

**The Dairies**  
**of**  
**Red Deer**

by

**Bob Snyder**

**The Dairies of Red Deer**

By Bob Snyder

February, 2007

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## Introduction

I have undertaken the writing of this book to record and compile information about the dairies that provided retail delivery of bottled milk in Red Deer up to the end of the glass milk bottle era in the late 1950s. Of these, six were more prominent, used milk bottles with their names on them, and provided retail delivery. A seventh dairy, Laurentia, had bottles with its name on them, but operated only briefly.

Andrew H. Trimble and Albert H. Hepworth founded several dairy operations which through differing paths ended up as part of the United Dairies (Union Milk) group.

Messers Streach and Kitching and the Wright family all played roles in developing Whitehills Jersey Dairy up to the time of its sale to the Central Alberta Dairy Pool in 1953. Charles Streach and Elias Kitching operated dairies that were predecessor operations to Whitehills.

Prior to World War 2, Red Deer was a fairly small center with a population of no more than 4000 (see Appendix H - City of Red Deer, Early Chronology and Population). Its citizens were served by various dairies delivering raw (natural) and pasteurized milk. Short family histories for several of these earlier smaller dairies are included in chapter 2. Appendix G is a listing of the dairyman's licenses issued by Red Deer from 1908-1940. In the years after the war, the city grew rapidly, and the local dairy industry rapidly consolidated to only two major players, Alpha Milk and Union Milk, selling only pasteurized milk.

United Dairies of Calgary (Union Milk) had a presence in Red Deer from 1929 when they purchased Red Deer Dairy Products. In 1941 they acquired the Red Deer Creamery (#2). The name Red Deer Dairy Products was gone from the scene by then. United continued to operate Red Deer Creamery up until 1959, when the use of that name was discontinued. In that year, Union Milk opened a new plant in Red Deer.

Although, to the best of my knowledge, Union Milk did not operate in Red Deer under that name until 1959, after the era of the use of glass milk bottles with dairy names on them, for completeness and for the reader's general interest, I have included a history of Union Milk as an appendix. Even though bottles with the Union Milk name on them are common around the province, I am assuming Union used only plain bottles in the Red Deer area after 1959.

Also included because it is a very interesting, but short-lived episode in Alberta's Dairy history, is information about Laurentia Milk Co. and the bottles they used.

The initial material for this book has been taken from my previous one, *Milk Bottles of Alberta*. Additional pictures from my collection and from photos I took of artifacts at the Red Deer Museum have been included, along with family histories from sources as noted. The pictures on pages 22 and 50 relating to Whitehills Jersey Dairy were provided by Drew Wright. Several pictures from the Red Deer and District Archives have also been used herein. Additional research has been done to confirm the location of the buildings used by the dairies. Present day pictures of the sites have been included. The photos used have been taken by myself, unless attributed to others.

The reader is reminded that this information has been compiled by a milk bottle collector and the original focus has been dairies that used glass bottles with their names on them. The book does not purport to present an exhaustive listing of every dairy or dairyman that delivered milk in Red Deer, although chapters 1 and 2 and Appendix G, a list of the dairyman licenses issued by the city, probably go a long way in that direction.



## Acknowledgements

- Red Deer and District Archives. Michael Dawe and Shelley Respondek at the Archives were particularly helpful with facilitating access to archived materials and with suggestions for other information sources.
- My thanks to Alvin Johnstone, Gerry Hepworth and John Neale for their research suggestions and for sharing their recollections.
- The staff at the Alberta Service Bureau Edmonton assisted me with access to Corporate Registry regarding:
  - Laurentia Milk Company
  - Red Deer Dairy Products Limited
  - Red Deer Creamery (Partnership)
- The staff at Land Titles Office - Bowlen Building Edmonton assisted me with numerous title searches and searches through their map data base.
- My thanks to Naomi Mahaffy for her help in assembling the text, scanning pictures, formatting pages, and designing the covers.

# NOTICE TO CREAM SHIPPERS

The Red Deer Creamery will be re-opened on **Monday, April 21st**, under the supervision of **G. DANIELS**, who has had years of experience, and he will be pleased to meet all old patrons of the Creamery, and any new ones.

Highest prices paid for Cream and fair test given.  
A trial shipment will convince you.

Cream paid for monthly or on delivery.

We will also manufacture a high grade of Ice-Cream and are installing the latest machinery for this purpose.

We solicit your patronage.

Advertisement placed in the Red Deer Advocate on April 23, 1919, when A.H. Hepworth opened Red Deer Creamery #2. He had been part owner of Red Deer Dairy Products, which he left to open this business. This was a new business at a new location. (Red Deer and District Archives)

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Note to Readers: I will be pleased to hear from anyone who has further information about the dairies I have described and discussed in this book. While I have tried to be as thorough as possible in presenting the story of the dairies of Red Deer, in several cases specific information was not available. In these instances, I have presented what I feel are reasonable suggestions as to how events may have unfolded.

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