

ARCHIVIST'S CORNER

GLEANINGS FROM THE EDMONTON BULLETIN

by Mike Kostek, Archivist, EPS Archives and Museum

Founded in 1880, the *Bulletin* was the Edmonton settlement's first newspaper. Its fiery editor, Frank Oliver, brought the first printing press to Edmonton.

Frank Oliver, who was first named Frank Bowsfield but who took his mother's maiden name after a heated dispute with his father,

published the *Edmonton Bulletin* until 1923.

Oliver was an elected member of The NWT Council from 1883 to 1885 and a member of the Northwest Territorial Assembly from 1885 to 1894. As a member of the House of Commons from 1896 to 1917, he held two cabinet portfolios – Minister of the Interior and

Superintendent of Indian Affairs.

Frank Oliver's colorful news reports in the *Edmonton Bulletin* often reflected his critical analysis of the government and its bureaucracy. A sampling of his early news items illustrates his diverse interest in matters relating to public education.

October 29, 1881

Tenders will be received by the Edmonton School Trustees the 2nd of October for the erection of a frame school 24' x 30'.

January 14, 1882

The public school has been running now nearly two weeks, with an attendance of from 25 to 32, of which only three are girls. The building has been quite comfortable so far, although it is not banked, and the children are making fair progress. The scarcity of school books is a slight drawback at present, as also that of white chalk for blackboard use, but these wants will be supplied in a short time.

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January 21, 1882

The collection of subscriptions towards the school building fund is making good progress. There is still a balance due on the school, exclusive of the mortgage, of \$26, and an unpaid balance on the list yet of \$29, all of which it is confidently expected will be paid. Besides what is due on the building there is \$15 to pay for the stove pipes and the putting of them up, besides \$10 rent for the use of the stove during the winter. The wood is to be supplied voluntarily by parties sending their children to school, and others who are generously inclined.

June 28, 1886

A meeting of the school board was held on Tuesday evening. The treasurer reported on \$200 of taxes not yet paid up - the matter of the erection of the proposed school district of South Edmonton on Tuesday resulted in a vote of 13 for and 16 against the district. A full vote was polled and a good deal of interest was manifested on both sides.

The *Edmonton Bulletin* was published from 1880 to 1951.

The two-storey log Bulletin building, now in Fort Edmonton Park, was one of the first

Edmonton office buildings.