

# FORGOTTEN FOOTHILLS

## Sandstone



The Canada Cement Company's brickyard at Sandstone, 1912.

The village of Sandstone was located west of Okotoks in the Sandstone Coulee (also known as Wilson Coulee) NE2-21-1-W5. It was an industrial village established in 1900 along the CPR's main line. The village was named after the abundance of sandstone and rich clay in the hillsides.

In its heyday, four brickyards operated in the coulee; from a small family-owned brickyard run by the Serviss family to the large Canada Cement Company's brickyard which produced 12 million bricks a year using both round and long coal-fired kilns. Many of the bricks were used in homes and churches in Okotoks and southern Alberta. Several stone quarries also established near Sandstone providing the sandstone blocks used for foundations as well as decorative elements on local buildings.

The village of Sandstone consisted of approximately 100 people. Many lived in one-room shacks and tents. Company managers and superintendents lived in more substantial brick or wood homes. The village had a post office, railway flag station and a general store. A large bunkhouse doubled as a community hall.

Production diminished during World War I when many workers enlisted for service. Following the war, the brickyards resumed, however, the increasing price of coal, competition from gas-powered brickyards in Medicine Hat and Redcliff as well as striking workers, forced the brickyards to close. The last bricks were manufactured in Sandstone in 1923. Company land and houses were sold to private individuals. The post office closed in 1924.

The large brick superintendent's house and the smoke stack are all that remain of the village — all on private land. However, the legacy of this long-forgotten industry lives on in the many brick buildings that still stand in Okotoks. *Source: A Century of Memories.*

### The Sandstone Brickyards

A. & C. Serviss Brickyard	1899-1909
Watson Brickyard and Stone Quarry	1905-1907
Sold to Alberta Portland Cement Co.	1907-1909
Sold to Canada Cement Company	1909-1923
Sandstone Brick and Sewer Pipe Company	1908-1914
Burnvale Brick, Pipe and Enamelling Co. Ltd	1909-1912



Sidney Bird's home at Sandstone.



A view of what was once Sandstone. It is all privately owned and used as a farming operation.