

T.A. Burrows, 1857-1929: Case Study of a
Manitoba Businessman and Politician

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T.A. BURROWS, 1857-1929: CASE STUDY OF A
MANITOBA BUSINESSMAN AND POLITICIAN

by

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the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Abstract

T.A. Burrows (1857-1929) was an early Manitoba businessman and politician. He became involved in the lumber business in Manitoba in 1875 and remained active in this industry until his death. His operations were centred primarily in the northwestern corner of the province, in the Dauphin-Grandview region. He also represented this area politically, first as a provincial MLA for Dauphin (1892-1903) and then as federal MP for Dauphin (1904-1908). After his defeat at the polls in 1908, he continued to be active in the Liberal Party of Manitoba in an organizational capacity. In 1927 he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, a post which he held until his death in 1929.

This study attempts to trace the close connections between Burrows' political and business careers and the importance of his relationship to his brother-in-law, Clifford Sifton, the Minister of the Interior in the Laurier government from 1896 to 1905, in these activities. While Burrows was neither an outstanding politician nor businessman, his career serves as a useful case-study of the sort of politician-entrepreneur Alan Artibise describes in Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1875-1914.

Burrows' career in politics and the lumber business have a certain interest in their own right, but they also illustrate the degree to which the desire for economic

development in frontier regions could lead to what would now be seen as a conflict of interest between the responsibilities of a politician and individual business interests.

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PREFACE

Winnipeg's early businessmen played an important role in the development of Winnipeg and "had more than a little to do with the manifest rise of their city" to a dominant position over its hinterland, the Northwest.¹ These early businessmen were versatile, turning their hand to many different occupations, and unshakably optimistic about the future of the Northwest.

Unlike later generations of businessmen who might come to the city in the service of large companies in a transitory stage of their careers, they reached there as entrepreneurs and individuals; to settle down, succeed, and fully identify themselves with the community.²

Their belief in the potential of the West led inevitably to their stress on the need for its rapid development.

In order to examine the role of the entrepreneur a definition of his characteristics must be developed. Economic and business historians have debated the essential attributes of entrepreneurship but as yet there seems to be little agreement. The major debate centres on the attribute of "innovation", formerly a central characteristic in most definitions. Studies examining the imitateness of most businessmen have led to the abandonment of these criteria. A broader definition based on entrepreneurial activities has evolved, best articulated by M.W. Flinn,

[He] organized production. He it was who brought together the capital (his own or somebody else's) and the labour force, selected the most appropriate site for operations, chose the particular technologies of production to be employed, bargained for raw materials and found outlets for finished products.³

This seems to provide an appropriate definition of the activities of the West's early entrepreneurs.

While in Britain and Upper and Lower Canada the fields being exploited by entrepreneurs during the period after Confederation tended to be industrial the scope of the entrepreneur in Western Canada was wider. The rapidly expanding frontier provided a ready market for the numerous goods and services that Winnipeg entrepreneurs could provide. Firms and businesses which had started as small partnerships or one man concerns expanded rapidly in response to heavy demand. Entrepreneurs entered a variety of fields. For J.H. Ashdown merchandizing the paraphernalia of agricultural implements and supplies proved to be a lucrative occupation. Others such as Donald Smith, William Mackenzie and Donald Mann came West to build railways, which were viewed as perhaps the major requirement to prosperity. Others exploited the natural resources of this newly opened area to provide products to an expanding local market and to export these resources to more distant markets. A.R.M. Lower describes the character of these enterprises using the example of lumber,

... the prairies, when being settled, were a new phenomenon in Canadian industrial history, a domestic

market of large dimensions, where demand outran supply.

... Forested tracts on the prairies near which settlements were being established, as in Riding Mountain in Manitoba, produced the same result [the establishment of small mills]. Most of these prairie mills were small compared with the giants of the east, and, with a limited supply of timber, entirely domestic in purpose; but where a good stand was available, they tended to take on the familiar form of capitalistic and exporting undertakings.⁴

Lumbering, fisheries, mining and later pulp and paper and hydro electric power have been overshadowed in most discussions of the development of the West by that of agriculture; nevertheless, these resource industries have proved important to the economy of Manitoba and the West.

Despite the variety of entrepreneurial activities in the West most shared the same basic needs and requirements. Of paramount importance to these entrepreneurs was the rapid development of the West through the growth of domestic markets and the provision of an economic infrastructure. These tenets of development were carried by these entrepreneurs into their political activities. Business and politics are not easily separated in the early history of Manitoba, for it was the same men who controlled both spheres. Politics was simply another way of promoting development. Traditionally the relationship between business and politics in Canada has been a close one. In the West, Federal ownership of resources encouraged an even closer relationship between businessmen and politicians. Grazing rights, timber berths and

mining claims could be subject to vagaries of the political system and corruption was a common, even accepted occurrence, as simply the gaining of a "business advantage".

As a representative of Manitoba's early entrepreneurial class, a politician, and a lumber baron Burrows' activities are worth examining. For although Burrows was never especially prominent in either field he was friendly and associated with many of the period's most influential men, such as Clifford Sifton and D.H. McMillan. As well, Burrows, as a figure representative of the West's pioneer elite, may provide us with insights into its composition and ideas through his responses to events and adaptation to changing conditions.

Footnotes

¹J.M.S. Careless, "The Development of the Winnipeg Business Community, 1870-1890." Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, series IV, vol. VIII, 1970, p. 239.

²Ibid., p. 254.

³M.W. Flinn, Origins of the Industrial Revolution, London: Longmans, 1966, p. 79.

⁴A.R.M. Lower, The North American Assault on the Canadian Forest: A History of the Lumber Trade Between Canada and the United States, (Toronto: Ryerson, 1935), p. 183.

INTRODUCTION

T.A. Burrows was one of the many young men who came to the West in the late nineteenth century in search of opportunity. Born in Ottawa on the fifteenth of August 1857, he was the son of a socially prominent family in Ottawa. His paternal grandfather, Captain John Honey Burrows, was one of the first settlers in Bytown, later Ottawa. Captain Burrows came to Canada from Plymouth, England in 1809 and became the patentee of a farm in the Ottawa area. He was an engineer by profession and later became one of the engineers in charge of the construction of the Rideau Canal under the direction of Colonel By. He was also a prominent landowner and at one time owned the land "on which the principal business section of Ottawa now stands, and which he sold ... to Nicholas Sparks for a sum of slightly under \$500."¹

His son, Henry John Burrows, married Sarah Sparks, a granddaughter of Nicholas Sparks.² The couple had six children of whom Theodore Arthur was the second son.³ Mr. and Mrs. Burrows were tragically killed in a railway accident when Theodore was still quite young, and the children were scattered among various aunts and uncles.⁴ Theodore and his sister Arma were brought up by his mother's uncle.⁵ In 1875, at the age of eighteen, Theodore left Ottawa for Manitoba, probably drawn by the stories of

two uncles, Alfred Burrows and William Ogilvie, who had come West earlier.

Burrows' first position in Manitoba was with a Dominion Land Survey party led by William Ogilvie. The party surveyed both the Riding Mountain and the Lake Dauphin area. When the survey work was completed Burrows returned to Winnipeg where he enrolled at Manitoba College to take a course in Law. He soon abandoned his studies however and joined his other uncle, Alfred Burrows, in the real estate business.

At the time Burrows joined his uncle, the latter had already had several careers in the West. He had come West in 1870,⁶ travelled widely and made a point "of associating with all classes of its inhabitants and voluntarily undergoing every kind of experience for the purpose of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the people and the resources."⁷ For two years he had held a variety of jobs: as a miner in Edmonton, a trader with the Blackfoot and Cree, and an agent in the Secret Service of the Dominion Government, before being appointed a clerk in the Land Office in Winnipeg. Soon after his appointment he began to speculate in land, an activity which eventually led to his dismissal from this position. He then began a real estate business and was said to have been "the first man to boom Winnipeg."⁸ He was also involved in civic politics, running unsuccessfully for mayor in 1876, but serving as an alderman for South Ward.

Theodore did not like the real estate business any more than law, and in 1878 he entered into a partnership in a small lumber concern, the industry in which he would remain for the rest of his life. One writer described Burrows' interest in it as "having come from Ottawa, one of the great centres of lumbering in Ontario, he had quite naturally inherited a decided liking for the business."⁹

In 1882 Burrows' younger brother and sister joined him in Winnipeg. J.J. Burrows found a job as a Dominion Lands Surveyor, a job which included the surveying of two timber berths for his brother.¹⁰ He died in 1886. His sister Arma had come to Winnipeg to keep house for her brothers. There she met a young lawyer articling for a Winnipeg firm, whose name was Clifford Sifton. The two courted and were married in August 1884.¹¹ The two brothers-in-law became good friends and their relationship was to be central to many of Burrows' future business and political activities.

From an inauspicious start Burrows' interests in lumbering expanded. He became involved in the Dauphin area in 1890 when he was awarded a contract by the provincial government to construct a colonization road into the area. He quickly realized the potential of this district and in 1892 was elected as the M.L.A. for the new constituency of Dauphin, holding the seat until 1903. Throughout this time he was accumulating large timber

tracts near Dauphin and throughout the Northwest. The year of 1904 marks a watershed in Burrows' business career, as after this time he was primarily concerned with his lumbering and retailing operations rather than acquiring timber lands. This was also the year in which he was elected as Member of Parliament for the Dauphin area, representing the constituency until his defeat in the 1908 general election. Thereafter he confined his political activities to the backroom while his business activities continued to expand. Nevertheless, his political work behind the scenes stood him in good stead when in 1926, as a reward for these past services and in recognition of his financial success in business he was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba.

One biographer described Burrows as a "delightful man to meet", he was,

... not a big man physically, standing only five feet seven inches, and weighing about one hundred and sixty pounds. He suffered from a stiff knee, as the result of an accident in his youth.¹²

He married quite late in life. In 1899, at the age of 42 he married Georgina Creasor, the daughter of a barrister, D.A. Creasor of Owen Sound. The two may have met on her periodic trips to Winnipeg to visit her sister, who was the wife of a Winnipeg lawyer. The marriage took place in the bride's hometown of Owen Sound, and after the ceremony the couple left for Toronto to begin their honeymoon. Burrows, knowing of his new wife's

dislike of crowded trains, arranged for a private train for them to make this journey! The honeymoon was cut short however when the provincial election in Manitoba was called, and the couple hurried to Manitoba to begin campaigning. Burrows had asked his wife to consent to living in Dauphin for a time, and the first year of their marriage was spent there. In 1900 however the Burrows moved to Winnipeg to a house at 187 Kennedy Street. They resided here for several years before moving across the river to 246 Roslyn Road.

The Burrows were very friendly with their neighbours, for their next-door neighbours were the Crawfords, Mrs. Burrows' sister, and the neighbours on the other side were Mr. and Mrs. Colin H. Campbell. Campbell was a minister in the Roblin Government, and a business associate of Burrows.

The Burrows had two children, Theodore Jr. and Kathleen. Theodore Jr. was an avid sportsman, especially interested in polo. Later he went to University and obtained his forestry degree and entered the family business. He was killed in an automobile accident in 1940. Kathleen later married Jack Lightcap, and still resides in Winnipeg.

Mrs. Burrows concerned herself mainly with her home and her family but she enjoyed entertaining. Her charitable work was confined mainly to the Children's Mission. She got along very well with her sister-in-

law, Lady Sifton, and she and the children often vacationed at the Sifton's summer home in Brockville. Other family holidays were spent with the Crawford family at their cottage on Lake of the Woods, or at the Banff Springs Hotel. Burrows, himself, however, spent only short periods of time away from his business.

The family were active churchgoers and regularly attended Broadway Methodist Church. Burrows would accompany his family to the morning service, and go again to the evening service alone. Burrows enjoyed singing the hymns, and, although he was not in the choir, he was a member of the church's music committee.

While Burrows was a close associate of many of Winnipeg's social elite he does not appear to have been a prominent participant in Winnipeg's busy social life until his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor. His name is mentioned only infrequently in the society columns of the day. This appears to have been a matter of choice as much as anything else, as he was not particularly interested in social activities, preferring to read or have quiet conversations with his friends who included Sir Daniel McMillan and John W. Dafoe.

He and his family were, however, members of many of Winnipeg's social clubs. Burrows was a member of the prestigious Manitoba Club and enjoyed a round of golf at the St. Charles Golf and Country Club. He and Mrs. Burrows were also members of the Motor Country Club,

and the Manitoba Jockey Club. His son Theodore was active in many of Winnipeg's athletic clubs including the St. Charles Polo Club, the Winnipeg Lawn Tennis Club, the Winnipeg Squash Raquet Club, and the Winnipeg Skating Club. Burrows was also a member of two fraternal orders, the Masons and the Independent Order of Foresters.¹³

Burrows did not participate in any charitable activities, but his voluntary work included a position on the board of Wesley College, "to the interest of which he had given much of his time and made liberal donations."¹⁴

Burrows' major interests were those concerned with his business and political careers. There was, in the earlier part of his life, a good deal of overlap between these spheres. His business and political careers can be divided chronologically, and these divisions will form the basis for the following chapters. His business career can be divided into distinct periods: 1889-1905 and 1905 until his death in 1929. The former, from 1889 to 1905, was a period of expansion. From 1889 until 1895 Burrows gained experience in the lumbering business and after 1895 his experience - and Clifford Sifton's appointment as Minister of the Interior - led to Burrows' acquisition of hundreds of square miles of timber lands in the Northwest. This period is examined in Chapter 1. After 1905 however Burrows' rate of acquisition fell drastically when Sifton resigned as Minister. After this time Burrows began large scale operations on these

previously acquired berths, at one point operating three large sawmills in Manitoba and Alberta. These ventures are discussed in Chapter 4. The same period, 1904-5, also marks a watershed in his political activities. From 1892 until 1903 Burrows was a provincial politician, serving as a M.L.A. for Dauphin. In 1903 he resigned his seat, and in the Federal election of 1904 was a candidate for Parliament. While his election in 1904 marks his official entrance into Federal politics his interest in them went back to the time of Sifton's appointment as Minister of the Interior, when he began to serve as one of Sifton's provincial lieutenants, and was to continue long after his own defeat in 1908. He continued to serve as a party organizer and campaigner until his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor in 1926. Chapters 3 and 5 discuss Burrows' involvement in Federal politics, while Chapter 2 details his career as a Provincial political figure.

Footnotes

¹Ottawa Citizen, October 8, 1929.

²The Sparks family was a wealthy and influential family in the Ottawa area. For a biography of Nicholas Sparks, Burrows' grandfather, see the Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. IX, 1861-1870, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 1976, p. 733-5.

³George Bryce, A History of Manitoba, Its Resources and People, (Toronto: Canada History Co.), 1906, p. 324.

⁴Personal interview with Mrs. J.S. Lightcap. Mrs. Lightcap is Burrows' daughter, Kathleen.

⁵Ibid.

⁶PAC, Department of the Interior Records, vol. 228, file 1200, A.W. Burrows to J.C. Aikens, Secretary of State, March 13, 1873.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Manitoba: Pictorial and Biographical, vol. II, (Winnipeg: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co.), 1913, p. 376.

⁹PAM, William James Healy Papers, "Historical Notes re: Saw Mills and the Historical Development of Manitoba".

¹⁰PAC, Department of the Interior Records, vol. 1180, file 9a, J.J. Burrows to Sir John A. Macdonald, May 14, 1883.

¹¹PAC, Sifton Papers, c 2177, Marriage Certificate.

¹²Sir C.D. Roberts and A.L. Tunnell, eds. A Standard Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Canadian Who was Who, 1875-1937, vol. II, (Toronto: Trans Canada Press, 1938), p. 57-58.

¹³A.L. Tunnell, The Winnipeg Society Blue Book and Elect Membership Register, Illustrated, 1926-27. (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Society Blue Book), c 1927.

¹⁴Roberts and Tunnell, A Standard Dictionary, p. 58.

CHAPTER 1
BUSINESS ACTIVITIES, 1875-1905

When Burrows arrived in Winnipeg in 1875 the Winnipeg business elite had already established its influence both economically and politically in the Northwest. These pioneer entrepreneurs had come west to provide the goods and services required by the expanding frontier and its metropolis, Winnipeg.¹ Some businessmen such as Alexander Logan and A.G.B. Bannatyne, both former Hudson's Bay Company employees, and others such as J.H. Ashdown and Alexander Begg had come West before Manitoba had joined Confederation and had established businesses in the old Red River Settlement. The majority, however, came to Manitoba after 1870. One specific group consisted of members of the Red River Expeditionary Force, who after being disbanded in Winnipeg, had decided to stay. This group included D.H. McMillan, C.N. Bell, W.F. Alloway and H.T. Champion. Others such as Burrows journeyed to Manitoba individually, either by way of the Red River from Pembina or across the Dawson Road from Lake Superior.

Most members of the Winnipeg business community were either Ontario or British born. They came as entrepreneurs, not as settlers, and once established they became devoted to the West and its development. W.L. Morton wrote of these men that "they became by interest

and connection passionate Winnipeggers and stalwart champions of the West's future."² They were not simply interested in Winnipeg's development. Alan Artibise described these men as "broadminded and never provincial, because they envisioned all of the Northwest as their hinterland, with Winnipeg as its metropolitan centre. As a group they were optimistic, expansionist and aggressive."³

Their mutual interests and concerns were quickly recognized. They soon formed a number of business and social clubs and became both Manitoba's social and commercial elite. Business associations such as the Winnipeg Board of Trade and the Winnipeg Grain and Produce Exchange permitted them to regulate and control business and trade conditions, as well as giving them an influential collective voice in economic affairs. Socially, the Manitoba Club was established in 1874, and "membership in it was practically a certificate of leadership in the commercial community in Winnipeg."⁴ Their passionate interest in the development of Winnipeg and of the Northwest led them into politics at all three levels of government, as they were the "first and natural leaders of Winnipeg and the West."⁵ They were a group with whom T.A. Burrows could feel very much at ease.

The business interests of this group were diverse as the newly-developing West required a variety of goods and services and the entrepreneurs and capital to provide

them. One of the most important of these commodities was lumber. The lumber business was for several years, the most prominent of the early local industries. At least three sawmills were operating in Winnipeg by 1873. In 1882 the value of Winnipeg's lumber trade was \$2,250,000.⁶ In 1884, its value was \$2,559,300 behind only the provision trade (\$3,154,346) and grain and flour-milling (\$2,955,522) in economic importance. In 1885 lumber slipped to fourth place, the value of the dry goods trade moving ahead of it, but lumber continued to be in high demand. At first, most of the timber was rafted down the Red River to Winnipeg from Minnesota⁷ and sawn into lumber at one of the sawmills of companies like Dick and Banning, D.N. Sprague, or Brown and Rutherford. Soon, however, these companies were cutting their own timber from the eastern shores of Lake Winnipeg or in the Rat Portage area, transporting the logs to Winnipeg by raft and later by rail. Lumber was always a commodity in great demand in Winnipeg, and in the midst of the frantic construction of the boom of the early eighties, it was especially hard to find. For example, in 1877, one local lumber merchant imported over four and one half million board feet of logs and thirty carloads of lumber from Minnesota to supply local demand.⁸ Carloads of lumber coming in by rail were often purchased by local lumber merchants waiting at the railway station.⁹ Construction figures show why this shortage existed. "In 1880

four hundred buildings had been erected at a cost of one million dollars, in 1881 seven hundred buildings were erected at a total cost of two million dollars and despite the collapse of the boom in 1882, over three million dollars worth of construction was carried out in this year."¹⁰ Most buildings, because of a shortage of housing and business premises, were constructed quickly of rough lumber rather than of brick or stone, and the makeshift nature of many of the buildings made them prone to fire.¹¹ Lumber was not, however, the only forest product in demand; cordwood was needed to heat the houses and offices of Winnipeg. The city used 20,000 cords of firewood in 1882 at a cost of nine to twelve dollars a cord.¹² Wood was also an essential commodity in the small towns developing in Manitoba and most such towns had at least one lumber yard and sawmill, often purchasing lumber from Winnipeg wholesale lumber dealers. The lumber trade was an important and vital industry in the early history of Manitoba; an industry in which Burrows was to become a prominent figure.

In 1878 Burrows joined in a partnership with Arthur Walkley who had started a sawmill business at the mouth of the Winnipeg River on the Fort Alexander Indian Reserve the year before.¹³ Their joint operation was on a modest scale. Logs were cut and manufactured into lumber on the berth. The cut lumber was then barged to Selkirk where some of it was sold at the firm's own lumber yard

and the rest of it shipped to lumber merchants in Winnipeg. The operation called for resourcefulness, a quality in which Burrows was not lacking. Once when the lubricating oil for the mill machinery had run out Burrows boiled down sturgeon and used the fish oil for lubrication. He is also credited with learning Saulteaux in order to train a crew of Indians to work in the mill.¹⁴ One of Burrows' contemporaries later remarked of this operation:

... there was laid the foundation, in addition to his great natural ability, of his uncanny faculty of foresight in anticipating the requirements of a business that called for foresight to a remarkable degree.¹⁵

The firm was not, however, held in high repute for its business practices. For example, in 1878 Walkley and Burrows cut logs from a timber berth on Catfish Creek before they had been awarded the berth. Incidents such as these led one Dominion official to remark that, "The firm are [sic] not very reliable and need constant watching to collect the dues."¹⁶ Nevertheless the firm was not without friends. In 1881 they requested a timber berth on the west side of Lake Winnipeg at Dog's Head Creek and a berth on Catfish Creek.¹⁷ Instead of these berths, Burrows and Walkley were assigned a berth on the Jackhead River, probably because of conflicting claims for the same berths by other lumbermen. The assigned berths did not please them and Mr. Bradbury, a third partner who had joined the firm in 1882, asked Stuart Tupper, the son of Sir Charles Tupper, to see Sir John A. Macdonald

in reference to obtaining the Catfish Creek berth.¹⁸ In spite of its prominent advocate, this appeal did not seem to help the company, as it shut down its operations and sold its assets the following year,¹⁹ the partners each joining different firms. Apparently they did not part on the best of terms. James Shaw, a later colleague of Burrows in the lumber business, made the following remarks about the Burrows-Bradbury association, "Bradbury and Burrows were partners on Lake Winnipeg, Burrows quit the company with \$100,000. Bradbury went bankrupt."²⁰

After his first lumber venture was sold Burrows established his own lumber company, the Selkirk Lumber Company. He operated a sawmill at Selkirk, which soon became one of the largest mills in the province, the logs to supply this mill were cut from his berth on the west side of Lake Winnipeg near Fisher River.²¹

By 1890 the lumber market in Manitoba was in a slump and Burrows turned his hand to another occupation. He was contracted by the Provincial Government to construct a colonization road into the Dauphin country, an area in which Burrows was later to expand his interests. Burrows spent a year constructing the road, but had no intention of letting his interests in the lumber business lapse. In 1894, he entered into the retail trade in partnership with D.N. Hall. They formed Burrows and Hall, Lumber Merchants, selling lumber from a yard on Maple Street, near the Canadian Pacific depot in Winnipeg.²²

This retain venture was not particularly successful, and several years later he relinquished his share of the business in return for his partner assuming the firm's liabilities.²³ By this time he had become involved in more substantial lumbering interests elsewhere in the province.

In 1890, when Burrows was contracted to build a road into the Dauphin area, he returned to an area that he had first seen some fifteen years earlier. Settlement in this area had begun as early as 1881, but it was not until the late eighties that the area began to attract settlers in any numbers. After 1885, the good free lands of Southern Manitoba were beginning to fill up and new settlement areas, such as the Dauphin area were beginning to open. The country was a new frontier, isolated from the south by Riding Mountain and in need of transportation routes. Burrows, while constructing the road, saw the new possibilities of his area and quickly established himself as a businessman and political spokesman for the region. Burrows was well entrenched there by the time the railway arrived early in 1897, bringing with it thousands of new settlers for the lands of northwestern Manitoba.

In 1892 Burrows entered provincial politics for the first time when he was elected as the Liberal-Conservative member for Dauphin in the Manitoba Legislature. His primary concern was the need for construction of

a railway to the area to encourage its further development. He actively participated in the struggle to attract a railway there, and when the first train pulled into the new town of Dauphin in January of 1897, Burrows was considered a major force in its acquisition.²⁴

In 1896 William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, the owners of this new railway, the Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Company, asked Burrows to become Land Commissioner of the Railway. This appointment was probably the result of Burrows' enthusiasm for railway construction as well as his relationship with his brother-in-law, Clifford Sifton. As Manitoba's Attorney-General, Sifton had been a staunch supporter of the railway and a major force behind its construction. Burrows accepted the position and served as Land Commissioner until 1904. The position had its advantages. He had inside knowledge of where lines would be built, and could bid on timber berths in the area, as the exploitation of the berths in this area was only feasible when the railway was close enough to them to provide economical transportation of the lumber to market. The railway company also became one of Burrows' major customers, buying lumber, ties, and poles from him.

In his job with Mackenzie and Mann Burrows was responsible for land sales from the Company's railway land grants to both settlers and other land companies, and the purchase and sale of town lots in the townsites

along the railway line north of Dauphin.²⁵ The job required frequent dealings with Sifton and the Department of the Interior in obtaining and exchanging railway lands.

The job was not simply a political sinecure however, Mackenzie and Mann expected their employees to work for their keep.²⁶ Burrows worked long hours for them and in 1901 felt it necessary to hire a manager to look after his own lumber interests so that he "might be able to devote [his] entire time to the business of MacKenzie [sic] Mann and Co. and the Land Department."²⁷ He did this in spite of the fact that he considered the \$150 a month salary he received did not pay him very well for his time, and felt that it "would not be enough for me to live on in case I relinquished my business."²⁸

Burrows had first become directly involved in the lumber business in the Dauphin area in 1897. In that year, he established his own Dauphin Lumber Company and began cutting from Berth 575 on Riding Mountain, a berth he had purchased from the Shaw Brothers, another Dauphin lumber concern.²⁹ Later, Burrows also purchased their lumber yard in Dauphin.³⁰

While Burrows had purchased this first timber berth in the Dauphin area privately, most of the later berths he acquired were obtained directly from the Department of the Interior by tender. By this time Burrows had a very strong connection with this department. In 1896 Clifford Sifton had left provincial politics to become

Minister of the Interior, the department in charge of assigning timber berths in Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. From 1898 to 1905 Burrows had no hesitation about using this connection to help him obtain the berths he wanted throughout the West. Indeed, the history of Burrows' tendering from 1898 to 1905 clearly indicated the reliance he placed upon Sifton's position in order to obtain the berths he wanted.

In 1898 Burrows acquired, by public tender, berth 814 and was soon operating a small sawmill with logs supplied from this berth at Garland, a railway siding on the east side of Duck Mountain.³¹ He had been particularly interested in obtaining this berth because of its proximity to the railway line being constructed at this time from Dauphin to the Swan River Valley to the north. Tendering on this berth was scheduled to close on May 30, 1898. On May 20, Burrows wrote to Sifton, the Minister of the Interior for help, the tone of the letter making Burrows' assumption of Sifton's help obvious.

I expect that in view of the railway being built speculators will group in and I don't expect to get it [the berth]. However, I am going to tender and I want you to see I get a fair chance. I am very much annoyed about this being put up for tender at this time but it can't be helped now ... I am very anxious to get this limit but don't want to pay too much for it. I have spent some money now in inspection, and of course don't want to lose it all ... I want to get this limit if possible.³²

Burrows managed to obtain this berth, for a payment of \$1,500 as a bonus payment.³³ Contrary to his fears,

only one other tender of \$1,100 had been submitted for the berth. His appeal to Sifton had perhaps been unnecessary; however, Burrows had requested Sifton's help to get it, and it was a request that would frequently be repeated.

Before 1889, the disposal of timber lands in the West had followed a rather informal procedure. Anyone could apply to the Department of the Interior for the timber rights to a berth of up to 50 square miles. These berths were usually awarded upon request to the first interested party. The only expense was that of a basic ground rent of five dollars per square mile per year and a duty on the logs cut. Many businessmen and politicians took advantage of this system and obtained timber berths in the Northwest, most of which were only held for speculative purposes. A few of these men sold these berths at a profit, but most reverted to the Crown because of non-payment of dues. In 1889, in response to increasing interest in the timber lands of the Northwest, a new system of public competition for timber berths was instituted. Timber berths were to be tendered on and payment made in the form of a bonus over and above the ground rent and dues. Duties on the timber cut differed with the type of product, and a flat royalty of 5% of total sales also had to be paid. The assignee (the successful bidder) also had to undertake the construction and operation of a sawmill on or near the berth. However, these

regulations were not enforced very stringently, and the acquisition of berths for speculative purposes continued.

In 1898, a modification was again made to the regulations by the Department of the Interior. The new clause stated:

On the discretion of the Minister of the Interior permits may be granted in Manitoba and the North West Territories to saw-mill owners to cut over a definitely described tract of land, not exceeding fifty square miles in extent, on payment of Crown dues at the rate of 50 cents per thousand feet on sawn lumber, and the further sum of 50 cents per thousand feet in lieu of bonus or ground rent.³⁴

This clause was in force until January 13, 1899 when it was rescinded because it was "decided not to issue any more permits to cut timber for barter or sale, without public competition."³⁵ Burrows was one of the few lumbermen to benefit from this short-lived change in the regulations when he obtained a permit berth. The "discretion of the Minister" in the awarding of these berths led to charges of favouritism on the part of Sifton towards certain lumbermen, and especially towards his brother-in-law, T.A. Burrows.

Sifton was accused in the House of Commons of changing the regulations "in a way that would rebound to the advantage of certain parties."³⁶ The Conservative member for West Assiniboia, Mr. Davin, led the attack, making a long speech illustrating how Burrows, even though he had ignored almost every restriction governing the granting of these permit berths, was awarded the berth anyway.

Firstly, he had not submitted with his application an exact description of the area. Secondly, Burrows did not require the additional berth in order to continue his operations. Others had been refused on the basis of this requirement. For example, a permit berth was refused to Mr. Shaw on January 4, 1899 because of the decision to rescind this clause.³⁷ Although the clause had been officially rescinded on January 13, Burrows was granted a berth under this clause on January 17.³⁸ Furthermore, the berth was used to cut railway ties and telegraph poles which Burrows sold to the railway, rather than sawn lumber. By not manufacturing lumber, Burrows evaded the payment of double duties, which were to have been levied in lieu of the bonus and ground rent.

When questioned in the House, the Liberal's defence of this action was not persuasive. The Liberal spokesman, James Sutherland made the defence resting on two points: that it was not Sifton who had inaugurated the change in the regulations, but William Stephenson, the Crown Timber Agent in Winnipeg. Stephenson's father had been a Conservative member of Parliament, "therefore we do not think there would be any collusion between Mr. Stephenson and the Minister of the Interior."³⁹ Moreover, he pointed to the fact that the duties paid by Burrows were "\$5,000 or \$6,000 in cash; and ... that he paid more for it than any other person paid for a similar berth."⁴⁰ In response to this point, Mr. Roche, the Conser-

vative member for Marquette, replied that this amount would have been substantially more had the double dues on sawn lumber been paid.⁴¹ Mr. Roche was careful to state, "we are not accusing Mr. Burrows of anything. He simply obtained a business advantage over his rivals, but who we are accusing is the Minister of the Interior for having allowed his own brother-in-law these privileges which he refused to other applicants."⁴² A motion by the Conservatives calling for an investigation of this incident was defeated, and the question was dropped.

By 1899 Burrows' operations in the Dauphin area were firmly established, and were becoming very profitable. In a letter to Sifton in January 1900 he remarked,

I have paid to the department during 1899 - \$6,700 in dues, besides dues paid by the Dauphin Lumber Co. so that if any return is asked for it will be seen that I am a pretty remunerative customer of the Department. I made a fairly good thing myself, but would have made a big amount if it was not for the extreme closeness of the firm of Mackenzie, Mann and Co.⁴³

This profit was coming from his operations on his three timber berths, numbers 575, 814 and permit berth 827. To manufacture the timber from berths 814 and 827 he operated two small sawmills, one at Garland and the other at Pine River, both of which were stations on the railway line from Dauphin to the Swan River Valley. However, in the next three years, he began to expand his holdings rapidly in the Dauphin area, and the Northwest. In 1902 he acquired berth 986 located in the Duck Mountain Forest Reserve. This berth became the most productive source

for his Dauphin area operations. The next year in order to exploit this berth he built a large sawmill at Grandview.⁴⁴ Grandview was at this time the western terminus of the railway which ran east from Dauphin through the valley between the Duck and Riding Mountains. Logs were cut on the berth in the mountain during the winter months and then driven down the Valley River to the mill at Grandview in the spring. The construction of the mill boosted the local economy, and Burrows became the largest employer in the area. Employment was provided both in the mill and in the logging camps. The seasonal work in the camps earned for many of the new settlers the needed cash to help sustain and improve their homesteads during the first few difficult years.⁴⁵ In its first year of operation, the mill manufactured 7,000,000 board feet of lumber.⁴⁶

In 1904, Burrows further increased his holdings in the area when he purchased Berth 571A from the Shaw Brothers. This is one of the very few berths that Burrows did not obtain through tender. Berths which were privately purchased were usually more expensive, and the Shaw Brothers held the upper hand in this transaction. Burrows later stated that:

I had a large mill there [at Grandview] and they had no mill. If there was a limit anywhere that there was strong reason for me to obtain it was that one, because the Valley River is so small that it would be impossible for two of us to drive on it, Therefore, Shaw Bros. had me at a disadvantage - I simply had to buy their limit. The limit had

an area of $28\frac{1}{2}$ square miles and ... I bought it for \$16,000.⁴⁷

The Grandview mill operated under the name of the Theodore A. Burrows Lumber Company. The value of his berths on Duck Mountain can be seen by the fact that this mill operated, primarily from Berth 986, for a period of almost twenty years.

During the period of expansion in the Dauphin area, Burrows was also developing his interests elsewhere. By 1904, he owned timber berths throughout Manitoba and the Northwest. These berths were held in the names of four different companies: his own Theodore A. Burrows Lumber Company, and the Dauphin Lumber Company, and two others in which he held a substantial interest, the Big River Lumber Company and the Imperial Pulp Company. His success rate in tendering upon berths advertised by the Department of the Interior was striking. From 1902, until 1905 he bid either directly or indirectly through an agent, on nineteen timber berths and was successful eighteen times.⁴⁸ By 1905 Burrows personally controlled 534 square miles of timber lands.⁴⁹ This made him the largest holder of timber lands in the West.⁵⁰ Of special importance to Burrows' future operations were the berths he obtained in Northwestern Manitoba in the Woody River Basin along the Porcupine Mountains, berths 992, 1054 and 1047. Together these berths comprised an area of 91 square miles and were acquired for a total bonus payment

of \$17,002.⁵¹ Timber berth 1047 was especially valuable:

It is probably the most valuable limit of its size in the whole Canadian Northwest, traversed from end to end by the Canadian Northern Railway lying right along the railroad and on both sides of it, a selection area of 50 square miles out of seven townships on the north slope of the Porcupine Hills.⁵²

Burrows also held several small berths in what was to become northern Saskatchewan, a total of fifteen square miles which he obtained for a sum of \$2,268 in 1902.⁵³ The majority of his other holdings were in Northern Alberta. These berths eventually became the core of his operations under the name of the Phoenix Lumber Company.

Sifton's role in helping Burrows to obtain these berths was substantial. Late in 1901, Berth 992 was put to tender. In order to have time to properly assess this berth Burrows required more time than that allowed prior to the date for tender submission. He appealed to Sifton to postpone the date by which the tenders were to be received "to give him time for inspection."⁵⁴ Sifton obliged, and the date was delayed to Burrows' advantage. He was ultimately awarded the berth. By contrast, when a berth in the Northwest Territories came up for tender, numerous requests for additional time in which to inspect the berth were received by the Department of the Interior, including one from the mayor of a nearby town, but these requests were denied. The Department stated that, "as these berths were put up and advertised in the ordinary manner it was not thought advisable to make any change."⁵⁵

Burrows was also involved in several corporate ventures including the Big River Lumber Company which was incorporated in 1903.⁵⁶ Its 2,500 shares were sold at \$100 each. Its corporate members included Burrows, Horace Crawford, a lawyer, George Mantle, an accountant, and two other lumbermen, William Cowan and Edward H. Moore of Prince Albert.⁵⁷ In 1903, the Big River Lumber Company controlled 250 square miles of timber lands. This area was in one timber berth, number 1048. It was located northwest of Prince Albert in what was then the Northwest Territories. The Company obtained this berth for the very low bonus of \$5,000.⁵⁸ The awarding of this berth to the company, and Burrows' role in its acquisition in particular, was later to play a major part in a debate in the House of Commons on the distribution of timber lands in the Northwest.⁵⁹ This debate focused on the business activities of Burrows and his relationship with the Department of the Interior.

On the 17th of January, 1903, a group of American real estate agents, Urquhart, Richards and Pattinson wrote to the Department of the Interior asking that 500 square miles of timber lands in the Prince Albert area be put up for tender. The Department agreed and this area was put to tender in two timber berths of 250 square miles each. This was most unusual in that generally timber berths had a maximum area of 50 square miles each, and that the Department should agree to tender this amount

of timber lands at one time was unheard of. These berths were first advertised on January 28, 1903. The tenders were due by March 7, 1903. Numerous complaints were received by the Department about the lack of time to inspect the limits, but the complaints were dismissed.⁶⁰ On March 7, only three tenders had been received: A.W. Fraser, an Ottawa timber agent, submitted tenders for two different parties, both of which were successful. One of these tenders was from the Big River Lumber Company and the company was awarded Berth 1048. The second berth was awarded to John McBain. T.A. Burrows held a substantial interest in the Big River Lumber Company, but soon after the berth was awarded he sold out his interest in the Company to another company member, Mr. Cowan.⁶¹ This move on Burrows part was regarded with grave suspicion by Mr. Ames, the Conservative member for Montreal-St. Antoine, in the House of Commons. He remarked in the House:

Mr. Cowan would never have acquired that limit if it had not been for the force that drove it through in the person of the brother-in-law of the Minister of the Interior of that day, and Mr. Cowan and his associates, before they could become full owners of that limit, had to buy out that brother-in-law for \$80,000. That is what the middleman cost in this job.⁶²

Burrows made no attempt to deny these charges. Cowan and his associates considered Burrows' participation an essential condition of gaining ownership of the berth, a tacit acknowledgement of at least some lumbermen of

his influence with the Department of the Interior. The other Prince Albert berth, Berth 1049, could also be traced back to Burrows through another company, the Imperial Pulp Company. This company, incorporated in 1903 listed its directors as John Spence, Maria Lynch, James Star, Andrew Hunt, and William Hardisty all of Toronto.⁶³ Its major shareholders were, however, T.A. Burrows and Sir Daniel McMillan, the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, and a close political associate of Sifton's. R.R. Pattinson acted as the Secretary of the company.⁶⁴ The name of Pattinson also appears as one of the members of the American firm that first requested that Berth 1048 and 1049 be brought to tender.⁶⁵

Berth 1049 was originally awarded to John McBain, a brother-in-law of Mr. A.W. Fraser, the Ottawa lawyer who had acted as an agent on both of the tenders. The relationship between Burrows and Fraser is mysterious but was undoubtedly close. Burrows denied any interest in any berth that Fraser held,⁶⁶ but he did admit to acting as an agent in the sale of berth 1049 and in 1905 had submitted the ground rent payment on this berth.⁶⁷ Burrows' denial of interest in the berth is contradicted by a telegram which he sent to Sifton in October 1903, "Get transfer of berth ten forty nine to Imperial Pulp at once."⁶⁸ If the request was granted by Sifton, and it seems likely that it was, it would have given Burrows a fifty percent interest in a berth in which he later

denied having any interest. The berth was later sold, with Burrows acting as agent, to his former partners in the Big River Lumber Company. Little doubt can exist that Burrows profited substantially from his transactions over these two berths, and the business advantage he gained was a result of his influence within the Department of the Interior.

As for the Imperial Pulp Company, it had been established by Burrows and McMillan with the following purpose in mind:

The company was formed with the object of going into the pulp business in the Western Country. We [the Company] secured limits in the neighbourhood of Edmonton. The intention was to erect a pulp mill in that locality ... Upon going into the matter I [Burrows] found that that was not the place for a pulp mill, that while the timber is valuable for pulp ... the original idea of the company to erect a pulp mill proved not to be a business proposition and the idea is now to use the limits for lumbering purposes.⁶⁹

The company accumulated a large number of timber berths in the Edmonton area. The method by which these berths were obtained was questioned later. Berth 1031 is an example. This berth was opened for tender in 1902 and four tenders were received: Burrows himself bid \$6,057, James Ross, on behalf of an Edmonton syndicate bid \$17,010, the company of H. and K. McDonald and Firth bid \$31,161, and the Imperial Pulp Company bid \$31,575, and was awarded the berth. The tender of the Imperial Pulp Company was submitted with the tender in two cheques, one for \$17,575 and the second for \$14,000.⁷⁰ When questioned Burrows

stated that the submission of more than one cheque was a common practice among lumberman to ensure secrecy.⁷¹ The Conservatives submitted an alternative theory for this action,

Look at the way those cheques dovetailed in. The cheque which came in with the first tender was for \$17,575, which slightly exceeds the bid of James Ross and the Edmonton syndicate. The combined cheques exceed the McDonald tender by a narrow margin. Is it any wonder the question is asked: 'Was this coincidence or design?'.⁷²

The Conservatives further supported their allegations of collusion between Burrows and the Department of the Interior by quoting a newspaper article published in the Edmonton Weekly Journal of February 28, 1908. Dr. H.L. McInnis wrote of a story told to him by F.E. Moloney, the Ottawa agent who had submitted the tender of James Ross,

When the man [Moloney] got there a tender had been submitted by Burrows for \$6,610 [sic]. The man was at the office a few minutes before the tenders were opened. The tender was taken inside and in the meantime a conference took place and a blank cheque signed by Burrows was filled out This made Burrows' total amount \$31,010 [sic] and so he got the berth.⁷³

The questionable business methods of the company combined with its high rate of success in acquiring timber berths resulted in the Conservatives regarding the Company with grave suspicion, "it is one of those companies ... which keeps itself scrupulously hidden but which had constant dealings for its own profit with the government."⁷⁴

The acquisition of timber berths meant that Burrows maintained close liaison with the Department of the Interior.

This was not unusual, as this Department held jurisdiction for timber lands in Manitoba and the Northwest. What distinguished Burrows' connections with the Department was his rate of success in acquiring timber berths. Burrows' timber holdings did not expand appreciably after 1904. Mr. Ames remarked upon this fact in 1908, "since June 1905, Mr. Burrows has but once tested his luck in bidding on a timber berth Naturally we ask the reason why - whether it be because all the good timber has been annexed, or whether he does not find the present atmosphere as favourable to his operations as in years gone by."⁷⁵ This was an oblique reference to the fact that Sifton had resigned as Minister of the Interior in that year.

Sifton's role in Burrows business affairs during this period was a close one. Although sources do not indicate conclusively that Sifton was personally profiting from Burrows' business ventures, it is not unlikely that he had some personal investments in them. There is no doubt, however, that Sifton helped Burrows in obtaining timber lands thus forwarding his business fortunes. Part of Sifton's motive would undoubtedly have been based on the personal relationship that they shared. Burrows and his sister, Mrs. Sifton, had remained close since childhood, and the two families frequently visited and vacationed with each other. In addition, the two were also political associates, an association that will be examined more closely in the chapters discussing Burrows'

political activities.

At this time politicians often used their positions to further their own business ventures or those of their friends and supporters without attracting much public disapproval. However, the fact that the ties between Burrows and Sifton were so frequently a matter of debate in the House and speculation by the press suggests that Sifton's "help" to Burrows had gone beyond the limits of propriety even of that time. Moreover, as Burrows discovered, close ties to Sifton could be a mixed blessing. Sifton's position as Minister of the Interior gave him ample resources for aiding his friends, but it also meant that that aid was likely to be speculated upon. Their personal and political lives were so entangled that opponents could, and did, try to erode Sifton's political reputation and power through their attacks on Burrows.

Nevertheless, not all of Burrows' business success can be attributed to his influence at the Department of the Interior and his connection to Sifton. He was a resourceful and capable businessman in his own right with an aptitude for the intricacies of the lumber trade. In these respects he is a good example of the kind of businessman/politician that Alan Artibise and J.M.S. Careless describe as the leaders of Winnipeg and Western Canada's economic development at the turn of the century.⁷⁶

Footnotes

¹J.M.S. Careless discusses the development of the group and their activities in promoting Winnipeg and the West in his article "The Development of the Winnipeg Business Community, 1870-1890," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Series IV, vol. VIII, 1970, p. 239-254.

²W.L. Morton, Manitoba - A History, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), p. 170.

³Alan F.J. Artibise, Winnipeg - A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975), p. 24.

⁴Morton, Manitoba - A History, p. 173.

⁵Artibise, Winnipeg - A Social History, p. 25.

⁶The City of Winnipeg, The Capital of Manitoba, (Winnipeg: Thompson and Boyer, 1886), p. 29-30.

⁷Morton, Manitoba - A History, p. 169.

⁸Alexander Begg and Walter Nursey, Ten Years in Winnipeg, (Winnipeg: Printed at the Offices of The Commercial, 1879), p. 158.

⁹Reuben Bellan, Winnipeg: First Century, an Economic History, (Winnipeg: Queenston House), 1978, p. 29.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 29-30.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Artibise, Winnipeg - A Social History, p. 79.

¹³PAC, Department of the Interior Records, vol. 1180, file 9a, "Report on Fort Alexander Mill," by James Anderson, Crown Timber Agent.

¹⁴Theodore Sparks, "The Early Lumber Industry of Winnipeg," Northwest Review, 45th Anniversary Issue, 1930, p. 122.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶PAC, Department of the Interior Records, vol. 1180, file 9a, "Report on Fort Alexander Mill," by James Anderson, Crown Timber Agent.

¹⁷Ibid., vol. 1180, file 9a, "Departmental Memo," February 11, 1882.

¹⁸Ibid., vol. 1180, file 9a, Stuart Tupper to Sir Charles Tupper, Winnipeg, November 11, 1882.

¹⁹Selkirk Herald, August 10, 1882.

²⁰PAM, Department of Mines and Natural Resources, Forestry Branch, C.B. Gill Papers, "Interview with James Shaw, November 17, 1926."

²¹Lyle Dick, "T.A. Burrows, Timber Baron of the Northwest," Unpublished paper prepared for Manitoba Department of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, Historic Resources Branch, Summer 1976, p. 3, citing the Selkirk Record, 1885 to 1888.

²²Winnipeg Directory, 1894, Winnipeg: Henderson's Directories, 1894.

²³Sparks, "The Early Lumber Industry," p. 122.

²⁴Manitoba: Pictorial and Biographical, p. 376.

²⁵UM, Sifton Papers, p. 74019-74023, Burrows to Sifton, February 19, 1901.

²⁶T.D. Regehr, The Canadian Northern Railway, Pioneer Road of the Northern Prairies, 1895-1918, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976), p. 213. Although there is ample proof of Burrows having to work long hours for Mackenzie and Mann, the reference used by Regehr (PAC, Sifton Papers, LXXCI, 57738-9, Burrows to Sifton, 23 Jan. 1900), is rather ambiguous.

²⁷UM, Sifton Papers, p. 74019-74023, Burrows to Sifton, February 19, 1901.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹PAM, Department of Mines and Natural Resources, Forestry Branch Records, Timber Berths and Mill Returns, set 1, no. 2(a), folio 136.

³⁰Dick, "T.A. Burrows," p. 3.

³¹Canada, Department of the Interior, Annual Report, 1899.

³²UM, Sifton Papers, p. 26082-3, Burrows to Sifton, May 20, 1898.

³³Canada, House of Commons, Debates and Proceedings, 1908, p. 8755. Hereafter referred to as Hansard.

³⁴Hansard, 1900, p. 7222-3.

³⁵Ibid., p. 7228.

³⁶Ibid., p. 7222.

³⁷Ibid., p. 7232.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid., p. 7238.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 7252.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 7256.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³UM, Sifton Papers, p. 57738, Burrows to Sifton, January 23, 1900.

⁴⁴Grandview Exponent, March 27, 1903.

⁴⁵Winter work in logging camps has long been a tradition of pioneer farmers in Canada. It provided them with a welcome cash income for pioneers first establishing their farms, or after a poor harvest. Graeme Wynn discusses this practice in New Brunswick in the 19th century in his book Timber Colony, a Historical Geography of Early Nineteenth Century New Brunswick, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 1981, p. 78-84.

⁴⁶Grandview Exponent, March 18, 1904.

⁴⁷Hansard, 1903, p. 8761.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 8714.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 8767.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 8757.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 8756.

⁵²Ibid., p. 8716. A selection area was given when areas of merchantable timber were scattered throughout an area. The berth could be made up of several blocks, making up the total area of the berth.

⁵³Hansard, 1908, p. 8756.

⁵⁴UM, Sifton Papers, p. 74086, Burrows to Sifton, Telegram, December 22, 1901.



⁵⁵Hansard, 1908, p. 8721. Quoting reply of the Dominion Land Commissioner.

⁵⁶Canada, Secretary of State, Annual Report, 1904.

⁵⁷Hansard, 1903, p. 8721.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 8721.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 8711-8834. The effects of this debate on Burrows' political career will be discussed in Chapter 3.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 8720-22.

⁶²Ibid., p. 8724.

⁶³Canada, Secretary of State, Annual Report, 1904.

⁶⁴Hansard, 1903, p. 8767 and 8771.

⁶⁵R.R. Pattinson also served as Burrows' election organizer in his campaign for a Federal seat in 1904. UM, Sifton Papers, p. 110265, Burrows to Sifton, November 30, 1903.

⁶⁶Hansard, 1903, p. 8774.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 8722-3.

⁶⁸UM, Sifton Papers, p. 110265, Burrows to Sifton, November 30, 1903.

⁶⁹Hansard, 1908, p. 8765.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 8727.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 8737.

⁷²Ibid., p. 8728.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 8714.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Alan Artibise, Winnipeg - A Social History, Chapter 2; J.M.S. Careless, "The Development of the Winnipeg Business Community."

CHAPTER 2
PROVINCIAL POLITICS, 1892-1903

In 1892, the newly created provincial constituency of Dauphin elected its first representative. In what was, by all reports, a hard fought campaign T.A. Burrows narrowly defeated his opponent, Glen Campbell, a long-time resident of the area. Burrows was to hold this seat for twelve years, winning re-election in 1896 and 1899. In 1903 he chose not to seek re-election to the Legislature in order to pursue a career in Federal politics.

Burrows was, first and foremost a businessman, and it was the interests of business, and all too often his own business, that shaped his political views. In this Burrows was by no means unusual. After coming West many entrepreneurs established themselves as more than economic leaders. They dominated the social and political life of the frontier communities they settled in, often long after the community had lost its frontier characteristics. In Winnipeg businessmen "dominated every elective office throughout the period [of 1874 to 1914]." ¹

In Manitoba the declining influence and relative numbers of the older fur trade-Red River settlement population opened the door to the domination of all spheres of provincial life of an Ontario elite.² Despite

differences in political labels - Liberal or Conservative - this business elite was united in their basic political and economic goals.³ "They were practical men, businessmen who were convinced of the desirability of material progress."⁴ They were also, to a man, passionate Westerners, and were extraordinarily expansionist in their views on everything from the extension of provincial boundaries to railroad development.

Nor were these businessmen-politicians squeamish about how they acquired and buttressed their political power in the period up to about 1914.⁵ Gerrymandering of electoral divisions, bribery, and the stuffing of ballot boxes were common occurrences, as were less obvious ploys such as the restricted municipal franchise used in Winnipeg to ensure that the commercial elite retained a firm grip on City Hall and civic development.

The political attitudes and behaviour of T.A. Burrows must be seen against the backdrop of Manitoba's political environment at the turn of the century. The province's political and business elite were powerful and ruthless men. This is not to say that they lacked good intentions, but they were convinced that their dictum of material progress at all costs was the philosophy that both business and politics should be based upon. What was good for business was good for the country and it would seem that, up until the Roblin government fell in 1915 under a barrage of charges of wholesale

political corruption, most Manitobans agreed with this philosophy.

Burrows shared his colleagues' concern with the development of the West in terms of economic prosperity, and he made his role in Dauphin's development the cornerstone of his political career.

I have always endeavoured to bring the varied requirements of the district to the attention of the government and its numerous resources to the notice of the outside world, and I point with considerable pride to the fact that since that time [his election in 1892] in no part of this great Western country has there been such substantial and material progress as has taken place in the county of Dauphin.⁶

Burrows also shared many other things in common with his Winnipeg contemporaries. He belonged to many of the same clubs and was later to sit on many of the same boards as these men. The parallel is, however, not complete. Burrows' political career was at times rather precarious, and though he was re-elected in both 1896 and 1899, he lacked a strong base of popular support within his rural constituency. He won the 1892 election by only nine votes, and in 1896 by only twelve votes, in spite of his strong connections with the Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Company, and the soon-to-be-completed Dauphin Railway. His success at election time depended upon his connections outside the constituency - the influence and help of Clifford Sifton, and his ties to the new railway and the company which built it. In this, his electorate was as concerned with political

expediency as he was, as demonstrated in his electoral victories, especially in 1899. Rather than on his personal popularity, Burrows relied on his access to patronage and the support of both his own and railway employees to secure his re-election, as will be illustrated below.

Manitoba's businessmen and politicians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw their primary goal as the development and material progress of the province; and the best method of ensuring this prosperity was the promotion and encouragement of settlement. The most effective means of accomplishing this was seen to be the construction of railways. After the construction of the C.P.R. line to Manitoba, settlers had come to the province and settled in the rich farmlands of southern Manitoba. By 1890 most of this good land had been taken up either by settlers, or was held by speculators, and attention began to shift to the northern prairies. Some settlers had already made their way over Riding Mountain to the fertile land between the Riding and Duck Mountains. But it was Burrows' construction of the Dauphin Road in 1890-91 that was the first significant step in opening this country to large numbers of settlers in search of homestead land.

Both Burrows and Sifton were firm believers in the potential of the northern prairies and became staunch supporters and advocates of settlement there. Both felt that the lack of a railway was the major impediment

to the further settlement of the area, and Burrows became a major force behind railway promotion.

Railway construction was probably the single most important issue in Manitoba politics at that time. Although the coming of the C.P.R. line to Manitoba had been enthusiastically received, settlement was already "in too wide a territory for a single railway line to serve."⁷ The extension of branch lines and the construction of a rail link to American rail lines were a constant demand of the settlers and a continuing concern of the Manitoba government. However, the construction of these lines was hindered by the monopoly clause of the Canadian Pacific Railway prohibiting construction of lines south of the C.P.R. mainline and the disallowance by the Federal government of provincial railway legislation granting charters for the construction of new lines.

The conflict over railway construction continued until 1888 when the Federal government stopped the disallowance of provincial railway legislation.⁸ After this time a number of charters were granted for the construction of various lines but these ventures were frequently plagued by financial and political difficulties and construction proceeded only in fits and starts with frequent defaults.

For Burrows, like most other Manitoba politicians of the period, railways were a major concern and formed the basic plank in his election platforms. Railways

were essential to the development of Dauphin, and Burrows was untiring in promoting their construction. The need for a railway to Dauphin was the issue Burrows stressed in his 1892 campaign. While one of his first actions in the Assembly was his sponsorship of a bill to increase monies allocated to the construction of a colonization road into the northern areas of the province,⁹ his primary interest was in railways. He felt that:

... the only districts [of Manitoba] that now lacked communication were the northern and northwestern. In these [areas] there were some of the best lands in the province, and it was very necessary that a [rail] road should be built; until it was built settlement would not increase.¹⁰

In 1895, Clifford Sifton, the provincial Attorney-General, devised a scheme whereby the provincial government could offer financial help to companies willing to construct railway lines in Manitoba. Through this scheme, the government proposed to guarantee bonds issued by potential railway companies to finance the construction of these lines. Government underwriting of the bonds encouraged investors to purchase these issues as a secure investment, while, at the same time decreasing the interest rates the company would have to pay. Railway promoters, William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, entered into negotiations with the province on the basis of this scheme and agreed to build a railway line from Gladstone to Dauphin, under the name of the Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Company.¹¹ This was their first step in the establishment of Canada's

second major railway, the Canadian Northern.

Clifford Sifton's aid to the Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Company was no doubt prompted by the fact that the scheme was sound from a business and political view, and an expression of Sifton's belief in the potential of the Northern prairies, but it was also a great help to his brother-in-law. Burrows was soon to reap both political and economic benefits from its construction.

In 1896 Sifton left provincial politics at the request of Wilfrid Laurier to enter the Federal cabinet in the influential position of Minister of the Interior. He remained, however, a powerful Manitoba Liberal, acting as de facto leader of the provincial party. In order to keep in touch with the political climate of Manitoba, Sifton relied on the advice and observations of his provincial lieutenants, men such as Burrows, Daniel H. McMillan, and J. Obed Smith. They could influence Sifton's policies, promote Liberal party fortunes in Manitoba, act as liaisons between federal and provincial parties, and have a hand in distributing the contents of the federal "pork barrel" where it would do the most good. Moreover, Burrows could count on Sifton's direct help and influence in both his business and political activities. In fact, his political and future economic success were in large part the result of Sifton's largesse.

Burrows was a pragmatic politician and had no moral qualms about taking advantage of his connection

with Sifton: a connection he used to help maintain his support in the constituency. An effective means of doing this was through the distribution of patronage to maintain the loyalty of his friends and to gain new supporters. Often this was as simple as recommending that a supporter of the opposition be appointed to a position or granted some favour, if he could be persuaded to change his political affiliations. In 1899, he wrote to Sifton requesting that more Indian children be sent to a particular mission school, in order to please the priest who ran the school. Burrows knew this man to be influential among the Metis population.

... the priest has a big influence with the Half-Breeds in my District and at the last election gathered up a party of thirty-six voters, and went personally with them one hundred and twenty five miles in the middle of winter across the Lakes, in order to have them poll their votes against me.¹²

This access to patronage was particularly important to Burrows as he does not seem to have been a particularly charismatic figure politically, nor did he have close personal ties with his constituency except through his business activities.

While politically Burrows described himself in 1894 as "a believer in National schools, an advocate of Tariff Reform, and a staunch 'Manitoba First' man",¹³ throughout his terms in the House, his primary concern was the economic development of Dauphin and, therefore, his own business interests. The close relationship

between these did not go unnoticed by his constituents and his advocacy of his own vision of development in the Dauphin area did not go unchallenged.

Burrows' preoccupation with matters only of direct concern to Dauphin explains his rather indifferent attitude to many of the other issues of the day. His position on the Manitoba Schools Question, the major political issue of the period, was in full accord with that of the Greenway Government, but Burrows did not play a role in debates on it in the Legislature. His political statements and positions tended to be on issues of an uncontroversial nature, with the exception of women's suffrage which he supported. He aimed to be a good constituency man, and not, by any means, a political philosopher.

Little is known of Burrows' platform in this first election, beyond his railway promotion: always a popular cause in remote frontier areas. Burrows titled himself a Liberal-Conservative, a somewhat peculiar label, since at that time this was the formal name of the Conservative Party, and Burrows was a supporter, at least after election, of the Liberal government of Thomas Greenway. This apparent anomaly is perhaps explained by the relative looseness of the party organizations at the time.¹⁴ It was not unusual for people to switch political parties, or simply to support whatever government was formed to make sure the constituency had a voice on the right

side of the House. It may be that Burrows simply wanted to appeal to as many voters as possible to collect support from both Liberals and Conservatives in a constituency where formal party organizations were just starting to form, and where, due to heavy immigration, the political leanings of the constituents was unknown. Burrows' support of Greenway, however, soon firmly established him as a Liberal even though he maintained the Liberal-Conservative label for several years.¹⁵

Due to the isolation of the constituency at this time, little information is available on the platforms of Burrows or his opponent, Glen Campbell. Campbell had been one of the original settlers in the area, and was popular among the electorate. His popularity was probably the reason why the Manitoba Free Press was confidently predicting his victory.¹⁶ The election was held on July 23, 1892, but due to the isolation of some of the polls, and the size of the riding, results were extremely slow coming in, and it was not until August 8 that the outcome was decided. The final tally gave Burrows a majority of nine votes.¹⁷ Campbell contested the results but his suit was rejected on the basis of a technicality when irregularities in the filing of his election deposit were discovered.

Throughout his first session in the Legislature, Burrows' primary interest remained the promotion of a railway for Dauphin, to improve access to the area

and promote settlement. He was an enthusiastic supporter of an 1893 bill to provide aid for the construction of this line, and when, in 1895 negotiations were completed with Mackenzie and Mann, Burrows' goal was realized.

Apart from his staunch support of the railway, Burrows made little mark in his first term as a MLA. He did not play a major role in the Assembly. His administrative activities were confined to House Committees, but he proved to be a conscientious member. He sponsored a number of private bills to incorporate companies, especially those concerned with resource exploitation, such as the "Winnipeg Water Power and Canal Company". The purpose of this company was to construct and operate a canal connecting Lake of the Woods with the Red River; the kind of project Burrows could see great virtue in.

He [Burrows] pointed out the advantages of being able to float saw logs, ties, telegraph poles, etc., to Winnipeg. He found in the Scientific American an article on a similar scheme to connect that district [Lake of the Woods] with Grand Forks. He estimated that the Winnipeg scheme would reduce the price of lumber \$2 a thousand, besides bringing in a large amount of cheap fuel.¹⁸

In spite of these economic benefits, however, nothing came of this proposal. The one public bill that Burrows did sponsor, "An Act Respecting the Payment of Builders and Workmen", was introduced in the House in 1894, where it died an ignominious death.

Mr. Burrows' bill ..., and Mr. Ironside's bill to give the women of Manitoba the franchise ... were left over 'till today [the last day of the session], the meaning of which is well understood.¹⁹

Burrows was also interested in women's suffrage, and supported this cause. This included supporting bills to give women the franchise and, in 1893, he introduced a petition from "Amelia Yeomans, et al., praying for an adjournment of this Legislature on Thursday evening to attend the Women's Mock Parliament."²⁰

When Manitobans went to the polls again, in January 1896, the major election issue was the question of remedial legislation by the Federal government, or the Manitoba Schools Question, which sought to reinstitute minority educational rights. In Dauphin, which was impatiently waiting the arrival of its new railway line, this issue was not of major importance. Again, the results in Dauphin were close. The Conservative candidate was, once more, Glen Campbell and the battle for the seat between the two men was hard fought. In spite of Burrows' zealous promotion of the railway, the voting results see-sawed back and forth with each poll; and it was not until the last poll was counted that Burrows was declared elected by a majority of twelve votes.²¹ The results also showed that Burrows' strength was overwhelmingly in those polls in the Interlake area, an area which was to a large extent dependent upon its resources of fish and lumber.

The closeness of this election is, on the surface, a difficult result to explain. Burrows' success in railway promotion probably should have been rewarded

by a larger majority, instead of the net increase of three in his margin of victory. However, it should be remembered that Campbell was a very popular and influential resident of the area, and personal loyalty and appeal was a large part of electoral success in the 1890's. It is interesting to note that in 1899 when Campbell did not run against him, Burrows secured an overwhelming majority, and that in an election in which the Conservatives were the overall victors. Nor were railways solely a part of the Liberal platform, Conservatives were just as zealous in promoting them, and Burrows could not claim full credit for the promised line to Dauphin. Other factors which may have influenced the outcome of the election may also be speculated upon. Population growth in the Dauphin area led to redistribution, and Burrows lost polls in the solidly Liberal Interlake area where the resource-based economy made him popular. Instead his constituency contained more homestead land, and Burrows seems to have been less popular among farmers. Burrows was also not popular in Dauphin itself.²² Finally, in contrast to Campbell, Burrows does not seem to have generated much personal appeal. Although his business interests in the area were beginning to provide welcome jobs, they did not make him well loved.

During his second term in the Assembly, Burrows' business interests began to take up an increasing amount of his time. Burrows had begun logging operations on

Riding Mountain in 1895 and, in 1896, he became Land Commissioner of the Lake Manitoba Railway and Canal Company. His job as Land Commissioner proved to be especially hectic during the first part of each year, the same period during which the Assembly was in session. His activities in the House were again confined to committee work. He limited his role in the Legislature to serving as the Chairman of the Select Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections in 1899 as well as serving on several other committees, and presenting petitions from his constituents to the Assembly.²³ In 1898 he presented a petition "of Hugh Hamilton and 140 others, residents of Gilbert Plains District, praying for the extensions of the Lake Manitoba Railway Company to Gilbert Plains."²⁴ This particular branch line was to play a pivotal role in Burrows' next election campaign.

Throughout his political career, Burrows remained intent upon keeping his "organization" as efficient as possible. He made extensive use of patronage, but also paid great attention to the electoral lists and boundary changes. One of these changes, in July 1899, was of particular concern to Burrows in light of an upcoming election. He wrote to Sifton, "I am going to lose all the East Side of Lake Manitoba, the place where I was 125 ahead in my last election, and I am left with the portion of my district where I was behind."²⁵ An additional factor bedevilling his organization was

the influx of new settlers into the area. Although this was something that Burrows fully favoured and promoted, it nevertheless caused problems. "The district has increased from 1000 to 3500 since [the] last election, and the political composition (the exact nature of which at present no man can tell) may be altogether changed."²⁶ As far as he could ascertain, however, there were "more Conservatives than Liberals in Dauphin County."²⁷

He did not look forward to the prospect of a difficult campaign in 1899, especially since its timing was most inopportune. It would detract from his business interests and from the organization of his impending wedding. The date of the upcoming election was a major concern for Burrows throughout the summer and fall of 1899. He wrote to Sifton several times trying to determine the date of the election so as to be able to plan his wedding and still be "in time" to attend to his campaign. Burrows felt that Sifton would have the necessary inside information.²⁸ The fact that Burrows needed to ask Sifton for this information is an indication that he was not consulted on such an important issue, and was not, therefore, a confidant of either Greenway or his cabinet. Another concern Burrows expressed about the upcoming campaign was a financial one.

I am going to tell the government that I am not going to spend more than \$1,000 of my own money on this campaign and if I see there is a possibility of my losing for want of assistance, I am going to retire. My last two elections cost me 5,000

dollars and accounts seem to be cropping up yet, and I am tired of that kind of politics.²⁹

However, this was exactly the kind of politics encountered throughout the 1899 campaign.

Burrows was in trouble politically during the 1899 campaign. Public opinion was shifting away from the Liberals and Burrows felt that "should the Greenway Government be defeated or hard pressed this [constituency] will be a battlefield."³⁰ He felt his best chance for reelection was to obtain "a good deal of outside assistance."³¹ It was to Sifton that Burrows turned to provide this assistance.

When Burrows discovered that his Conservative opponent was to be Robert Hunt, whom he described as "a very decent fellow, a first class politician", he immediately wrote to Sifton. He asked Sifton to write to L.M. Jones, a Liberal Senator and general-manager of the Massey Harris Company, Hunt's employer. Sifton was to ask Jones to tell Hunt that "the Company [doesn't] want him to meddle in politics."³² Jones complied with Sifton's request and Hunt was told by the Company to withdraw. Hunt, however, went ahead and tendered his nomination, at which point the Company "ruthlessly discharged him."³³

While Burrows campaigned on his record and the important role he felt he had played in the development of the area, the Conservatives' main campaign strategy

was based on what they considered to be Burrows' corrupt practices and his relationship with Sifton.

He [Burrows] came here without much money and today he is wealthy but his wealth was not gained in the ordinary way. It was literally heaped upon him by his brother in law, the generous Sifton, at the expense of the country.³⁴

A few weeks before the election, the Dauphin Weekly News began publication of a series of articles entitled, "That Timber Steal", in which Burrows was accused of obtaining the rights to timber berths in the area through Sifton's influence. The latter was accused of changing the timber regulations to allow timber berths to be granted without the usual public competition. Under this regulation, Burrows had been granted a berth of fifty square miles.³⁵ Although the Opposition press was concerned about this transaction, the voters did not seem to share its concern to the same degree.

Meanwhile, Burrows, in his letters to Sifton, kept pressing his need for assistance and efficient campaign organization. Burrows felt that the Tories had a "majority of 300 to 500 [votes]."³⁶ His "strength lay in the expectation of getting a good many Tory votes, which was not the very safest thing to rely upon."³⁷ Burrows' uneasiness increased when the Dauphin election was deferred until a week after the general election in the rest of the province due to the notices being posted late. He pleaded with Sifton to send both speakers and organizers to Dauphin to support his campaign for

he felt that assistance was essential, "if you [Sifton] stay with me and give me all the assistance you can I will carry this Riding [sic] even if the fort [the Greenway Government] is defeated. But if I don't get lots of assistance the chances are doubtful."³⁸ Sifton proved to be a valuable ally and complied with most of Burrows' requests and gave his own advice:

We have sent you all the good men we can get.... Do not make a mistake and waste too much time at meetings, but look to your organization. See that you have a strong working committee at every poll. The best men we have in the Province are up there [in Dauphin], and we can do no more.³⁹

The main issue of the 1899 campaign was, however, again to be railways. In the rosy days of construction Burrows constantly emphasized his role in its acquisition claiming to have "labour[ed] incessantly to procure the construction of a railway."⁴⁰ He gave himself credit, in its promotion for the development of the area,

... my efforts in procuring the construction of the Canadian Northern Railway, and in persistently advertising the varied resources of this district has aided materially in its rapid development.⁴¹

Once construction of the Dauphin line was completed the demand began for branch lines to the Swan River country and through the valley between the Riding and Duck Mountains. Work on the line to Gilbert Plains in this valley was scheduled to begin in 1899 but the company began to drag its heels on its construction contract. With the Company out of favour with the settlers. Burrows' connection with the Company could be used against

him. The Dauphin Press wrote, "He is in the House by our votes, but is paid to look after the interests of this Company."⁴² Burrows was aware that his business interests were influencing his political career: "my being in the Railway employ is rather a detriment, as the cry has been raised by the Tories that I am working for the Railway rather than for the people."⁴³ In addition, Burrows' relationship with his employer, the C.N.R., was not always a congenial one. The company was not always generous in its support,

I had to pay for every little service rendered me by the Company, I never even got a telegram sent over their line that I did not have to pay for ... the Company acted towards me in a very mean and narrow manner.⁴⁴

Burrows, however, recognized the preoccupation with railways of his constituents, and was particularly concerned with the lack of construction on the Gilbert Plains branch line. Again he called upon Sifton's help, "there is [sic] miles of the Gilbert Plains railway ready to lay steel on, and if we could only get William Mackenzie to lay the rails at once it might be a means of securing my election."⁴⁵ Sifton complied with this request and brought his influence to bear on Mackenzie. Construction began on this line a week before the election, and ensured Burrows' victory. "The local papers and the Manitoba Free Press had given the matter extensive coverage. Burrows thus convinced his constituents he could still get them the railways they wanted."⁴⁶

Burrows' victory, in spite of the defeat of the Greenway government the week before, provides a perfect illustration of Regehr's assertion that "political careers blossomed or were blighted as railway construction proceeded or was halted in various constituencies."⁴⁷ In fact the margin of victory was quite remarkable. When the ballots had been counted, Burrows had won by a majority of 425 votes, "or double the majority that the whole Conservative party got in Manitoba."⁴⁸

Burrows' coup with the railway led the Conservative Dauphin Weekly News to write in a fit of pique after the election,

Why did he not insist on the road from Gilbert Plains being completed? [emphasis added] Surely he could have had this done, as his influence with the government is so great that they will (if what he says is to be believed) even build railways where he requests them.⁴⁹

It was not, however, Burrows' influence with the government or the railway, but Sifton's that had resulted in the beginning of construction of the railway at such an opportune time.

Burrows expressed little surprise, or sympathy, over the defeat of the Greenway Government with whom, because of his close connections to the Sifton camp, he had never been particularly close. He felt that their lack of organization was the major factor in their defeat. Throughout the campaign, he had expressed his concern over organization to Sifton.

I think Greenway is foolish to bring on the election this year as the other side is well prepared and we are not. The Greenway Government has done practically no campaigning and the country as a whole has not heard our side of the case. If the government is defeated it is because they have been too infernally lazy to look after their own interests.⁵⁰

He felt that the Liberals were overconfident and had seriously overestimated their own strength. Sifton, after the election, expressed his agreement with Burrows' concern.

I thought that there was a good deal in what you said and did the best I could to wake them up and get them to work but without any result. The election was as easy an election to carry as I ever say, ... and if the Party had been properly organized they would have won it without trouble.⁵¹

Soon after the election, Burrows met with Colin H. Campbell, a new Conservative member, to arrange a saw-off between the parties to stifle any protests. This was a concern of Burrows, who had written to Sifton directly after the election to get William Mackenzie "to tell his friends in the opposition that they better leave me alone."⁵² The saw-offs were arranged and the Liberal constituencies of Mountain, Birtle, Minnedosa and Dauphin were matched with Conservative Manitou, Russell, Saskatchewan, and Morris.⁵³ Burrows was pleased with these arrangements, as he did not like "the prospect of trying another contest in this awful constituency."⁵⁴

During his third, and final term in the Manitoba Legislature, Burrows played a more active role in the Legislature serving as the Liberal financial critic. This increased prominence was likely due to the collapse

of the Liberal party, rather than any particular change in Burrows' commitment as a member of the Legislature. His main preoccupation remained matters of direct concern to his constituency, but he also began to express an interest in the broader matters of immigration and Manitoba's boundaries.

One of Burrows' first worries was a call by the new Conservative government for the revision of the Dauphin voters' list. Lists could be, and frequently were, manipulated by the party in power to ensure the party's fortunes. Burrows was concerned about the effects these new lists would have on the upcoming Federal elections, as the lists would be used for this as well as provincial purposes. Burrows wrote to Sifton asking him if new lists for the Federal election would be requested because, if so, Burrows did not want "to waste time and money on the preparation of a new Dauphin list" to ensure that all of his supporters were included.⁵⁵

On the question of the extension of Manitoba's boundaries, Burrows introduced a motion in 1901 calling for the extension of the boundaries to the west and north.⁵⁶ A similar non-partisan resolution proposed by Premier Roblin in 1902, was seconded by Burrows.⁵⁷ Burrows' support for the extension of Manitoba's boundaries was hardly surprising as it was not only a popular political issue, but supported by both Liberals and Conservatives in Manitoba as an important part of Manitoba's future

economic prosperity.

Burrows' attitude to political issues was affected not only by his partisan and business interests, but also by his need to reaffirm his political support within his constituency. His attitude towards the "Galicians" offers a case in point. The Eastern European population of the constituency of Dauphin was quite large, and soon these new immigrants would obtain Canadian citizenship and become voters. In the Assembly, Burrows actively defended this group, and strongly protested a move by the Roblin government to exclude certain immigrants from exercising the franchise. The Franchise Bill of 1901 was to give the vote only to those who could speak English, German, Icelandic, Scandinavian, and French. Burrows called for the addition of Ruthenians to the list, and refuted the claim of Mr. Roblin that they were "illiterate" or poorly educated, asserting that this group was rapidly assimilating into Canadian life.⁵⁸

The potential of the "Galician" vote was obvious to all. For Burrows it was essential that they be convinced to vote Liberal. In December 1900, Burrows wrote to Sifton advocating a scheme that a friend of his had suggested. Its purpose was to submit articles to a Galician newspaper published by the radical party in Galicia. The Liberal Party would subscribe for 50 copies and then distribute these among immigrants in the district, as part of an education programme.

If their intelligent vote can be obtained, so much the better, and when a Galician says 'I want to be a Liberal, I want to learn all about them' and so I would be the first to try and teach him and get his vote.⁵⁹

While it is not certain if this specific scheme was followed up by the Liberals, both parties recognized the importance of the ethnic vote and were active in trying to gain it for themselves.

During his third term, Burrows faced a major conflict of interest between his political and business activities as Land Commissioner of the Canadian Northern Railway. In 1901 the Roblin government, intent on lowering freight rates in the West, proposed a bill to provide assistance to the Canadian Northern for the construction of a railway line to Port Arthur. The line would give Manitoba another outlet for its grain, and in doing so challenge the freight rates set by the Canadian Pacific which were considered by the West to be too high. The proposed line would travel from Manitoba through Minnesota, south of Lake of the Woods to Rainy River and on through Ontario to Port Arthur. The Manitoba government was to guarantee the bonds of the company to finance the construction of this line, as well as acquire the Northern Pacific and Manitoba line, which the company would then lease from the province.⁶⁰ This meant that the Manitoba government was essentially undertaking to guarantee bonds for railway construction in not only another province but another country.⁶¹ In return, the company was to

guarantee a rate of ten cents per hundred weight on wheat moving between Winnipeg and the Lakehead.

Sifton's first reaction to the proposal was negative, and Manitoba Liberals followed his lead in criticizing the measure. "They hoped that Sifton and the Liberal government in Ottawa would use their authority to refuse the enabling legislation, or possibly even to disallow the Manitoba bills."⁶² Burrows was in accord with his provincial colleagues in his opposition, but felt himself to be in a difficult position because of his position with the Canadian Northern. He wrote to Sifton,

You no doubt have been reading the contracts as printed in the Press between the Manitoba Government and the Canadian Northern Railway and the Northern Pacific Railway Co., and the comments thereon also Roblin's speech at Neepawa explaining same, which contracts to my mind place a financial obligation on the Province, which is simply appalling, and viewing them as I cannot help to do I feel myself (in the dual capacity of M.P.P. and Land Commissioner) to be in a very unpleasant, and almost intolerable position. I am pleased to see the Canadian Northern Railway get some assistance from the Government here, and get control of the N.P. system, which together with our own system constructed lines gives many advantages to the residents of Dauphin in particular, as well as being to my mind a good thing for the Province provided such control did not cost too much. But on carefully reading over, and considering the operation of the contracts entered into I feel that they are so entirely one sided and the Province is being put into such a helpless position, a position out of which I cannot see any possible way of its extricating itself; that any member of the Legislature, especially one on our side of the house who votes for them after a full consideration is either a knave or a fool, and has no future to look to except certain and sure political extinction. I recognize that to a large measure my interests are wrapped up or allied to the interests and success of the C.N.R. system, and I feel a personal friendship towards Mackenzie and Mann which is the outcome

of my association with them of an officer of their Company. I must say, however, that I feel myself under no political obligation whatever for they did not assist me in my election.⁶³

Sifton's reply to Burrows offered him a convenient way out of his predicament,

I do not see that there is the least difficulty about your position, and in my judgement there is only one course open to you. The principle in these cases is that when a Member of Parliament is interested in a transaction which is coming before the body of which he is a member he has no right to take any part.... You should simply state that as an Officer of the Canadian Northern Company you are to such an extent interested in the transaction that it is impossible for you to either vote or take any part in the discussion.⁶⁴

He went on to assert that he did not approve of the proposal and went on to state:

I have assisted the Canadian Northern Railway because I thought it a good thing for the Western Country to have another line of railway, but as to the terms which Mr. McKenzie [sic] has [made?] with the Roblin Government I have nothing to do.⁶⁵

Three months later, however, after Mackenzie had explained the deal to him, and Sifton had become aware of the favourable public response in the West to the deal he was actively encouraging its passage, and advised Laurier to let the measure pass without the hinderance of the Federal Government. This move of Sifton's was not well received by the Manitoba Liberals and "many never forgave Sifton"⁶⁶ as they saw it as a betrayal. Burrows followed Sifton's advice not to participate in the debate, and in doing so avoided a conflict between his political and business interests, and a conflict

in his relationship with Sifton.

In 1903, facing the prospect of another difficult, and expensive campaign, Burrows decided not to run for reelection to the Legislature. His business interests were continuing to expand and in that year his sawmill at Grandview opened. This decision did not mark the end, however, of his involvement in politics and he decided to run federally in the upcoming 1904 election.

Burrows' role in provincial politics during the twelve years he represented Dauphin in the Manitoba Legislature was not a major one. In the House he was a conscientious, but never prominent member. His decision to enter provincial politics was undoubtedly based largely upon his desire to promote the development of the Dauphin area. He, like many other Manitoba businessmen, felt that entering the political arena was the way to promote his vision of the West and encourage the adoption of policies most appropriate to promote its economic development in general, and of Dauphin in particular. His business interests did, at times, clash with his political role, and the entanglement of his interests in both areas could be a liability as well as an asset. Overall, however, they complemented each other very well, as they were in fact often identical. Burrows' concern with railways and immigration was primarily carried out within his activities to encourage the development of his own constituency of Dauphin, the area in which his business

interests were also concentrated. In 1892 Burrows had felt that this area was one of great potential, its development needed furthering through the construction of a railway and the encouragement of settlement. Burrows undertook to encourage the development of the constituency for the benefit of its inhabitants and the province in general, but also of course to the benefit of his own business interests. Indeed the nature of his business encouraged Burrows' entry into politics. The lumber industry and other resource extractive industries were dependent upon the provisions of governments; from the granting of permission by permit or license to exploit the resources, to the provision of subsidized transportation services to move the products from the isolated areas in which they were produced to market. While in Manitoba it was the federal government that held control of the province's natural resources including timber, it was the provincial government that controlled, to a large extent, the construction of railway lines. Thus, it was to Burrows' benefit to have close political connections to both levels of government.

Footnotes

¹Artibise, Winnipeg - A Social History, p. 25.

²Morton, Manitoba - A History, p. 229.

³The differences between Liberals and Conservatives often seemed more fraternal than philosophical. Both groups were internally linked by strong ties of friendship and often kinship, i.e. the close political friendship of R.P. Roblin and Colin H. Campbell, or the family ties of Burrows and Sifton. In spite of their political differences, members of these two groups were often closely associated in business. For example, Campbell and Burrows were involved in several business ventures together.

⁴Artibise, Winnipeg - A Social History, p. 23.

⁵For a discussion of some of the electoral "practices" of the time see Report of the Royal Commission Appointed to Investigate the charges made in the statement of C.P. Fullerton, K.D., (1915).

⁶Dauphin Press, November 24, 1899. "Letter to Electors".

⁷A.S. Morton, History of Prairie Settlement, Canadian Frontiers of Settlement Series, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1938), p. 66.

⁸See James A. Jackson, "The Disallowance of Manitoba Railway Legislation in the 1880's," unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1945; chapter 6.

⁹Manitoba Free Press, February 24, 1893.

¹⁰Manitoba Free Press, March 11, 1895.

¹¹Dr. T.D. Regehr has remarked of this transaction, "Their agreement with the province marks the beginning of one of Canada's most unusual and notorious business enterprises." Regehr, The Canadian Northern Railway, p. 28.

¹²UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40489-90, Burrows to Sifton, October 3, 1899.

¹³W. Cochrane, The Canadian Album, vol. 3, (Brantford, Ontario: Bradley, Garretson and Co., 1894), p. 173.

¹⁴For a discussion of the reasons for the lack

of organized political parties in Manitoba prior to 1900 see M.S. Donnelly. The Government of Manitoba, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), Chapters 2 and 3.

¹⁵In 1893 Burrows described himself politically as a "Liberal-Conservative in Dominion politics but a supporter of the present Government in Manitoba." Even if Burrows was Liberal-Conservative federally at this time, he had certainly become a staunch Liberal by 1896 with Sifton's departure for Ottawa. PAC, Henry J. Morgan Papers, vol. 3.

¹⁶Manitoba Free Press, July 25, 1892; July 27, 1892 and July 28, 1892.

¹⁷Manitoba Free Press, August 8, 1892.

¹⁸Manitoba Free Press, March 7, 1893.

¹⁹Manitoba Free Press, March 2, 1894.

²⁰Manitoba Sessional Papers, 1893, Feb. 7, 1893, p. 10.

²¹Neepawa Register, January 31, 1896.

²²Manitoba. "Record of Elections since Confederation" microfilm Mc6, Reel #1, p. 35 lists Burrows with 585 votes to Campbell's 572 giving Burrows a majority of 13. A recount gave a final result of Burrows 589 and Campbell 577. The original tallies for each poll were:

Poll No.	Location	No. for Burrows	No. for Campbell	Burrows Majority	Campbell Majority
1	McKinnons	30	40	-	10
2	Martin	23	36	-	13
3	Mitchell's Store	33	60	-	27
4	Gillies'	24	35	-	11
5	Town Hall Dauphin	47	58	-	11
6	Gartmore School	44	76	-	32
7	Ochre River	36	54	-	18
8	Orange Ridge	21	34	-	13
9	Turtle River	38	48	-	10
10	The Narrows	52	2	50	-
11	Kinosota	19	20	-	1
12	Sandy Bay	43	3	40	-
13	Lundyville	33	21	12	-
14	Hendersons	54	23	31	-
15	Clarkleigh	17	16	1	-
16	Markhams School	33	11	22	-
17	Fairford	25	35	-	10
18	Fisher Bay	13	0	13	-
		585	572	169	156

The first six polls are those located in the town of Dauphin, where Burrows lost heavily. Hoever, his losses in Dauphin were not as heavy as those of Campbell in the eastern part of the constituency, at the Narrows, Sandy Bay, etc. The anomaly of Fairford may be explained by the dislike of Burrows by the local priest who led a party of Metis across the lakes to vote against him, as discussed above.

²³Manitoba Sessional Papers, 1898, March 25, 1898, p. 41.

²⁴Manitoba Sessional Papers, 1899, March 23, 1899, p. 10.

²⁵UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40459A-63. Burrows to Sifton, July 16, 1899.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40477-8, Burrows to Sifton, September 15, 1899.

²⁹UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40459A-63, Burrows to Sifton, July 16, 1899.

³⁰UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40505-7, Burrows to Sifton, November 23, 1899.

³¹Ibid.

³²UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40473-6, Burrows to Sifton, September 10, 1899.

³³Dauphin Weekly News, November 24, 1899.

³⁴Dauphin Weekly News, November 3, 1899.

³⁵See chapter 1 for a discussion of this transaction.

³⁶UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40505-7, Burrows to Sifton, November 23, 1899.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40511-15, Burrows to Sifton, November 30, 1899.

³⁹UM, Sifton Papers, Book 20, p. 257, Sifton to Burrows, December 11, 1899.

⁴⁰Dauphin Press, November 24, 1899.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴UM, Sifton Papers, p. 74019-23, Burrows to Sifton, February 19, 1901.

⁴⁵UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40505-7, Burrows to Sifton, November 23, 1899.

⁴⁶T.D. Regehr, "William Mackenzie, Donald Mann and the Larger Canada," in Western Canada, Past and Present, A.W. Rasporich (ed.) (Calgary: McClelland and Stewart, West, 1975), p. 81.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 77.

⁴⁸Hansard, June 10, 1900.

⁴⁹Dauphin Weekly News, January , 1900.

⁵⁰UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40479-84, Burrows to Sifton, September 24, 1899.

⁵¹UM, Sifton Papers, Book 20, p. 643-4, Sifton to Burrows, January 5, 1900.

⁵²UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40527-8, Burrows to Sifton, December 26, 1899. Mackenzie evidently held a considerable amount of influence with the newly elected government, for Sifton wrote back that, "Mackenzie will do anything he can to help you in the matter you spoke of in your letter." (UM, Sifton papers, Book 20, p. 536, Sifton to Burrows, Ottawa, January 1, 1900.)

⁵³UM, Sifton Papers, p. 57791-9, Burrows to Sifton, April 15, 1900. Saw-offs had become an established practice in provincial politics. A Royal Commission remarked in 1915,

The whole system which has been followed with regard to disposition of election petitions in Manitoba during many years has defeated the intentions of the Act (ie. The Controverted Elections Act) ... we think that these 'saw-off' agreements for the withdrawal of election protests, without bringing them to trial, are very objectionable ... The practice of political parties in this regard has been of such long standing that the public have come to

regard it as being not illegal, but actually permissible.

(Report of the Royal Commission Appointed to Investigate the charges made in the statement of C.P. Fullerton, K.C. (1915), p. 6.)

⁵⁴UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40530-33, Burrows to Sifton, December 29, 1899.

⁵⁵UM, Sifton Papers, p. 57756, Burrows to Sifton, February 10, 1900.

⁵⁶Manitoba Sessional Papers, 1901, March, 1901.

⁵⁷Manitoba Sessional Papers, 1902, February 27, 1902.

⁵⁸Manitoba Free Press, Thursday, March 21, 1901.

⁵⁹UM, Sifton Papers, p. 57839-42, copy of letter from Paul Woods to T.A. Burrows, December 10, 1900.

⁶⁰Regehr, The Canadian Northern Railway, p. 88-92.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 91.

⁶²Ibid., p. 93.

⁶³UM, Sifton Papers, p. 74019-23, Burrows to Sifton, February 19, 1901.

⁶⁴UM, Sifton Papers, Book 25, p. 987-8, Sifton to Burrows, February 22, 1901.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Regehr, The Canadian Northern Railway, p. 95.

CHAPTER 3
FEDERAL POLITICS

From 1892 until 1903 Burrows had served as the M.L.A. for Dauphin; but his political interests, even at this time, were not confined to provincial politics. From 1896 to 1904 Burrows was strongly allied with the Federal pro-Sifton Liberals in Manitoba and acted as one of Sifton's provincial lieutenants. In 1904 Burrows, himself, switched to federal politics and was elected by acclamation as the member of parliament for the new federal constituency of Dauphin. After his own political career finished with his defeat at the polls in 1908, Burrows continued his political activities as a campaign organizer and party worker.

As previously mentioned, when Clifford Sifton became Minister of the Interior he also became de facto leader of the federal Liberal party in Manitoba. As leader, Sifton relied on the support of a number of loyal "lieutenants" in Manitoba to keep him informed of the political climate and events in the province and to help him promote his own policies. These men gained political influence in Manitoba because of this connection which gave them a role in the distribution of patronage throughout the West. Burrows, as one of these lieutenants, corresponded regularly with Sifton,

was expected to help organize election campaigns, and also often acted as a liaison between the employees of the Department of the Interior in the province and their Minister in Ottawa. In the distribution of patronage Burrows' particular sphere was the provincial constituency of Dauphin, but he was also consulted on matters pertaining to the federal riding of Marquette, which was represented in the House of Commons by a Conservative member.

While Sifton commanded the loyalty and respect of many Manitoba Liberals, his position was not unchallenged within Liberal ranks. In fact, rebellion over Sifton's leadership within the party broke out after his departure for Ottawa when certain Liberals felt that he was excluding them from patronage distribution and other "fruits of office".¹ This resentment soon led to political infighting among Manitoba Liberals. The battle lines between the "Siftonites" and the "kickers", as they were known, formed and the battle ground was to be Winnipeg politics.²

Burrows, though not directly involved in the political situation in Winnipeg, was aware of the division and helped to keep Sifton informed about it. In 1899, when the conflict erupted, Burrows warned Sifton that he did "not like the trend of events",³ a reference to the war of words that had broken out between the Siftonite Free Press and the Winnipeg Tribune, owned by an independent-leaning Liberal, R.L. Richardson. The Tribune

was becoming vocal in its expression of anti-Sifton policies and sentiments and was soon to become the voice of the "kickers" faction of Manitoba Liberals. A month after his initial warning to Sifton, Burrows, after having a chat with Richardson, had expressed the naively optimistic hope that the situation was improving. He wrote to Sifton:

I am inclined to think he [Richardson] has changed his attitude towards you somewhat. I asked him how he was getting along and if he was still scrapping with the Laurier gov't and the Minister of the Interior in particular. In answer to which he said 'You have not seen anything in the Tribune lately along that line.'⁴

Burrows further remarked that the attitude of other Liberals also seemed to be improving and advised Sifton to "keep your head cool. This thing will work out all right."⁵

Unfortunately, this was not to be the case. Discontent in the Liberal ranks continued to brew and played a major role in the defeat of the Greenway government in 1899 and in the loss of the riding of Winnipeg to a Labour candidate, Arthur Puttee, in 1900.⁶

Burrows, although remaining staunchly loyal to Sifton throughout, was not particularly effective during this period. He even had to refuse Sifton's appeal to help with the nomination meeting for the by-election, unless Sifton could get permission for him to take time off from his job with the Canadian Northern. He wrote,

Now Clifford you can always count on me doing what

I can to assist the party and I will come in on Friday for the nomination meeting, but I don't see how I can remain unless you get permission for me to do so.⁷

Burrows' negligible role during this period of unrest in the Liberal party is an indication that, although Burrows was an intimate of Sifton's, he was never a major figure in the Sifton camp, nor within the Provincial Liberal party. He was essentially outside of the "Liberal machine", and in the Sifton camp was a follower rather than an advocate of Sifton's policies. Sifton, in fact, acted more as a protector towards Burrows, without being able to depend upon Burrows for astute political judgements in return. Burrows' correspondence with Sifton advising him on political matters tends to be naive platitudes rather than substantial political strategy. Nevertheless, Burrows was in touch with the political climate and his observations reflect this. Burrows was especially worried about the chances of the Liberals in the federal election after the defeat of the Greenway government in 1899. Shortly after the provincial election he wrote to Sifton,

There is a stronger and more wide disaffection in this Western country among the Liberal ranks than I believe you are aware of, and there is a good deal of feeling against you personally ... and of course the fall of the Greenway administration makes the chances of the party very much less bright.⁸

Burrows' correspondence with Sifton during this period reflects a concern with the problems of the farmer in the West. Unlike Sifton, Burrows, because of his

particular business interests in lumbering, was forced to maintain a much closer connection with, and consideration for, the problems of agriculture. In his thesis on Sifton, D.J. Hall remarks that,

Clifford Sifton was not the representative that many westerners expected him to be. He had little attachment with the rural west. The problems of the wheat farmer had never been his. Rather his western associates had been legal and business connections, which were reflected in his later policies.⁹

While Burrows too, was a businessman, the state of his business was in large part dependent upon the farmer. Lumber sales fluctuated with the price of wheat and as a result Burrows was quite sensitive to the needs of the farmer. His advice to Sifton reflects this concern. Burrows was aware of the discontent the farmers felt about Sifton and frequently conveyed this to him. In 1900, Burrows expressed concern over Sifton's personal chances for reelection and strongly urged him to adopt a more "western" point of view in his opinions and politics.

... you will have to change your policy very much to regain in Manitoba the popularity you once had. You will have to advocate the interests of the Farmers of the West as against the Capitalist and Speculator. You are now looked upon by a good many as being too favourable to Railway interests You might as well look the position squarely in the face and be prepared to meet it.¹⁰

The fact that Burrows felt that Sifton should essentially complete a volte face in his policies is interesting in that in his own campaign Burrows always stressed political organization over political ideology, as indeed Sifton frequently urged him to do. Throughout his political

career, Burrows' primary strategy was to try and establish a strong local organization. In federal elections Burrows frequently acted as an organizer for the northern ridings, but was often frustrated by the lack of funds and organizers that could be counted upon. He consistently stressed the need for a strong organization that would continue its work throughout the year, not just at election time, and that would encourage party loyalty. In this he was often disappointed. At one point in the 1900 election campaign, much to Burrows' disgust, the vice-president of the Liberal Association in Marquette resigned because he did not receive a desired patronage appointment and began to campaign actively for the Conservative incumbent.¹¹ While incidents such as this were not uncommon at this time they led Burrows to see efficient organization as the key election requisite. He wrote of the Marquette election,

I think the principal cause of defeat in Marquette ... was lack of organization.... I feel certain that if we had Cory, or some other good smart fellow to start and organize this County say six or seven months previous to the election we could have won it.¹²

As it was, Burrows relied largely on the distribution of patronage to encourage the loyalty of the Liberals in Dauphin and Marquette. Through patronage, Burrows consolidated a good deal of support. In the developing area of Dauphin, influence in the distribution of post offices and mail contracts as well as access to positions with the Department of the Interior were especially

valuable. His success in obtaining them is demonstrated by the number of requests he forwarded for positions outside of the Dauphin area, including Winnipeg, the Yukon, and civil service positions in Ottawa. He was even asked by Glen Campbell, his long-time political opponent, to do what he could in obtaining Campbell a commission in the contingents going to the Boer war,¹³ an indication that even his opponents considered him a powerful advocate in these matters. Burrows also acted as a liaison between Sifton and the employees of the Department of the Interior in the Dauphin area, forwarding their requests for promotion or additional pay. In return Burrows requested their assistance at election time, but was frequently disappointed.

... we have no men on our side here who are even a little bit good at organization. The only men on our side who used to be an assistance to me in this regard are now Government employees and too much afraid to try; anything I got done for myself at the last election was done by my own staff, and by men who I had to hire and pay.¹⁴

In 1903 Burrows decided not to seek reelection as the M.L.A. for Dauphin. In 1904 he accepted the nomination as Liberal candidate for the newly created federal constituency of Dauphin. While no explicit statement of the reasons for this decision were found, it is likely that Burrows simply wanted to try his hand in this larger arena and perhaps be closer to the source of his timber berths. He knew his constituency from the provincial campaigns he had fought in the area,

and could generally rely on Sifton's help. His resignation as Land Commissioner of the Canadian Northern gave him more time to devote to his political and other business pursuits. Past provincial success in Dauphin probably led Manitoba Liberals to encourage him to run for the seat.

In deciding to run federally, Burrows was cognizant of the problems he would encounter. The area was, he felt, essentially conservative in sympathy, and had voted Conservative when it had been part of the riding of Marquette. Several months before he decided to seek the nomination he wrote to Sifton, advocating his traditional strategy:

The new county of Dauphin is going to be Tory with Gilbert Plains in it and can only be carried with very careful organization and good effective work for several months before the elections and then only by the best candidate obtainable.¹⁵

Evidently it was the considered opinion of both himself and his fellow Liberals that he was the best candidate.

The Dauphin Conservatives, however, experienced greater difficulty in choosing their candidate, but not through lack of trying. At one point, the Conservatives offered the nomination to R.J. Mackenzie, the son of William Mackenzie of the Canadian Northern. Mackenzie was evidently seriously considering the nomination, a state of affairs that sent Burrows scurrying to Sifton for help.

Now Clifford ... the proper thing for you to do

is to see Wm Mackenzie at once and get his unqualified promise to support me in Dauphin ... Now R.J. personally would not be a strong candidate, but with the influence of the Railway and a host of contractors at his back and all the money he wanted, he would make a very serious opponent.¹⁶

Had Mackenzie decided to run he would have usurped Burrows' identification with the railway, and this identification had been a major factor in his past election victories. Burrows gave the Conservatives credit for their astuteness in asking Mackenzie to run, "they certainly made a good move when they did that as even if he should not consider it he will be under a certain obligation not to support me." ¹⁷

The candidate eventually chosen by the Conservatives to run against Burrows was his old political foe, Glen Campbell. The 1904 campaign was the third contest in which these two had opposed each other, but the contest seemed to lack the excitement of the former provincial elections.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier had called the 1904 election for November 3, but in Dauphin, due to the notices of election being posted late, the voting day was deferred until November 14, eleven days later than the rest of the country. As the Dauphin Press noted, this postponement caused a decided lack of interest in the local campaign, and both candidates felt that their hopes of election would depend upon the fortunes of their respective parties on November 3.¹⁸ Nevertheless, though "lifeless", the

campaign continued, with local meetings and speeches by both candidates. On November 3, when the national results came in giving Laurier a large majority Campbell, as expected, withdrew his candidacy and T.A. Burrows was declared elected by acclamation.

In the House of Commons Burrows' areas of interest were, as in the provincial legislature, primarily concerned with the development of the West. A biographer has remarked,

The subjects that had interested him in provincial politics were now his to develop in the wider federal field, namely, transportation, communication and the extension of the Manitoba boundary.¹⁹

In the transportation field Burrows was an ardent supporter of the Hudson Bay Railway, "I think that the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway is one of the most important projects which the government have before them at the present time."²⁰ Burrows had always been a strong supporter of railways for Manitoba and the promotion of this line, which had long before caught the public's imagination was indeed a popular cause in the West. Burrows was, however, aware of the many complaints Westerners directed towards the railway companies, and in 1907 he and a group of other Western members presented a paper to the government deploring the state of transportation in the West.²¹ He obviously felt little loyalty to his former employers when he "freely criticized the Canadian Northern before the railway commission" and

expressed his opposition to their attempts to gain permission to extend their lines in Saskatchewan and Alberta.²²

In 1905 Burrows was named a member of the Mullock Committee, struck to investigate the operation of telephone systems in Canada and around the world. The Committee concluded that different companies should be compelled to interchange business, and that all railway companies should be required to allow the telephone companies access to their stations to install public telephones.²³

A third area of concern and interest for Burrows was the extension of Manitoba's boundaries, and he felt himself in part responsible for a resolution passed in the House of Commons proposing the extension of the boundary northward to Hudson Bay.²⁴ Despite the passage of this resolution, Manitoba's boundaries were not extended until 1912.

Besides these activities, Burrows was also an active constituency man, as he had been in provincial politics. He spoke in the House on local Dauphin issues such as the regulation of water levels on Lake Dauphin, the dredging of Lake Manitoba, and federal sponsorship of the construction of colonization roads.

His opinions on issues such as the autonomy bill, and Sifton's resignation are unfortunately not known, although it can be strongly conjectured that Burrows supported Sifton's stand but regretted his resignation over the issue. There does not appear, however, to

have been any disruption in his own relationship with the party.

The last two years of the parliament were, for Burrows, largely taken up with a public defence of his own business activities and he "had to defend himself from severe attacks from the Conservative opposition in regard to lumber combines, excessive lumber prices and large timber holdings."²⁵ A committee was struck in the House to investigate accusations of a western lumber combine, accusations that proved well founded. Burrows was forced into a defensive position by these charges, and came under attack over his relationship with Sifton and the Department of the Interior.

Although, in part, this attack on Burrows represented a legitimate concern by the Conservatives over undue use of influence by Sifton and Burrows, it was also part of a larger strategy of the Conservatives to discredit the Laurier government. From 1906 to 1908 the Conservatives followed a campaign designed to expose the corruption of the Laurier administration,²⁶ and in Burrows they found an especially vulnerable target. Concern over Burrows' rather dubious business activities was not new of course. The opposition press in Dauphin, the Dauphin Herald, had written extensively about the awarding of a permit timber berth to Burrows under suspicious circumstances during the 1899 provincial election, but little attention had been paid by the voters.

When faced with a concerted attack in the House however, his dealings with the Department of the Interior came under closer scrutiny. Early in 1906, the leader of the Opposition, Robert Borden, suggested to a member of his caucus "that there was political capital to be gained from a strategy of hunting for ... malfeasance" among the Liberal members, by damaging the credibility of the Laurier administration through exposing its corruption.²⁷ The Department of the Interior was one department singled out for particular examination.²⁸ One of the most effective Conservative "investigators" was H.B. Ames, and it was Ames who led the attack against Burrows.²⁹ While the "scandal" campaign of the Conservatives did not prove to fulfill Borden's optimistic hopes of discrediting the Liberal government, it proved to be a major thorn in Burrows' side. The scandal surrounding his business dealings became the major issue in his local campaign in the 1908 election.

In Dauphin, the Conservative Dauphin Herald had been publicizing the issue ever since it had become a subject of debate in the House and as the election grew nearer, it grew more vociferous in its complaints against Burrows. As early as August the paper was preparing for the election, attacking Burrows and the Liberals for corruption, and urging "honest" Liberals to desert the Party.

Let the Liberals who are free from the bonds of

heelership and the seduction of graft sharing join the Conservatives in ousting from power that Government which is a disgrace to Canada, and in leaving at home Mr. T.A. Burrows one of its worst products.³⁰

The alleged corruption of Burrows and his fellow Liberals continued to be the predominant issue throughout the campaign. The direct attacks of the Conservatives and the Dauphin Herald forced Burrows, and the Liberal Dauphin Press, into a defensive position, though the strategy of the Press was to ignore the whole issue until a few weeks before the election. Then it began to defend Burrows actively, usually by reprinting his speeches in which he explained himself and his actions.

The Dauphin Conservative association also made Burrows' corruption its main campaign issue. One of its most successful events of the campaign was a speech delivered by Mr. Ames who delivered a lecture to a full house at the Dauphin Town Hall. It was entitled the "Timber Limit Grab", "the means by which Brother-in-law Burrows cinched the large part of the timber supply of this western country."³¹ Ames arrived at the Town Hall with a magic lantern with which he showed various figures and facts to his enthusiastic audience.

The advantages of the stereopticon in such an address were easily discerned when he produced pictures showing the general topographical features of the Western country in regard to timber lands.³²

His presentation at the meeting was essentially the same presentation he had made to the House of Commons four months before. He raised questions about the tendering

practices of Burrows and his associates, who were identified as A.W. Fraser and Sir Daniel McMillan. Although the group was criticized for their questionable tendering practices and the holding of timber lands for speculative purposes, the main point of the attack was Burrows' relationship with Sifton, and Sifton's influence in obtaining these berths for his brother-in-law. The use of influence rather than the actual advantages gained by Burrows was also the major concern of the Herald,

We have no personal animus against Mr. T.A. Burrows. We believe we have the right to oppose him because we believe from the facts known that he is a degrading and corrupting influence in the political life of the district, and has always been such, and the sooner he is removed from public life either by his own party or by the opposition the better for the political morality of the country.³³

Glen Campbell, once again Burrows' opponent, stressed the embarrassment the scandal was causing to the constituents of Dauphin. "Theodore A. Burrows has disgraced his constituency in the eyes of Canada. That is the reason I accept the nomination to drive him from public life."³⁴ Campbell's charges of corruption were not levelled only at Burrows. Campbell considered the whole of the Laurier administration to be corrupt, and illustrated this point with a personal example. At one time Campbell had requested a grazing lease from the Department of the Interior.

Towards the end of Sifton's regime some of my Ottawa friends gave me warning that if I wanted my [grazing] lease I had better go down there myself and approach the representatives of the government in the proper

manner, and it cost me \$2,000 to get what I had an absolute right to.³⁵

Burrows' attempts to use this episode to point out Campbell's own lack of "moral purity" did not prove to be effective, but the personal attacks each candidate made on the other set the tone of the campaign.

The charges of misuse of influence by Burrows were not confined solely to his relationship with Sifton. Burrows' close relationship with the civil servants in Dauphin was also noted. Throughout his political career, Burrows had maintained, and indeed cultivated this relationship, and he was in many cases responsible for their appointments to the civil service. In return Burrows counted upon, though was often disappointed in, their support at election time, and this was of course a sore point with his Conservative opponent.

During the campaign Campbell also stressed the conflict between Burrows' interests as an entrepreneur and those of his constituents. He felt that Burrows could not adequately represent the needs of agriculture and charged that Burrows' past record illustrated this point.

He was there [at Ottawa] to look after your interests. What did he do? Not a thing. Did he ever make a speech? Did he do anything? He never turned a hair. Why? Because he was looking after the interests of the man he believed he was elected to represent, Theodore A. Burrows.³⁶

When the final ballots had been counted Burrows had been defeated by a margin of 217 votes.³⁷ Burrows

had maintained his majority in the areas which had traditionally supported him, the Gimli area, Grandview and the largely ethnic areas of Riding Mountain, Pine River and Garland. He was defeated by narrow margins in the agricultural and more prosperous regions of the constituency, but Burrows lost the election in the town of Dauphin.³⁸ It was the first election contest that Burrows had lost, and it was to be the last campaign he would enter as a candidate.

The scandal that surrounded Burrows, both before and during the campaign, was undoubtedly the major reason for his defeat in 1908. Across Canada the Conservative strategy of exposing scandal and corruption in the Laurier administration had proved to be relatively ineffective, but in Dauphin this was not the case. A contemporary observer remarked of the election,

The General Election was a surprise to most people. Sir Wilfrid has a majority of well over 50, in fact he has done just as well as he did in 1904. The scandal talk and mudslinging has apparently had little effect.... In fact the scandal business has hurt the Conservatives more than the Liberals. The only thing the scandals did on the Liberal side was to reduce Sifton's majority in Brandon to 47 - & to defeat his brother-in-law Burroughs [sic].³⁹

Dauphin electors, unlike those elsewhere, reacted to the charges of corruption levelled at their member and responded by defeating him at the polls. Their responsiveness to these charges reflects the changing nature of the area. Dauphin constituency, by 1908, was a prosperous and increasingly established area.

No longer was it the isolated, unsettled frontier to which Burrows had come in 1892. With increasing prosperity and population, Burrows' stature within the area declined. In the 1890's Burrows' position as a large employer provided the jobs necessary for farmers to supplement their meager incomes. His position with the railway, and his claims to have influence on its construction in the area, also served to secure his political position. The same was true of his relationship with the Minister of the Interior, for the resources controlled by the Department were essential to the farmer. By 1908 the area was beginning to prosper, Sifton had resigned his cabinet post and the area was well served by the railway. Burrows, who had played a large role in the development of the region no longer held the power he once had, and his questionable "activities" were no longer tolerated. Burrows remained, and increased his position as an important businessman in the area, but his political hold on Dauphin had been broken.

Footnotes

¹A.R. McCormack, "Arthur Puttee and the Liberal Party, 1899-1904," Canadian Historical Review, II, 2 (June 1978), p. 144.

²Ibid., p. 144-150.

³UM, Sifton Papers, p. 26106-9, Burrows to Sifton, November 9, 1898.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶McCormack, "Arthur Puttee," p. 148

⁷UM, Sifton Papers, p. 57733-4, Burrows to Sifton, January 10, 1900.

⁸Ibid., p. 40530-3, Burrows to Sifton, December 29, 1899.

⁹D.J. Hall, "The Political Career of Clifford Sifton, 1896-1905," Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1974, p. 367.

¹⁰UM, Sifton Papers, p. 40530-3, Burrows to Sifton, December 29, 1899.

¹¹Ibid., p. 57822-6, Burrows to Sifton, October 5, 1900.

¹²Ibid., p. 57835-7, Burrows to Sifton, December 3, 1900.

¹³Ibid., p. 74077, Telegram, Burrows to Sifton, December 1, 1901. Sifton, however, replied that he could not recommend Campbell for such a commission.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 57822-6, Burrows to Sifton, October 5, 1900.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 110236-40, Burrows to Sifton, July 21, 1903.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 110267-70, Burrows to Sifton, December 9, 1903.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Dauphin Press, October 26, 1904.

- ¹⁹Roberts and Tunnell, Canadian Biography, p. 57.
- ²⁰Hansard, 1906-7, p. 6368.
- ²¹Roberts and Tunnell, Canadian Biography, p. 57.
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³Ibid.
- ²⁴Ibid.
- ²⁵Ibid.
- ²⁶R.C. Brown, "The Politics of Billingsgate," In The West and the Nation, C. Berger and R. Cook (eds.), Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976, p. 161-173.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 167.
- ²⁸Ibid.
- ²⁹See Chapter 2.
- ³⁰Dauphin Herald, August 8, 1908.
- ³¹Ibid., August 27, 1908.
- ³²Ibid., September 3, 1908.
- ³³Ibid.
- ³⁴Ibid., December 1, 1908, quoting an election speech made by Glen Campbell.
- ³⁵Dauphin Press, October 15, 1908, quoting an election speech made by Glen Campbell.
- ³⁶Dauphin Herald, October 1, 1908.
- ³⁷Canada, Sessional Papers, 1908, vol. XLIII, no. 8, Paper no. 18, "Return of the General Election for the House of Commons of Canada."
- ³⁸Ibid.
- ³⁹PAC, Lord Minto Papers, vol. 23, p. 164-5, Arthur F. Sladen to Lord Minto, September 30, 1908.

CHAPTER 4

LATER BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

By 1900 T.A. Burrows had been in the lumber business in Manitoba for over twenty years yet until the late 1890's his lumbering interests had been of a rather "temporary", though financially successful, nature. His partnership with Walkley, his own Selkirk Lumber Company, and his retail venture with D.N. Hall had all been rather short-lived concerns, but had given Burrows the experience and reputation he needed to expand his interests. During the late 1890's Burrows began to establish himself as a prominent businessman in the newly developing Dauphin area in Northwestern Manitoba. He carried on several small logging operations in the area from 1895 on but his main achievement of the period from 1896 to 1904 was the accumulation of timber lands throughout Manitoba and the Northwest. These timber berths would provide Burrows with the resources to carry out the extensive operations he conducted from 1903 until his death in 1929, and which were continued under the direction of his son until the 1940's.

Burrows' other business interests also developed and expanded after 1903, these included a retail lumber company, the Northern Lumber Company, which would eventually become a chain of thirty yards across the Prairies.

He was also involved in the promotion of a colliery in Alberta, and a land company. With the consolidation and success of his business ventures Burrows was invited to sit on the boards of several financial companies as well as the boards of various charitable and educational institutions. Throughout his life, however, Burrows' interest and personal involvement in the lumber industry never wavered, and the majority of both his time and interest was always devoted to his lumbering concerns.

Although his retail lumber interests were spread across the Prairies, his logging operations were centered in Manitoba and Alberta. During this period he operated two major sawmills in Manitoba, at Grandview and Bowsman, both in the northwestern part of the province along the forested Manitoba Escarpment. His operations in Alberta were centered on a succession of mills in the north-central area of the province. At first they consisted of a small scale operation carried out under the name of the Imperial Pulp Company, with Burrows and D.H. McMillan as partners. But in 1911, Burrows formed the Phoenix Lumber Company, and thereafter it was this company which was responsible for running his Alberta operations.¹

In 1898 and 1899 Burrows acquired a number of timber berths on the southern and eastern slopes of Duck Mountain. In the former year, he began logging the berths on the eastern slope, berths 814 and 827, manufacturing lumber at two small sawmills he owned

at the railway sidings on Garland and Pine River, on the Canadian Northern Railway's branch line to Swan River. Logging continued on a small scale until 1903. In the winter of 1902-1903 Burrows, anticipating the completion of the C.N.R. line to Grandview, began logging operations on berth 986, on the southern slope of Duck Mountain. Logging continued throughout the winter and logs were piled on the banks of the Valley River in anticipation of a spring river drive to an as yet non-existent sawmill. Throughout the early months of 1902 Burrows negotiated with a local Grandview farmer, James Joynt, to purchase part of his land for the construction of a mill. By spring the negotiations were completed and Burrows began construction of the mill in May.² To encourage this construction the town of Grandview granted Burrows tax exemptions on certain mill property. By September 1903 construction was completed and sawing had begun.³

The Grandview mill site had several advantages. The logs were transported cheaply and efficiently from the berth to the mill by means of the Valley River which flowed down Duck Mountain to Grandview from its headwaters in Singoosh Lake. Secondly, construction of the C.N.R.'s Gilbert Plains Branch line began in 1899⁴ and was officially opened in 1903.⁵ This line provided the means of transporting the finished lumber to markets in Winnipeg and across the West. Thirdly, the Gilbert Plains area,

itself, could provide a strong local market. The whole of Northwestern Manitoba was opening up with the construction of the railways and settlement in the area was increasing rapidly. The new homesteaders required a great deal of lumber to construct their homes, barns, and fences.

Though Burrows' first Grandview mill was a small building only 100 feet square,⁶ the saws were operated by a 250 horse power steam engine, and the mill had a capacity of 80,000 board feet of lumber per ten hour day, making its output one of the largest in the province.⁷ In 1903 the production from this mill and Burrows' other Duck Mountain operations totalled over 6,000,000 board feet making Burrows the largest producer of lumber in the province that year.⁸

During this time, Burrows continued to operate the small mills at Garland and Pine River, and about 1907 he began to operate a third small mill about 16 miles north of Grandview on the Forest Reserve.⁹ This Mountain Mill operated only during the winter months sawing logs cut from a number of sites on the berth.

The operation of the logging camps and mills, though primarily a labour intensive activity, required a substantial capital input in terms of buildings, machinery and equipment. The success of the logging operations was dependent upon a number of support services, requiring a capital outlay at the beginning of the season. Each

year the logging camps on the mountain had to be established and equipped. Camps were moved each year as the cutting sites surrounding them were depleted. New buildings had to be constructed including bunk houses, cook shacks, stables, a blacksmith shop and an office. Roads to the camps had to be cleared and prepared for the winter and food for both the men and horses purchased. In order to offset the costs of feed for the horses Burrows owned and operated several farms in the area. He had a stable and pastures at the Lower Dam, near Strevil siding, for the horses. Food for the men was purchased wholesale from local merchants and the camps were resupplied every few days by the tote wagon hauling up provisions from town. Attempts to keep live animals at the camp for slaughter proved unfeasible and meat was usually purchased from local farmers.

Another essential part of the logging operation was the maintenance of the dams along the Valley River to ensure the success of the log drive in the spring. The organization needed to ensure the accomplishment of these tasks was staggering. To help with the logistics, Burrows could count on the help of his general manager, his nephew T.A. Sparks and that of his foremen, but Burrows also took a strong personal interest in the business. He frequently visited Grandview to attend to the business affairs and the head office of the T.A. Burrows Lumber Company was in Grandview.¹⁰

Fire was a common hazard in lumber mills and yards and Burrows was not immune. In 1910 his Grandview sawmill burnt to the ground.¹¹ This was not to be the last fire Burrows' operations suffered, the next year a planing mill he was operating at Birch River burned down¹² and in 1917 the saw mill of his Phoenix Lumber Company in Alberta was destroyed by fire.¹³ His later Bowsman operations also suffered a loss from fire when the barn burnt down and several horses were killed.¹⁴ The Grandview fire in May 1910 was, however, especially inopportune.

The season's cut was to have been begun this week, and the finishing touches were being given the machinery to that end and a complete staff of men had been engaged and were ready for operation and the river full of logs. The loss is a great one, both to Mr. Burrows and the town and district.¹⁵

Total losses with the burning of the mill were \$60,000 but the building was insured for only \$25,000, a loss "calculated to stagger any businessman."¹⁶ At first Burrows was uncertain about whether he would rebuild again, a state of affairs which moved the Grandview Exponent to plead:

Grandview cannot afford to lose so important an industry, and the best interests of the town will be conserved by the powers that be meeting Mr. Burrows' views in every fair way. Whether any, or what move may be made to this end, The Exponent knows not. But should any advances be made they should be met in a candid manner. Differences of opinion there have been, possibly mistakes made in the past. Let them not be repeated.¹⁷

Evidently "advances" were made and a week later Burrows announced his plans to rebuild the mill. Two weeks

later the town council passed a bylaw "relating to the exemption of certain mill property of T.A. Burrows."¹⁸ Burrows' tax exemptions were to be extended to assist the mill in becoming reestablished. Construction on the new mill was carried out sporadically during the next year, but was completed by the next spring. The second mill was much larger than the previous one, and had a capacity of 120,000 board feet per ten hour day.¹⁹

By 1914 Burrows was experiencing some problems in supplying his mill. Good cutting sites close to the river were becoming scarce and the distance of new sites from the river made the hauling of logs to the river in preparation for the spring river drive increasingly costly. To overcome this problem Burrows turned to an alternate method of moving the logs to the mill. He purchased four second hand Phoenix log haulers from the United States. These steam driven tractors, mounted on runners could haul over 20 sleighs of logs at one time and were used to bring the logs directly from the berth to the mill, eliminating the need for a large number of men and teams for hauling and the need for the spring river drive. The reduction in manpower needed in the bush proved to be an especial advantage later on as with the outbreak of war in 1914 a large number of Grandview men left to join the fighting. In 1915 a fire swept over Duck Mountain and Burrows was awarded a contract to harvest the fire-killed trees. The fire,

however, limited future supplies of timber on Duck Mountain, and in fact a large percentage of Burrows' holdings had already been cut over. Burrows purchased and cut logs from several of the old berths on Duck Mountain.²⁰ Trees on these berths too small to be cut in past operations were now of merchantable size. However, by 1918 future timber supplies on Duck Mountain were limited indeed, and Burrows decided to begin closing down his Grandview operation and began transferring employees and machinery to a new mill site at Bowsman, Manitoba.

Concurrent with his Grandview operation Burrows was also carrying out logging operations on his berths in Alberta, northwest of Edmonton. The Imperial Pulp Company, a partnership of Burrows and Sir D.H. McMillan, then serving as Manitoba Lieutenant-Governor, began logging operations on these berths in 1903.²¹ The logs were manufactured at small portable mills built on the berths and a large mill was built at Ernsted in 1912.²² This Company had originally intended to construct a pulp and paper mill but this idea was soon dropped as unfeasible and the Company began to specialize in the manufacture of railway ties for the construction and maintenance of the Canadian Northern Railway lines in Alberta. Burrows frequently obtained tie contracts with the C.N.R., and as ties needed to be replaced every four to seven years the market was steady.²³ In 1911 McMillan left the partnership, and Burrows formed a

new company, The Phoenix Lumber Company to log these Alberta berths. The company was incorporated with a capital stock of \$500,000, with Burrows serving as President.²⁴ This change in companies was a change in name only for neither the type nor the character of the operations altered to any appreciable extent. Connections between this operation and Burrows' Manitoba operations were limited, although there was some movement of employees between the two mills.²⁵

With the winding down of his Grandview operations, Burrows turned to his rich timber berths on Porcupine Mountain. Burrows had acquired these valuable berths, especially berths 992 and 1047, in 1902 and since that year had been intermittantly carrying out small-scale logging operations on them. The logs cut from the berths were manufactured at two small mills at Birch River and Fishtown Spur, two railway sidings five miles apart on the C.N.R. line to The Pas. Burrows, however, chose Bowsman as the location for his large mill. As with Grandview, the site chosen was near both the railway and a river for transporting the logs and lumber in and out of the mill.

The Porcupine Mountains were a densely forested area of the Manitoba Escarpment that had been supporting several logging operations since the late 1890's. The firm of Mutchenbacker Brothers, based in Mafeking had begun logging in the area in 1899, before the railway

had come and the Caverly Lumber Company had been established in 1902.²⁶ Burrows was in fact a latecomer to the area, but the quality of his berths ensured that he would become one of the largest operators in the area. His first large scale operations in the area were not, however, from his berths. In 1918 a fire had burnt across the Mountain and Burrows was awarded the salvage contract. In order to ensure the quality of this timber, logging operations had to be carried out quickly before bark beetle damage made the timber worthless. The majority of this timber was cut in 1918, and was shipped by rail to the Grandview Mill for manufacturing.²⁷

The new mill at Bowsman, a town about 10 miles north of Swan River on the Canadian Northern Line, began operations in 1920. This mill was larger than the Grandview mill; manufacturing about 20,000,000 feet of lumber annually.²⁸ Logs were driven down the Woody River from the berths or transported to the mill by rail from a spur track between Bowsman and Birch River. While Burrows' logging and milling operations in Manitoba were transferred from Grandview to Bowsman he moved the head office of his lumber manufacturing company, the T.A. Burrows Lumber Company, and his retailing venture, the Northern Lumber Company to the Scott Block in Winnipeg.²⁹ Many of the Burrows employees from Grandview moved with the operations to the Bowsman mill, and the workers in the logging camps on the berths were essentially the same kind of

workers as had been employed in the Grandview Mill, local farmers working part-time, and permanent employees. Drifters, moving from camp to camp were not uncommon but do not seem to have been as prevalent in Burrows' operations as in other logging operations, probably because of their moderate size.

The finished lumber from Burrows' Grandview and Bowsman mills found a ready market. In the West Burrows' lumber was sold wholesale to various retail concerns, including his own Northern Lumber Company. These retail outlets took the majority of the lumber Burrows manufactured but there were other important markets as well. Burrows exported a fair amount of lumber to the United States. Burrows felt that the American market in particular was bound to increase "as the available supply of lumber ... in America is rapidly diminishing and the demand increasing all the time",³⁰ the only threat to this market was the possibility of import duties being applied to Canadian lumber by the Americans.³¹ Occasionally, as an advertisement stated, lumber was shipped overseas; "Our Grandview Mills are weeks behind on New York orders, some of which are for export to South Africa."³² As well as the retail and export markets, Burrows also supplied lumber on contract, such as that for the construction of Pool Elevators,³³ and of course his Alberta operation frequently filled the contracts with the C.N.R.

Burrows' lumber retailing interests began to expand about 1912. In this year he purchased the Grandview lumber yard of John Sinnott,³⁴ but he was also beginning to accumulate a number of lumber yards in small rural towns in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The yards were operated under the name of the Northern Lumber Company, and eventually expanded to a chain of thirty yards across the Prairies,³⁵ and proved to be very successful.

I think I have the best line of retail yards in the west, particularly owing to their location in the north country, which is a sure crop producer and being situated close to my mills, therefore they get lumber with a very small freight charge.³⁶

The Company operated as a line yard chain with its head office located in Grandview, under the direction of General Manager, T.A. Sparks, Burrows' right hand man, until 1919 when with the closing of the Grandview mill the head office of this company along with that of the T.A. Burrows Lumber Company was moved to Winnipeg. The Company's yards sold not only lumber, but reflected the growing diversification of the retail lumber business into building supplies. Each yard was encouraged to develop a complete "Building Services Department" which could provide advice on "the furnishing of stock and special plans, ... consultation on all features connected with the erection and equipping of buildings, and expert advice in the selection of materials" was to be provided to all customers.³⁷ The Company retained the services of an architect, and its advertisements often contained

plans of houses that could be built with supplies purchased from Northern Lumber Company yards. The Company was, in the jargon of the day, a "go-ahead" company, stressing the use of new and progressive business techniques, especially in the field of advertising. In 1917 at the annual convention of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association, the Northern Lumber Company along with the Dutton-Wall Lumber Company was chosen as "the most progressive and best advertisers in the West", and Sparks, its general manager, was asked to chair the discussion on advertising at the meeting.³⁸ The Company also held its own annual conventions at which its yard managers were encouraged to adopt new business techniques, and learn about new products. These conventions also provided a social occasion for managers and their wives to talk to others, and, therefore, helped to increase company loyalty and morale.

Throughout his business career Burrows was a member of the major lumber trade association, the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association, and its predecessor, the Western Lumbermen's Association. Indeed, his long involvement in the lumber business meant that he was one of its original members, joining in 1891, the year the Association was established.³⁹ The Western Lumbermen's Association was organized by the sawmill owners at Rat Portage "with the object of getting the retail lumber business on to a half decent commercial basis, which it wasn't at

the time." 40

The first lumbermen who handled lumber in the West were mostly men who hadn't any experience in the lumber business; the storekeeper, who had no experience, would get a little in his backyard. Then there was competition amongst the mills, and credit became easy, and the retail lumber business got into really bad shape.⁴¹

The Association was not particularly effective during this time and indeed the whole of the lumber business during the 1890's was in "bad shape". Over production and a declining market for lumber forced lumbermen, like Burrows, to find other endeavours temporarily (it was at this time he was contracted to build the Dauphin colonization roads), and forced others to merge or go out of business. The lumber manufacturers at Rat Portage merged under the directorship of D.C. Cameron to become the Rat Portage Lumber Company, but two of the mills were closed down. The Association continued however, changing its name to that of the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association. The Association managed to exert a great deal of control over the lumber trade in the West.⁴² Lumber manufacturers were "requested" not to sell lumber to consumers or to retailers who were not members of the Association, presumably under threat of boycott. Members sold lumber at a fixed mark-up, "the 20 per cent mark-up allowed by the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association, ... was calculated to provide a 10 per cent profit on turnover, which could produce a 100 per cent annual return on capital."⁴³ The activities of

the Association were the subject of an investigation by a parliamentary committee in 1907, resulting in the prosecution of the Association.⁴⁴ Burrows was involved, though peripherally in this investigation. Burrows was, at this time, primarily occupied with the production of lumber rather than its retailing, though his own Northern Lumber Company was a member of the Association through its operation of a lumber yard in Dauphin. As a result, the prosecution of the Association impinged very little on Burrows, and in fact, he had been reprimanded by the Association. A complaint had been made about Burrows' activities to the secretary of the Association by Mr. Carment, a retail yard owner in Kamsack, who stated that Burrows had sold a carload of lumber directly to a consumer.

... had Burrows confined himself to selling to the other yard in Kamsack although they are not in the Association, I would have made no complaint, although according to the rules of the Association, I would be justified in doing so, but the offence in this instance was particularly gross.⁴⁵

The Secretary of the Association later wrote back to Carment stating that he had Burrows' company's guarantee that such a transgression would not occur again.⁴⁶ Although Burrows denied to the committee that he, personally, had ever made such a guarantee it seems obvious that the T.A. Burrows Lumber Company was indeed conforming - for the most part - to the rules of the Association.⁴⁷ With the expansion of Burrows' retailing activities

after 1912 his connections with the Association became stronger, and in 1921 T.A. Sparks, the general manager of Burrows' Northern Lumber Company served as President of the Association. In 1927, when Lieutenant-Governor T.A. Burrows was called upon to open the 36th annual convention of the Association, he remarked,

I think this may be said about the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association, that probably it is the most outstanding trade organization of its kind in Canada. I don't know any organization that has the record of The Western Retail Lumbermen's Association ... It is one organization that has kept this business straight.⁴⁸

Besides his lumbering concerns, Burrows was also involved in the exploitation of other Western resources. In 1902 Burrows, along with a group of Winnipeg businessmen including Colin H. Campbell, E.J. Davis, D.R. Dingwall, J.Y. Griffin and Johnson Douglas of Winnipeg and C.C. Van Nottman and John McGillvary of Toronto, formed the Ontario Manitoba and Western Land Company.

This Company [will] ... buy and sell on commission lands and city property, transact loans and insurance business, secure business chances for industrial and merchantile houses, conduct a rental agency, and act as managers of estates for residents and non-residents with equal promptitude and exactness.⁴⁹

The majority of the Company's clients were from Ontario but they also had a large number of local customers "who likewise trust to the judgement of the management in placing their money to secure quick returns in profit."⁵⁰ The company specialized in the sale of railway lands, "A 1 Wheat Lands ... by Quarter, Half or Whole Sections

or in Large Blocks",⁵¹ in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The company could say that it had never had a customer who did not make a profit on his investments "the minimum average of such profit would be 25 per cent to 30 per cent, and the maximum would scarcely be believed if it was stated."⁵² By 1906 the company had handled over 100,000 acres of land.

Burrows also had interests in coal. Along with Colin H. Campbell, and D.R. Dingwall, with whom he was also connected through the land company, he helped to promote Lethbridge Collieries in 1906.⁵³

By 1912 Burrows was a member of the Winnipeg commercial establishment, serving on the boards of several financial companies such as the Winnipeg General Trusts Company, the Annuity Company of Canada, and later the British Crown Mortgage Company and Investors Limited.⁵⁴

Though Burrows was never personally involved in the pulp and paper industry, he was always interested in the potential of the industry. His original intention in the establishment of the Imperial Pulp Company was to develop a pulp and paper industry in the Northwest, a plan which did not come about. Nevertheless, he retained his interest in the industry, and when J.D. McArthur took steps to establish the industry in Manitoba both Burrows and Sifton were interested in the potential of his plan.

Sifton and Burrows were originally consulted by McArthur about his pulp and paper proposal, Sifton as a prospective financial backer and Burrows as both a backer and a potential supplier of pulpwood from his own timber berths.⁵⁵ Both men, though interested, expressed doubts about McArthur's ability to establish such an industry. Burrows was particularly annoyed with McArthur's attempts to amass large areas of alienated land for pulp berths, and felt that McArthur was attempting to control a large portion of the natural resources of the province. McArthur tried to gain the support of the Bracken government for his plan, but Burrows' prophecy that "the Bracken government is not ... foolish enough to recommend to the Ottawa government the giving away, without public competition, any of the Natural Resources of this Country",⁵⁶ proved to be correct. McArthur's attempt to gain American support for the venture, without consulting Sifton resulted in Sifton's withdrawal of support for the venture.⁵⁷ When McArthur's American support did not appear, his next move was to try to get the provincial government to guarantee bonds for the venture. When this was not forthcoming, McArthur was forced to sell out to the Backus interests "which then dominated the power and paper industries of northern Minnesota and Northwestern Ontario."⁵⁸ It was to the Manitoba Pulp and Paper Company, a subsidiary of these interests, established in 1925, that the federal government

granted the pulp berths with which to commence Manitoba's first pulp and paper mill.⁵⁹ This American concern was involved in other lumbering interests in Manitoba and had in fact expressed an interest, at one time, in purchasing Burrows' operations.⁶⁰

Although Burrows had business interests in other fields, lumbering was to remain his major business activity. The lumber business was not, however, without its difficulties. Though the move to Bowsman in 1919 had been necessary to ensure an economical supply of timber for Burrows' operations it was not a successful move financially. It coincided with the post-war depression and the effects of this depression upon Western farmers, Burrows' major customers, was drastic. For example, "The price of wheat [fell] from an average price of \$3.19 3/4 a bushel in December, 1920 to one of \$1.10 3/4 a bushel in August, 1922."⁶¹

During 1919 and 1920 the demand for lumber on the Prairies had been high, and supplies had been inadequate to fill this demand. Consequently in the winter of 1920-21 Burrows and other western lumbermen had carried out large logging operations in the bush.⁶² By 1921, however, the full effects of the depression were being felt in the lumber business as evidenced by the falling collections in the retail trade. Farmers buying on credit were unable to settle their bills because of the poor prices they realized on their harvests; and although Burrows' books showed a substantial volume

of business had been done, the cash from these sales was not forthcoming.⁶³ One customer in particular was tardy in its payments.

I might say that I find the Canadian Northern Railway very slow in making their payments, they owe me \$180,000 which is the full amount of my account against them for the past year. ... it will come in time, but they certainly are slow and they don't want to pay interest.⁶⁴

Burrows experienced a cash shortage at a time when his financial commitments, from the construction of the Bowsman mill, were high. This led to an awkward situation, "My difficulty is that I haven't got enough money to handle a business the size of mine at present, for the reason that I have so much money on the books I can't get my hands on."⁶⁵ Burrows' line of credit at the bank was fully extended and he was worried that the bank, because of the "tight" policy it was following, would refuse him the advances he needed to finance his winter operations. Burrows was also indebted to Sifton, but Sifton seemed willing to accept only the interest payments due on this money, and forego repayment on the principle until Burrows' financial situation improved.⁶⁶ The retail end of Burrows' business was experiencing further troubles in that lumber, produced in 1920 at a high cost was now having to be sold at a loss, "our main difficulty is to sell our present stock of high priced lumber without making a loss, in fact we cannot do so."⁶⁷ In May, 1920, Burrows' retail volume amounted

to \$313,000 while the volume in May, 1921 totalled only \$70,000.⁶⁸

While Burrows' retail company was experiencing difficulties, the production end of the business was looking up. The costs of producing lumber fell drastically.

From the logs I took out of the bush last winter [1921-1922], I can put lumber on the car for [\$] 15.00 per thousand planed and ready for use. My cost two years ago was [\$] 30.50 not counting interest on capital investment or capital on the overhead.... I can't expect my mill to make any money this year but I am going to make a good operating profit on the logs I took out last winter and can continue to do so in the future.⁶⁹

A major factor in the declining cost of production was the fall in the cost of labour. In 1921 Burrows remarked that the price of "unskilled labour has dropped from \$75.00 per month a year ago to \$40.00 to \$45.00 today per month."⁷⁰

To help alleviate his financial problems Burrows toyed with several ideas. One method was to amalgamate his companies. This would,

... reduce my office expenses, and combine my revenue tax. For instance last year I made a loss in the mill end of my business and made a profit in my retail. I have to pay a revenue tax on the one, and have no allowance for loss in the other business.⁷¹

If the companies were amalgamated Burrows planned to issue preferred and common stock and proposed that Sifton take stock for the amount of money Burrows owed him. Another idea was proposed by Harry Sifton, Clifford's son. He had approached Dominion Securities Corporation, a bond house, and proposed that they handle the issuing

of a bond issue for Burrows' companies.

Mr. Andison says there has never been a lumber issue made, but that he thinks that they would handle it. They would not make any public issue but would sell the half million dollars of bonds to a couple of institutions so that the deal could be done quickly and inexpensively.... They are distinctly interested.⁷³

In the short run, however, neither of these solutions proved necessary. Burrows' books for 1923, in spite of his worries, showed a small profit, and he had reduced his indebtedness to the banks substantially. Although the prospects for the next few years were not bright, Burrows' sense of cautious optimism for his business affairs was returning, "I am not generally given to extreme optimism, but I feel that we have struck bottom and that the condition of the farmer generally has increased a good deal during the past year in most districts of this western country."⁷⁴

Burrows was very aware of the fact that the success of his ventures was dependent upon the economic situation of his major customer, the Western farmer. "This is primarily an agricultural country, and if the farmer does not succeed we might as well get out of the lumber business."⁷⁵ The lumber business of the West expanded or contracted with the economic conditions affecting the western agricultural economy, and especially with the waves of immigration. Burrows felt "that when we had people coming into the country we had a great expansion, and that was reflected in the prosperity of the lumber

business." ⁷⁶ Because of the dependence Burrows felt he had upon the farmer, he was consequently sensitive to and aware of the problems faced by the agricultural community, especially in the depression after World War One. Burrows' earlier optimistic statements on the virtues of settlement on the Northern Prairies and their opportunities began to be replaced by a more serious re-examination of the state of the West and of its economy in particular.

The West is peculiarly an Agricultural country, and when the grain crops are good, and the prices good, we have prosperity, or should have prosperity but if the prices of grain are low, even with a good crop, the West has a hard job to pull along, and for this reason with the present prospect of low grain prices in the West I am a little afraid of the future.⁷⁷

Burrows was articulating one of the basic problems of western agriculture. These problems were soon to lead to political action by the farmers in both Federal and provincial politics with the formation of the Progressive party. Burrows, however, saw a solution to the problems of the West only in economic terms, and was not swayed by Progressivism. While Burrows was sympathetic to the plight of the West, Sifton felt no such emotion.

No agricultural population has ever made as much money as the farmers did during the early years of the War, and if they have squandered it it is their own look out. Furthermore I do not recognize the idea that it is the duty of the Government ... to make farms pay for the people who are on them, and the sooner we get over this nonsense, the better.⁷⁸

While Burrows agreed with Sifton's sentiments to some

extent, he looked for more concrete methods of getting the West back onto its feet. His primary goal was to ensure the prosperity of the West in economic terms and he felt that the two best methods of promoting this prosperity was through a change in farming methods and increased immigration. Burrows felt that the agriculture of the West was too one-sided, dominated by the growing of wheat as a single crop and felt that farmers should turn to mixed farming. "The people are commencing to see that 'man does not live by bread alone', and that he must raise something else; cattle and butter and honey, etc., etc.." ⁷⁹ Burrows had always been strongly in favour of immigration. The immigration of the early 1900's had proved very beneficial to the country in general and to the businessman in particular.

That is what made this country prosperous; and the only thing that will maintain that prosperity that we had then is that we get more population. We have a great country; we are ready to receive more population, and our only trouble is that we don't do a large enough volume of business.⁸⁰

The period from 1905 until his death in 1929 was for Burrows a period of consolidation and expansion of his business interests. This consolidation was based upon the timber berths he had acquired during the period from 1899 to 1905 through his connections with Sifton. His passage through the business world was typical of businessmen in the West who had developed early opportunities into substantial business enterprises. His reliance

upon Sifton did diminish although the two did participate in business ventures together during the twenties. Along with many others in the West the twenties were for him a period of reappraisal of the West and its condition. No longer did the West's resources seem limitless nor did businessmen continue to promote development at any cost. Instead through organizations such as the Western Retail Lumbermen's Association they strove to limit competition and to protect the profitability of their existing concerns. Like their counterparts in other areas of Canada they were engaged in what Michael Bliss has described as a "flight from competition."⁸¹

Footnotes

¹Canada, Secretary of State, Annual Report, 1913, Synopsis of Letters Patent, p. 6-7.

²Grandview Exponent, May 29, 1903.

³Grandview Exponent, September 18, 1903.

⁴As discussed in chapter 2 this railway line had had an influence on the election of 1899 and the beginning of its construction had probably been the major factor in Burrows' re-election to the Provincial Legislature.

⁵Regehr, The Canadian Northern Railway, p. 78.

⁶Grandview Exponent, May 29, 1903.

⁷Grandview Exponent, March 27, 1903.

⁸Canada, Department of the Interior, Annual Report, 1904, p. 92.

⁹The first mention found of the mill was in Hansard, 1906-1907. February 11, 1907, p. 2827. It may of course have existed before this season, the winter of 1906-1907, but no earlier mention can be found.

¹⁰For a description of the actual logging and milling operation run by Burrows see the essays of a number of local historians including Ed Dobyn "Swan River Valley Logging and Sawmills," P.A.M., MG9, A 105, which described Burrows' Bowsman operations; Watson Crossley "T.A. Burrows Lumbering Operations at Grandview"; and Cameron McBride "Memories of the T.A. Burrows' Mill". Copies of the two latter reports can be examined at the Manitoba Historic Resources Branch.

¹¹Grandview Exponent, May 19, 1910.

¹²Grandview Exponent, October 12, 1911.

¹³Grandview Exponent, June 7, 1917.

¹⁴Dobyn, "Swan River Valley Logging and Sawmills," p. 8.

¹⁵Grandview Exponent, May 19, 1910.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Grandview Exponent, June 9, 1910. The date of the council meeting where the by-law was passed was, June 2, 1910.

¹⁹Crossley, "Theo. A. Burrows, Lumbering Operations", p. 1.

²⁰PAM, Department of Mines and Natural Resources, Forestry Branch, "Timber Berth License Registers," Set 3, Book 5 - 1915-16 - 1926-27, p. 7, 9, 10, 11.

²¹Department of the Interior. Annual Report, 1904, p. 96. In this year, however, only logging was carried out, a mill was not operated.

²²Department of the Interior, Annual Report, 1913, p. 102.

²³During the 1920's his correspondence with Sifton shows that he got one of these tie contracts almost every year.

²⁴Secretary of State, Annual Report, 1913, Synopsis of Letters Patent, p. 6-7.

²⁵Dobyn, p. 17.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid., p. 3.

²⁸PAM, Ernest A. Koons, "Reminiscences of a District Forester," MG 9, A 12.

²⁹Grandview Exponent, February 27, 1919 and

³⁰PAC, Sifton Papers, vol. 300, T.A. Burrows to Clifford Sifton, Winnipeg, April 22, 1922.

³¹PAC, Sifton Papers, vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, Winnipeg, May 12, 1921.

³²Grandview Exponent, June 21, 1919.

³³Dobyn, p. 13.

³⁴Grandview Exponent, May 16, 1912.

³⁵Prairie Lumberman, November, 1926, p. 9.

³⁶PAC, Sifton Papers, vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, Winnipeg, April 22, 1922.

³⁷Grandview Exponent, February 15, 1917.

³⁸Grandview Exponent, February 14, 1918.

³⁹Prairie Lumberman, November 1426, p. 9.

⁴⁰Prairie Lumberman, February 1927, p. 11.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²In 1907 Parliament appointed a select committee to investigate the price of lumber in Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan to investigate complaints from retail dealers not in the Association.

⁴³Michael Bliss, A Living Profit, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974, p. 49, citing House of Commons, Journals, 1906-07, vol. XLII, Appendix 6, "Proceedings of the select committee appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the Prices Charged for Lumber in the Provinces of Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan," p. 657.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 39.

⁴⁵"Select Committee on Prices Charged for Lumber," p. 730.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 615.

⁴⁷Ibid. "In that same letter Mr. Burrows takes a good deal of pains to say that he is trying to have everybody [dealers in the area] join the association."

⁴⁸Prairie Lumberman, February, 1927, p. 11.

⁴⁹Winnipeg Telegram, September 18, 1906.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³H.J. Morgan, The Canadian Men and Women of the Time, Toronto: William Briggs, 1912, p. 177.

⁵⁴C.W. Parker, (ed.) Who's Who and Why, vol. 6 & 7, 1915-16. Toronto: International Press, 1916, p. 63.

⁵⁵PAC, Sifton Papers, vol. 301, Sifton to Burrows, Toronto, January 24, 1924.

⁵⁶Ibid., vol. 301, Burrows to Sifton, Winnipeg, February 19, 1924.

⁵⁷Ibid., vol. 301, Sifton to Burrows, Toronto, February 22, 1924.

⁵⁸Morton, Manitoba - A History, p. 395.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰PAC, Sifton Papers, vol. 301, Sifton to Burrows, Toronto, January 24, 1924.

⁶¹A.S. Morton, History of Prairie Settlement, Toronto: MacMillan, 1938, p. 171.

⁶²PAC, Sifton Papers, vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, Winnipeg, May 23, 1921.

⁶³Ibid., vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, January 29, 1921.

⁶⁴Ibid., vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, May 12, 1921.

⁶⁵Ibid., vol. 300, Burrows to Harry Sifton, Winnipeg, October 7, 1922.

⁶⁶Ibid., vol. 300, Clifford Sifton to Burrows, January 26, 1921.

⁶⁷Ibid., vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, Winnipeg, May 12, 1921.

⁶⁸Ibid., vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, May 23, 1921.

⁶⁹Ibid., vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, April 22, 1922.

⁷⁰Ibid., vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, May 12, 1921.

⁷¹Ibid., vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, April 22, 1922.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., vol. 300, Harry Sifton to Burrows, October 4, 1922.

⁷⁴Ibid., vol. 301, Burrows to Sifton, December 20, 1924.

⁷⁵Prairie Lumberman, February 1927, p. 12.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷PAC, Sifton Papers, vol. 300, Burrows to Sifton, February 5, 1921.

⁷⁸Ibid., vol. 301, Sifton to Burrows, January 15, 1923.

⁷⁹Prairie Lumberman, February 1927, p. 12.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Michael Bliss, A Living Profit, Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1893-1911, Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974, Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Burrows' interest and involvement in politics did not stop with his defeat in his campaign to retain his seat in the House of Commons in 1908. Although he never again sought elected office for himself, he was a diligent organizer and campaigner for Liberal candidates in both federal and provincial elections. Burrows kept an eye on the state of Liberal fortunes throughout Manitoba, but was interested in the northern constituencies and the ridings of Dauphin and Swan River in particular.

Burrows often wrote to federal Liberals in Ottawa, as he had done with Sifton, offering advice and opinions on Liberal Party fortunes in the West. His letters to Mackenzie King during the twenties show how little his political policies and concerns had altered since the early 1900's. In 1925 he wrote King outlining what he felt to be the major issues with which the West was concerned, these included "the Hudson's Bay Railway; reorganization of the C.N.R., which will give hope for a reduction in freight rates; rigid economy in public expenditures; and a more vigorous immigration policy."¹ Of these, Burrows predictably felt the most important to be those issues concerned with railways.

Burrows' attitude towards the Progressive Party, the most important new political movement of the time, was shaped by his usual political pragmatism and loyalty to the Liberal Party. He had little sympathy with their political aims, but he recognized their popularity in the constituencies he was most interested in: Dauphin and Nelson. When it became clear that the only chance of defeating the Conservative candidates in his constituencies was to avoid a three-cornered fight, he adapted himself to the policy of supporting the Progressive candidate, although it was not something he approved of wholeheartedly. In 1925 he wrote to King that he felt that "the Progressive wave seems to be subsiding in the West and the Liberal Party is gradually getting on its feet again and I think we will possibly have a better chance next year than at the present time."² His doubts about a fall election in 1925 proved well founded as the Liberals went to the country to return with only 101 seats compared to the Conservatives 117 seats. As the Conservatives lacked an absolute majority, however, King decided to remain in power, counting on the support of the Progressive Party.

In the constituencies of Nelson and Dauphin, the two constituencies Burrows had undertaken to organize,³ Progressive candidates were elected. Burrows had "refused the nomination in Dauphin to avoid a three corner fight and helped to get the Liberals to support the Progressive

[candidate]."⁴ About the result in Nelson, Burrows wrote, "My largest lumbering operations are in the County of Nelson and I used my influence to the fullest extent to help Bird [the Progressive candidate] so that in neither one of the Counties do you have an opposition member ... I think the Conservative candidate would have won it had it not been for my own personal efforts and the solid vote of my employees for the Progressive candidate."⁵ By 1926, however, Burrows felt that the need to cooperate with the Progressives was drawing to an end and wrote to King "If you have to go to the country within the year, and have control of the election machinery I think we can elect a Liberal in Nelson."⁶

There was indeed another General election within the year and again in these northern constituencies the Liberals outwardly supported the Progressive candidates, to avoid three-cornered fights which would have rebounded to the benefit of the Conservative Party. This stand was not a popular one with the local Liberal Association. Burrows later wrote to King that, "the Liberals tried hard to arrange for cooperation with the Progressives, but the Progressives would not agree to cooperate. This caused very hard feelings with the Liberal Party who wanted to nominate a Liberal candidate at once."⁷ Burrows managed to persuade the Liberals not to make a nomination, but it was a situation that he found "rather humiliating for the Liberals" but recognized that it

was "in the general interests of the Party."⁸

After the success of the Liberals at the polls in 1926, Burrows wrote to King with advice on the cabinet potential of Manitoba's Liberal members. He did not seem to find them a particularly deserving group, but felt that "one of the things the Liberal Party needs in Manitoba is a cabinet minister who will look after the political interests of the party here."⁹

Burrows' political activities during this period show that his loyalty belonged to the party, and he was a strong party man that had served his party well. It was the recognition of this and past service that led to his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba.

In about April 1926, Manitoba Liberals began to discuss possible successors to Sir J.A.M. Aikens, who had been appointed as Manitoba's lieutenant-governor by the Union government led by Sir Robert Borden in 1920. Several names were mentioned, Senator Robert Watson, T.C. Norris, Edward Martin, and T.A. Burrows. Watson was the early favourite. The Winnipeg Liberals tried to work out a deal whereby Watson would resign his senate seat to become lieutenant-governor and T.C. Norris, the former premier of Manitoba, would be appointed to his senate position. Watson, however, was not interested in this proposition, and the two front runners became Burrows and Norris. In support of his claim, Burrows had the unconditional help of his old friend Clifford

Sifton. Sifton wrote to J.W. Dafoe,

With regard to the Lieutenant-Governorship of Manitoba, I do not think that this is a case where there is any necessity of being mealy mouthed. There is simply no comparison between Burrows and any of the others who are mentioned, and I think his friends should put their shoulders to the wheel and get him appointed.¹⁰

These friends included Sifton himself, Dafoe, Motherwell and Bob Rogers, former Conservative Cabinet Minister in Borden's government, "Bob Rogers told Motherwell that B. [Burrows] was the obvious man for the job and ... Motherwell agreed with him."¹¹

M.S. Donnelly has written of the lieutenant-governorship that:

The main qualifications for office have been a major contribution to provincial society, strong ties with the party in power in Ottawa at the time of the appointment, and a private income sufficient to maintain a high standard of hospitality at Government House.¹²

It was indeed, these qualifications that tipped the balance in Burrows' favour over his closest rival, T.C. Norris. Dafoe felt that Norris was being considered because of a need to provide for him, "Norris is about through politically and financially", and his appointment would have meant "the virtual closing out of the governorship as a social institution as Norris has no means of his own."¹³ The Winnipeg Liberals, referred to by Dafoe as, "a bunch of local manufacturers" felt that Norris could run the governorship "on the cheap" by maintaining Government House but living in a hotel "and

do a certain amount of official entertaining in the Parliament Buildings." ¹⁴ But it was not only Norris' lack of personal wealth that told against him. His bachelorhood was also a drawback, and a lack of "female relatives" to act as hostess and chatelaine at Government House was felt to be a disadvantage, while Burrows had both a wife and a daughter to help fulfill these duties. ¹⁵ In September 1926, Sifton wrote to Dafoe asking him to write to King and Robert Forke (the cabinet minister responsible for the distribution of western patronage) and "intimate to them that in your judgement Mr. Burrows is the only suitable candidate with claims that make it imperative that the government should recognize him." ¹⁶

The machinations of Sifton and Burrows' other political friends had proven successful, and on October 24, 1926 Theodore Arthur Burrows was sworn in as Manitoba's new lieutenant-governor.

As lieutenant-governor Burrows shared many characteristics with former lieutenant-governors, M.S. Donnelly has remarked that "until recently there was a distinct tendency to favour successful pioneers for the office." ¹⁷ These pioneers were, for the most part, businessmen who had come to the West and made their fortune there, men such as D.H. McMillan, D.C. Cameron, and J.D. McGregor.

Burrows' tenure as Lieutenant-Governor was politically uneventful. This is not surprising, as by the time Burrows was appointed to the position it was essentially

a ceremonial post, and had been shorn of its former political significance.¹⁸ Since Burrows' responsibilities were almost entirely social there is no reason to assume that his relations with Premier Bracken were anything but cordial.

Burrows' appointment catapulted him and his family into social prominence, and he proved to be equal to the rigorous social demands: "as lieutenant-governor he was a great social success one of his assets being 'a magnificent baritone voice' in which he 'sang the old songs to the delight of everybody."¹⁹ Visitors at Government House during his tenure included Sir Charles Grenfell, the Arctic explorer and Stanley Baldwin.²⁰

Burrows acknowledged Sifton's help as both a political and personal friend when he left the first entry in the guest book at Government House empty for Sifton to sign on his first visit. There was another member of the Sifton family also involved in Burrows' governorship, Major J.W. Sifton, Burrows' nephew served as his first aide-de-camp. Burrows' term was, however, cut short, when in January 1929, after an operation for appendicitis, Burrows' unexpectedly died of an attack of peritonitis.

In many ways T.A. Burrows was a representative member of the Winnipeg business community. In his personal background, his loyalty to the West, his business career, his political involvement, and his social activities Burrows shows distinct similarities to many other members

of this group. This study has sought to discuss Burrows' career in politics and business in the hope that conclusions can be drawn about the nature of Manitoba business and politics. While Burrows' career does of course have its own idiosyncracies it also serves to illustrate several general trends.

The relationship between the government and business in Canada is a difficult one to uncover, but few would disagree that it has been a close one. This relationship was particularly important on the developing frontier where the primary goal has been to push back those frontiers. In these areas development of resources and the construction of infrastructure to carry these resources out to market became the preoccupation of both government and business. In Manitoba and the West the ownership of resources such as land, minerals, and timber by the federal government insured strong ties between businessmen and the federal government. When the Federal Government seemed to be denying the aspiration of those at the frontier the provincial government was more than anxious to step in. This can be seen in the attempts of the provincial government to promote railway construction when the Federal Government refused to dissolve the monopoly clause of the C.P.R.

The involvement of businessmen in politics ensured that a policy of development, and preferably rapid development of Manitoba's resources was followed, at least

until the period of the First World War. While the relationship between politicians and businessmen was not without its conflicts the primary goal of both, the material development of the country, ensured that for the most part it was a genial one.

Since timber resources of the West were controlled by the Federal Department of the Interior, it is not surprising that Burrows strove to maintain close connections with this Department. The fact that its minister until 1905 was Burrows' brother-in-law of course gave Burrows a decided advantage in his dealings with it. This close connection led to corruption, or at least the appearance of it.

To define corruption is a difficult thing to do, especially when one is looking back to a period when the use of influence was a common and accepted practice, and the notion of "conflict of interest" was at best ill-defined. The failure, for the most part, of the scandal campaign carried out by the Conservatives prior to and during the 1908 federal election indicates that the public was either willing to accept it, or thought the Conservatives no purer than the Liberals.

... voters were more interested in the tangible rewards of politics, from tariff favors to public works, than they were in the morality of electoral politics and petty speculation by the governing party.²¹

As long as politicians could keep the voters happy they did not have to be overly concerned about their activities

in their own interests.

Sifton and Burrows both shared an overriding interest in the economic development of the country. Hall has written "for Sifton, politics and power were means to the attainment of greater purposes of development and progress." Sifton, of course, had his own policies of development and used his office as Minister of the Interior to promote policies of railway construction, immigration, and the development of resources. His methods, however, included the use of influence and corruption. D.J. Hall states,

When does using influence or inside knowledge for personal benefit become corruption? It is a question difficult to answer except that most people believed that Sifton did so to a degree that was corrupt. He also tolerated and used corruption both in his administration and politics.... There can be little doubt that Sifton did exceed the acceptable standards of the day.²²

However, unacceptable as his methods may have been his electorate never rejected him, and Burrows lost his seat only when he could no longer plausibly claim to be the best representative Dauphin had to encourage in future development. Thus in Burrows' case, his political career illustrates a degree of public acceptance of corruption. Although allegations of corruption had been made during his election campaigns of 1899 and 1903 they had little effect. In fact in 1899 Burrows was returned to power with an overwhelming majority because he could help provide the voters with what they

wanted - railways. In 1908, however, Burrows was defeated in a campaign that emphasized charges of corruption because the nature of his riding has changed, it was now settled and well provided with railways, his constituents no longer felt they needed his influence. For the first time they were unwilling to tolerate his personal corruption.

A good deal of emphasis has been placed on Burrows' political career and its relationship to his business interests. However, his business activities are worthy of study in and of themselves. Burrows arrived in the West in the 1870's and soon exhibited a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Impressed by the potential of the province's natural resources, he quickly established himself as an innovative and successful businessman. In his early career he resembles the kind of businessman Alan Artibise describes in his Winnipeg - A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1913, aggressive, versatile, optimistic boosters who generally matched their pre-eminence in business with leadership roles in politics and society. With the development of the province and the settling of its frontier areas, these men, like Burrows, came face to face with the finite nature of its resources. At this point they dropped their faith in unrestrained competition, at least in practice, and began to resemble the businessmen of Michael Bliss, who despite their protestations to the contrary were engaged in a "flight

from competition". Burrows' career in business offers an excellent example of this process.

Footnotes

¹PAC, Mackenzie King Papers, c. 2274, vol. 128, p. 98564-8, T.A. Burrows to Mackenzie King, August 14, 1925.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., c. 2274, vol. 128, p. 95869-71, Burrows to King, November 9, 1925.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., c. 2286, vol. 149, p. 109497-9, Burrows to King, September 14, 1926.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., c. 2286, vol. 149, p. 109500-1, Burrows to King, September 22, 1926.

¹⁰UM, John W. Dafoe Papers, Box 12, Fd. 6, Clifford Sifton to J.W. Dafoe, June 4, 1926.

¹¹Ibid., Box 4, Fd. 5, J.W. Dafoe to Clifford Sifton, June 1, 1926.

¹²Donnelly, The Government of Manitoba, p. 115.

¹³UM, J.W. Dafoe Papers, Box 4, Fd. 5, Dafoe to Sifton, June 1, 1926.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid., Box 12, Fd. 6, Copy of letter from Clifford Sifton to Mackenzie King, June 4, 1926.

¹⁶Ibid., Box 12, Fd. 6, Sifton to Dafoe, September 27, 1926.

¹⁷Donnelly, The Government of Manitoba, p. 115.

¹⁸The last Lieutenant-Governor to have played an active role in the political process in Manitoba was D.C. Cameron. Cameron's activities at the time of the Parliament Buildings' scandal appear to have played an important part in the demise of the Roblin Government. (Morton, Manitoba - A History, p. 342)

¹⁹Ibid., quoting the Winnipeg Free Press, January 19, 1929.

²⁰Personal Interview with Mrs. J. Lightcap.

²¹Brown, "The Politics of Billingsgate," p. 170.

²²D.J. Hall, "The Political Career of Clifford Sifton, 1896-1905." Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1974, p. 915.

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