups by showing them how to co-operate.

The major way The Farmers in Politics differs from Wood's teachings is that Irvine, while noting that group governments would have business representatives, looked forward to the gradual collapse of capitalism and its replacement by socialism—although he avoided the latter term for fear of alarming liberals. Wood's philosophy implied that his true democracy would be capitalistic, though he said little about how society would be organized. This lack of specificity, and Wood's use of non-liberal notions of class conflict and class co-operation, enabled Irvine to cast Wood's theory in a socialist light.
Because of Wood's ambiguity and Irvine's hints of the eventual triumph of collectivism, most radicals accepted group action and government. They were also pleased that Wood permitted a measure of farmer-labour political co-operation. With both radicals and liberals supporting group organization and politics, Wood's philosophy, and Irvine's version of it, became the UFA/UFWA philosophy. That theory inspired farmers politically by promising to end party rule and corporate exploitation while assuring them that their utopias - whether liberal or radical - would be realized.

Henry Wise Wood's social and political philosophy was a product of his class experience, reading, American background, the historical context, and the UFA/UFWA "movement culture." Expressing that culture, his theory was readily accepted by farmers. Interpreted in a socialist way by William Irvine, it appealed even to radicals. Supported by both wings, it became the UFA/UFWA philosophy, and was an intellectual force in the agrarian revolt. It also established a populist "bias" for grassroots democracy that lingers in Alberta political culture.
ENDNOTES

1Grain Growers' Guide (hereafter GGG), July 2, 1919, p. 7.


5For further biographical information on Wood, see Rolph, Henry Wise Wood of Alberta.

6This was a liberal arts university run by the Campbellite denomination.

7Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Don Wood, John O. Wood, Lois Hollingsworth, Bessie Pointen, March-April 1993.


10*CF*, Dec. 1922, p. 73.


12Ibid.

13Ibid., Apr. 1, 1922, p. 5.


17*GGG*, Dec. 11, 1918, p. 40.


20*CF*, Dec. 1922, p. 73.


23*GGG*, Dec. 11, 1918, p. 39.


26*MR*, 1921, p. 5.

27Laycock, pp. 120, 279.

Wood's reading of Spencer is noted in Rolph, p. 62.

MR, 1927, pp. 5-6.

Sharp, p. 144.


The U.F.A., Mar. 15, 1922, p. 5.

Hofstadter, pp. 94, 97-98, 103-104.


"I can only interpret God by tracing him through Nature and Nature's laws," Wood wrote in response to a religious survey. "My ideas of religion have undergone quite a change during the last ten or fifteen years. I think I would interpret my religion, if it may be called a religion, and my religious creed, as being a desire to understand natural social law" (GA, Leonard D. Nesbitt Fonds, M891, File 17, Wood to R.W. Frayne, Aug. 17, 1925, p. 2).


His reading of Mill and Smith is recorded in Rolph, p. 11.

A brief treatment of Emerson's idealism can be found in Jackson, p. 196.


There he observed the efficacy of business organizations and organized a mutual telephone company which successfully challenged the Bell telephone system (Sharp, pp. 144-145).

GGG, June 1, 1910, p. 17.


MR, 1912, p. 9.


Coote Fonds, Box 17, File 161, "Co-operation Between Organized Groups."

Ibid., "Alberta Plan of Co-operation Between Groups Spreading."

GGG, Apr. 6, 1921, p. 10.

Laycock, p. 98.


Laycock, p. 102.


60Follett, pp. 24-33.

61Cited in Macpherson, p. 46.


63Follett, esp. chapter 26.


71He gave addresses on group political action and government at the constituency conventions, annual conventions, and the 1919 UFA secretaries' convention. For examples of Wood explaining his ideas to locals, see the *Western Independent* (hereafter *WI*), Mar. 10, 1920, p. 15; *Vulcan Advocate*, Mar. 17, 1920, p. 1. The *Advocate* printed Wood's speeches in some detail. Farmers also read Wood's articles as well as summaries of his addresses on group politics in such periodicals as the *Guide*, the *Western Independent*, the *Calgary Herald*, and the *U.F.A.*


73Wheat Pool Fonds, File 821, clipping from the *Albertan*, "U.F.A. and Politics."
The 1920 UFA annual convention and 1919 UFA secretaries' convention endorsed his principles as did UFA/UFWA political conventions (see, for example, GGG, Aug. 4, 1920, p. 30; Oct. 19, 1921, p. 23).


Mardiros, pp. 97-98.

Hart, p. 66.


Ibid., pp. 55-85.

Ibid., pp. 148-173.


Ibid., pp. 237-238.

Ibid., pp. 75-90, 183-185.

Ibid., pp. 80-81, 100, 144-147, 183, 230-231, 235.


Ibid., pp. xxii-xxiii, 101-102, 147.

Ibid., pp. 191, 210-211, 231-232.

Instead, Irvine used euphemisms such as "humanizing of the industrial system" (p. 36); "the commonwealth" (p. 38).

Epilogue and Conclusion

What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun?

One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth abides forever.
The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it arose.
The wind goes toward the south, and turns around to the north; the wind whirls about continually, and comes again on its circuit.
All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place where the rivers come, there they return again.
All things are full of labor; man cannot express it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.
That which had been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.

-Ecclesiastes 1:3-9

By the end of 1921, the greatest mass democratic movement in Canadian history, and the greatest provincial or state level farm organization in North American history, had reached its peak. At that dizzy moment, the UFA/UFWA had over 37,000 paid up members, including almost 40% of the province’s male farmers. It had developed an impressive co-operative movement, had gained important legislation for farm women and men, and had defeated the old parties, federally and provincially.

But as the heady excitement of the 1921 elections subsided, the UFA/UFWA began a long period of decline. The movement had been politicized, had thrown itself into the campaigns, had succeeded beyond its wildest expectations, and now its force was spent. For many farmers, there seemed nothing more to do. The UFA was in power; the Kingdom would come as a matter of course. The fight was over, plutocracy was defeated, or would be shortly. With many farmers feeling "the U.F.A. does not need me now," UFA/UFWA membership dropped by half in 1922, and continued slipping slowly, if erratically, into the 1930s.

Having become politically conscious, many farmers lost sight of the organization's educational and community work and contented themselves with electing UFA Members. Moreover, owing to their political success, farmers were less inclined to accommodate ethnic minorites. This, and renewed immigration, caused nativism to rear
its head in the 1920s as it never had when the movement sought, for political reasons, to recruit all producers. Non-Anglo-Celtic members and potential members became alienated, and drifted away from the organization.4

But the UFA/UFWA was more than a victim of political success and the rise of nativism. Co-operative activity, which had helped "form," "build," and "politicize" the movement, helped spell its demise. Frustration with the grain and meat trades, the termination of the Wheat Board, and a desire to save money through co-operation, had drawn thousands to the UFA/UFWA. The long awaited Alberta Wheat Pool, however, shifted farmers' focus away from the UFA/UFWA as "pooling became the panacea for growers' problems."5 In fact, the farm movement did not so much dissipate as it moved partly into a new institution. The UFA/UFWA became, to an extent, the pool movement.

Economics also conspired against the UFA/UFWA. The movement was a child of adversity; hardship had propelled farmers into the agrarian revolt. But with the UFA in power - the goal achieved - many farmers experiencing environmental disaster or depression in the early 1920s were no longer willing to pay membership fees to the organization.6 Then, as conditions improved, there seemed less need than ever for a UFA/UFWA.

Technology and demographics compounded the movement's woes. As the 1920s wore on, the combine, truck, and tractor made larger farms possible, leaving fewer producers in some areas from which the UFA/UFWA could draw members.7 And thousands left the dry-belt, where drought entrenched itself.8

The conduct of the UFA government also hurt the movement. Many farmers were happy with the government's conservatism, and saw no reason to try to change its policies by joining the UFA/UFWA, which continued its role as a political pressure group. Other farmers became disillusioned with the UFA/UFWA's inability to influence "their" government. This frustration, which became acute during the 1930s, pushed many away from the UFA/UFWA - and into the arms of William Aberhart.9

The decline of UFA/UFWA education weakened the movement. In 1922, The U.F.A. replaced the Guide as the UFA/UFWA's official organ. The Guide had been an open forum in which farmers debated issues and helped develop movement policies; The U.F.A. was essentially the voice of UFA/UFWA leaders and the UFA government. Some
members wanted more space in the paper in which to air their opinions, but this was not granted. Despondent, they lost interest in the UFA/UFWA. Others lost their crusading spirit; with the "secularization" of the social gospel in the 1920s, the movement's moral impulse lost its edge.

Yet even as it faded, the UFA/UFWA etched an indelible mark on Alberta political culture. The movement's emphasis on direct democracy and its culture of opposition to metropolitan power entrenched a permanent populist "bias" in Alberta politics. Moreover, in spawning a political movement that defeated the Liberals, absorbed many Conservatives, and held power for fourteen years, all the while eschewing "partyism," the UFA/UFWA established a pattern of one party dominance and political eccentricity. Furthermore, by exposing farmers to radical monetary ideas, the UFA/UFWA prepared the way for Social Credit, another unorthodox populist movement, which stormed to power when the UFA government failed to solve the riddle of the Depression. Before that, the Depression enabled UFA/UFWA radicals to influence the organization to endorse the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, which they helped create, as the movement's federal political wing.

The four decades to 1921 saw the "making" of the Alberta farm movement and its culture in response to frontier conditions and environment, capitalistic pressures, and government policies. From 1880 to 1908, farmers began questioning the economic and political status quo, articulating a nascent "movement culture" which led them to "form" several farm associations. Some of these organizations were ideologically liberal; others were radical. Rivalry between them led to the final act of "movement forming," the creation of the United Farmers of Alberta - and liberals and radicals became distinct wings of the one association.

Then, from 1909 to 1918, the movement was "built." It gained a solid membership base and fully developed its movement culture. In the first phase of "movement building," from 1909 to 1913, farmers developed self-respect which inspired mass commitment and attracted new members. In the second phase, from 1914 to 1918, the movement "built" a women's section, and, under the stress of the Great War, moved toward the brink of direct politics.
From 1919 to 1921, the movement was "politicized." Farmers dedicated themselves to independent politics, were confirmed in that decision by their interpretation of events, gained women's political support, created political structures, and launched the most successful agrarian revolt in North American history.

The development of a "movement culture" helped drive the movement through these stages. At the heart of this culture were several core elements: faith in education; feelings of community; a sense of class opposition; gender assumptions; belief in organization, co-operation, and democracy; a social ethic; religious convictions; commitment to citizenship; agrarian ideals; and collective self-respect and self-confidence.

Farmers' belief that education would empower them to solve their problems motivated them to "form" and "build" the movement. Their use of education, including that involving state and corporate resources, trained them for this work and helped them achieve consensus. After the war, education helped "politicize" farmers, and taught them about political action.

A sense of community was the rockbed of the movement. It arose from farmers' pride in their districts and identification with a European-style landscape, collective projects and mutual aid, social ties and activities, and economic ties based on occupational pluralism and non-staple exchange. Through community work, socials, and economic activity, the UFA/UFWA helped farmers develop feelings of mutuality that enabled them to "form" and "build" the movement, and then to enter politics.

This sense of collectivity and farmers' experience with corporate and state power spawned a feeling of class solidarity and opposition to metropolitan economic and political control. The resulting oppositional culture helped "form," "build," and "politicize" the movement by drawing farmers to it for protection and action, eventually political action, against the "interests." The UFA/UFWA preserved its class strength by accommodating differences among farmers based on ideology, ethnicity, wealth, and product specialization.

Assumptions about gender shaped this culture of opposition and affected the movement in other ways. Aspiring to be "manly," farm men "formed" and "built" the
movement and supported UFA politics to defend their families, rights, and nation. Farm women used the movement to protect the home, to gain gender rights, and to further their class interests. And while never granting women equality in the organization, the UFA endorsed their agenda because of their domestic, community, and reform work as well as their political support. By their work on the farm, women made the economy and movement viable; by joining and working for the UFA/UFWA, they "politicized" the movement.

Women and men felt that organization would give them great collective power. Starting in the 1890s, farmers "formed" several associations but found that organizational rivalry hampered their cause, and so created the United Farmers of Alberta. They then "built" the movement, believing that if they organized their class, they would become an irresistible political pressure group. When their influence proved limited, they were "politicized," and organized for direct action, convinced that every woman and man brought into the movement would vote UFA.

Through organization, farmers hoped to create a co-operative society. Radical and co-operative ideology, the social gospel, and collaboration with farmers and other groups, shaped a co-operative ethos, a belief that "co-operation" should replace competition in social, economic, and political relations. This vision attracted farmers to the movement - which "built" it. Ultimately, farmers entered politics to implement their co-operative ideals. Co-operative enterprise reinforced farmers' belief in "co-operation"; "formed" the movement by speeding up the formation of the UFA; "built" the UFA/UFWA by providing an economic incentive to join; and "politicized" farmers by strengthening their self-confidence.

Farmers believed a co-operative society should be democratic. A longstanding agrarian aim, this commitment to democracy was developed by farmers' class experience and the UFA/UFWA's democratic example which members felt the political system should emulate. Farmers were drawn to the movement and "built" it to bring about democratic reform, and when pressure politics failed to accomplish this, they were "politicized" and entered politics. The post-war UFA/UFWA philosophy told them that class-based political action would produce a co-operative, democratic order.

Farmers' social ethic suggested that state action could reform society. Wartime
anxiety and idealism, state control, maternal and other ideology, charity work, and veterans' needs, prompted farmers to seek greater freedom, public morality, and equality of opportunity and condition through libertarian laws, social reform, welfare legislation, and progressive taxation. Farmers "built" the movement to lobby for many of these measures, but they were "politicized" as they felt compelled to enter politics to implement most of them.

Christian convictions shaped farmers' social ethic and "built" the movement by giving it moral impulse and a sense of righteousness in its critique of the status quo. During the war, many farmers embraced a gospel of social regeneration through legislation or class action. Some saw the UFA/UFWA as a Christian institution which broke down religious barriers. After the war, many farmers caught a millennial vision of a redeemed society emerging out of the war, and took independent action to realize their Christian ideals about society.

The UFA/UFWA notion of citizenship responsibility mobilized farmers by telling them it was their obligation to improve society and their own lot through politics. At first this meant working for the election of good candidates in the old parties and "building" the movement into an effective political pressure group. When this failed, farmers' sense of citizenship "politicized" them to take independent political action so that constituents were directly responsible for nominating, financing, electing, and "instructing" their candidates.

Agrarian ideology reinforced farmers' commitment to the movement. The agrarian myth informed them they were the fount of national wealth and virtue - which attracted new members and inspired farmers to "build" the movement. Moreover, the myth assured them their demands were just; since agriculture was the basic industry, what helped farmers benefited all. During and after the war, the movement was "built" as farmers were attracted to its "country life" ideas and sought to implement them. In the end, farmers were "politicized" as they realized Country Life solutions required direct political action.

Agrarian ideology, and movement education and successes imparted self-respect, and then self-confidence - cornerstones of any successful movement. These feelings encouraged farmers to "build" the movement and gave them psychological strength to
enter politics.

Self-respect and self-confidence; agrarian ideology; religious convictions; a social ethic; belief in democracy, co-operation, and organization; gender assumptions; a sense of opposition; a community ethos; and faith in education - these, then, were the core elements of the UFA/UFWA "movement culture." Their emergence and development help explain the "forming," "building," and "politicizing" of the Alberta farm movement, one of the most fascinating, and most successful, mass movements in North American history.

The wind continues to howl outside the old UFA hall, whistling through the cracks, and banging the door, open and closed, open and closed. The sun, no less relentless, beats down on the broken shingles, and on the dry splintering wood siding of the building.

In time, the sun begins to set, the wind changes direction, and rain clouds pass quickly overhead, releasing their drops - loudly they fall - on the roof and surrounding thistle-choked fields. Inside, water starts dripping from the ceiling, forms a puddle on the hardwood floor, and slips slowly between the cracks, finding its way eventually to the earth beneath.

And I set my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all that is done under heaven; this grievous task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be exercised.

I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind.¹²
ENDNOTES

1 Taken from the Holy Bible, New King James Version (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1982).

2 Glenbow Archives, United Farmers of Alberta, Film BR, Minutes and Reports of Annual Convention (hereafter MR), 1923, p. 11.

3 Ibid., p. 12.


6 MR, 1923, p. 12.


8 David C. Jones, Empire of Dust: Settling and Abandoning the Prairie Dry Belt (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1987).


12 Ecclesiastes 1:13-14, New King James Version.
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**THESSES**


