

# SCRAP BOOK



*Dartmouth*  
*Smith*  
**PASTE**

# Young Man Of Vision, Courage Was Province's First Premier

When the Province of Saskatchewan was created in 1905, the day following the actual ceremony which took place at Regina, Walter Scott, then 38 years of age, was invited to form the first government of the province, on Sept. 5.

Mr. Scott, at the age of 33, had been elected as member of the federal parliament for West Assiniboia, an area stretching from the boundary of Manitoba and the North-West Territories to Medicine Hat on the west. From the first day that he entered the House of Commons at Ottawa Mr. Scott had fought strenuously for the separation of what is now Saskatchewan from the North-West Territories. He found a sympathetic ally in Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and it probably was a logical choice when the newly created Lieutenant-Governor invited Mr. Scott to form the first administration.

It was a herculean task which the young Premier faced on forming his cabinet, of which he was Premier, President of the Council, Commissioner of Public Works and Railway Commissioner. J. H. Lamont, who in 1907 was appointed to the King's Bench Court, was his attorney general; J. A. Calder was provincial treasurer and Commissioner of Education, and W. R. Motherwell, Commissioner of Agriculture and Provincial Secretary.

## GREAT OPPORTUNITY

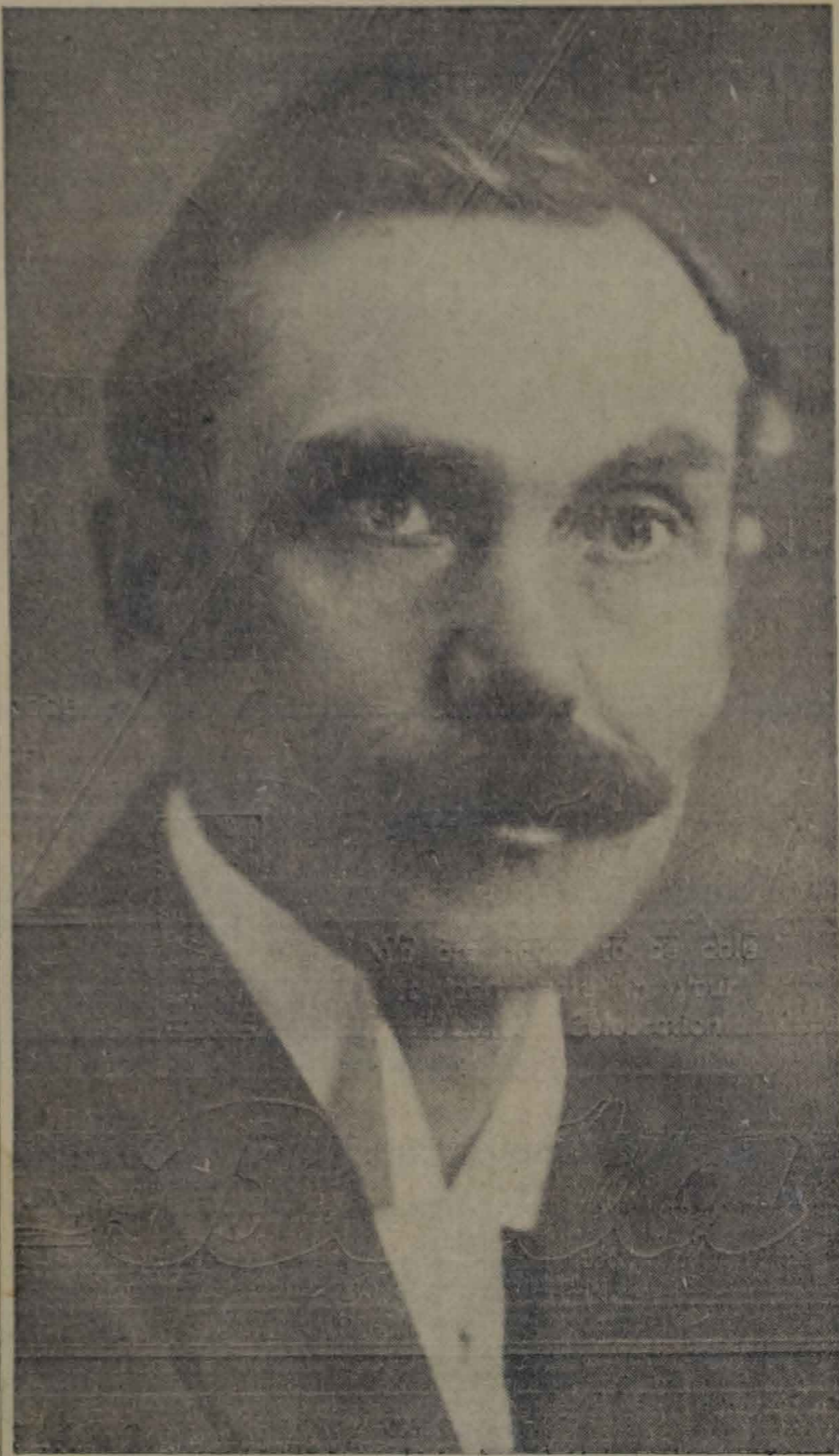
Anyone lacking the vision and the determination of Walter Scott might well have approached the task of creating the institutions of government, the necessary statutory law, founding an educational system; providing court houses and jails, a Land Titles system and Land Titles Offices, with fear and trepidation. Not so with Mr. Scott. He threw himself into the task with the vigor and the enthusiasm of youth confronted with a magnificent opportunity.

One of the first hurdles he had to face was to submit his administration to the electors, and the first election was held December 1905. His administration was accepted by the people at the polls with a substantial majority in the 25-member Legislature. In the election Mr. Scott's Liberal cabinet was confronted by Frederick Haultain, later knighted, who had been Premier of the North-West Territories Council.

The First Legislature of Saskatchewan opened March 29, 1906, and sat until May 26 of that year. Mr. Scott, as Premier, launched a legislative program to provide a sound foundation for the young and vigorous province, the creation of which had already resulted in a population growth and a demand for the essential services of government.

## FIRST CONSIDERATION

Provision of legislative buildings commodious and attractive was one of the first considerations of the new government. A site on what was then farm lands south of the city was obtained and with plans for an artificial lake the handsome Tyndall stone legisla-



HON. WALTER SCOTT

tive building began to take shape. Almost simultaneously, the governments in Manitoba and Alberta started to build their legislative buildings. When completed, those in Saskatchewan represented a capital outlay of under \$4 million, several million less than either of the other two Western provinces.

Nestling today in a well-treed and on the spacious acres of lawns and flower beds, the white stone Saskatchewan building, topped by a towering dome at the central portion, is considered to be the most beautiful and imposing provincial capital in all Canada.

The creation of the necessary institutions brought the imagination of Mr. Scott into full play. He conceived the University of Saskatchewan, and by 1912 the first buildings had been built, and in that year it was opened. Due to the insistence of Mr. Motherwell as Commissioner of Agriculture, the College of Agriculture of the University was given degree-conferring authority, the first Uni-

versity in Canada to possess such powers.

Another problem of great magnitude and requiring diplomacy as well as statesmanship, was that of grain marketing, and as the result of a Royal Commission of investigation, appointed by the Scott Government, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company was formed. It was a farmer-owned co-operative rather than a government-owned system as was adopted in other Western Provinces. This became the greatest grain marketing co-operative in the world and was the foundation of the Saskatchewan Wheat Growers' Association and the present Wheat Pool co-operative system.

Another problem that faced the new government was that of providing telephone communication on a more extensive scale than was being provided by the Bell Telephone Company. The Scott Government bought the Bell system and founded the Saskatchewan Government Telephone sys-

tem. Here again Mr. Scott differed in his approach to this problem from that in other provinces. A network of long distance lines was government-owned, the rural service was left to the farmers to provide through co-operative telephone companies and the phone systems in the cities and larger centres was assumed as a responsibility of the government system. The success which has met this system is testimony to the far-sightedness and the readiness to experiment in untried fields that marked Mr. Scott's public life.

Not all this was accomplished in the first few years of the Scott administration, but other progress just as important and as necessary was made. The education system was founded and the people assisted and encouraged to

provide the school buildings made necessary to meet the great growth in population.

The setting up of a province required that a Land Titles System must be founded and the necessary Land Titles Offices set up to provide for the issue of titles for property. This entailed, as did the construction of the university and the court houses, a considerable financial outlay, but confident that Saskatchewan would become a great and wealthy area the financial outlay was not permitted to retard provision of these facilities.

## HIGHWAYS NEEDED

The survey of the province and the creation of municipalities and local improvement districts presented the government at Regina with the responsibility of providing a highway system connecting the main centres of population, while the municipalities, and local improvement districts were given financial aid in providing the secondary and main market roads. This, too, provided a heavy financial burden, for communication by vehicles or by horseback over rough prairie trails had been the only means and the demand was

insistent that a province must do much better than in the past.

While presenting this picture of what confronted the first government of Saskatchewan and the legislature for many years thereafter, a glimpse of the personality who was the motivating force behind the great development is desirable.

Walter Scott was born of Scotch-Canadian parents in Middlesex County, Ontario, and lived on the family farm until he was 17 years of age. The call of the West caught him as it did thousands of other young men of that day, and he came West. The first job he secured was driving a tradesman's cart at Portage la Prairie, but five months later saw him an apprentice printer in the employ of the Manitoba Liberal, published by J. C. Atkinson.

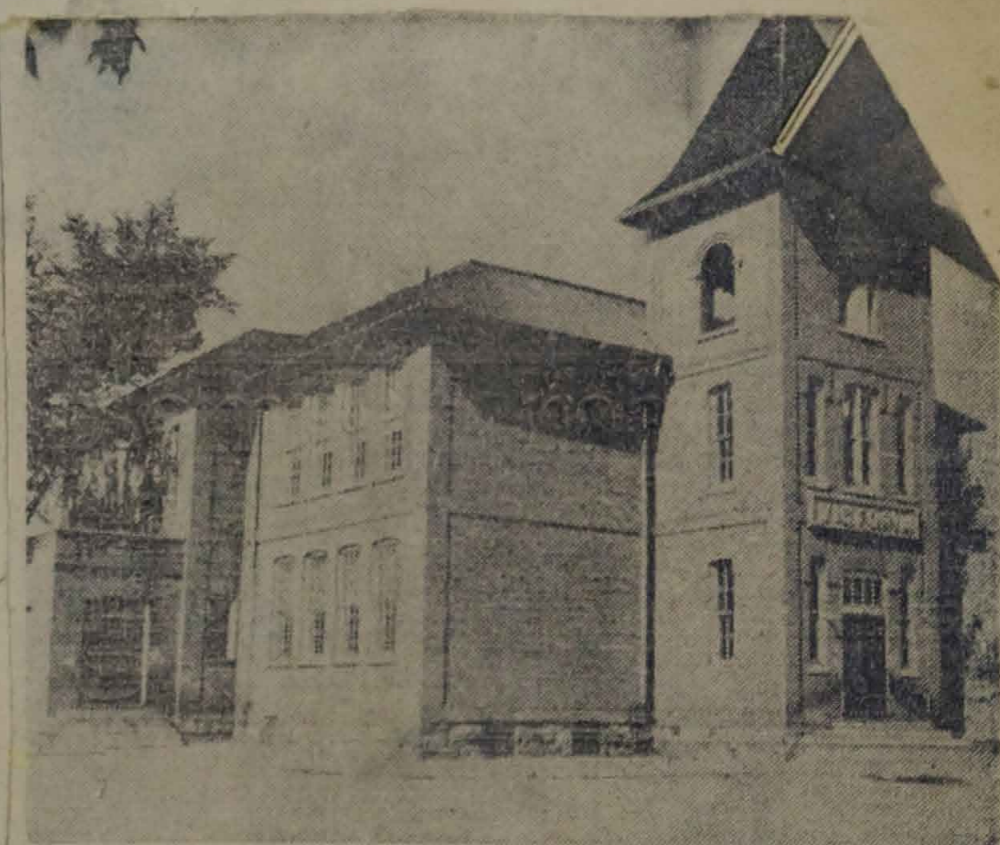
By 1890 he had left Portage la Prairie and arrived in Regina, where he became mechanical foreman of the Regina Journal. By 1892 he had formed a partnership with the late J. K. McInnes and they bought the Regina Standard. **BUYS MOOSE JAW TIMES**

Two years later Mr. Scott disposed of his interest in the Journal to Mr. McInnes and in 1894 he purchased the Moose Jaw Times at a sheriff's sale and conducted and edited it personally for a year. In 1895 he purchased the Regina Leader from Nicholas Flood Davin, and shortly afterwards he formed the Leader-Times Company, occupying the position of president of the company.

He continued the Leader-Times Company until 1905, when he was invited to form the first govern-

ment. He withdrew from active participation in the Leader company and W. F. Kerr assumed the position of managing editor, and Thomas Miller became the editor and manager of the Moose Jaw Times. Mr. Scott disposed of the

Leader because of a printing contract which that company held with the government, but he retained control of The Times and was president of the Times Company Limited until his death in 1938.



## FIRST SCHOOL

Victoria School, Moose Jaw, still in use, was the first permanent school built in Moose Jaw. Here the first school district in

the entire North-West Territories was formed, in 1884, just two years after the first settlers arrived to "squat" on the unbroken prairie land.

# Battell Brothers Plowed First Furrows In Area

No more interesting story of pioneer spirit, endurance and foresight can be told than that of the Battell brothers who were among the first to settle in the district where Moose Jaw was built. Tales of a Methodist missionary, Rev. Egerton Birson Young, about the vastness and possibilities of the prairies, where he had spent eight years, so intrigued the sons of Henry Battell, living at Cobourg, Ontario, that a desire was formed to see this new land and to settle where opportunities for young men were said to be great.

Accordingly, in the spring of 1881, Henry Battell, the oldest of the Battell brothers, with Frank Callandar (cousin of Mrs. J. E. Battell), came out to the promised land to select a suitable spot for the rest of the brothers to settle on. After an arduous journey, they arrived at Winnipeg and there met Major Webb, of Brighton, with whom the brothers had served in the volunteer forces.

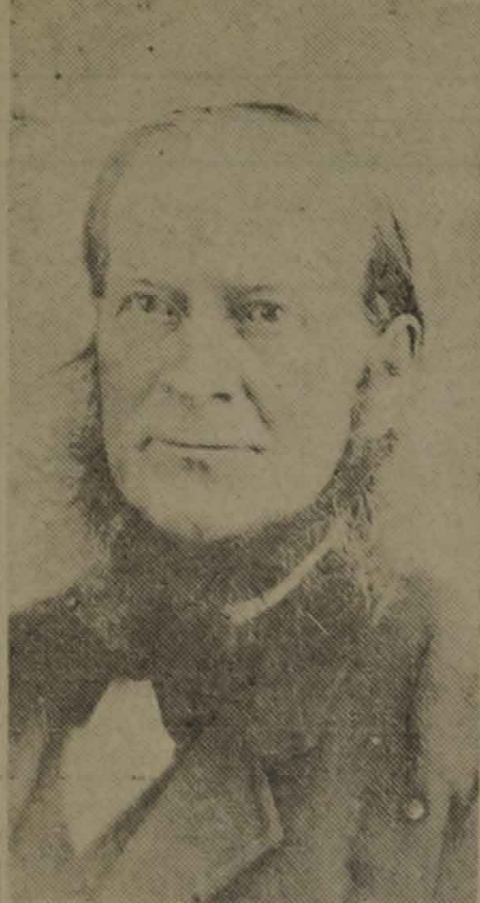
On learning their purpose, Major Webb invited the young men to join the survey party running out lines west from Brandon. This, he felt, would give the newcomers a chance to look over the land, at the same time making good money. This they did and spent the summer lining out townships, eventually coming to what was then known as "Moose Jaw Crossing".

The two were greatly impressed with possibilities of the adjacent land, not only as a railway centre, but as the pivot of a great agricultural district. They also saw the possibilities for ranching and dairying in the Dirt Hills.

## GLOWING ACCOUNTS

The two explorers arrived home for Christmas and gave glowing accounts of the West, particularly of Moose Jaw. Then followed many long talks and discussions which finally ended in the decision to start anew in the new land. Preparations were begun without delay for an early start in the spring, for if the journey were to be a success they felt that they must be fully equipped.

In the last week of March, 1882, their outfits being complete, they shipped for the west. With them were three carloads of oxen, cows, seed grain, seed potatoes, with wagons, plows, harrows, garden tools and many other implements. This foresight on the part of the brothers was the means of planting them firmly on the ground where they eventually settled and which is now the centre of the city of Moose Jaw. In the party were



HENRY BATTELL

Henry C. Battell, Joe Battell, Charles E. Battell, W. J. Battell, three brothers-in-law, John Shields, George Keys and G. W. Potter. It took fifteen days to reach Brandon because many of the railroads were blocked with snow. At that time Brandon was a tent town. The rest of the journey had to be made in wagons drawn by oxen. The journey of 250 miles was made eventually. In order to cross streams one wagon box was caulked and used as a ferry to float the goods. They travelled steadily, resting on Sundays, when a short service was held in observance of the day.

On the 24th of May, 1882, they arrived at their destination—Moose Jaw Crossing—and were so pleased with what they found that they immediately selected half sections and in short order had begun to plow the first furrows turned in the district.

It was then necessary to hold the land until it was surveyed. This was done at times by plowing a certain acreage or, in the instance of the first settlers, by piling poles on the land to show it had been taken. When the Battell brothers arrived the only white settlers were James H. Ross, later Senator Ross; Fred Ross, his brother; W. Burton and Thomas Healey.

Two others living on Section 32, directly west of what is now Main

Street, were not recognized by the government as actual settlers since they were merely holding the land for a railroad engineer. These two men lived in a tent placed inside a square of logs, spending in that rude habitat the winters of 1881 and 1882. This log hut became the first Post Office. Anyone who called at Fort Qu'Appelle and was coming west became a mail carrier and delivered letters addressed to Moose Jaw Crossing via Qu'Appelle.

Mr. Whitmore was appointed by the government as the first postmaster in 1883. The first store in Moose Jaw was established by Messrs. Folger and William Haldiday in the early fall of 1882. The first station and the first section house were also constructed that fall.

Mr. Joe Battell was the first to butcher beef in the district and sold it to the C.P.R. boarding house, run by "Fatty" Thompson. The richness of the buffalo grass was evident in the fact that a six-month-old calf, killed by Mr. Battell, weighed 300 pounds, dressed. A four-year-old steer, fed nothing but grass, dressed at 1,000 pounds. Hides sold for about \$2 and tallow was sold to the Indians.

## PRODUCED FIVE FOR ONE

Because they had brought with them plows and other tillage implements the Battell brothers were the first to plow the land and to grow a crop in the Moose Jaw district. Sown on breaking, potatoes produced five bags for every bag sown. The first crop of oats sown by the brothers was thrown on the ground and then broken in by the plow two or three inches deep.

The first steam threshing outfit was brought into the district in 1883 and was the source of a great deal of interest throughout the countryside. F. W. Green was the "Big Chief" of the engine and "Judd" Battell looked after the separator.

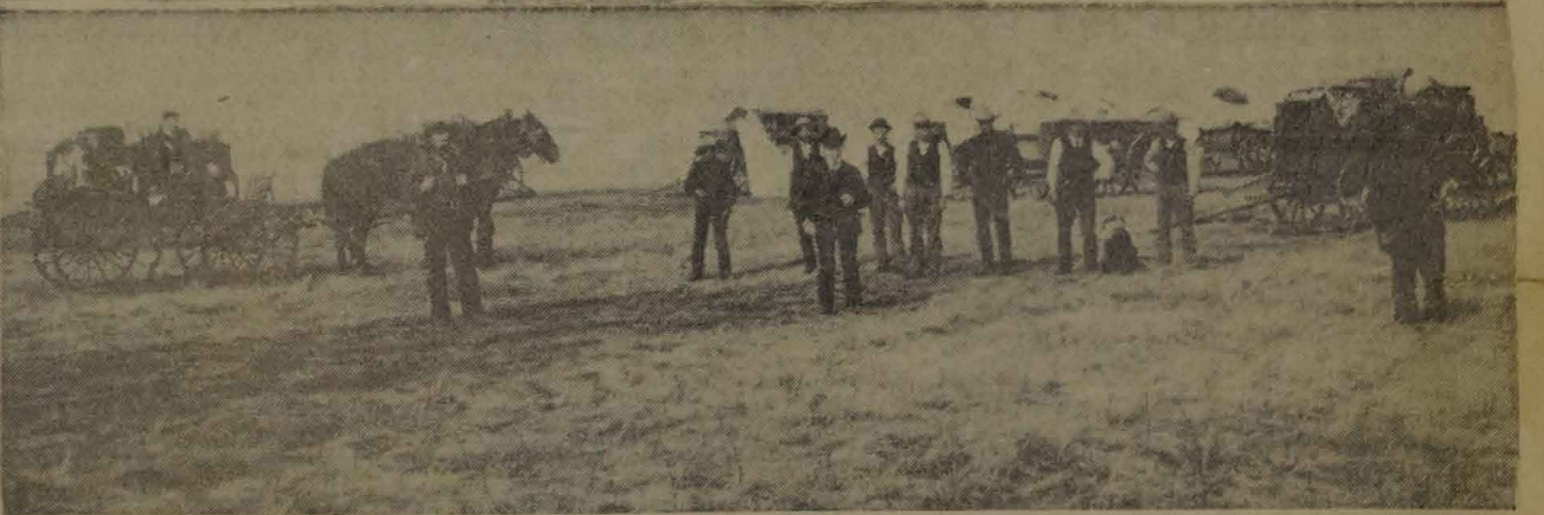
Joe Battell, who always took an active part in the public life of the

community, was the first president of the Government Creamery which succeeded the provisional board. This latter consisted of Thomas Baker, who kept a hardware, grain and grocery store; Hugh MacDougall, lumber merchant; Sam Rathwell; Benjamin Smith; F. W. Green; William Watson, and J. E. Battell. When it was succeeded by the Government Creamery J. H. Grayson acted as secretary-treasurer and the former members were on the board. The organization continued for eight or ten years.

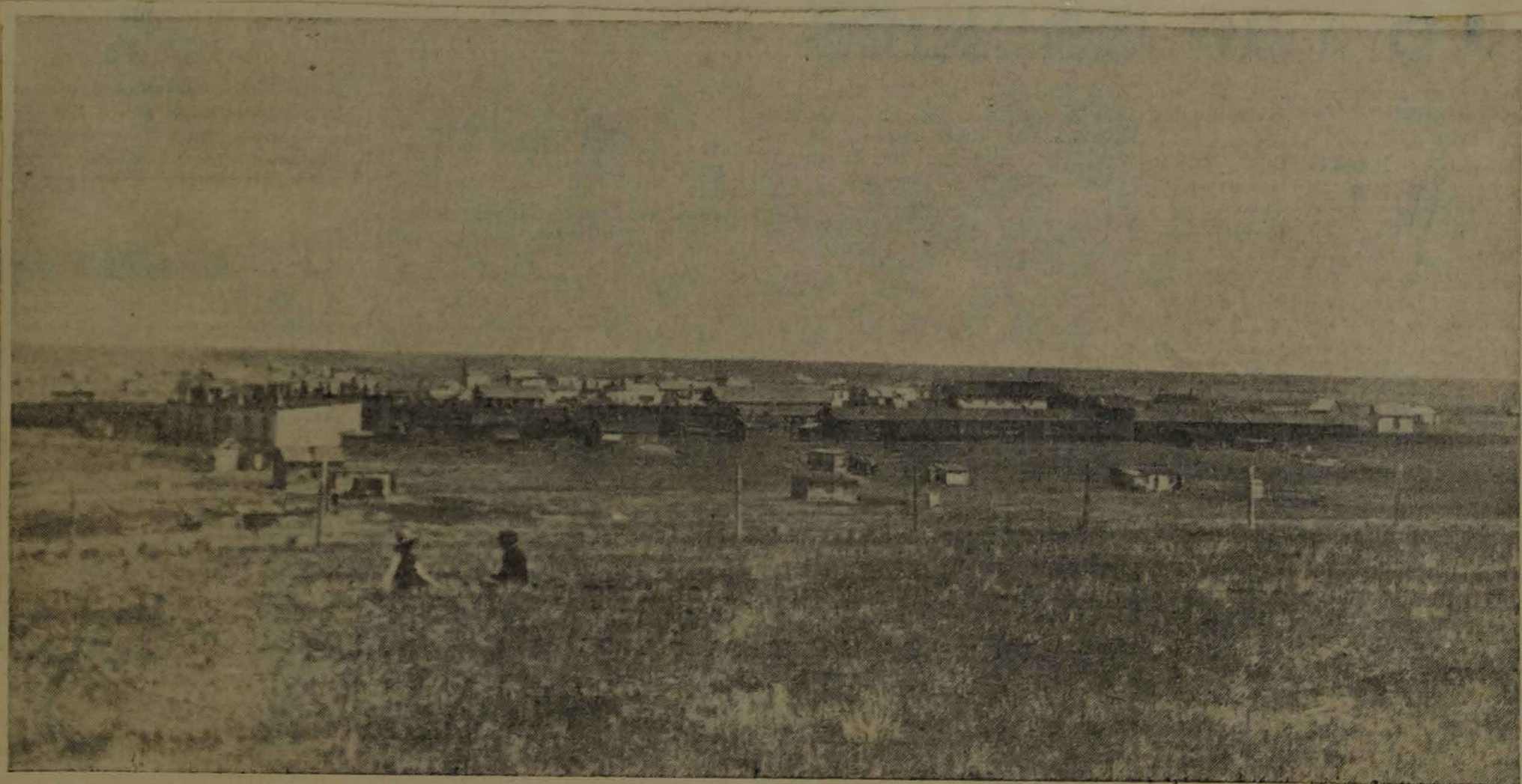
## FIRST WHITE WOMAN

Among those who quickly followed the Battell brothers to the district were Chester Card and his family. Mrs. Card was the first white woman to settle here and they were accompanied by their sons, William, Harry, Frank and Charles. When it was known that the party was expected to come to the district a "bee" was organized and by the time they arrived their crops had been sown on the virgin prairie. The next white woman to come along was Miss Ross, daughter of David Ross and a sister of George Ross, of the Pioneer district.

J. E. Battell was one of the original purchasers of the Exhibition Grounds, which he and his fellow purchasers later turned over to the city for the same price paid for it. He was a member of the Council in 1889 and 1890 and was on the School Board in 1899 when the Victoria School, an eight-roomed school, was the only one in the town. Always interested in sports, he and his brothers could be found where some healthy sport was in progress.



STAGE MEETS BATTLEFORD-BOUND FREIGHTERS ON OLD SASK. TRAIL



PANORAMIC VIEW OF MOOSE JAW IN 1889