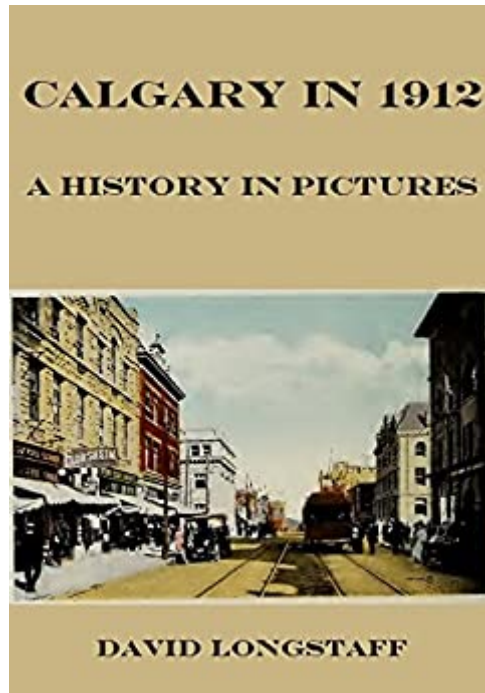


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Calgary In 1912: A History In Pictures



Synopsis

“Calgary in 1912: A History in Pictures” contains old images of landmarks in the city of Calgary, Alberta around 1912. At the time Calgary was still a relatively small town. Today Calgary is the third most populous municipality in Canada, with a population of about 1.1 million. It has Canada’s fifth most populous greater urban area, behind Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and Ottawa-Gatineau. It is the biggest city in the province of Alberta, edging out slightly less populous provincial capital of Edmonton. In the 1970s Calgary enjoyed an economic boom, thanks to the Arab Oil Embargo that drove up oil prices and encouraged the United States and Canada to turn to the extensive, but expensive-to-exploit, oil reserves of western Canada. The economic good times fizzled out with lower oil prices in the 1980s, but oil-based wealth grew again as prices rose in the 2000s. The latest slump in oil prices has adversely affected Calgary and Alberta, but the city is surviving. Calgary’s traditional economic mainstay wasn’t oil or gas. It was agriculture, especially cattle ranching. The city’s role as a major hub for the Canada Pacific Railway (CPR) made it the go-to destination for farmers and cattle ranchers from the surrounding countryside to sell their produce. Businessmen like Calgary’s Patrick Burns made their fortunes packing meat in Calgary and other western towns for shipment to the markets in the east. What is now Calgary was frequented for thousands of years by various First Nations groups. The modern city, however, was founded in the 1870s as a post of the North-West Mounted Police (the predecessor of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or RCMP, also known as the Mounties) who were trying to stop illegal activity in what was then a lawless frontier region in the North West Territory. In 1875 Mounties built a base at the confluence of the Bow and Elbow rivers called the Elbow, Bow Fort or Fort Brisebois. In 1876 the name was changed to Fort Calgary, after a place on the Isle of Mull in Scotland. The fort gave its name to the settlement that grew up around it. The arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 1880s made it easier and faster for settlers to come to the Calgary area, and the town’s population began to grow. Cattle ranchers obtained cheap land around the city and Calgary became a major meatpacking and meat export hub. In 1912 World War I hadn’t begun yet. Alberta had only become a province about 7 years earlier, in 1905. At the time English-speaking Canadian still identified more strongly with the British Empire than they did with Canada. Great Britain was still responsible for Canada’s foreign affairs and defence, although the Canadian parliament had control over domestic policy. It was after World War I that Canada began to assert complete independence in foreign affairs and defence.

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