

Bellis

The majority of the line from Oliver to St. Paul was constructed in 1918 and 1919. The first railway station was built at Bellis in 1919 and train service to Edmonton began that same year. Regardless of when the line was actually officially opened, the farmers and settlers of Bellis and other nearby communities recall the advent of rail service during 1918 for Bellis. R. G. Dunn & Company, in their commercial directory for the year 1921, recognized the location of Bellis along the Oliver to St. Paul line several years after the event as was their practice. The Oliver-St. Paul line was conceived and begun as a typical Canadian Northern branch line in 1912 and completed as Canadian National Railways branch line after financial troubles overtook Mackenzie and Mann's pioneer railway.

Bellis Country Station before move



The modern hamlet of Bellis had its beginnings in its current location in 1916 when the surveyors of the Canadian Northern Railway Company laid out the route for the Oliver-St. Paul branch line. Originally the townsite of Bellis had been located at 2-1/2 miles east and slightly north of its present location by the first settlers to arrive in the area. Several years later (after 1914) the C.N.R. (Canadian Northern) began building a railroad, running partially through the homestead. There was great jubilation amongst the new settlers, since the railroad would provide transportation and employment.

In 1919 the Canadian Northern built its first rudimentary railway station in the market town or service centre which served a large area of grain growers and mixed farmers. With the re-establishment of the town on the new site, commercial

development followed; in fact, it had begun with the survey of the rail route.



Bellis in 1940s



Commercial Hotel 1955