

THE CITY OF EDMONTON.  
"The Gateway to the North"

310 Civic Block,  
Edmonton, Alberta.

ARCHIVES AND LANDMARKS COMMITTEE

W. E. Edmonds, President.  
Mrs. M. Williams, Secretary.  
Mrs. O. J. Walker.  
Ald. S. Cowcott.  
A. M. Dechene.  
M. M. Downey.  
T. E. Garside.  
Duncan Innes.

March 3, 1948.

His Worship Mayor H. D. Ainlay and  
Members of the City Council,  
Civic Block,  
Edmonton, Alberta.

Gentlemen:-

Annual Report of The City of Edmonton  
Archives and Landmarks Committee.

Pursuant to section 7 of Bylaw No. 1121, your Committee submits its first annual report concerning the activities of the Committee during the year 1947.

The first meeting of the Committee, called by His Worship Mayor H. D. Ainlay, took place on the 4th March, 1947. At this meeting the Rev. W. E. Edmonds was elected Chairman and Mrs. M. Williams was elected Secretary.

Since the Committee was appointed 7 meetings have been held with an average attendance of 6 members.

The material accumulated by the previous Committee has been classified by the Secretary and deposited together with other material obtained during the year at the Edmonton Library building in a fire-proof vault which the Edmonton Library Board has kindly placed at the disposal of the Committee.

During the course of the year the Committee considered the following matters:

1. Places of historical interest within the City;
2. Sources from which historical material could be obtained;
3. Recording of current events which may become of historic interest in the future;
4. Means of creating, building up and maintaining public interest in the objects of the Committee.

As to No. 1. Mrs. O. J. Walker, a member of the Committee, has made a special study of the history of Edmonton and vicinity in connection with the preparation of her recently published book "Fortress North", which although written

in the form of a novel, contains authentic historical material, including a map prepared by herself showing historical landmarks of the City.

Among the places, buildings and objects within the City of historic significance we may mention the following:

- George McDougall Memorial Church, located just North of the present McDougall United Church; old Methodist Church;
- Old building site of Legislative Buildings which formed part of the old Hudson's Bay Fort, and was known as "Bachelors' Hall";
- Morris & Gray's old store, an original structure in Edmonton, now located at the rear of 9942 - 110th St.;
- Black & White Taxi building in the City, which is the building where the first religious service of First Presbyterian Church was held;
- Donald Ross Hotel, site of;
- The old Lauder house, South-east corner of 98th St. and 101A Ave.;
- Walter house, 1st house on South side built 1875.  
John Walter's barn in rear of his house, below High Level Bridge, owned by the City;
- Logs in Walter's stable, original;
- School House 1881, original, S.E. corner (opposite Arctic Ice Co.);
- Fire Place - Gibson - Laurier Park area;
- Bulletin Building, (original);
- Jasper Food Basket, built 1885. (99th St. and Jasper Ave.);
- Birds Grist Mill, site of, Mill Creek;
- First Baptist Church, site of, (portion of, might be pulpit or gable, see Norman Legg);
- Log Booms, Walter's, (sawed off);
- Remains of "City of Edmonton" boat;
- Indian Grave Yard, N.E. 105th Street Bridge;
- The Hermitage, Canon Newton - Lilac tree;
- Factor Hardisty's tree;
- Garneau tree;
- McCauley's tree.

Members of the Committee made a personal inspection of some of the foregoing during the course of the year.

We feel that where old buildings have special features typical of the period when constructed, they should if possible be preserved but in any event

markers of suitable size, material and design should be placed and maintained at historic sites.

Mrs. O. J. Walker has kindly undertaken to prepare a design proposed to be used as the official historical marker of the City, and Mrs. Walker and Alderman Bowcott have been appointed a sub-committee to ascertain what material will be suitable for this purpose and the estimated cost involved.

As to No. 2. Among the societies and organizations of special importance in relation to obtaining sources of historical information regarding Edmonton we mention the following:

- The Canadian Historical Society;
- Dominion Archives;
- Historic Sites and Landscaping Branch;
- The Historical Society of Alberta;
- Provincial Archives;
- Provincial Library;
- University of Alberta;
- Various Churches in the City;
- Fraternal and social organizations;
- Hudson's Bay Company;
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police;
- Military, Naval and Air Force Units;
- Old Timers' Association, of which Mr. Downey is the Historian.

We have already communicated with some of the foregoing organizations and have received from them every encouragement in our efforts, including permission for the Committee to make extracts from any of their records dealing with matters of historical interest to the City and vicinity. In this connection Mr. Duncan Innes, a member of the Committee, has been in communication with the Provincial authorities with reference to the possibility of borrowing a microfilm camera for the purpose of making copies of any records of particular interest in the possession of any of the foregoing organizations for information and display to our citizens. For instance, Mrs. O. J. Walker mentioned Paul Cain, an artist who came to Edmonton in 1947 and whose paintings are on exhibition in the Royal Ontario Museum in Ottawa. It may be possible, without incurring very much expense, to obtain photographic copies of these paintings for deposit with your Committee. This method could also be used in connection with any other documents or other interesting data.

As to No. 3. "History is always in the making". The difficulty, however, is to recognize those events which may subsequently become of historic interest. The Secretary is already receiving the Edmonton Bulletin gratis and we

expect shortly to receive the Edmonton Journal. Mrs. Williams is keeping record of clippings concerning any event which seems likely to become of historic interest in the future. For example, the striking of oil within the vicinity of Edmonton, the establishment of Edmonton as the Military and Air Force Headquarters of Western Canada. Also, for instance, where public or other important buildings are to be erected, the Committee considers that it would be desirable to have photographs made of the location of site and vicinity before and after erection; e.g. New Dominion Government Postal Building.

As to No. 4. In order to create public interest in the objects of the Committee and to obtain suitable material for the Archives, an advertisement was published in the Edmonton Bulletin and the Edmonton Journal. Subsequently both papers were kind enough to publish an editorial concerning the objects of the Committee and urging the public to assist the Committee in its work.

The creation and maintenance of public interest is of great importance and we consider that from time to time newspaper or radio announcements and other methods of keeping the objects of the Committee before the public should be adopted. For instance, the assistance of the Public School Board might be obtained in making arrangements for teachers and others to give short talks to pupils regarding incidents of historic interest to Edmonton. This no doubt could be done without interfering with the school curriculum and perhaps might be included in the subject of civics.

Today, conditions are very different from those of 30 or 40 years ago. Then, very few of those taking part in the activities of the City were born here. Now, many active in our community were born and educated here and naturally have a strong attachment to their birthplace and a genuine interest in the past history of Edmonton, and in its development, could be readily created and sustained.

Circulars explaining the purposes and objects of the Committee and asking for donations of any historic material that they might possess were sent to many organizations in the City. We also intend to ask all printers and publishers in the City to assist the Committee by donating, where possible, copies of pamphlets, programs or other material which may become of historic interest.

Among the objects of interest which the Committee has received during the year the following may be mentioned:

The first telephone used in Edmonton, donated by Mr. Christie, Superintendent of the Edmonton Telephone Department; this is to be put in a suitable case and displayed in the Edmonton Public Library Building;

Mr. Thomas Ferrier, Superintendent of the Street Railway Department, has promised to preserve the first street car used in Edmonton and we hope that this may eventually be placed on a suitable site in the Exhibition Grounds;

First Seal of the City of Strathcona, presented by Mr. A.A.Campbell;

Other objects have been donated to the Committee and the Secretary is preparing for the information of Council a list of these showing names of donors.

The Committee is grateful to the various societies, organizations and individuals who have assisted the Committee and made donations of material of historic interest.

All donations received by the Committee are endorsed with the name of the donor thereof and a suitable acknowledgment by letter is sent wherever required.

The expenditures of the Committee for the year as shown in the records of the Comptroller's Department, are as follows:

Hamly Press Ltd.	500 Letterheads	20.14
Edmonton Bulletin	Advertising	16.80
Stationery Dept.	Misc.Stationery Supplies	6.10
Edmonton Journal	Advertising	21.84
Jenvrin Printing Co.	Reprints from type	2.00
Douglas Printing	Kraft Envelopes (printed)	18.20
Stationery Dept.	300 White cards 8½ x 14	7.50
Stationery Dept.	Misc.Stationery Supplies	<u>2.33</u>
	Total	<u>\$94.91</u>

In view of the work done by the Secretary in checking and classifying material taken over from the former Archives Committee, in recording the minutes of meetings of the Committee, in undertaking all correspondence and in keeping records of newspaper clippings of present events likely to have future historical interest, we recommend that the sum of \$100.00 be paid to the Secretary as an honorarium for 1947.

The Committee is very fortunate in having Mrs. Williams as one of its members, because she has had considerable experience as assistant to Major J. S. Matthews, who is the present Vancouver Archivist, and Mrs. Williams has established a sound and modern system of classification and recording of historical material which will be of great value for reference purposes and in preparing the material for display when conditions permit this to be done.

The Committee has been handicapped by lack of a suitable place to hold its meetings, and we point out that it will be difficult to sustain public interest in the objects of the Committee until a suitable place can be made available for public display of material collected. We realize the present difficulties but hope that facilities will be provided in this connection as soon as reasonably possible. In this connection we take the liberty of quoting for your information an extract from a letter received by the Secretary from Major J. S. Matthews, Vancouver City Archivist, relating to the growth of the archives there:

"The first City Archives room was as lonely a place as a mountain top.

. . . . .  
Gradually, throughout the years, it grew and grew until finally, we had to exclude tourists; then school children; (we take the teachers but not the pupils), and ultimately we were forced to put a notice on the door, 'BY APPOINTMENT ONLY', and lock the door to keep people out. . . . .

The great asset of an archival institution is CONFIDENCE. Until you secure the confidence of the citizenry that you are conducting a safe and almost sacred depository, you are not going to get their treasures."

We would also recommend that an annual appropriation, not exceeding, say, \$1,000.00, be granted for the use of the Committee, expenditures from this appropriation to be approved by the City Commissioners. For instance, the Secretary needs a typewriter and suitable filing cabinets, office equipment and supplies. We also hope to be able to place suitable markers at some of the historic sites soon, and other incidental expenses may arise.

Respectfully submitted,

W. E. Edmonds,  
President.

M. Williams,  
Secretary.