

Rev. Andrew Gordon
1st Methodist
Minister to Archibald -
Manitou.
1984-1987

The Rev. Andrew Gordon, clergy with the
Bible Christian Church, arrived in 1883 to
the Pembina Darlingford area. The family
then moved to Manitou City (on the hill north
of Manitou) where a new Methodist church and
parsonage had been built.

Read Page 54.

The church was placed on the corner of Fuller
and Jules St, and later used as a home for
the Jacobs family. The parsonage was placed
on Dufferin St, where John. Dulcie Maloney live

picture in
Manitou book

The second Methodist Church, built in 1890
on a Main St location
and a parsonage which is now the home of
Ross + Marlene Manning.

Our present church (originally Presbyterian) built
in 1901, and became United Church in ~~1921~~ 1925

Volume 3

A STORY
FOR
EVERY MILE



**HITHER
THOU
GOEST**

**THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF THE REV.
ANDREW GORDON
AND HIS WIFE
ANN COPP GORDON**



Presented to Jean & Don Hall

A life long friendship with
similar Manitow roots.

Sept 5, 2003

L. W. Don Gordon



PHOTO COLLAGE OF REV. AND MRS. ANDREW GORDON AND FAMILY

The individual pictures were taken, in some cases, many years apart, and therefore do not reflect their ages relative to each other. Seated foreground: Robert E. Gordon, 1872-1943; clockwise: Rev. Ann Copp Gordon, 1837-1927; Anne, Rebecca (Daisy) 1869-1957; Susan Mary, 1862-1913; William Freeman Gordon, 1864-1943; Abbie Jane Gordon, 1860-1943; Major Herbert Andrew Gordon, M.D., 1862-1942; Rev. Andrew Gordon, 1830-1927.

FORMER TEACHER SUPERVISOR DIES

Miss Annie R. Gordon, 87, of 1352 Downing Street, a retired teacher and supervisor, died Thursday in Winnipeg General Hospital.

Born in Tweed, Ontario, Miss Gordon was the daughter of the late Rev. and Mrs. Andrew Gordon. She had lived in Winnipeg since 1904. She taught school in Brandon and Carman, Manitoba, and on coming to Winnipeg taught at Carleton. Mulvey and Riverview schools and was principal at Riverview for 24 years. For three years she was supervisor of primary grades with the Winnipeg school board.

She was a member of the Crescent Fort Rouge United Church and active in the Women's Missionary Society and the ladies' auxiliary of United College. Surviving are a nephew, W. C. Gordon, and three nieces, Mrs. O. Henry, Miss Mary Gordon and Miss A. Jean Gordon.

Funeral service will be at 2:15 p.m. Saturday in A. B. Gardiner Funeral Home, Rev. G. F. Dyker and Rev. D. MacLean officiating. Burial will be in Elmwood Cemetery. Pallbearers will be L. Curry, H. Robson, H. Stevens, James Gordon, Charles Ironside and George Wightman.

Winnipeg Free Press, 25 January 1957



WHITHER THOU GOEST

The Life and Times

of the

REV. ANDREW GORDON

1830 - 1922

and his wife

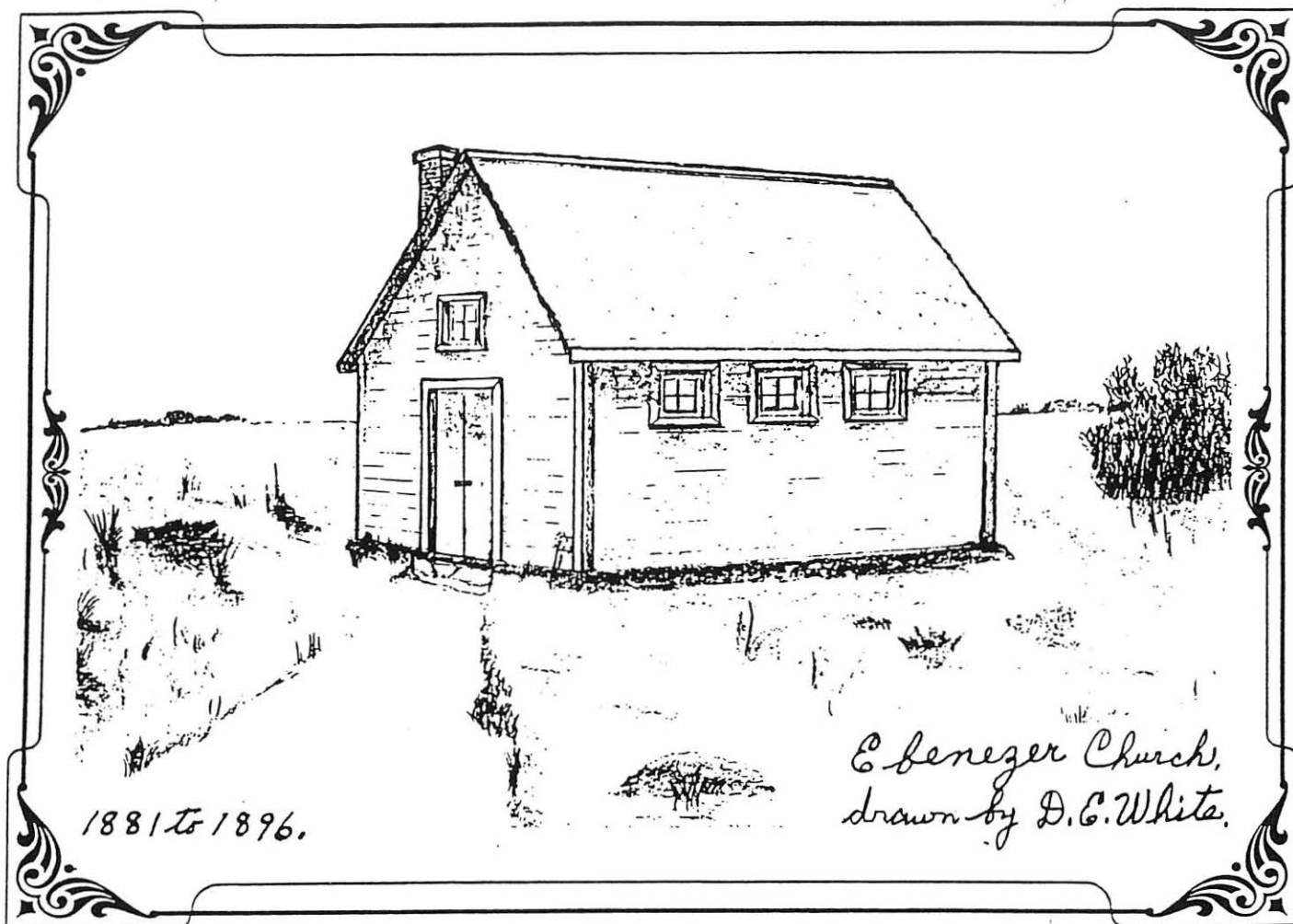
ANN COPP GORDON

1837 - 1931

Pioneer ministers of the first Bible Christian Church
in Manitoba at Alexandria, Manitoba, 1882 - 1884, and
of the Methodist Church at Manitou, 1884 - 1887

A sketch of their lives, 1882 - 1887, based on the biography
written in the 1950s by the longest surviving member of their family,
the late Miss Ann Gordon of Winnipeg, Manitoba, introduced by a
synopsis of the early history of the Methodist Church in the Pembina
Mountain Country.

Published by
THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION
NORTH WEST MOUNTED POLICE TRAIL
ASSOCIATION
1992



MANITOBA'S FIRST, AND ONLY, BIBLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

In 1816 William O'Bryan, a minister of the Methodist Church in southern England established the Bible Christian Church as a branch of the Methodist faith. Noted for their devotion to the study and preaching of the Gospel, the Bible Christians, (or Bryanites as they were originally known), were the first Protestants to welcome women as preachers. The movement spread to Canada in 1831, to the United States in 1846 and to Australia in 1850.

The only building erected by the Bible Christians in western Canada is shown above. It was originally located six miles southwest of Thornhill and just west of the Alexandria townsite. A local newspaper, the Nelsonville Mountaineer, reported its opening in its edition of 14 March 1882, "The opening of the first Bible Christian Church in Manitoba took place on the 14th inst. Quite a large crowd gathered and a good time was enjoyed. The total cost of erecting the church was \$416, of which the sum of \$310 has already been raised. It is a handsome structure. 20 x 28 feet, and reflects much credit on the congregation."

Originally located just a few yards off the Boundary Commission Trail, this sketch by a grandson of one of the original members of this congregation shows the structure on its second location six miles southeast of Darlingford. In 1896 it was again moved, this time onto the yard of a nearby farmer where it remained until it was demolished some ten years ago.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN THE PEMBINA MOUNTAIN COUNTRY

The story of the establishment of the Methodist Church in the Pembina Mountain Country is inseparably associated with a half dozen pioneer ministers, Rev. Daniel Pomeroy, Rev. J.M. Harrison, Rev. Charles Mearing, Rev. John Greenway, Rev. Wm. Kinley, and Rev. Andrew Gordon. They were clergy of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Bible Christian Church, three of the four Methodist churches which united in 1884 to form the Canada Methodist Church.

Although the Methodist church began its work in western Canada in 1840 with the arrival of the first missionaries to the Indians, it was not until July 1868 that work began among the settlers of Manitoba. This ministry was initiated by the Rev. George Young, previously pastor of the Richmond Street West Church in Toronto, Ontario, who was sent west by the Wesleyan Methodist Church. He undertook a ministry not only to the settlers of the Red River settlement, but also including the pioneers northwest of Winnipeg, a district then known as Rockwood, and the settlements along the Assiniboine as far west as Portage la Prairie.

In September 1875, the Rev. Daniel Pomeroy, M.A., of the Methodist Episcopal Church began mission work for that denomination. Henderson's Directory for Manitoba, 1877-1878, states, "He arrived at Emerson on the 26th day of September. Having organized a mission, comprising the town of Emerson, and the surrounding settlements, and built a house for the minister, Mr. Pomeroy visited Winnipeg on the 11th day of November, and succeeding in establishing another mission, and in making arrangements for the building of a church in the city. On the 3rd day of December a mission was organized at Morris and on the 13 of the same month another mission was organized in the Pembina Mountains."¹

His name is still associated with a historical site beside the bridge across Tobacco Creek on Provincial Highway 3 seven miles straight south of Carman. This was the site of the Pomeroy School, (now located in the Morden Threshermens' Museum), and, one mile west, the first Methodist church erected in southern Manitoba. He hauled the logs for this church with his own ox which, when hitched to a buckboard, provided transportation over the vast prairies. No doubt, this was the means by which he visited the Pembina Mountain settlers along Silver Creek where Nelsonville was established some years later. Rev. Pomeroy remained until late in 1877 when, due to lack of financial support, he was forced to return to Ontario.

In 1876 the Presbyterian Church sent their first minister to southern

Manitoba, the Rev. H. J. Borthwick who was specifically delegated to serve the settlers of that faith living in the Pembina Mountain country. He established himself south of Morden near where Mountain City was surveyed that same year. Writing in the 23 April 1893 edition of the *Morden Monitor* newspaper, Rev. Borthwick recalled the Rev. J.M. Harrison whose circuit, as noted in the 1877-1878 edition of *Henderson's Directory*, consisted of the Boyne and Pembina settlements. "Rev. J. M. Harrison, now ministering in Winnipeg, was the first Methodist minister officiating regularly in the district. The first time the writer and he met was on the open prairie. Mr. Harrison was dressed in hunter's costume, leather from top to toe, and the writer thought he had come across some wild hunter of the plains after some quarry or other."

Rev. Harrison arrived in southern Manitoba from Ontario in 1877 under the auspices of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and in *Henderson's Directory for Manitoba and the North West Territories for 1878-1879*, Alexandria is listed as one of the appointments served by this pioneer clergyman. For some time, Rev. Harrison and his wife lived in a small house on a farm within walking distance of Nelsonville. To Rev. Harrison belongs the credit for having built the first church and parsonage in the Pembina Mountains at Nelsonville.²

Rev. G.H. Hambley's 1956 history of Roland and the adjoining districts, *Trails of the Pioneers*, states that Rev. Harrison was married to a daughter of pioneer settlers of the Roland district, the Phillips, who had come to that district in 1877 as a result of reading "a very glowing account of the possibilities of this country" in the *Montreal Witness* newspaper. This article had been contributed by Rev. Harrison shortly after his arrival in southern Manitoba without any thought whatsoever that it would result in the arrival of his future wife in the district he described in such appreciative terms. Pioneers of the Stonewall district, (where Rev. Harrison succeeded Rev. Charles Mearing), recall this pioneer minister as "a man large in stature, but suffering from a slight impediment in hand and limb. He was strong in intellect and sympathetic in nature, untiring in labours and a most successful minister. He became one of the best known and most highly respected ministers of the Manitoba and North West Conference after the division. He passed to his reward in Summerland, B.C., in August 1915."³

A considerable number of the pioneer settlers of the Alexandria district were members of the Bible Christian Church, a denomination of the Methodist church established in 1816 by William O'Bryan. Noted for their devotion to the study of the scriptures and the preaching of the Gospel, the Bible Christians, (or Bryanites as they were originally known), were the first Protestants to welcome women as preachers. Among the Bible Christian families of the Alexandria district were the Chings, the Elliotts, the Tricks, the Sweets and the Whites.

For two of these families, the Elliotts and the Sweets, the county of Devon in

the southwest corner of England had been their original home. The William Sweets family were residents of Devon until 1830 when they came to Canada to take up land near the village of Exeter in Huron County. They were followed in 1844 by some of their closest neighbours, the Greenways who settled not far away in Huron County's Stephen Township. Among their other neighbours in Devon had been a family by the name of Copp, some of whom followed their friends to Ontario in the late 1850s and settled near London.

At Exeter a daughter of Mr. Wm. Sweet, Mary, became the wife of Mr. Thomas Ching Sr. They were the parents of a son, John Ching, the first member of the family to leave Huron county for Manitoba. In the fall of 1876, John Ching, 26 years old, left Exeter to select a new home in Manitoba. He eventually chose land in the Pembina Mountain Country where he took up a homestead in Township 2-7 West on the south side of Dead Horse Creek some four miles south of the present location of Darlingford.

In the fall of 1878, Thomas Greenway, (until a few months before member of the federal parliament for South Huron), arrived in southern Manitoba with the intention of locating land for a large group of settlers he intended to bring from Huron County the following spring. Mr. Greenway made his way from Emerson along the Commission Trail to Mr. Ching's homestead. After Mr. Greenway had explained his plan to Mr. Ching, the latter suggested they look at the land west of the Pembina River Valley, the Rock Lake Country. Here Mr. Greenway found exactly what he was looking for, a perfect location for his Ontario friends to homestead.

In April 1879, John Sweet, a grandson of Wm. Sweet, joined the dozens of other residents of Huron County heading west for Manitoba under the leadership of Mr. Greenway. Mr. Sweet, however, rather than going farther west to the Rock Lake Country, decided to take up land in Township 2-6, just east of the Chings. Here he purchased eleven acres of land four miles south of Thornhill in the townsite of Alexandria located on a beautiful level section of prairie overlooking the Commission Trail ford through Dead Horse Creek.⁴

Four months after John Sweet established himself at Alexandria, the first clergyman of the Bible Christian church arrived in Manitoba, the Rev. John W. Greenway. Two years younger than his brother Thomas Greenway, he had come to Canada at five years of age. As a young man he had joined the Bible Christian Church and after his ordination in 1874 served in one of the two districts of the Bible Christians in the United States. He came to Manitoba in August 1879 after a bout of poor health had forced him to resign from his circuit near Milwaukee. Most of the Methodists of the Rock Lake Country were members of the Wesleyan Church who, within six months of their arrival in the Rock Lake Country, began work on the construction of a church building.⁵

Shortly after his arrival, Rev. Greenway began ministering to the Bible Christians of the Crystal City district and of Alexandria 30 miles to the east. As soon as Mr. Sweet completed a large building to serve as his home, a store and a stopping house, Rev. Greenway began conducting services in it. Generally his morning services were at Crystal City; his evening services at Alexandria.⁶

At the June 1880 conference of the Bible Christian Church Rev. Greenway was successful in persuading his fellow clergymen to send a missionary to the Alexandria district, a Rev. Silas C. Cunning, who is recalled as a popular clergyman and an effective preacher. Rev. Cunning made his home with the Sweets and conducted his services in their house. It was not an easy ministry for, in addition to the challenges of climate and distance, the work of the Gospel was considerably hindered by "Mack's Pool", a well patronized "shebeen", (a notorious unlicensed and illegal liquor outlet), located in a store in Alexandria. In February of 1881, the *Nelsonville Mountaineer* newspaper noted that Rev. Cunning had resigned his circuit, "the reason is not known." Some weeks later, this same paper noted that he had taken up his work again and was "holding prayer meetings in the neighbourhood in lieu of revival services." According to this same entry, Rev. Cunning had also initiated work on the building of a church with a Mr. A. Buie hauling out the first load of logs for its construction.

Apparently Rev. Cunning did not remain too much longer in the community for by May of that same year we read in the *Mountaineer* that Rev. Greenway was once again conducting services in Mr. Sweet's store. That same paper is also our source for the information that, in July 1881, a Rev. Wm. Kinly had been appointed to Alexandria as part of the Northwest Mission of the Bible Christian Church and that he was "highly recommended". He arrived at the end of that month and began his ministry by preaching an impressive sermon. Rev. Kinly was a married man with a family and encouraged the congregation to build a small rectory and to continue work on the church. A former member of their congregation, H.C. Sweet, recalled the Kinly family as "goodly people and deeply revered."⁷

Although the original plan called for the building of a log structure, it was eventually decided that a frame building resting on posts would be more appropriate and so local farmers and builders, John Mugford and his brothers, were hired to put up the structure on NW 19-2-6, across the road and a few hundred yards west of the Sweet home. (This quarter was the property of T.D. Elliott who resided in a large log house, still standing, on the adjoining quarter.) Farmers hauling wheat to Emerson sixty miles east purchased lumber there and brought it back to the building site just a few rods north of the Commission Trail.

By mid January the *Mountaineer* was able to report that "The frame of the Bible Christian church is erected and the work is being pushed forward. The friends hope to have it completed in a week or two." That same month a social was held in

Alexandria, probably in the Sweet home, for the purpose of raising funds for the needs of the church. The *Mountaineer* correspondent for Alexandria, "Budget", reported on this event thus:

The social on Thursday evening last was a decided success, over one hundred persons being present. After all had partaken of the sumptuous spread provided by the ladies of the neighbourhood, Rev. W. Kinly called the meeting to order, the choir sang "Happy New Year" and the Rev. J. W. Greenway led in prayer. Mr. John Sweet then received a unanimous call to the chair, and in a short address explained the object of the social and said he was pleased to see so many present. The choir then rendered a musical selection in excellent style, which was well received and followed by a well-received reading "Dignity of Labour" by Mr. Henry Elliott. Miss Ada Werry then gave a temperance song in good style, followed by an admirable reading by Mr. H. C. Sweet. After another selection by the choir, Rev. J.W. Greenway was called upon for a speech, and in response favoured the audience with a very entertaining sketch of his labours in Manitoba, alluding to the necessity of building churches, and closing with comparison of portions of Southwestern Manitoba with other parts of the province and Northwest Territories.

Another selection by the choir followed after which a recitation by Master Willie Kinly and a reading by Mr. J.G. Elliott both of which were delivered in good spirits and were well received. A song, "Brave Nelson", by Mr. Alex Lawrence was highly appreciated and the loud encore responded to by a comic song which created bursts of laughter and applause. Then came a recitation by Miss Fennie Kinly, a selection of music by Miss Robertson of Mountain City, and a recitation by Miss Ada Werry all of which were much appreciated. An excellent reading by the chairman came next, after which an address by the Rev. W. Kinly followed by a vocal trio by Miss Ada Werry, Fanny Kinly and Harriet Elliott. A recitation by Mr. H.G. Elliott then, after which another highly applauded comic song by Mr. Lawrence. The chairman then presented Rev. Mr. Kinly with a cake, after which the usual vote of thanks were passed, Rev. Mr. Kinly pronounced the benediction, the choir sang "God Save the Queen," and the audience dispersed to their several homes well pleased with the evening's entertainment. The proceeds amounted to \$26.43 which goes to the Sunday School and building fund.

The official opening of the church on 14 February 1882 is recorded by the Nelsonville paper. "The opening of the first B.C. church in Manitoba took place on the 14th inst. Quite a large crowd gathered and a good time was enjoyed. The total cost of erecting the church was \$416, of which some \$310 has already been raised. It is a handsome

structure, 20 x 28 feet, and reflects much credit on the congregation."

Whether the Kinlys lived during the winter of 1881-1882 in the granary-like building which served as rectory is not known, but if they had, perhaps this may have been part of the reason that Rev. Kinly did not continue his ministry at Alexandria. Again the task of promoting the mission work of the Bible Christian church in western Canada fell upon Rev. Greenway. Rev. J. H. Riddell's *Methodism in the Middle West* explains that Rev. Greenway, at the Port Hope, Ontario, conference of the Bible Christian Church "pleaded so persuasively the claims of Manitoba that the conference decided to send Rev. Andrew Gordon and his family of eight to open work at Thornhill."⁸ A newly ordained clergyman, Rev. James Hoskins, was to accompany the Gordons to Manitoba and assist them in their ministry.⁹

The conference's decision, when reported by Rev. Greenway to his parishioners at Alexandria, was warmly applauded. Three of the pioneer families of the community, the Tricks, the Elliotts and the Whites, had been members of Rev. Gordon's congregation at Port Hope in the 1860s. Although Rev. Gordon was an Orangeman from the north of Ireland, his forefathers had come from Scotland. Through this Scottish connection, he was distantly related to Charles George Gordon, better known as General Chinese Gordon, killed in Khartoum in the Sedan in 1885. This hero of the Second Chinese Opium War had a niece living at Alexandria, Mrs. T.D. Elliott. Her six children, four sons and two daughters, each received Gordon as their second name in his honour. (The Elliott home, a large two-story oak log structure, still stands just across the field from the site of the original Alexandria Church.)

The Sweets were equally as pleased with this turn of events for they too had connections with the Gordons. Mrs. Gordon's maiden name had been Copp, and the Greenways and the Sweets had been her parent's closest neighbours back in Devon. There were other connections as well. Mr. Richard Sweet's eldest brother, William Sweet, was a veterinary in Brussels, Ontario, some twenty five miles southwest of Exeter where the Gordons had served Dr. Sweet's home church some 10 years previously.¹⁰ In addition to this, Mrs. Richard Sweet's parents, the Westcotts of Brucefield, Ontario, were neighbours and close friends with two of Mrs. Gordon's brothers.

The Gordon family remained at Alexandria until 1884 when, according to the discipline of the Methodist church which specified that a minister could remain not more than four years in one community, (generally only three), they were appointed to serve the Methodist church in Manitou some 18 miles northwest of Alexandria. Here Rev. Gordon was the successor of a Rev. Septimus C. Colwell who was appointed to the Alexandria circuit.

Precise dates for the start of the work of the Methodist church west of

Nelsonville and Alexandria currently are not available although the name of the Rev. Charles Mearing is always noted as having initiated this work. In 1876 he was one of the eleven missionaries of the Canada Methodist church working in Manitoba.¹¹ His first circuit was the Rockwood district where Rev. Young had built a church in 1874 and where, in 1878, under Rev. Mearing's guidance, the first church in Stonewall was erected on the corner of Ida and Clark Streets, just opposite the present church. Forty years later, pioneers of the district recalled Rev. Mearing as "a young Englishman"...small of stature but earnest and zealous in discharge of his sacred duties. He found it somewhat difficult to adapt himself to western conditions and sometimes missed the trails and became lost on the prairies."¹² After serving briefly at Fort Francis, in the late 1870s, he was posted to Morris, Manitoba.

Two articles written for the *Manitou Western Canadian* during the district's fiftieth anniversary celebrations in 1929 suggest that Rev. Mearing must have served the settlers of the Archibald district while still stationed at Morris. (The Archibald area received its name from the local post office located two miles northwest of the present town of Manitou.) Mrs. John Wallcraft, a daughter-in-law of Mr. Wm. Wallcraft who took up land in the Archibald district in 1878, recalled, "Rev. Charles Mearing was the first Methodist minister and church was held in Mr. Wallcraft's new log house." The other pioneer to mention Rev. Mearing was Mr. W.E. Baldwin, a pioneer of the Manitou district in March 1878. Writing of his experiences of 1880, he states, "This spring, we had another minister in our district, Rev. Mr. Mearing, (Methodist), and we had services every two weeks at S.C. McDonald's home." In a history of Manitou and district written in 1950, Mr. Charles H. Vrooman, noted, "The Methodist Church came in with the first settlers and, in 1878, Rev. Charles Mearing was on the ground as a missionary."

In October 1879, a post office was established on section 19-6-9 West, near the Cypress River and four miles north of the present site of Somerset. It received the name Beaconsfield.¹³ In 1881 this settlement became a central point for Methodist mission work in the western portion of the Pembina Mountain Country.¹⁴ Rev. Mearing was placed in charge of this circuit. Unfortunately, we do not know where he resided. Mr. Vrooman's history suggests that it may have been with some of the pioneers living northwest of Manitou. "There were no closely defined bounds to his field but he went where he was needed. His headquarters were at Archibald, but he covered the territory as far as Swan Lake, Norquay, Beaconsfield and several other points." A history of Swan Lake published by the local Women's Institute in 1936 likewise associated Rev. Mearing with the district south of Swan Lake. "The first ordained minister to serve the community was Rev. Mehring (sic) who came in 1881. He lived at Manitou and covered a distance as far as Glenboro and preached at Swan Lake once a month."

His ministry in the Pembina Mountain Country was not a long one. In the listing of clergy in attendance at the June 1882 conference of the Canada Methodist

church in Winnipeg he is noted as serving "Boyne River," that is the settlements in the area of vicinity of the present day town of Carman. The Beaconsfield, Cypress River mission had no minister, the minutes of the conference stating "one to be sent".¹⁵

Rev. Mearing's ministry in western Canada concluded with his service in the Carman area. He is not mentioned in the records of the Methodist conference in Winnipeg during August 1883 but another source notes, "It is stated that after labouring for some time he had the misfortune of losing his reason. He returned to 'Canada' as the East was then termed, this territory was not thought of belonging to Canada."¹⁶

In 1882 Rev. Mearing was succeeded by Rev. Colwell who, in September of that year, formally organized the Beaconsfield Mission. This meeting took place at the home of Mr. Wm. Wallcraft on 16-4-9. The original preaching points of the Beaconsfield Mission were Pembina Crossing, Norquay, (a settlement in Township 6-10 centring around the post office on Section 17 in the home of T.H. Pentland), Wallcrafts, and Swan Lake. Archibald, Somerset and Mount Carmel, a school four miles south of Manitou, were added soon after.

In December 1882 the Pembina Mountain Colonization Railroad arrived within a half mile of the present location of Manitou. There was, of course, at that time, nothing on this site other than a homesteader's shack. The town, Manitoba City, was located on the hill on the north half of this same section. Late in 1883, Rev. Colwell completed the construction of a church, 35 x 30 feet, and manse, 20 x 30 feet, in Manitoba City.¹⁷ That same year an extension of the railroad was built south of Manitoba City and the station constructed along this line given the name of Manitou.

In 1884 the name Manitou replaced that of Beaconsfield in the official records of the circuit. The first official meeting of the Manitou Mission took place on 11 August 1884. This gathering set the salary of Rev. Gordon at \$300.00 a year; that of his assistant, D. S. Houk, at \$200.00. Both received, in addition, a housing allowance, travel expenses, ("horse keep" is the term used in the records), and incidentals. Besides the above preaching points, the records from 1885 note that Rev. Andrew also served the pioneers of Musselboro, (now Altamont), where in September of 1884 a post office was opened in the home of Mr. H. Mussel.

Early in 1884 Manitoba City's first buildings were moved off the hill with many of its others trekking to the lowlands to the south during the winter of 1884-1885 under the guidance of a Mr. Aitkens, a well-known Winnipeg contractor. In February 1885 both the Presbyterian and Methodist churches were moved to "more convenient locations south of the tracks". The Methodist rectory followed that fall.

The church was relocated to the northwest corner of Fuller and Jukes, (Lots

25, Block 116), a block southeast of the present post office. The congregation soon outgrew this building and it was replaced by a new church, 30 x 60 feet, completed on Manitou's Main Street in July 1889. Today it is the town's fire hall. The original church then became the home of the Nelson Vrooman family and, after their removal to Boissevain during the summer of 1894, (their son Rev. W. A. Vrooman was the minister of the Boissevain Methodist church), it passed into the hands of Mr. Alex Tait. It was purchased in 1901 by Mr. James Jacobs whose widow and daughter Iva resided here until it was torn down some twenty-five years ago.

Rev. Gordon was not the first member of his family to make the town at the end of steel for the Southwestern Manitoba Colonization Railroad his home. The arrival of the railroad had quickly attracted a considerable number of enterprising business men and when the town moved down the hill others equally as ambitious arrived. Among these were several of Rev. Gordon's nephews, James T. Gordon, a founder of the Canada Packers Empire, and Charles R. Gordon, later the president of the Charles Gordon Land Company.¹⁸

The Gordons served three years at Manitou and in 1887 were appointed to Carman. While serving here, Rev. Gordon was responsible for the building of the first Methodist Church in the newly established town of Roland. In 1899, at the age of 69, Rev. Gordon and his wife retired to Winnipeg. He returned to Ontario for a year spent with his brothers John and Robert at Hungersford and Huntington and then came back to Manitoba. He then served a Methodist church near the Louise Bridge in Elmwood and after his departure two years later the church was renamed in his honour. The Gordon-King Memorial Church on Cobourg Avenue is the successor of that congregation and treasures several mementoes of Rev. Gordon including the saddle bags he used in the early years of his ministry in rural Manitoba.

At Manitou Rev. Gordon was succeeded by Rev. Thomas Argue who, prior to the union of the various Methodist churches in 1884, had been a leading minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He, in turn was followed by Rev. J. A. McClung, later the father-in-law of Nellie McClung. In the fall of 1891, when Nellie Mooney first came to Manitou to teach in the local school, she boarded with the McClung family and described the house in which the Gordons once had lived in these words:

I was boarding in the parsonage and that was really the highlight of my coming to town. The parsonage was a small frame building facing south, quite near the school. The front door opened into the parlour and beyond the parlour was the dining room, with a kitchen and woodshed to the right. An open stair in the dining room led to three bedrooms upstairs. The McClung family had come from Port Arthur and the junior members were still bewailing the change. Mr. and Mrs. McLung

were ready to at any time accept the ruling of the Stationing Committee of the Methodist Church, even if it took them to the North Pole; though I know they found our little town bleak and barren after the scenic beauty of the head of the Lakes...Wes and Nellie, Herb and Ed....mourned for the companions and beauties they had been forced to leave, besides they found the prairie winters very cold. Having known nothing but prairie winters, I did not know any better, and wondered why they made such a fuss when a pail of water froze to the bottom or the frost gathered on the walls an inch thick.¹⁹

This house on Dufferin Street on the block east of Main Street served as the Methodist Manse until 1901 when a large new one was erected beside the church, today the home of the Manning family. In later years the original structure became the home of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Nairne. Residents of Manitou will recall it standing approximately where the Tom Kingston home is today located. Dr. Black's widow resided next door in a flat-roofed house on the site of the present Harold Sims home.²⁰

The Bible Christian Church remained on its original location until after the union of the various Methodist denominations in 1884. Mr. H.C. Sweet records that the church was moved to its second location in 1886 by Mr. John Elliott and his brother-in-law, Mr. William White, who after jacking it up and loading it on sleighs, relocated it three miles west to NE 26-2-7, the homestead of Mr. S. J. Ray. This was a more central location, convenient to the majority of the Methodists of the district and again just a few yards off the Commission Trail. This property formerly was the Gordon Carson farm and is now the residence of Mr. Gerald C. Graham. Here it became well known as the Ebenezer Church and remained in use here until 1896 when it was replaced by the building of a larger new church a mile west, the Zion church.²¹ In 1896 it was again moved, this time onto the yard of a nearby farmer where it remained until it was demolished some ten years ago.

1. See page 114, *Henderson's Directory for Manitoba, 1877-1878*, for an unusually detailed article concerning the establishment of this branch of the Methodist Church in Manitoba.

2. Reference to the work of this pioneer clergyman will be found in Rev. G. H. Hambley's history of Roland and the adjoining districts *Trails of the Pioneers*, published in 1956.

Additional information concerning Rev. Harrison are recorded in the booklet produced in 1929 for the Re-Union of Old Timers and Ex-Students for Morden and District, see pages 37 and 38. This notes that he continued in the ministry for many years and eventually bought a small fruit farm in Summerland B.C. where he died.

His widow was still alive in 1921. When Mr. Harrison moved from Nelsonville to High Bluff, he was succeeded by Rev. Wm. Kenner, J.W. Bell and W.W. Colpitts. During the tenure of the latter, the church and parsonage were moved from Nelsonville to Morden where Rev. Colpitts continued his ministry. Rev. Harrison's next posting after High Bluff was the Emerson Methodist Church.

3. This is a quotation from an article written in 1918 by the Rev. R. E. McCullah, then minister of the Stonewall Methodist Church entitled *Historic Sketch of Stonewall Circuit of the Methodist Church*. It is on file in the United Church Archives, University of Winnipeg.

4. Full particulars of the story of the Sweet family in England, Ontario, and in Manitoba, will be found in a manuscript now in the possession of the Doney family of Morden. It was dictated in June 1956 by Dr. H. C. Sweet, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Sweet. It also provides some interesting insights into the early history of the Ebenezer church and the Rev. Gordon's ministry while at Alexandria.

5. Reference to the fact that the pioneers of the Crystal City district began the construction of a church during their first season in the province will be found on page 3 of *Sketches from Real Life*, in the volume 1940 *Corner Stones of Empire*. This church was completed in the fall of 1880 under the direction of Rev. Andrew Stewart, a young missionary of the Wesleyan Methodist denomination.

6. Rev. Greenway took up land in the Crystal City district where he was joined by his wife and family in the spring of 1880. His obituary notes, "While engaged in agricultural pursuits he nevertheless gave without stint of his powers to carry the Gospel message to remote districts of the sparsely populated territory, braving the dangers of the prairie fires of autumn, the furious blizzards of the winter, and the floods of spring in doing so.

After the union of the various Methodist bodies in 1884, he retired from the ministry but continued to serve in a part-time capacity when called upon to do so. In 1908 he moved to Nelson, B.C. where, during World War I, because of the shortage of ministers, he volunteered to take a regular charge. He retired from the ministry in 1920 at the age of 80 and passed away in Nelson in January 1922.

7. *The First Days of the Bible Christian Church at Alexandria, Manitoba*, written by Rev. Henry C. Sweet in 1947 when he was 81 years of age. It appears in the Thornhill community history book, *As Years Go By*, (1971), and in the souvenir booklet for the unveiling and dedication of the Alexandria-Elam cairn, 10 July 1988. According to *Henderson's Directory for 1885-1886*, Rev. Wm Kinly was then serving the Gladstone circuit.

8. See page 106, *Methodism in the Middle West* by J. H. Riddell, D.D., LL.D., printed by the Ryerson Press.

9. In 1884 and 1885, according to the Henderson's directories for those years, Rev. James Hoskins was serving at Otenaw. In the late 1880s he returned to the Pembina Mountain district as minister of the Ebenezer congregation. Rev. Sweet notes that Rev. Hoskins lived at Manitou during the time he was an assistant to the Gordons.

10. The first students of the Ontario Veterinary College graduated in 1866. Dr. William Sweet was the 92nd graduated of this institution, Dr. Matthew Young of Pembina Crossing, the first government veterinary in southern Manitoba, the 93rd. *The Annual Announcement of the Ontario Veterinary College, Toronto, Canada, for its Session of 1875-1876* includes a complete "Register of those gentlemen who have graduated of that council".

11. A picture of these eleven missionaries, including Rev. J.M. Harrison and W. R. Morrison, Rev. Mearing's assistant and later successor at Morris, will be found as the frontpiece of the volume *Methodists in the Middle West*.

12. *Historic sketches of the Stonewall Circuit of the Methodist Church*.

13. Mr. C. H. Vrooman's 1950 *Story of Manitou* also mentions a Mr. Buller and a Mr. Colpitts as serving in the district. The latter was Rev. W. W. Colpitts of the Nelsonville Methodist Church, Mr. Buller may have been a student at Wesley College, (now the University of Winnipeg), who served on a temporary basis.

Dr. John P. Pennyfather, a pioneer of the Norquay district just east of Beaconsfield during the summer of 1880, recalls in his 1892 book *Thirteen Years on the Prairies* that during the winter of 1880-1881 "Presbyterians and Methodists held services every alternating Sunday", but does not mention whether any of these were conducted by ordained ministers. However, the *Emerson International* newspaper of 15 July 1880 notes that a Mr. Cross was conducting services on alternate Sundays in Robert McLeod's house. This Mr. Cross was a well-known pioneer and Methodist lay preacher.

14. The precise date when Rev. Mearing took up his ministry in the Beaconsfield district is currently not available. However, the 24 July 1881 issue of the *Manitoba Mountaineer* quotes the *Winnipeg Free Press* in an entry stating that "Rev. Mearing is holding services at Norquay on every alternate Sunday."

15. See the *Winnipeg Daily Times*, 19 June 1882

16. *Historical Sketch of Stonewall Circuit of the Methodist Church*.

17. According to the 16 November 1889 edition of the *Manitou Mercury* newspaper, Mr. Wm. Elliott, a missionary in Korfu, Japan, was engaged in the building of a Methodist mission church in that city modelled upon the Manitou Methodist Church.

18. In 1904, Dr. Matthew Young, V.S., originally of Pembina Crossing but by then living three miles south of Manitou, was associated with the Charles Gordon Land Company of Winnipeg, Manitoba and travelled extensively through the north central United States encouraging immigration to southern Manitoba. Among those who did come as a result of his efforts were some of the more successful farmers of the Holmfield district.

19. See *Clearing in the West* by Nellie McLung, chapter 37, published in 1935 by Thomas Allen Limited, Toronto, Ontario.

20. By the strangest of coincidences, Mrs. Black and her next door neighbour, Mrs. Nairne, had been born within hours of each other; Mrs. Black in Nova Scotia, Mrs. Nairne in Ontario.

21. The name Ebenezer is a reference to 1 Sam. 7:12, the place where the prophet Samuel raised a stone in memory of the triumph of the Children of Israel over the Philistines. The phrase eben-ha-'ezer is generally translated as "stone of help".

PROLOGUE

This is the life story of the Reverend Andrew Gordon and Mrs. Ann Copp Gordon, pioneers of Christian Home Mission work in Ontario and Manitoba, Canada. Andrew Gordon, the son of Robert and Jane Hall Gordon, was born at Macquires Bridge, seven miles from Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, North Ireland on 15 September 1830. He was the third generation of Irish Gordons, his grandparents, John Gordon and wife, Abbie Story Gordon, having come from Aberdeen, Scotland by way of the "clearances" to help found Protestantism in the north of Ireland.

After the passing of Andrew's father, in September 1846 his widowed mother and three sons and two daughters emigrated to the United States but within a year resettled in Tweed, Ontario, a short distance from the city of Belleville. Here he received his early education at Hungerford. In 1850 he entered the ministry of the Bible Christian Church, five years later became a probationer and was ordained in 1859. On 23 June 1859, in St. Thomas, Ontario he married Ann Copp who had recently arrived from Devon, England.

Ann Copp, (she was always called Annie by her husband), a daughter of John and Susan Copp was born in December, 1837, in the quaint village of Bideford, Devon. Her unusually vivacious personality was evident even in her childhood years. After completing the studies offered in the village school she was sent to a girl's private school in Exeter, South Devon, for three years. She always regretted the choice of this school as too much time was spent on fine needlework although, unknown to her, this was to greatly assist her in her lifework, clothing a family of six on the meagre salary of an itinerant minister. No shabby piece of work ever left her busy fingers, her exquisite darning and mending and unusual cleverness in making a good garment from an old one should have earned her a university degree in Household Arts. The older children's garments were all embroidered.

The Copp's home was a large, comfortable house below Church Hill, set back from the village street and looking down a long meadow. to the Torridge River Bridge and the old mill. It was a home of music, five instruments being played by the brothers and her father who led the village orchestra for 50 years. Confirmed in the church of England, Ann was a great favorite at the rectory and soon became the belle of the parish. Special training in dance, as well as her beauty, wit and a natural interest in people made her many friends. Life was gay and happy. However, feeling a lack of spiritual power in her church, she was drawn to take an interest in the people of the little Bible Christian chapel. There was a joy, a confidence emanating from them, even when experiencing harrowing circumstance, sickness, or bereavement. This she too longed to possess.

Fearful of her father's wrath, she never dared enter the chapel, but for a year

or more, sought the blessing of consecration. This struggle continued until one night, after telling her Heavenly Father she would not rise from her knees until He blessed her, she felt his presence, His hand on her head and a voice within her soul saying "Peace be unto thee". The struggle of her soul was over, an intense calm filled her and, though long after midnight, she slipped downstairs and ate a hearty meal, the first hunger she had felt in a long time.

This divine light now gave her the courage to proclaim her new found faith and she joined the despised Bible Christians, knowing full well that her father's wrath would be meted out to her. She was turned out of her home. Methodist friends took her in and she made her home with them for two years. In 1854, at the age of 18 she was entered on trial and in 1858 ordained as a local preacher by Rev. John Diamond and Rev. Henry Thorne of the Bible Christian Church in the village of Beeford, 12 miles south of Bideford. That she was divinely appointed to the work of saving souls was apparent as almost directly she began taking services, walking miles to preach to small groups. This, along with the grief of family separation, weakened her, and she fell ill with pneumonia. While still ill, her father insisted on her returning home.

Never limited before as to late hours, her evenings were now proscribed to early morning comings. She therefore made up her mind to join her brother William, who earlier had joined the Bible Christians and gone to Canada. Her mother gave her everything she needed for housekeeping, including an heirloom set of dishes which had been in the family for over two hundred years.

The family doctor insisted on a sailing voyage, believing the sea air would restore her health; the voyage was long and she arrived in London, Ontario, in 1858 to find that her brother was already married. After visiting for a few months, she planned to return home, but was persuaded to remain a year. In the meantime she met a Scottish-Irish probationer who was about to be ordained and, causing another break with her father, decided to take up life in the itinerant ministry of the Bible Christian Church.

- Annie Gordon

Foreword

This biography of Andrew and Ann Copp Gordon was written by their daughter Annie Rebecca (Daisy) Gordon between 1948 and 1955. Much of the original manuscript is in the possession of Daisy Gordon's nephew, Mr. Don Gordon, of Edmonton, Alberta; a typed copy of the balance will be found in the archives of the United Church at the University of Winnipeg.

The original type-written manuscript of this biography is some 180 pages in length and includes the following chapters .

Whither Thou Goest

1. Anne Copp, A Devon Maid
 - Childhood
 - Girlhood
 - Conversion; "Watchman, What of the Night"
 - leaving for Canada
2. Canada
 - A Wonderland
 - "O For the Wings of a Dove"
3. The "Grey" North
 - Lonely, Cold, Hungry in the Winter of 1859-1860
 - The "Ole" Boy Returns, 1860-1861
 - A Cheery Good-Bye
 - Port Hope, Perrytown, Tweed
4. Angusville, Brussels
 - Harry's Passing
 - Susan Mary born
5. The Conference Sermon, Port Hope 1868
6. Belleville
 - Establishing a Bible Christian Church
 - Prof. Macoun; Canada's Greatest 19th Century Botanist
7. Peterborough
 - Preaching Anniversary Sermons; Lindsay, Morning and Evening
 - Making the First Public Address
 - Chairman, Judge Benson of the Supreme Court of Canada
 - An Economy Heartbreak
 - Bert, a Dramatist

8. Pickering, 1877
 - An Episode
 - Quaker Stronghold, Pacifism
 - Will's Obedience
9. Uxbridge
 - Upholding the Western Missions
 - Bible Christian Conference, Port Hope, 1882
10. Pioneering Again; Manitoba's Pembina Hills
 - The Journey West
 - Our Arrival and New Home
 - Mosquitoes and Smudges
11. The Enchanting Prairie
 - Happy Birthday to You
12. Winter 1882-1883
 - A Shell of a House
13. Spring 1883
 - A Parachuter
 - A Prairie Fire
 - Jack Frost Returns
14. Manitou, 1884 - 1887
 - Union of the Methodists
 - The Christian Guardian
 - Life in a Pioneer Town
15. The "Moving" Move
16. Carman
 - Local Option; The Referendum
 - A Serenade
 - The Gay and Sad Extras
17. Portage la Prairie
 - Vote for the Plebiscite
 - Posting Bills
 - The Silver Speech; The Women's Christian Temperance Union at Rat Portage, (Kenora)

18. Wawanesa and Methven
 - Illness of Mother and Susie
 - Dr. Winnifred's Thomas Request
19. A Well-greased Wheel - Last Parish Circuit, High Bluff - A 16th Parsonage, Oh My!
20. Providence
 - "But the Lord is Mindful of His Own"
21. Good-Bye to Itinerancy
22. The Golden Wedding, 1909
23. Susie - The Stream Cascades
24. The Prime Minister's Letter, Lloyd George
25. The Diamond Wedding, 1919
26. Father - The Stream Sings over the Rapids
27. Mother - The Water of Life

PIONEERING AGAIN

The Journey West

Departure was arranged by the Conference Committee. Father and Will would leave on a west bound freight, 10 July 1882. The rest of the family would follow on an excursion train two days later and catch up with them in St. Paul. The family spent the night before their departure at the home of Rev. Roberts and the following day entrained for the long journey unaware it would be doubly as long as they expected. Wesleyans and Episcopalians joined Bible Christians at the station to bid the Gordons farewell.

Before settling for the night, (no pullman, tourist car or diner - but pillows and quilts to make some sort of comfort), Bert rushed in with the news that there had been a terrible wreck near Windsor and it would take all night to clear the track. There were many unexpected delays so that all through the United States what was supposed to be a speedy excursion train was, time and time again, pushed onto a side track, oft times to sit there for half a day. Fortunately, during these enforced stops, fruit, milk and other necessities could be procured in the towns, villages and farm houses. There were, of course, some advantages to these delays for they provided extra time to read, to rest and, most of all, to exercise in the fresh air. The last was particularly appreciated by many a tired mother with younger children, or teenagers, restless after having been trainbound for several days.

Bert, always on the alert for whatever might come into view, was filled with amazement at the seemingly endless train tracks in the Chicago yards. With eyes glued to the fascinating scene, suddenly, dancing with excitement, he shouted, "Mother, I see Will standing in the door of a freight car! Come and see!" All hurried, waved and called. Stolid Will called back enthusiastically.

Not long after, several box cars were attached to the excursion train, and the Gordon family was reunited one day sooner than expected. The lack of a comfortable bed was the only detriment to the long trip. Ann's interest in people, and the jolly personality and great fund of humorous stories of James Hoskins, (he was to be father's assistant in Manitoba), soon made the travellers one large family, even to having evening prayers and singing together the good old hymns. The number of passengers gradually decreased as they disembarked at several places after leaving St. Paul. Many were settlers taking up land in Dakota. Had the road bed been better ballasted, the train would have made better time, but at last it lumbered into Emerson in the late afternoon of 19 July.

Before leaving Uxbridge an effort had been made to locate our destination in Manitoba. The closest we could come was an Alexander on the east side of James Bay, far from any other settlement. Alexander was where we expected to pioneer. No wonder Ann's cheeks blanched at the thought, but when joined by her husband

in Chicago she was relieved to find that their destination was an Alexandria in the Pembina Hills just a few miles above the Red River Valley and not far north of Dakota. Here there was a parsonage just vacated by a Bible Christian pastor, a Rev. Kinley. At least three families from Port Hope, well known to the Gordons, lived within a few miles and attended the church. The church property was on the farm of T.D. Elliott who had made the arrangements for the trek from Emerson to the Gordon's new posting in these hills.

Andrew Gordon, who had learned much of western Canadian pioneer life from members of the crews on the trains running between Emerson and St. Paul and from several others who had experienced it first hand, felt a gladsome thankfulness for his role in saving the Bible Christian mission in this part of the West. What he saw and heard in the few hours spent in bustling Emerson made him realize that this new land, with endless possibilities, would open up quickly. He would have a part in this pioneering, but he never doubted for a moment that he and his family would be returning to Ontario in a few years.

On arrival it was found that the spare bedroom off the hotel parlour had been secured for the minister and his wife. Two horse-hair covered couches and a small settee in the parlour provided sleeping accommodations for the girls while the boys bunked down on the carpeted floor. Great comfort for all after the long journey. Speeder, Father's ever faithful driver, was disembarked soon after reaching Emerson and the phaeton unloaded and parked near the hotel. Though the carriage was greatly admired, all the men, (for many gathered around), declared it was a mistaken idea for prairie trails. Buckboards and wagons and only certain kinds of buggies were the only really suitable vehicles. "This," they all prophesied, "would last no time." How mistaken they were! For seventeen years, six circuits, this phaeton gave excellent service to the Gordons as they travelled over hundreds of miles of prairie trail.

As the stores were open in the evening, Ann was able to purchase supplies, chiefly bread, flour, oatmeal, cracked wheat and a ham. The hotel cook was kind enough to boil the ham together with a large pot of potatoes, assuring the family of meals on the trail for a couple of days. "Household goods will be transferred to the wagons at an early hour; breakfast will be at six!" said Father. "Several heavy rains have made the trails rough. Everything going west for three hundred miles passes over this trail so it will take a long day to reach Alexandria sixty miles directly west."

Father and Bert rode in the high seat of the first wagon while Abbie and Will took turns driving the center one. Mother, with Sue driving Speeder, brought up the rear. Nan snuggled between Mother and Sue while Rob, seated on an upturned pail behind them, completed the list of passengers in this last vehicle. Once out of Emerson the view to the north, east and west was amazing...a flat treeless prairie that gave one a haunting feeling of its lonely immensity.

How quaint we found the first Mennonite village we drove through; long buildings stretching back from the trail - living rooms, barns, granaries, stables and storerooms all under one roof. The waving of hands indicated friendliness as the stout, well-groomed matrons and equally well-groomed children came out to watch the passing travellers. A stop at early noon gave the party an opportunity to observe something of the homelife of these rugged Russian settlers. A door in the side of the home led into a large kitchen with a built-in stove constructed of clay and stone. This room also served as a store room and as extra sleeping quarters. Close to the stove was a door into the front room. This was a combined dining, sitting and bedroom. A long, narrow table with benches on each side was set with a large dish containing the meal consisting of meat and several kinds of vegetables. Each guest helped themselves. Two very large, well-made chests, a clock, a piece of pottery, a pewter pitcher and a couple of stools formed the remainder of the furnishings. The room was well-lighted with two, four-pane casement windows, one overlooking the trail, the other on the opposite wall was centered between two double bunk beds. Everything showed careful and scrupulously clean housekeeping. The big chests were polished and the brass ornament on a little shelf shone like gold.

As old Sol was dipping his hot face beneath the western horizon, he let loose a plague. Mosquitoes in clouds rose and feasted on these fresh Ontario folk. Bad roads and heavy loads had made it impossible to reach even the foot of the hills and so the drivers sought early shelter in the next village. Here no one wanted these travellers for the night, and the same response was found in the next village. All were concerned, especially for Rob, whose face was swollen beyond recognition; Nan was a close second. The refusal to open the door in the next, and last village, which would have meant an all night stay out in the open, dark, mosquito-infested prairie, was met with threats as the drivers, with one accord, hammered on the door. "We'll burst the door if you do not open. We have women and children with us."

Swishing the mosquitoes off at the fire smudge, we quickly took shelter in the almost dark outer room; the men followed into the front room. They moved the table over and put the benches against the wall. In a few minutes armfuls of hay were brought in and strewn on the floor. Over this was placed a layer of buffalo robes, pillows and quilts. After rubbing ointment on Rob and Nan, they were soon in "the Land of Nod" on the narrow benches.

The Mennonite women, sleeping on feathers in the upper bunk, awakened by this intrusion, kept pushing their feather blankets down for more coolness. The drivers said that our reception at this last village was not unusual; it was often bypassed and late night travellers over this section of the trail were not uncommon. Everyone showed signs of the ravages of the mosquitoes, but the weary travellers, in spite of not being used to sleeping on mud floors, were all soon asleep.

An early start, after an even earlier breakfast, brought them to the foot of the

shale and pebbled covered Pembina Hills. It was a steep, twisty, rocky climb. A soft wind from the west gently swayed the prairie grass, "like sea waves," murmured Ann. (Years later the children were to learn that this was the western shore of ancient Lake Agassiz.) Unbending clumps of shrubs, standing like sentinels here and there across the undulating prairies, yielded only slightly to the wind. In the distance the horizon was darkly lined with timber and a few farm.

"How beautiful!" came with one accord from all as they continued westward. Close to the trail a wooded valley, supreme in its lovely rich, many-hued greenness, wound its way below the crest of the hills. A rabbit bounded across the trail and Rob spied a fox trotting down the valley far below. Wee animals ran to and fro, then perched on their haunches beside their hole, saucily saying, "you catch me," as they scuttled down it only to reappear at another hole a few yards away.

"They're not squirrels for squirrels live in trees," said Nan. "I wonder what they are." Gophers, she soon learned, and she was to chase many in the months to come. From their many front and back doors, they could always "chit" their saucy answer. After passing bumpily over the roots and stones of a clump of scrub, the travellers found themselves beside a little frame church with a wee frame house across a long meadow. "Home," breathed Ann. The welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Elliott, (old friends and former parishioners from Port Hope), waiting at the parsonage door, was a truly western one and soon all were enjoying a good, hot dinner at the Elliotts were house, barn and the meal were all reminiscent of Ontario.

When we returned to our new parsonage there was no problem in deciding which rooms would be used for what purpose. There was one room downstairs and this became kitchen, dining room, parlour and study. There was one room upstairs and here three beds completely filled the south wall, the low bedsteads just fitted against the three foot wall below the eave. "Close quarters," said Abbie as she threw a heavy quilt over the freshly filled straw tick with a feather tick on top. "A piece of carpet between each bed, with a curtain along the front, will make for a little privacy," answered Mother. The upstairs furniture was arranged against the north wall. The organ case was placed in the center, (this was the closet for our best clothes), then on either side were two of Father's bookcases, one to hold things not required in summer, the other turned on its side for use as a dresser. A packing case in each corner completed the arrangements on this floor.

Sue, downstairs, was arranging dishes and kitchen utensils brought in by the younger children while Will carried bedding upstairs. All the rest of the luggage was piled in the "parlour" for consideration the next day. By then it was time for supper with more western hospitality appearing as Mrs. Elliott called everyone to the table for their first meal in their new home, a great, long pan of hot corncakes with a jar of maple syrup! How Mrs. Elliott laughed when told by Ann that she had filled her jam jars with butter thinking it might be a long time before any was available in the

west.

"Why," said Harriet Elliott, "we have a big herd of cattle, at least ten cows, and make butter every week. Fruit is what you should have brought as berry time is past. However, there will be plenty of plums, cherries and cranberries and these take the place of apples as there's such an abundance of them." All this good news was relished along with the corncake and syrup. Both Mother and Father gave fervent thanks to God that night at evening prayers for the kind welcome they had received. They believed His guiding hand was in this new venture though both knew there was strenuous work ahead and dreaded the long drives in Manitoba's severe winter.

By supper time two days later, the study-parlour was settled down and looked quite comfy. The "silver-tongued" organ with its real ivory and ebony keys and solid walnut case was placed across from the bookcase; Father's beautiful portable writing case sat on his desk beside the east window. Two high-backed ruttan rockers, one Ann's, the other belonging to the parsonage, formed the balance of the main furnishings. Corner shelves displayed a few pieces of beautiful Devon china, survivors of the many moves each three years. The single window boasted fresh curtains and on the floor there a new, bright rag-rug carpet. This was the "retreat" for family prayers and a none-too-quiet place for study.

The children, who had always lived in a town or city, were thrilled with the countryside. Something ever-new and interesting came with their daily treks across the prairies and up and down the nearby ravines. Everyone in the family found joy in this wonderful prairie flower garden. The sweet scented prairie flowers drew young and old to admire and gather them. It was truly one great flower garden with banks of roses perfuming the air and great beds of tiger lilies in their tall dignity tossing splashes of orange against the dainty blue lupines. The children found the grassy ravines especially fascinating. Here deep rutted paths, cut into the sod by great herds of buffalo, led down these ravines to pools of water. What fun it was to try and walk, buffalo-like, foot crossing foot, along these steep paths!

The countryside was a perpetual delight. Warning was given to the children to keep away from the heavily wooded ravines to the south as they extended well across the border and it would be an easy matter to lose ones way. Directly east of the church was a mile of prairie encircled by a beautifully wooded ravine. Along each side of the faint trail running through it were surveyor's stakes marking lots for the embryo town of Alexandria. Mr. Hoskins knew a bit of doggerel verse about prairie staked towns, "They're all surveyed and marked with stakes and I think that's a queer joke." As it eventually turned out it was no joke for the real estate man who owned this townsite because, when the railway was built through the country, it missed Alexandria by some miles.

People came from near and far to the first church service. It was reminiscent

of the country services in the east as the people raised their voices in the grand old familiar hymns and listened to a sermon on God's guiding providence. Just as the church service was over, a great brown bear ambled leisurely across the meadow between the church and the parsonage. A wagon filled with men chased after it and, three miles distant, Mr. Bear, not enjoying being pursued, took refuge in a tree. A fire was built to keep Bruin in his refuge while the hunters secured the loan of a gun from the nearest farmhouse. Tasty bear steaks were on the menus of many families for some time after this. Two weeks later, a young bear was discovered in a farmer's granary looking for something besides berries and again the settlement enjoyed the meat.

(Just after we left Alexandria, farmers were puzzled over the loss of stock and poultry; sheep and calves were being feasted on by some wild animal. For three years it preyed upon local livestock before this fearsome ravager was felled by a shot from a well aimed gun. It proved to be a mountain lion which, it was believed, had wandered into the Pembina Hills from the farm west via the badlands of Dakota.)

MOSQUITOES AND SMUDGES

These numberless stinging insects, with a high pitched-song preceeding their vicious attacks, made dull days and many evenings a horror. Cotton mosquito netting was tacked over the windows to give some protection from the pests and this was assisted by a smudge at the door. After a hot day one craved to be out of doors. A wide-brimmed, ten cent straw hat draped with netting and securely fastened to the neck, shooed off the stingers but even the constant swishing with a leafy poplar branch did not save an unprotected part from the agile foe. An application of ointment to lessen the hot sting was a daily and nightly task.

After one of those hot August days when the close upstairs, too hot for sleeping, made retiring later than usual, all were roused by a voice saying "This is the place," and two men made a dash for the welcome smudge, knocking as they entered the open door.

"Who's there?" called Father as he jumped out of bed, quickly donning trousers. He hurried down to find two of the head officials of the church out on an inspection tour of the four or five of our southern mission fields. These were well-known gentlemen and it was a glad surprise for us to see them.

A late supper refreshed the tired travellers. An alteration of sleeping arrangements was quickly made; the boys moved downstairs onto a shakedown leaving their bed upstairs for their parents; the guests moved into the Gordon's front upstairs "bedroom". As the light was turned out, the reverend gentleman on the inside, not used to the close quarters of pioneer bedrooms, instead of the pillow, struck his head with great force on a rafter. "Oh!" he called, "I've broken my casket!" What innate wickedness impells one to laugh at another's discomfort! We shook with

laughter but extinguished the peals by sheer force of will. It was not funny for the rafter-hitter. Father insisted on rubbing the already-swollen lump with ointment.

The stories of our prolonged journey, our experiences with the Russian life of the Mennonites, the bear stories, the amazing wonders of the prairies, not forgetting the mosquito pests, made the early morning hours pass quickly. Then off to call on the Elliots, then the Whites, and the other homes in which Father preached nearby. They returned with appetites well whetted by the invigourating prairie air for a dinner of prairie chicken pie, vegetables and fresh saskatoons covered with cream.

This was the beginning of seventeen years of visitors, all of whom we enjoyed, and of stop-overs, some of whom we endured. In those early years there were many of the latter and all were made welcome and as comfortable as possible. Newspapers were rare in our pioneer settlement and so, as in the days when Ben Johnson and his contemporaries met in Ye Ould Cheshire Cheese Inn when the stagecoach arrived with the news, newcomers from the east were warmly welcomed.

Other than our guests, our principal sources of news and information were the *Observer*, (the Bible Christian Church paper), the *Montreal Witness* and an engineering periodical from London, England. Of course, news came more quickly when the first railroad was built. News of federal and provincial achievements, or the lack of the same, were of especially great interest and spiced many a stop-over dinner. These were, of course, the days when political opinions were sharply divided with well-meaning and alert men willing to vote for a yellow cat if it was running for his particular side, either Grit or Tory

THE ENCHANTING PRAIRIE

By the middle of August the riotous blooming of the dogwood roses, having perfumed the air as a prairie greeting, had passed. So too had disappeared the tiger lilies, great splashes of bright colour, and so we knew that the fall flowers were coming to clothe the prairies with a autumn dress of enchantment and great beauty.

Mother and Susie had a special love for flowers and our one room, a combined parlour, dining room and kitchen, became a real conservatory as vases were filled, and then quart jars and tumblers were requisitioned, to display old fashioned bouquets of fireweed, pearly everlasting, harebells, bellwort, sedge and toadflax. Blue bells always adorned the study table, the organ and the bookshelves, regaling all in a royal way. One can imagine the delight of Professor Macoun, wandering over the western prairies in the early seventies, cataloguing these gems of God's great outdoor conservatory for the Canadian government.

Inspite of the superabundance of flowers, honey bees were, in those times, totally unknown on the Canadian prairies and it was said the province would never produce honey. Then, one realized how abundant the nectar of the sweet prairie

flowers was although today, in 1952, Manitoba is the greatest producer of honey in Canada.

Mother, who loathed weeds, rejoiced that not a Canadian or Scotch thistle, nor a mustard plant, was to be found, although an odd French weed, and much chick weed, could be seen. The former was always plucked. "How did it get here?" asked Rob. Birds coming north in the spring drop seeds, he was told, and soon after, when all these noxious weeds became pests that had to be exterminated, they even began arriving in our seed grain.

We were not to know the sweetest of all the prairie flowers, the mauve anemone, our dearly loved crocus, until the following spring. With its furry coat for protection from the frost and snow, it was one of the first heralds to announce that the long reign of Jack-of-the-North was over and spring had arrived. The crocuses were followed by the dainty blue and white violets snuggling shyly in the prairie grass.

If mauve and blue ushered in spring, summer was bid adieu by purple and gold flowers and foliage painted across the prairies and the deep grass-covered ravines, a scene of particular beauty to recall when the white world reigned. Clumps of purple and white asters on their fragile stems swayed in the slightest breeze, yellow plumes of goldenrod nodded in bright dignity beside its tall neighbour, the prairie sunflower. Our joy was complete when wandering farther than usual along the west trail, we spied ahead deep, rich orange and ran to see who would capture this prize first. Our Susan's eyes glowed like the heart of this latest find, brown-eyed susans, a princess among fall flowers.

We found this complete joy even heightened when Mother and Father returned from visits near Calf Mountain where, along the edge of the slough at the foot of the mound, they found a relative of the "flower kingdom empress - the orchid", in the charming yellow lady slipper, breathtaking in its novel beauty. It was only an appetite whetted by the cool of a Manitoba morning which could make one indulge in anything so mundane as nourishing bodily needs at a table bedecked in orange, purple, silver, gold and Cinderella slippers fit for a royal occasion.

Each new day was ushered in with new excitements. The three younger children rejoiced in a special gift from a friend who knew the shut-in days ahead would be monotonous. It was to be a practical gift which, in one case, gave long years of faithful, loving doggie comfort. Bert named his collie "Hector" and his fourteen years of devotion are still affectionately remembered. Rob called his long-eared, glossy, curled spaniel "Rover". He was a pet for herding and duck shooting. Day got a smartly marked black kitten named Tomie with white shirt front, white toes and a white tipped tail. The boys thought it fun to sick the puppies on Tomie. Day ably helped her pet when war was proclaimed although wee Tomie generally could give

a good account of himself and, in a losing battle, could take refuge close by in a scrub oak tree safe from the impudent, barking puppies. What one has to fight for becomes precious and Day's love for her handsome kitten grew accordingly.

Bert, with Rob sometimes as his assistant, secured a job herding Mr. Elliott's cattle on a big stretch of prairie north of the small bluff near the parsonage. "I'll do this, Father, if you'll let me have the Illiad and the Odyssey." The three much-prized volumes were the first English edition of the Illiad. Boys, puppies and the land of Troy were off each morning directly after breakfast. What better schooling than the wonders of the prairies and the wonderful ravines where, as the doggies barked themselves hoarse in their delight as they ran down the deep buffalo tracks, building cairns from the bones of Manitoba's emblem was an easy task.

Great boulders on the usually stoneless prairies were a topic of interest to all, and these, along with the flowers, birds and animals, were constantly discussed. Information was diligently researched in the very large, morocco-bound "Polar and Tropical World". No better world-wide geography was ever published as nothing had escaped the compilers of this great work which included all the known members of the plant, animal and mineral kingdoms from the Arctic to the Antarctic. Having examined this work we learned that evidence of the ice age was all around us including the shore of the ancient Lake Agassiz just below the Pembina Hills.

Supper, especially when Father and Mother were home in the summer, was partaken on our great boulder in a nearby ravine. Here our deep-dish prairie chicken pie, new potatoes, piping hot beet pickles and woodsy-tasting saskatoons overspread with Devonshire cream were all doubly delicious. These were red letter days which could dispel all former thoughts of a life of loneliness, deprivation and fear. It was well to have this hoarded joy to re-live on less exciting days during the reign of the Frost King when there was more time for indoor study and new tasks.

And what of the deadly weapons purchased for safety from the wild red man? The laugh was on the pastor as his former parishioners from Port Hope and other Ontario settlers teased him. True, three years later, when the Saskatchewan rebellion broke out, the Sioux Indians, coming along the Emerson Trail on their way to Brandon, were restless, but, on the whole, "Buckey" was friendly.

Shortly after the bear episode, Sue, at home preparing dinner so that Father could be off early for an afternoon service, was startled when the sunlit, open door, was darkened by a tall Indian who, without ceremony except a grunt, stalked in. No war paint or crown of feathers but dressed in a pair of dark trousers and a rather none-too-clean shirt, he did not appear aggressive. His constant call of "Buckety! Buckety!" was puzzling to Sue, who at first sight, all alone, was terror stricken. Naturally very courageous, nevertheless she was most relieved when Mr. Elliot appeared, breathless after running a quarter of a mile. He had noticed the Indian

turning into the parsonage and knew Susie was alone and would be frightened. When the strange word "Buckety" was translated "hungry" the Indian's need was soon satisfied. Sue was the heroine of the dinner hour.

A little later we were to see the Redman in feathers and war paint, and to hear the shrieking squeak of the Red River Cart giving a long warning of its approach. The squaw, with her papoose in its laced hammock and other bundles on her back, walked heavily behind her, tall straight master, who was free of all family cares.

The Winchester rifle and the old breech loader of Enniskillen and Crimean days were constantly in use bringing down the straight-flying prairie chicken. The deadly weapons were also used for sport as well as hunting. The long meadow, shorn of its timothy grass for winter fodder, made a shooting gallery where, between haying and harvest, shooting tournaments made gay the long summer evenings for young men and maidens interested in this sport. Much to her father's amusement, Sue became very expert in hitting the bull's eye with the long-barrelled pistol.

After few very hot days ripened the grain, cutting and threshing machines were brought in. Binding was done by hand. The nights were closing in and the evening air had the twang of the far north. This was not a heartening reminder for the farmer, and so the harvesters worked at top speed from early morn to late in the evening. Gradually cone-shaped stacks rose from all the stubble-covered fields.

"I am sure I can build a better stack if you will let me try. I am certain," said the minister to his near neighbour. Permission was reluctantly granted and soon a stack on the wheat field north of the parsonage rose from its oval foundation, curving out from its base and then curved upwards into a long, thin top. Very artistic!

Inwardly, Mr. Elliott must have prayed, "Rain, rain, keep away", an unanswered prayer as the first fall rains slithered down both curved sides drenching every blessed sheaf. Fortunately a warm day and a dry west breeze followed. Doing more than his bit at restoration, the fancy stack builder had to admit that architectural beauty in grain stacks was not practical and very soon proper stacks dotted the field. In the meantime, the double curved stack had attracted the attention of passers-by along the trail. The wise smiled and shook their heads and wherever the missionary went he was greeted with humorous comments, returned with equal Irish glee as, after all, the wheat had been mercifully saved.

As few farmers owned threshing machines, they worked co-operatively. A gang would all help one neighbour until his entire crop was safely stored in the granary, then they would move on to the next neighbour. As it was not possible to predict how long the threshing gang might be at one farm, the wives of these farmers had to be blessed with remarkable patience and strength. In one instance, because providing three meals a day in threshing season was hardly humanly possible for one pair of

hands, Sue went to help Mrs. Trick during a few day's threshing. Bread, buns and pies had been made in advance but the threshing gang consumed as much food at each meal as a small army. Three spells of heavy rains, with the gang sitting around the house rather than working in the fields, lengthened the three-day job into three weeks. Sue returned very tired but with heartfelt sympathy for the farmer's wives.

There were many things to glory in during the lovely fall days, but everything else, the beautiful wild floweres, delicious wild fruit, the wild animals great and small, wild fowl and birds, the loveliness of the dark green timeber with patches of green and yellow in the wind-protected bluffs, all these paled before the glorious autumn sunsets. The spendour of these filled one and all with breathless awe.

"And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed," quoted Mother as we gazed in wonder at a scene no artist's brush could paint. Any shade from Ole Sol's firey rays were sought during the day. Now he showed his mighty heat standing on the horizon, a great molten ball, then only a small arc, shrinking and firing rays upwards, fan-like, in shafts of orange, red, silver and gold, each beam a perfect rainbow.

Sue, our artist, proclaimed:

Who can paint like nature?

Can imagination boast

Amids its vast domains

Hues like hers?

Now a fleecy cloud is shaded from a light rose to a dainty pink, a blue sky forming a matchless background. We were entranced when the fleecy clouds to the east caught these colours, their pink edges streaming away into soft violet and amber. Not until the last touches of colour turned to the blue-grey of night did we turn in.

Each day brought its own excitement and work was quickly dropped when a call beckoned that something unusual had to be seen. One day those in the house thought a cloud had apparently darkened the sun until staid, quiet Will's lust call of "Come out! Hurry! Be quick!" suggested there was something that should not be missed. The sun was well on its way westward but it was not darkened by a cloud, but by a very black, swiftly moving, massive flock of birds, red-winged blackbirds travelling enmass to their winter home.

Suddenly, with one accord, they dropped onto a stubble field close at hand. We did not need to be mute as the air resounded with harsh "cacks", followed by a pleasant liquid song "conk-er-ee" given with much bowing and spreading of wings and tail as they partook greedily of the fallen kernels of wheat. What a sight! -the yellow stubble alight with raven black, dotted all over in a pattern of bright scarlet and buff streaked with the brownish black of the females. Did one harsh "cack" mean "quick

march?" for, when a bounteous supper had supplied nature's need, they rose as if at a signal and continued their southward journey. We just looked at one another and marvelled while Abbie hummed "The sun shall be no more thy light by day". This great flock had actually darkened the sun.

Father soon brought us down to terra firma when he said, "This means winter is just in the offing and you boys will start tomorrow and bring earth from beyond the barn and bank the house. I fear we'll be none too warm in this shell of a house." Cool nights gave impetus to this work and soon the house was piled to the window sills.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

"Where did you find those exquisite roses, Day? I thought they were all gone long ago", asked Sue on her early September birthday.

"Rob and I found them down the road, south of a bluff where virgin soil had been broken in June," was the reply. As she inhaled the queen of perfumes, Sue thought, and rightly so, that roses were more beautiful when grown on newly turned soil and cool nights enhanced their colour, making them deep and rich.

"What a lovely pioneer birthday feast!" said our happy Sue - Mother's chicken pie, new potatoes and corn-on-the-cob and the boy's saskatoons with cream. And then there were the gifts, the perfume of Day's beautiful bouquet, Abbie's warm knitted mitts topped by Father's amazing dollar bill which could purchase lots of stationery in Emerson. We called Susie our "top of the clown" sister for she excelled at dramatics and was additionally gifted with literary talents, reading, reciting, and an unusually fine memory.

Remembering birthdays bring joyous, comforting, heart-warming thoughts, indicators of affection. The entire family's love overflowed when Susie's birthday came round, second only to Mother's. The joy of finding those surprise roses is still bright in memory's jewel box. The sunshine of life is made up of very little beams which are bright all the time.

We all sang out our picture of Sue!

A cheery word and cheery smile;
How fast they foot it for a mile,
With what bright glamor and what sweet smile,
They made home heaven and life worth while."

This cooler weather sharpened already large appetities. The menu was wholesome and nourishing. If summer had been filled with exciting adventures, now autumn brought new experiences. One evening supper was hot potato balls made round with bacon filling the hollowed centers, garnished with lettuce and chili sauce. This had just been partaken of when sounds unheard before caused all to hurry out.

We were so immersed at the sight of our first sky-borne vee not a word was uttered until the last sound of wing and voice was lost in the distance over the hills. Led by their commodore's great "honk, each bird of the long vee caught the cry and "honked" their swift flight southward. Information about geese flying south is very different from the real experience of seeing that great, winged army shimmering across the blue sky honking their joy that their great journey was half over. We never lost the thrill of seeing these decorous geese in flight. What a mystery that annual flight is! If John Mason's verdict of the changes in the universe now taking place slowly proceed, the geese will be reversing their time of flight. That is a big "if", but not so with that mother o' mine for she firmly believed she would meet her barnyard geese in heaven.

Many others honked their way southward and the Winchester brought down two or three, and what princely dinners we then enjoyed. Once, and only once, a sandhill crane was caught on the wing and to chickens, ducks and geese was added this "wild turkey" although its wild favour was not so greatly enjoyed. With such providential additions to our larder, you will not be surprised to read that each morning the missionary led family prayers acknowledging God's gracious gifts from nature's storehouse while the lay-preacher led the evening thanksgiving.

We were not to miss the aroma of Ontario's fruit orchards as prairie scrub, (as it was called), glowed each spring with banks of blossoms of many kinds of wild fruit. As fall came, these ripened to bright red cherries, plums, and a little later, high bush cranberries, all in unlimited quantities. Where could one find a finer, more delicious flavour than the bright red, wild cherry jelly? There were also plums, soft and easily prepared although some had to receive special treatment to remove their bitterness. The jam made appetizing pies and puddings and was equally delicious with bread and buns. Great quantities of cranberry jelly and jam filled Mother's sealers as these were emptied of our dearly-loved Ontario apples. Cranberries taken in bunches from the bush and kept fresh in a barrel of water in the cellar were prepared as need for early winter use.

Money, until grain was hauled the sixty miles to Emerson and sold, was scarcer than hen's teeth and the farmers, knowing their pastors' need, paid his salary in kind. The parsonage garden had been planted entirely to potatoes but their yield was insufficient for a large, growing family. Therefore filling the pastor's cellar with "fodder" for the winter was the parishioner's concern. Often the phaeton returned from a circuit loaded with vegetables to be carefully stored in boxes in the cellar below the house. Others paid in bags of flour, oatmeal or buckwheat for the buckwheat porridge that was Father's preferred morning stimulant.

And what were the itinerants doing throughout this summer and fall? Enjoying it immensely and seeing the entire countryside for miles, northward across the prairie and into the heavy bushland and westward across the limitless plains.

They called at every home; some of them had not been visited by a minister since they had turned the first furrow on their homesteads. Friendly talk was always followed by Bible Reading and prayer and often by an invitation to hold a service in their home. Several of these soon assumed a certain degree of permanency and it was thus that two more preaching places, that at Wm. Whites and one in the Ferris Boulton home near Calf Mountain and the Ching settlement, were added. These were close compared to the long journey across the Pembina Valley to Snowflake, the Jabez Miller settlement.

Among the many fall activities, school work for the three younger ones began in earnest as sums, problems, spelling, history and geography commenced. Fundamental facts were repeated until as well known as $2 + 2 = 4$. It was self teaching, assisted where possible by their elders who planned the school menu. With chores to be done and playing with their fast growing pets, time was not boring for the schoolless ones.

Abbie went into Winnipeg via Emerson to take a Normal Course in preparation for taking charge of the first school in southern Manitoba built near the Ching district west and south of Alexandria.

THE GAY AND SAD EXTRAS

There was no time for dullness or inactivity in a minister's life for it was spiced with weddings, baptisms and funerals. The variety of weddings was as great as their number and the variation in the size of the stipends received was equally as diverse. There were church weddings, home weddings, and parsonage-rectory weddings. Church and home weddings were carefully planned and perfectly performed. Parsonage weddings were often cheery and homey, sometimes hurried and, once in a while, ludicrous.

One of the latter was the cause for much merriment. When the minister, Father, at the end of the ceremony, said, "Kiss your bride", the gay young bride started to race, running around the room, out into the hall, into the dining room and around the dining room table. Caught at last by the groom to the applause of the family, who had followed him surprised glee, she was smothered with kisses to the merriment of the senior and teenage witnesses. They drove off happy as larks while the stipend receiver hauled the bag of spuds to the cellar bin. Years later, as this episode was relived, it still brought chuckles. What kids they were!

Another wedding was more pathetic than ludicrous. The minister was notified in one of his far-off appointments by a young farmer with a rosy cheeked, bright young lady beside him, of the day and hour they wished to be married and it was duly noted. The midsummer day dawned bright and warm but in the early afternoon black clouds appeared in the south driven by a strong wind. They soon blotted out the sunshine and peals of thunder were a prelude to a heavy downpour of rain. "I

hope", said Father, "that those two were prepared for this rain. If not, they will likely turn back." It was no sooner said than the couple drove up. Prepared! Not even a parasol to shelter them from the deluge which soon spent itself.

The poor bride! Her dress, as thin as cheesecloth, which it actually was in the natural colour, (it must have looked a cooling cream when matched with her rosy cheeks and flaxen hair, and quite bride-like), now clung laundry-style to her girlish form. Mother insisted on her changing to a dry dress. Sue had already gone upstairs to look for something suitable. "The sun has come out. Your dress will soon dry and we'll press it out", they said.

But, no. There was a long drive home where a wedding feast was waiting for them and the warm sun would dry out her dress and hat on the return trip. It was obvious that happiness did not consist in clothes, dry or wet. So the marriage ceremony was performed and a cup of hot Devon tea was enjoyed as an extra heater before the happy couple drove off to celebrate with family and friends..

WINTER 1882-1883

As we made our way to Manitoba in July 1882, we repeatedly asked ourselves, "What would the weather be like in Manitoba?" An old, toothless man Mother met on the train west attempted to allay her fear of the winter, "I've seen many a Danuary, but I never saw a Danuary without a thaw". He would have to retract if he lived to see the January of 1883.

By the middle of November daylight had greatly shortened and we were in the midst of what proved to be a long, and severe, stormy winter. It held its sway of terror for more than six months, for this was truly a year of two seasons - summer and winter. It was a winter of great anxiety because the prairie trails were hard to follow and if one accidentally lost ones way there were but few barbed wire fences to guide one to some farmyard. Mother often accompanied her husband on his travels to his various preaching points, (services were generally conducted in the homes of the settlers), but just as frequently she remained at home to minister to the needs of the settlement. On Sundays, Father preached three times, Mother twice. Mother's gifts for this ministry included her spiritual intuition nourished by her Heavenly Father through prayer, her clear silvery soprano voice, her overflowing zeal and deep Christian experience.

This was a winter of many, many cold miles, all of them a battle with the frost. However, with a buffalo robe below and one above, and a hot brick for each foot, they managed to keep the Frost King at bay. The nor'westers were harder to combat. The great umbrella, (in the east used in the phaeton for rain protection), was now brought into commission for winter use. It was the sort of umbrella Josiah and Samantha carried when taking their Exhibition Trips. It was ribbed with heavy whalebone and boasted a long corkscrew yellow handle. A finely woven top cover made it equal in

comfort to an extra fur coat.

Speeder's canny intuition could be depended upon to keep on the trail even when it was hidden beneath hard drifts and billowy waves of snow. We have since learned that aeons and aeons ago the center of the continent was ocean from the Arctic to the Gulf of Mexico. In those early winters, casting an eye across the endless hillocks of snow or the waving long grass in summer, it was not hard to imagine this ancient aquatic phenomena.

Indoors, battling with the frost was an hourly job as well, but without the dangers of the outdoors. Our home had neither plaster nor insulation but only the outer layers of lumber, and so breakfasts were eaten in a gleaming chamber, resplendent with a sheen suggesting to us the decorations of a fairy palace. Every bent-in nail was hoar-frosted with diamonds. An hour or two later the heat of our stove dissolved our gem encrusted walls; the diamonds melted, ran down the walls and turned to ice when they reached the sill of our foundationless palace. On warmer days, when this ice started to re-melt and seep across the floor, it was a chore for the two younger boys, Bert and Rob, to carefully chop it loose and throw it out. This task ceased to be fun as the weeks and months of the long bitter winter all too slowly changed to milder weather.

But that never-to-be-forgotten winter was not altogether humdrum. There were exciting occurrences rivalling the V-shaped, winged honking of the wild geese. One morning shouts from the boys, (they had risen early to get a good crackling fire going), rudely broke any extra snoozes as they yelled up the stairway, "Get up! Dress quickly!" Naturally everyone was quickly out, snugly dressed, to see the sight which made one breathless with its magic beauty. A mirage! Wonderful magic! Brilliantly beautiful! The whole Red River Valley lay at our feet. The heavy timber along the edge of the hills was subdued and the entire valley rose, dotted directly east by many Mennonite villages smartly lifting their one storied buildings to the heights unbelievably dignified. Even Emerson, sixty miles away, a sizable town, was lifted to our amazed view as were the scattered farmhouses bordering the Boyne River away to the north. So amazed, so awed were we at the transfigured landscape that we felt like Peter on the Mount - "Let us build a tabernacle here", but steaming porridge dishes and fresh crispy toast brought the worshippers down to the mundane fact that a half-hour of the ozone of an early frosty morning had whetted the unusual rapacious prairie appetites. Before morning prayers the wonder-dream silence was broken, tongues loosed and the scene relived vocally to be locked in memory's fairyland basket of jewels.

Another call brought all out to see the Stubbins homestead, three miles away and sheltered from view by a bluff. It rose tower-like with the housewife hanging out the family washing and every movement of article and clothes-peg showing, as if we might say "Hello" to her and compliment her on her good housekeeping.

There were many of these atmospheric marvels, but only one other as marvelous as our Red River Valley scene. That came when we dressed on the double quick after a "Hurry up" call. This mirage greeted us from the south. The deep swath of forest along the Pembina River retreated, and a long stretch of Dakota ascended on high, showing the same farm and village-dotted prairie as we had seen when the Red River Valley rose and filled us with awe. God's handiwork in Nature is incomparable.

We watched until our every day landscape reappeared, but the vision of Nature's handiwork remained a never-to-be-forgotten picture. "The Heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork". We eagerly sought the information given in "The Polar and Tropical World", but the scientific knowledge paled before the sight of a real mirage.

The water supply brought from Elliotts on a stone boat ceased when the snow and frost made it too difficult a job, so these fresh pioneers turned to the only other resource - melting snow. This made another task for the schoolless children, one they performed with great zest, vying with one another as to who could carry the largest crust of snow. On one occasion, during the transit from stove to barrel, an accident occurred. The copper boiler, filled to the brim, was being carried to the big barrel in the corner, when one handle gave way, flooding the floor like a cascade.

"The potatoes! The potatoes!" called Mother, "nothing must happen to our only vegetable left". The trap door was quickly lifted and the precious spuds, which were already covered for frost protection, were now re-covered with the oilcloth carriage rug. All hands turned to the task of mopping up, making the accident cause for merriment for we relished even an accident in these mundane, short winter days.

When word came that a school was to be built in a wooded ravine a mile and a half east and south, the three younger children were more diligent in trying to catch up in their grades. This is not to say that all of their time was spent in their books. On the contrary, there was plenty of relief from study while racing over the hard-packed hummocks of snow, with the dogs well grown, or sliding down the deep ravines. All this was both relaxation from study and an outlet for prairie-appetite energy. The short winter days, (to-bed-early was the rule in our home), passed pleasantly with study, play and chores.

Abbie, having finished her Normal School course, became teacher in the first school, (the Ching School), in the Pembina Hills. Like pioneer preachers, pioneer teachers bore the hardships of the Manitoba winter. The kindly people where she boarded had not had time to complete their log house and she would wake with a drift of snow on her bed, break the ice in the water jug, dress, and after breakfast prepare for the mile and a half walk to school where, as a rule, she was expected to build a fire in the frigid atmosphere. Abbie loved her work, but hailed with joy an

opportunity at spending a weekend at home.

The Ching settlement was one of the appointments where services were held and so Father was sometimes able to call for her. Another settlement where the settlers were outstandingly fine people was Calf Mountain. This was one of those Mounds of a remote Indian tribe whose destiny is obscured in the race of ages. The slough which surrounded it was a favorite stopping place of wild ducks in the spring going north and, in the fall, returning to their southern home. Here, Rover, not naturally fond of herding cattle, had an opportunity to proudly showing his special ability in bringing the ducks to shore. Here, too, is where we first found the pink and yellow mocassin flower, commonly known as the lady slipper; the wild swamp rose; the dog-toothed and blue violet; the marsh marigold and, on the adjacent prairie, all the other beautiful prairie flowers.

Calf Mountain was a fast growing settlement. The deep black loam gave a rich reward in No. 1 wheat and this induced one farmer especially interested in analyzing soil, grain and growth of his crops to study and experiment intensively. This was Mr. Spencer Bedford who, after leaving this interesting and prosperous district, became a famed agriculturist. As the first director of the government-owned Experimental Farm on the Assiniboine River across from the city of Brandon, he undertook a wider field of experimentation. His invaluable research here was recognized when he received the degree of Doctor of Agriculture from the University of Manitoba and appointed as head of the fine Manitoba Agriculture College south of Winnipeg, now the site of the University of Manitoba. A man of integrity and high honour, he was also a man of God and gave unstintingly of his Christian experience in the building of God's Kingdom in this prairie pioneer settlement.

Another dependable helper, Mr. Ferris Boulton, was a natural-born Christian leader who lived long years to see the little town of Darlingford grow up near his farm. Both men were able and willing to lead a prayer meeting, a class meeting, or to serve as superintendent of a Sunday School. Their ministry lightened the burden of the preacher and his local preacher helpmate, a burden which had grown with the arrival of many new settlers who necessitated the expansion of his circuit even to fifty miles distant.

In the late fall, or more often during the shorter days of February, Father conducted special Mission Services, generally at two central locations. Because these were a series of special meetings held during a period of several weeks, they were called Tract Meetings, using the word in its old fashioned sense for a period of time. For the same reason, we children, glibly and rather irreverently, referred to them as Pro-tracted Meetings. People came for miles no matter how far the mercury stood below zero or whether or not blizzardly weather was anticipated. Most came by bob-sleigh, taking turns in bringing a good load of neighbours.

Our neighbours, the Whites, Elliots, Tricks and many others from Port Hope and other parts, were solid, reliable, high-principled people for generations back and they were the strength of these missions in our district where services were conducted in our little church. Here there was always a delicious lunch afterwards prepared by my thoughtful sister Susie. The kettle was always singing its song - ready to be poured into the warm teapot for a cup of tea to refresh the weary travellers before they left for home.

These were, in the true sense of the term, prayer meetings. Of course, not all of the prayers demonstrated continuous spiritual growth - sometimes they were the same oft-repeated prayers expressed in the same words, neither fresh nor life-giving. But there were also many spirit-filled prayers, prayers which touched the Throne; prayers, that, when they fell on the hearts of seekers, brought forth a hundred fold. It was then, in obedience to the admonition found in the Gospel of John, "Ye must be born again", that there were re-births and re-consecrations of the faithful.

The great, grand news that the trial run on the railroad built from Emerson to Manitou was to be made on Saturday filled both young and old with rejoicing. What did the coming of regular trains mean? In the British tradition, mission fields and schools preceded the building of railroads for it was the former which opened the new country to nineteenth-century civilization and in turn, the arrival of more people who needed more churches, schools and business places. However, it was expectation that a railroad was on its way which lead speculators to wildly stake out towns along the expected line. It was a boom which soon spent itself and left broken lives in its trail.

A station, Thornhill, had been built just above the hills and thither parents brought their families to see the first engine climb the hill, now smoothly graded, whistling and swinging its bell. As it slowed down at the crowded station platform, younger children, who had never seen a locomotive, and older ones who had known them only back east, hurrayed and danced with glee as it "whimpered-whampered" on its easy run to the end of the line. "Whimpered-whampered" was Bert's way of playing train, as he made the motion with his arms.

The first real train with coaches brought two doctors - one a young doctor starting to practise in Morden, Dr. McConnell, who was assisting one of Winnipeg's well-known pioneer physicians, Dr. Chown. It was our own dear Mother who was ill and on whom they were to operate - Dr. Chown's first major operation. All were excluded from the house except Mrs. -----, the only woman within many miles who could do the work of what we now call a practical nurse, who assisted the doctors.

Though Sue tried to be bright, she radiated her very great anxiety, and sensing this, we were easily quieted and prayed with Father and her that Mother be spared. In the house, the patient, lying on the kitchen table, prayed a prayer which reached

to God's throne - a prayer of absolute faith in God's goodness. She was, we all knew, perfectly ready to meet him and submit her life to His will, but wishing to be spared to minister to her family and to continue His work here on earth. This prayer on the threshold of "Crossing the Bar" had a lasting effect on both doctors. Throughout his long years in the medical profession, the younger one never forgot the perfect calm and peace of this, his first encounter with major trouble. It lent skill to the operating physician and steadiness to his assistant and together brought her safely through until the return of consciousness. The nurse remained the week. Dr. McConnell visited regularly and in two weeks our dear Mother was in the phaeton doing her work as assistant pastor.

Thus the first winter passed, with everyone in the little frame house busily doing their bit and not complaining. No one was frost bitten.

SPRING- 1883

It was not until on in April that Old Sol, beaming happier length of days, battled the Frost King and won out. Spring came with a bang and the days of cold feet on the frigid floor while ones face was burning from the heat of a red-hot stove just a two cubits higher, were over.

A few weeks before this longed-for change, Father came home with good, glad news. A farmer a mile and a half north was going east and would rent farm, house, stock, and implements. "We could not spend another winter in this shell of a house", Father said. "There is a large log house which when properly chinked and banked outside will be warm and comfortable. We are fortunate and can move in by the middle of April. A good thing for you, Will, as it will give you not only something to do but give you a revenue, and with both cows and poultry, you will have your own supply of eggs, milk and butter."

"It is truly providential," said Mother, "having our own supply of necessities and as well we are nearer the center of the circuit. On the other hand, the school is soon to be opened but if we move it will be a three-mile walk. We thought that a mile and a half would be taxing; now it's double. I wonder if house warmth and comfort will compensate for the greater anxiety," said Mother in some distress. "Don't worry, Mother," chimed in the three, "We'll make it alright". "We'll see", said Sue, with her Mother's rueful look, as these three were very dear to her heart. "But Mother", she continued, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, and we won't cross bridges until we come to them".

There was time to whitewash the log walls and paint the floors and the move was quickly made. A board partition divided the upstairs into two parts. The inside, (east), room with a carpet partition made two bedrooms; the west room, where open stairs entered, had a built-in bunk and still room for two beds. This made ample room for storm-driven travellers and relations starting business further west who

occasionally visited Aunt Annie and Uncle Andrew.

Farming! What a marvellous experience! If we thought living in the ravine-covered hill with God's great out-of-doors marvels a paradise, it only prepared us for this new experience of tending horse, cows, pigs and chickens. With new-born enthusiasm, the yard around the premises was made neat and tidy and the border of the good sized pond in the meadow cleared of debris. "I wonder how long this will last, Mother". "Well, Father, I understand the school will be open next week and there will be little time for chores, and in the short winter days none at all except on weekends. I'm glad they are having this enjoyable bit of fun. The boys are making a raft of bits of timber and will be sailing the seas one of these days". "You'll be the first to sail around the pond," chimed in the listening Sue. "I'm thankful they are not hanging around, hating the farm and not willing to do their bit. School looks good to them," she added, seeing the look of concern on her Mother's face. "It will do them good. Overcoming difficulties is the best tonic for building character and two daily walks, a strong body". "True, true," returned Mother Copp, brightening at the thought of what fortitude won even when the pathway was strewn with thorns. "But it will be a battle of winds and frosts, blinding snow and snow-covered trail - but God who remembers the sparrows will not forget my three". Anne knew well the place to hide her fears.

The three hungry school-travellers were joyously received when returning the first day by Hector and Rover bounding and barking around them. Tommie curled up in tired Day's lap, and all with their first impressions of teacher, school and schoolmates had their own views to express. "He'll not pounce on me every time I turn or twist like old J..... and give me a whopping," said Bert. "I like him real well" and the family heaved a sigh of relief for Bert's daily whopping had been a cause for discomfort. Bert's trouble was only natural activity, spiced with natural mischievousness, much of which should have been quietly overlooked.

"He plays as hard as we do" said Bob. "Why, he had shinny sticks ready and taught us how to play 'Pig in the Hole'. We each have to get an extra stick in the scrub, so if the handle breaks we can go on playing. It's a good game" was Rob's comment. "We chose two captains and they chose sides". "Clock Golf" now is an imitation of "Pig in the Hole", but minus the stirring competition of pioneer school days, which, of course, was enjoyed at no expense.

"I wish" said Day, "the board we have to sit on was a little wider and not so rough and hard. It isn't eight inches wide, it's made of oak and only planed a little. Of course, it has to sit against the wall on its tree-legs, or we might all fall back if someone started gymnastics, and, (looking cautiously at Mother), it will be cold on the back. But we go to the center of the room for lessons, so then we will be warm all around" continued Day, looking for a brighter side to these primeval school conditions. "Well" said Father, "six miles to school and back will give you brawn, if

you don't weaken. The Little Red School House has always produced scholars of some worth, so make the best of your studies. Difficulties surmounted in the end win the greatest reward" said the one who was braving the nor-westers every day.

When it was learned that pools, which could not be avoided, caused not just wet boots, but thoroughly-soaked ones, school attendance had to wait a few days until the situation was remedied by warm sun. The children could not sit all day with wet feet - anyway Day's feet were only covered with her stockings, usually coming right through. This forced a trip to Nelson that nearly broke the bank, but rubbers were an absolute must.

But as spring opened one forgot nor-westers and frost in the joys of the marvellous growth of the prairie's blossom-bedecked bush. We had totally enjoyed the woodsy tang of the saskatoon and the totally different tangy flavour of the cranberry. We had enjoyed the latter palate-pleasing delicacies all through the first winter in jams and jelly between layer cakes, in pies, or just on morning toast. Now, in spring, both the cranberries and the saskatoons were adorned in bridal array with great hanging bunches of pure white blossoms. Soon after plum and cherry blossoms wafted their prairie orchard-sweet odour from delicate pink blossoms.

Prairie flowers were brighter than ever after their long rest - the crocus snuggling in its furry coat, the dainty white and yellow violets nestling shyly in the fast-growing prairie grass -and these were soon followed by the pure white anemone and a little later by the bush roses.

And what a joy was the return of the birds! The meadow lark perched on a fence post and sang its continuous song "We beat old Pharoah's army"; the brightly coloured jay, (reminding us of Shakespeare's shrew), shrieked in defiance to all feathered songsters; while the running, hopping, friendly robins, busily home-making in the same old tree, filled the air with sweet cadences. The black birds flitted in family groups flashing bright red heads over the green fields; the scarlet head-and-throated woodpecker wakened us in the early hours as it hammered out its wormy breakfast on the oak scrub. The nesting prairie chicken and grouse came from their woodland winter refuge, flying swiftly over the spindly plover getting their running-wind on prairie trails. Gophers chased one another through their underground alleys, chicking to one another in saucy glee; and squirrels jumped from limb to limb, showing their young offspring how easy it was if they would only try to leap. The whole world seemed seething with activity - one of God's best gifts to man.

With the school walk, Day was growing round-shouldered. "She goes along" said Rob in evident contempt, "watching those round holes, the ones without the rim of fine black earth as gopher holes show, expecting to see a pair of green eyes giving a cold stare, or a slithering yellow and green body disappearing down the borderless hole. It's just pure silliness. They're harmless," said the nine-year old baby of the

family. "He puts them in his pocket and chases me holding the horrid thing by the tail and swinging it at me", said Day, quivering at the thought. "Breaking the Golden Rule", was Mother's rebuke. "You'll do without a second serving of prairie chicken pie" was Father's punishment - not one to be put lightly aside by the dinner-hungry snake-charmer.

Day qualified her horror of reptiles. "They're not as repulsive as lizards. They are the most horrid" said she who would rather wash all the dinner dishes than be asked to bring the potatoes from the cellar. The great holes in the earthen cellar walls were well known to the fearful Day who once nearly picked up one of the residents as she filled her pail in the dim light. Thereafter a lighted lantern made this a safer chore and if a lizard was exploring the cellar, it never escaped Day's abhorring eyes. To keep alive her remembrance of these reptiles she found among her Christmas gifts a paper weight containing a replica of a tiny lizard which wiggled when the glass weight was moved. "One gets used to anything" said amused Day whose innate horror of lizards was somewhat conquered.

Father sank a well near the house and all were surprised and pleased to find over six feet down a cosy hay and straw nest. Here a pair of gophers had snoozed all through the long winter. Evidently they had consumed all their provender laid away, as not one kernel remained. What God-given intuition to fill that frost-forbidden home with food for the long winter!

SUMMER - 1883

"I've great news for you, Mother" said Will, coming in from work at noon. "A man passing here told me of a raspberry patch a few miles east near the edge of the hills. They have picked all they need and more have ripened. I propose we all go tomorrow". Smiles of approval shone from all eyes and a genial assent was expressed by one and all. "What good news! Abbie is coming home tonight for her short holidays and that makes eight pickers. Ripe raspberries won't wait," said Sue delightedly. "That will add to our winter hoard, as we were too late for berry-picking last year," said provident Mother. All were soon busy preparing lunch.

Mother's deep dish chicken pie, with its flaky piecrust held up in the center by a upturned cup, (when the cup was taken out the cavity filled with the richest and most delicious chicken gravy imaginable), was soon in the oven, along with Sue's cake - a raspberry shortcake. Potatoes and a goodly mess of early peas, (with beet pickles), were prepared to be re-heated over a picnic fire. The Devonshire cream, beginning to crinkle on the back of the stove, would make the raspberry shortcake fit for a queen. All was in readiness for an early start and, after an extra good breakfast, the happy family filled the wagon to capacity and started eastward for the woods lining the brow of the hills.

After all the long days which have elapsed - count them who wish - for it is

nearly seventy years - I can see those tall canes which, when gently pulled down and shaken, dropped their luscious redness into our pails. "How many shakes to fill your tin?" called Rob. "Not a dozen, the size found here," answered Bert. "Say, they're as big as plums, but if you don't stop letting them fall down that long lane of yours, your appetite for the raspberry shortcake will be nil." That was an erroneous forecast. The deep dish chicken pie, vegetables and pickles all disappeared, but there was still appetite for raspberry shortcake and Devonshire cream. The hot, nourishing dinner renewed the morning zeal and the next three to four hours saw all containers filled. Sue, now almost head housekeeper, gleefully said, "I believe, Mother, we have nearly seven pails - plenty to do for two years".

"Mother, there are great patches of strawberries not far down the trail and, oh, they're so big since that last rainstorm. We must pick them," announced Day. Two days later, (Saturday), Mother and Day spent a day on their knees with the result that a six-quart pail of strawberries was added to the larder. Canned wild strawberries and pincherry jelly were of extra delicious flavour. To this was added, soon after, wild black current jelly and jam. Summer maturing of wild fruit sang its happy way through early September. The fruit corner of the cellar grew as the great variety of Mother Nature's supply was added, until it was declared that the larder had never been as well supplied. Apples and oranges were never shipped the sixty miles from the nearest good sized store lest they be nipped by the frost, and it was half a dozen years before we saw a banana, but this was no loss.

A late spring meant a late harvest. Ripening oats and one field of wheat barely escaped the return of frost. The first was fodder for the stock, the second ensured flour for at least part of the winter. The fate of the remainder of the crop was tragic, the ravages of an early frost made the rest of the crop useless except for feed - a blow to the young boy farmer. Fortunately, the late vegetables were saved by a timely covering of everything available. Will realized that a good farmer is the greatest capitalist of all.

Of course, by this time all our onions had already disappeared - into deep-dish Herby pie. Mother had declared that one could see the long, hollow stems of the onions stretching farther upward each summer day. Onions have no finer use than as the prime ingredient of herby pie. If you do not know its appetizing deliciousness, it is your great loss. Around our dinner table, this Devonshire dish was a supreme favorite. Onions and onion greens were cut fine and then with goodly squares of fresh pork heaped in a good, large cooking utensil lined with crust. When baked, the top crust, cut close to thumb-in edge, was lifted off and eggs dropped in, stirred a bit, the crust replaced, and in a few minutes, after the eggs were cooked, it was ready to be served with new potatoes. This dish vied with chicken pie for first place.

A PARASHUTER

"Mother" said Will, "I heard from our neighbour down the road that I can get

seed grain at Jabez Miller's in Snowflake and I must go right away". "That is a long way to go for seed. It's too bad you can't get it nearer," replied Mother.

"You see," went on Will, "It is farther south, very close to Dakota, and they pretty well escaped the frost. It won't matter much if Day loses one day at school and she would be company for me. I'm leaving early Friday and expect to be back Saturday evening."

"Your little sister will be delighted; it will do her good. She will enjoy the scenery and the little change," was Mother's thought. Early the next morning after Old Sol lifted his shining face they were off on a fifty mile or more trek.

For about half the journey the prairie roads made wagon-going easy although it was, perhaps, a bit slower around Calf Mountain. Here ducks were quacking their pleasure in extending their longer flight northwards, and the crocus, no longer needing to snuggle in furry coat, was stretching its head high on a long stem, while the soft spring willows complimented the dainty mauve flowers making Mother Earth's new spring outfit a joy to behold.

Passing the small hamlet of Manitou on the north side of a gently sloping wide hill, stopping for a minute's chat with a passing farmer, the beautiful, wide Pembina Valley came into view and a stop was made to drink in the wide deep valley clothed in its fresh, green, spring dress.

"That's good farm land," said Day looking southward, "What rich black loam, some of it already showing sprouting grain. We haven't seen such fine big buildings anywhere - a big barn and a splendid house".

"That's the property of an English baronet who knew well how to choose good land, protected somewhat from frost, and the sort of scenery the English find so homelike and love. And he well knows how to farm. Everyone speaks highly of him. It would be good for the country if scores of them would do likewise, instead of remittance men who lack real pioneer vision," explained Will.

Mrs. Miller's kind greeting along with toothsome hot dinner made shy Day feel at home as she helped clear the pile of dinner dishes. "It has been a long, wearisome drive and another one coming tomorrow," said the motherly hostess as she tucked Day in bed while the men loaded not only seed for planting, but enough to feed the stock until fall grain was harvested.

The morning was beautiful, the sun's beams warmed all growing things; the saucy gophers chasing one another down one hole and up another; and the two returning to the hills seated on grain bags with a comfortable back of the same enjoyed it immensely. Descending the steep, twisty hill to the valley with a heavy

load of grain demanded great care. "How lovely is this great valley," said Day. "Plenty to see and hear when eyes and ears are open," remarked the driver. "Look! see the spindly-legged plover running ahead and the much-loved meadow larks, our happy little songsters, over there near the house. Mr. Robin is rendering a few bars of grand opera, bringing bits for re-making their old nest to his mate". All this came from the usually restrained Will, allowing a peek into his love of nature.

Heavy loads had made deep ruts into the damp road and the wagon sagged one way and then another. Enjoying all things beautiful, neither noticed a long deep rut on Day's side of the road. Down with a great thump sagged the wagon, throwing Day, still clutching the huge umbrella, sailing well out on the prairie. Like a great bird she gently, slowly came to earth, prone on her stomach, only her feet showing from under the umbrella.

Will, surprised and frightened, was about to hurry down when his fears were allayed by a peal of laughter from Day out of sight under the umbrella. Day, turning herself and the umbrella on its side, revealed her rosy, unhurt face. Both laughed until a gopher near by sat up on his haunches wondering at the strange sounds of merriment.

Upon their return home, the two tired travellers were well ready to partake of the hot dinner and the family enjoyed the news of the journey. Will broke the questioning with an astonishing statement, "You didn't know we had a parachuter in the family?" "A parachuter?" broke from both young boys. Bert continued, "I know para rubber in the Amazon Valley, but what is a parachuter?"

So Will then narrated how the big umbrella, protection from hot sun in summer and the cold wind in winter, saved befreckled Day from a nasty fall. It took some years for Day to outlive her prairie flight.

JACK FROST RETURNS

After the early frosts laid on field and garden were passed, there followed a few weeks of the honeymoon of the year, Indian summer, with its sunny days and sharply cool nights. These brought scrub and woodland to its full dress with many warm hues - yellow, orange and soft and bright reds. Later Jack Frost flew in again, nipping the leaves and carpeting earth's floor, making all snug for a long winter's nap. A great bag of short-beaked hazelnuts was stored away to ripen for winter.

A PRAIRIE FIRE

"Do you want to have a look at Hades?" asked Will, coming in from feeding the horses. "It beats the pictures in that awful book of yours, Father". All trooped out to see an "Inferno" picture set in a pitch black night. The farm was nearer the edge of the hills than the parsonage, and the grim picture filled everyone with dismay. A dozen fires were raging in the great valley. Some where burning strawstacks. The

fire, running through the stubble, caught further on in the tall virgin prairie grass where it leaped and ran a swift race. One place it was seen to jump the fire-break - a wide swath of breaking around house, barns and sheds - and soon all was ablaze, the people taking refuge, with what they could carry, in a plowed field. It was a never-to-be forgotten picture. We had heard of horses racing and barely escaping the swift travelling fire. All eyes were rivetted on a spot where a streak of fire was racing up the mountain. It was miles away, but all knew that this was a stretch of very long prairie grass about where Thornhill is now situated. We were protected on all sides, but the granary was just outside the northern side of a long pasture with a strawstack from newly threshed grain piled on the north side of it.

Not a moment to waste. Father became General and issued quick orders. "Bert and Rob, get six or eight bags and put a pail or more of sand in each. The girls will help. Will, you and I will carry a tub of water and all hurry across the pasture. We must save the grain and the granary".

The fire was fairly leaping through the long grass and our only safety was the fact that the long grass had been cut a little distance out. One could not have come near the burning tornado. Where it crept along in the shorter grass, the wet sand would extinguish it. Clear-sighted vigilance was a must as, for an hour or more, everyone fought the fire. Although fiery forks tried again and again to steal in here and there, at last the fight was won. It was a begrimed, tired family who wended their way to the farmhouse for a tub bath and then to bed to sleep off the terrors of that black night. Mother thoughtfully left the copper boiler filled to heat on the stove. Washtub baths were the order of the day until Father retired and we built our own home in Winnipeg.

As winter set in, the three-mile trek to school had its terrors. It was a lonely walk as there was only one house, the one opposite the church, and the whole way was along a rather poor trail. Mother, using a hot iron, kept a peep-hole clear on a south upstairs window to watch for the returning children, but as the days shortened, she had to wait for the barking of the dogs when they met the children a mile down the trail. When blizzards raged fiercely the three courageous travellers tied themselves with rope. Why? Because yelling at some one who got off the trail to come back would only have been drowned out the high screeching, shrieking wind. Coyotes and foxes often ran alongside until the barking of the dogs made these natural cowards slink away.

Seeing the children off, on the shortest days of winter, long before the sun rose and returning after it had set, brought a streak of grey to Ann Copp's raven hair. Yet, thanks to the comfort of woolly mufflers, all escaped frost bite. Not more than three or four times during the long winter was their father able to call for them as there were no settlers east or south and few to the north near the brow of the Pembina Hills.

Less than a week before Christmas we celebrated Mother's fiftieth birthday. The simple gifts - one a poem - were hallowed with the light of love. There were no candles on the birthday cake, but only the figure "50"; we thought it a marvel of Sue's culinary art. We marched around the table following Sue carrying the cake and singing:

How do you like to be fifty?

'Tis a real mile-post to greet.

We hope you'll double the fifty

With years that are happy and sweet.

Happy birthday to you.

Christmas passed quietly, perhaps more in keeping with the shepherds' vision and the angels' song than the bizarre fanfare of this middle century. No severe frost, heavy roads or blinding blizzard deterred the Home Missionaries from a single duty. All the church services were held, even if scarcely a handful attended when it was dangerous to travel.

Spring again broke, bringing with it all the joys of its awakening, but these joys were broken by sorrows. Rover, with his finely curled black coat, his long, soft, velvety ears, his brown eyes eloquent of devotion, was sick. This was more than evident.

Tears welled up in Rob's brown eyes when he came to Susie and poured out his fears. "Do you know what happened this morning? Bert whistled for the dogs. Hector bounded out, but Rover lagged behind. When they reached the gate, Bert whistled again and Rover wagged his tail but did not follow. Now he's in the kennel and seems done out. You see, Sue, Bert has let him go in the ponds when he has had to break a skimmer of ice and he sometimes throws a stick and Rover bounds in to bring it back. It has happened once too often; he's very sick."

"You bring him in. I'll put a rag carpet on the couch and we'll see what can be done", said Sue, the ever-ready helper. Rover's quick breathing was eased with his head put up on the built-up couch pillow and for several days everything possible was done to check the evident lung trouble, but the end came - our dear Rover was gone. He was lovingly laid away at the edge of the north bluff.

When Hector returned with Bert he came at once to the couch where he had kept vigil while Rover was a patient on it. There was no Rover there and a search began which showed how deep and true was canine fidelity. It was pitiful to watch this heart breaking search. Upstairs he bounded under every bed, then down and away out to the stable. He climbed the straw stack beside the barn and ran again through all the buildings, including again searching all the upstairs rooms, but no beloved Rover. Running around to the west side of the house, where Rover's body had been laid awaiting the box, he put his paws up on the house banking and the air

was rent with his cries of grief. Rover had been there; now his chum was gone. When we could stand it no longer, Bert, sorrowing for his thoughtlessness, carried Hector to his kennel. Bert had ceased to play he was a Trojan warrior and no one thought of asking him if he were Agememnon or Achilles. Special kindness to Rob was his token of grief.

Our pets, dogs or horses, were dear to all. The dogs were our playmates and made life brighter no matter the time or weather. No bicycles, cinemas or even toys in those days.

Topsy, the wavy-haired, Topsy by name and Topsy by nature, was a well-bred retriever, stalking the prairie chicken or grouse with her strong, tall tail straight as an arrow. But Topsy never took Rover's place in our hearts. Hector had a reserved friendliness, sometimes showing real jealousy.

The Conference of the Bible Christian Church meeting in June appointed Father to the Manitou circuit. Again books and household goods were packed and the move was made by wagon loads to the enterprising young town.

"When I dipped into the future far as human eye could see
Saw the vision of the world and wonders that would be."

Would that it could be said, - and it too is coming to fruition:

"Ploughman, shepherds have I found and more than once and still could find,
Sons of God and kings of men in utter nobleness of mind."

What a galaxy of soft sounding names we have for our prairie towns, - Manitou, Minnedosa, Neepawa, Wawanesa, Wasagaminingin, but none so inspiring in Indian legend as Manitou - the Great Spirit they worshipped. Trees, streams, lakes and mountains; wind, fire, stars and sun all spoke to the Red Man of a Great Spirit. They sensed this Great Spirit in all creation. Perhaps they sensed it better than many of us who so easily lose much of the joy of life.

The people who settled in the Manitou district, like those in the Pembina Hills, were men and women of the high thinking who were ready to do and dare for what is right, good and true. Many of the early settlers, intelligent, educated and cultured people used to easier ways of living, made their first homes in sod shacks. Life in this district had its grim dimensions during those years, but this did not daunt these prairie folk. Many of them came from Ontario stock who had hewn a home and land out of virgin forest, toiling years to hand on, from their gnarled sun-burned hands, comfort and prosperity to their sons and daughters.

Now, the children and grandchildren of their determined pioneers plow a straight furrow, a quarter, a half or a mile with neither stick or stone to obstruct. Some of the members of our present generation may have forgotten how their present prosperity was laid on a foundation of hardships heroically triumphed over. One example immediately comes to mind; the hauling of grain many miles to Emerson and the bare necessities being brought back.

The first town, a few stores selling clothing and hardware, a blacksmith shop along with churches, manse, rectory and a one-room school, was built on the southern face of a gentle hill. This hamlet quickly grew to town proportions. The wide, boundless prairie gave one a feeling of greatness and anything suggestive of a village or even a town did not seem to fit and so the original name of this center, Manitoba City, was truly a fitting one. In a remarkably short time it had grown to a very respectable size and the arrival of an increased population suggested that the original choice of a name had been a most appropriate one.

Settling into our new home was an easy and joyous task when no interior decorating was necessary and furniture simple. Our own curtains went on the

windows and our pictures we children loved on the walls: the two chromos, "Wide Awake" and "Fast Asleep"; a picture of Dicken's "Nell" and one of "Little Lord Fontleroy blowing bubbles"; a steel engraving of "Sir John A. MacDonald as a Young Man"; and "Gladstone", the last two in beautiful oval frames. These portraits were hung on either side of a large steel engraving, - a picture which gave dignity and honour to house-hold patriotism, Queen Victoria in widow weeds with Princess Beatrice sitting on a stool close to her; the royal children were ranged around an oval table on which was a marble bust of the Prince Consort. This gave a touch of nobility to our parlour and was greatly admired.

Manitoba City was the end of the railway line, but did the railroad ever find it convenient to build its line into a brand new town? It was rather their rule to build a short, (or a longer line), in order to bypass the centers already established. Then, after stations and elevators were erected at the railroad's choice of a townsite, business places purchase land from the railroad and move to the railroad's townsite. This is what happened in our new home. The new Methodist church and parsonage, (our new home), were almost a half mile north of the line into the new townsite called Manitou. We would have to move.

"It seems unbelievable, Mother. To think we are once more living in a plastered house with separate rooms down and upstairs," said Sue as she unpacked the dishes. "This country seems to take a hop, skip and jump when a railroad is built. Come here, Mother, look," she called and together they watched a sight new to their eyes. A good-sized store was moving slowly on huge rollers down the sloping hill to take its place on the new street already graded and ready for occupants on the south side of the railroad tracks. "I'm glad" said Father when he came in, "that the church was moved in the spring before the snow was gone; rolling it is a big expense. The man who is doing this will make a fortune," and he did.

^{MOVING}
Flitting, we knew, would come when the snow between Manitoba City and Manitou was packed hard as a road. Jacked-up, with two bob sleighs at the front and two at the back, the parsonage was ready to take a journey.

"We'll take this unique ride and see to the safety of our goods and chattels," said Mother who was somewhat anxious over the wisdom of following the advice to leave things in the usual place. Indeed, she had turned the book shelves to the wall and packed dishes from what she judged might be precarious locations into a clothes basket.

As the sleighs were pulled into the snow, coasting in a house speeding down hill was an exhilarating experience. The swaying of the house sent pictures dancing back and forth. "You are right about staying in the house, Mother," Sue said as all helped catch a swaying picture and put it in a safe corner.

The business people lining the street gave the coasters hearty cheers as the horses tugged at what was now a heavy pull. With dint of cracking whip and vociferous "Get up" we reached the south side of the town and the house came to rest over the earlier prepared cellar. Our home now faced south overlooking virgin prairie with scrub and not far distant, our view of the Pembina Hills.

"Its just as we would wish it," said nature-loving Father, "and it's just as well we are not down-town next door to the church as is the order in the east."

A vacant lot separated us from our closest neighbour, Dr. Black, the town dentist. His fowl and Mother's hens, ducks, geese and my sister Day's turkeys had the run of the prairie together. The vacant lot between us soon became the yard for our town's most unique residence. A few alterations to a cupola, (until then a water tank for the railroad), turned it into a comfortable, small dwelling for Dr. Black's parents. His father, once a noble, southern gentleman, had come to live in peace and safety beside his son. The American Civil War had driven him from his wide acres, stately home and negro cabins and, with his property confiscated, and a price on his head, he had managed to escape to Nova Scotia.¹

His crime? As Jefferson Davis' private secretary, the gold for the Chesapeake paid to Great Britain had passed through his hands. Although we were taught at home to believe in Lincoln's saving the Union and the morality of his freeing of the slaves, we still loved to listen to the words of wisdom from this white-haired cultured gentleman who was our next door neighbour.

"Though living with mail and groceries handy, school near for the children, Father and you will still be pioneering", said Sue as they were finishing settling the upstairs rooms. "This place Altamont opening up north of here is a rough drive through scrub land and then through miles of woods to a very scattered settlement; another miles further north and west, a longer and rougher drive, is Oak River, and it seems Father is expected to take his turn still farther west at Treherne until the Souris Railroad is built when a regular minister will be appointed there. Then, I suppose, he will have to take his turn at Snowflake with the steep, ungraded Pembina Valley to cross. With class meetings, morning and evening service, Sunday school in the afternoon here, I fear you will have many preaching services to fill. There's one thing certain, Mother, you are not going to take those long, rough winter trips."

"You know, my dear, your Father and I never stop for the weather and I'll answer every call possible with the comfort of knowing you'll be at the helm at home," answered our Mother.

Sunday was a busy - rest - day. I say "rest" as it was a rest from all menial work. Dinner was prepared on Saturday - no electric stove set for a roast or baked

dish. I say "busy" because there often were three services a day, many of these with morning class meetings. Children were required to busy themselves with memorizing the Golden Text, to remember the subject of the Sunday school lesson and learn a passage of several verses to be stored away for comfort when grown-up troubles had to be met.

Family Prayers

Many families devoted time to Bible reading and prayer on a daily basis. Two episodes during family prayers which caused a flurry come to mind. This one just a funny co-incidence. Prayers after breakfast when the Old Testament was read, with the family seated in a circle around the dining room, reading in rotation, each one for twelve times had the same verse except one whose verse began with the name of a prince who was the head of one of the twelve tribes. In the sixth verse, this prince's jaw-breaking name was repeated giving the sixth reader a better chance at the difficult pronunciation, (now we are confused in Canada with even more difficult surnames, some having more than twelve alphabet letters). The smart, older ones soon had their verse memorized and titters naturally broke the solemn prayer time. Even Mother could not withhold a smile as twelve times her verse was repeated. Father, glasses lifted down on his nose, was the signal that titters be repressed but howls of laughter broke from the children on their way to school. Father had the first long verse with the Prince's name.

It must have been Numbers, Chapter 7, the offerings of the Princes of Israel, heads of the house of the twelve tribes bringing their offerings (each tribe the same amount) after the tabernacle altar had been anointed and sanctified.

God does require an offering - a tenth - but He has given us our free will and we can go on using His Tenth for cigarettes on which more money is spent than on all education from the kindergarten to the university. In that sense are we far removed from barbarism with all our scientific knowledge and easy living?

Another time it was a rude break made during Mother's prayers at evening worship when it was the custom to gather in the living room and kneel for prayer. A cousin who was visiting loves to relate Mother telling her Heavenly Father that she did not covet wealth for her family, but that they would love and serve Him. The exclamation of derision "Ugh!" which came involuntarily from the eldest daughter, who, more than any of the family, knew of the earlier extreme poverty of her childhood, her only plaything being a wee, tiny morocco-covered book of Psalms, now treasured by the third generation, and the long years of "we can't afford it". The rude break meant we could easily have enjoyed a bit more of the good things of life.

Goldsmith says "Experience is the only thing we can get for nothing," and we were rich in experience, so why worry!

The manse people, our next door neighbour, Rev. and Mrs. Townsend, called informally and a friendship began which grew warmer as the itinerant three years passed.² We were always good friends with the Presbyterians and proof of this - the Presbyterians had a tea for Mother before moving on to the next scene of labour and presented her with a silver pitcher. This token of unity was one of our parting joys.

THE UNION OF THE METHODISTS

In 1884 a visible sign of unity was established- the union of four Methodist denominations - the Wesleyans, Episcopal, Primitive, and the Bible Christians.³ This is the fore runner of what, today in the Christian Church, is the hope of union of all Protestant Communion and among the Nations of peace and goodwill to man, the United Nations with its background the United Nations of the British Commonwealth.

The Methodists had found a common denominator and joined forces because of overcrowding and overlapping. This extravagance apparent in eastern Canada's small towns was not to be tolerated in this newly-opened prairie land.

Is this the prelude to Tennyson's?

"Till the war drums throb'd no longer and the battle flags were furled,
In the parliament of man, the federation of the world."

I wonder if Joseph Stalin realized the three great means of help he unconsciously has given the world - the drawing together of the British Commonwealth of Nations, (which non-well wishers were prophesying was disintegrating), - the drawing together of Great Britain and the United States in a oneness questionable for many years, and because of bull-headed obstinacy in thwarting the efforts of peace, the United Nations was born.

This troubled, distorted world is but the growing pains of the adolescent age of the world when we see gleaming through the glass darkly the coming of the Kingdom of God here on earth.

Andrew and Ann Gordon welcomed and rejoiced over the Methodist Union. Not so their elder children who, with one accord, declared, "We will not read that *Christian Guardian* - the name of the new church paper, this being born because of resentment of school and playground taunts. "Mother," said the eldest, "good goods are done up in small parcels and this was proven when they passed our discipline verbatim; our church has lost not one iota of church management". "But child, the *Christian Guardian* is our paper now, under a new name for all united Methodists", said the breaker of old traditions. Many months of worshipping, teaching in the Sunday school and meeting in social activities with former Wesleyans this narrowness was outgrown and forgotten. Yes, it was soon forgotten in the

companionship of many bright young people who answered the call , "Go West young man" and the parsonage was the place where many gathered for a good time. Among these were cousins, one of whom was there when we moved, our cousin Jim who had run away from picking a new crop of stones each spring and fall on his father's farm; blue-eyed, fun-loving, well-known J. T. Gordon.

That first fall he seldom missed having Sunday dinner at Aunt Anne's, especially if prairie chicken pie was on the menu. He never ceased his expressing his disgust at rabbit pie served often at the hotel. This was the seventh year, rabbit innings for family growth, and rabbit pie was popular with many whose old country forbearers relished it.

One early winter Sunday when frosty air whetted prairie appetite, Jim's plate was replenished for a third time. "I'm glad you're enjoying the chicken pie. It's really appetizing, isn't it?" remarked innocent Sue as she brought in the cranberry pie. "Mother never loses her Devonshire touch", Father's Irish glee could no longer be repressed and a burst of laughter broke from all. Jim's blue eyes opened wide and with a confused look and heightening colour he said, "What's the joke, Uncle?" "Just this", was the reply, "your good aunt has been playing a practical joke on you. This is her beloved English rabbit pie, only this is a Manitoba sample." Jim's hearty laugh at his discomfiture was joined with peals from all as three dinner servings proclaimed his enjoyment of disdained rabbit pie, and Jim's, "Well, I never, Aunt Annie, to think you would play such a trick. We'll have to put a red mark down for you. You've won hands down."

Just as of yore when Christmas stockings held only an apple, some raisins and a couple of cookies, he said, "Well, if Santa Claus brought these cookies, Aunt Annie made them." It was the Devonshire touch which made the difference.

A snow ball fight ushered in the first soft snow as it was not biting cold weather. Mr. Townsend joined in the fun on the side of the girls while father helped the boys. All were more tired from laughter than physical exercise. The shouts from a well-aimed hit and squeals from snow rubbed cheeks brought to life on-lookers from new offices and stores down in the valley. It was the girls who suffered the chaffed cheeks. With Cleopatra days many years removed, they sought relief from Buckley's Ointment.

In the heat of summer or the cold, long drives of winter as well as the warm welcome of none-too-warm sleeping accommodations, never a murmur was heard from the breaker of trails. Bumping over prairie trails could be tolerated, but not risky snow-covered woodland drives, and Mother Ann found more need in the varied interest of growing town work, helping in all phases of church work, taking the Sunday services according to the monthly plan.

The announcement that Mrs. Gordon will take services on Sunday was spread far and near and the church was crowded to the utmost capacity. There was no microphone to send messages to other rooms, Sunday school rooms, Ladies' Parlour, or what is now called a 'Church House', and the disappointment of just-in-time comers, when weather permitted, heard the message from outside through open windows, for it was not just the novelty of hearing a woman preach, it was the clear, convincing message brought to the hearts, as well as the minds, of the hearers. It was given to waken the careless and indifferent and to stimulate to greater love and zeal His children who served him in spirit and in truth. The stirring message was not easily put aside and forgotten.

When visiting in the east, an old lady sent a message to Mother, "Tell your Mother her sermons have lived with me all these years. The one about Mary and Martha has helped me as I was a veritable Martha, spending all my thought on my house and housekeeping. She made me feel that Mary's part was the better and I found I could do what was necessary for our home in the spirit of Mary." And an old man in a country appointment came a distance to tell me, "The sermons your Father and Mother preached have lived with me all these many years."

We used to tease Mother in her pride of Father's preaching. We knew him to be a forceful, convincing exponent of the Truth, dividing texts into their component parts. Many preached long sermons, the first to thirdly, stretching beyond to a fourthly and a fifthly.

In June 1952 I call on Mrs. W. D. Ruttan. In the Manitou days of my parents, she and her husband had been faithful leaders in all good works and especially enthusiastic supporters of the temperance cause. Although now nearing her one hundredth and third year, she was still alert and possessed a marvellous memory. This wonderful lady told me of an occurrence during an evening service which would shock the sophisticated church of today. The preacher, warming to his subject, was pointing to the many ways "time" could be redeemed, "because the days are evil", (today the list would be endless), caught his wife's eye with speechless lip warning, stopped and said, " Now, Mother, I am going to finish what I have to say on this subject." This interruption to Redemption of Time caused a flurry of smiles, thus giving the speaker an attentive fifthly.

The preachers of the late nineteenth century were not all Spurgeons or Beechers, but they did not mince the truth and hit with great vigour the sins of the times, especially too great indulgence in alcoholic beverages.

Many people endorsed and worked for Total Prohibition. They did not see the difference between Prohibition and Temperance. The one aims to stop the traffic, while temperance aims to educate mankind to have no desire for liquor. Bands of Hope for the children gave place soon after to Scientific Temperance taught in

Sunday School and through Physical Education in the public schools.

Temperance in regards to alcohol has become so broad it has lost depth. Where there used to be few liquor cabinets in homes, today there are scores. It is the thing to do.

The liquor interest of Manitou had one chuckle on the Temperance workers. Unaware of a slight change in the law, the druggist of Wm. Vrooman, an outstanding advocate of temperance, sold the usual amount and was forthwith brought to account. What a chance for law-abiding? inebriates. Much chagrined, he had to pay the fine, but it only gave an added stimulus to the cause.⁴

Today Intemperance, measured by the Sermon on the Mount, can be a quick or surly temper, a sharp or sarcastic tongue, a studied selfishness; or undue time spent in games at the expense of necessary obligations.

Hospitality reached a high peak when the girls' room for three months was occupied by strangers, part of this time by a woman from the north bush land district who needed hospital care and for a month or more was given every possible attention. The boys, giving their room to the girls, bunked on the parlour floor.

As well there were those in town on business or to shop, who found it convenient to drop in at dinner time, - a farmer, his wife and children, causing parsonage people to draw in their belts for a meal or two. Who does not know that meat on spare ribs is deliciously sweet - when there is a bit of meat left - and the parcels of spare ribs left became a joke as we knew there were those whose home-roasts and steaks were provided in abundance. Getting on in the world! - well, there were things in life more important and "doing without", if taken wisely, can enrich life.

These years were times of great enjoyment and fun for Sue and for Abbie, who taught in a school a few miles south, riding horseback when weather permitted.⁵ They and the two cousins were inseparable. These two, the one tall and vivacious, the other tall and dignified, both were merry, fine-looking and well-dressed young ladies. No young people ever had a more joyous time with picnics in the beautiful Pembina Valley and long drives and visits in the Pembina Hills; hilarious parties in a country home and all the time a group of merrymakers at the parsonage with numbers of young men to make the time fly.

Itinerancy had a bitter side for Susie leaving these dear cousins and Abbie to face strangers and new circuit work. The younger ones had spent three years under a very capable teacher, Mr. Jackson, and made splendid progress. The third year, this highest class in an over-crowded one-room school produced four doctors, one university professor, a minister, two lawyers and a school principal and the school

wasn't painted red.⁶

1. See "Manitou's Bay Street Connections" in the *Western Canadian*, September and October 1983.

2. Rev. Townsend was a successor of the first Presbyterian minister of the area, Rev. Donald McRae who, in October 1879, was appointed to Township 3, 4, and 5 in Range 8 and Townships 3 and 4 in Range 9.

Rev. Townsend was inducted into the first Presbyterian charge established in the district, officially known as the New Haven Charge, in March 1883. His first home in the district was in Township 4-8, New Haven Township, where his son, John Graham Townsend, was born 2 April 1883. In 1929 the only house remaining on its original site in Manitoba City was Rev. Townsend's former home, the original Presbyterian manse which, for some reason, had never been moved into Manitou. It was then the home of the Jack Mudge family; thirty years ago Mr. Charles. Farmer lived in it. Today is gone, but a little clump of scrubby trees still marks the former site of this last reminder of Manitoba City.

3. At a conference held in September 1883 in the Methodist Episcopal Tabernacle in Belleville, Ontario, delegates decided that a union effective 1 July 1884 would bring the Methodist Church of Canada, (also known as the Wesleyans), the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, the Bible Christian Church, and the Primitive Methodist Church in Canada into a union. The name selected for this new church was "The Methodist Church".

4. Not everyone had the same point of view regarding this incident. Another side was presented in the local paper, *The Manitou Mercury*, in these lines:

THE FUGITIVE

A chemist in a country town,
A lad with hair of softest down;
A bold reformer though he'd be,
In this land of liberty.
The temperance craze was this boy's forte,
Though slyly selling whiskey and port;
So a stroke of business he though he'd do
By leading a raid on the whiskey crew-
And, by shutting up both bar and hotel,
His profits in physic he'd enormously swell.
So, with feigned wrath and godlike ire,
This youth pulled strong on the temperance wire.
After his lead followed more than one fool-

Their brains of a substance akin to wool,
But this youth, like the ostrich who hides his head,
And fancies there is naught to dread,
Found to his cost, notwithstanding his buffers,
That anti-tea-totallers were not such duffers.
Unearthing this boy, they hit him so hard;
The chemist was hoisted with his own petard,
His charges against others proved all fiddle-faddle,
But this youth had quick to skedaddle.
Away, far away, this little man ran,
Till he found asylum with Uncle Sam.
My readers, a moral does this impart-
Make it and learn it and take it to heart.
-Of all the mean men the gods despise,
'Tis he who by malicious lies,
And spiteful tongue, more dread than poisoned dirk,
All injury on his neighbour seeks to work.
Such, honest men will ever seek to foil,
And on their heads their dastardy recoil.

W.A. Vamouss
17 February 1886

5. The school Abbie Gordon taught a few miles south of town was Mount Carmel located on the southwest corner on the Jim Winram homestead, now the farm of Mr. Bev Furniss. Among her pupils was the Mabel, Edie and Ken Young, the children of Dr. and Mrs. Matthew Young who moved from Pembina Crossing to a farm a half mile to the northwest in the spring of 1886.

Although Dr. Young was a strict Presbyterian, (that is, the kind that had little interest in or sympathy for most Methodist ways), he had welcomed Rev. Gordon's preaching in the large front room of their stopping place at Pembina Crossing, the Valley House. When they moved up on top, they continued to attend Rev. Gordon's services when he preached in the Mount Carmel school.

Aunt Mabel Mackintosh, (nee Mabel Young), remembered one of Rev. Gordon's sermons with exceptional clarity. The Youngs were famous in the community for their house parties and on the occasion Aunt Mabel recalled Rev. Gordon's theme was dancing. He illustrated his sermon with references to the Chicago fire of 1871 when, as he related, the guests at a particular party were so entranced by their dancing that they failed to notice that the city was burning down around them. The result? "They danced, ... and they danced ... and they danced themselves right into hell!"

6. Before school opened in the fall of 1885 two teachers were hired, Alfred Jackson as principal and Miss Annie Gordon as teacher of the primary grades, at salaries of \$500.00 and \$350.00 a year respectively. Miss Jessie McEwen replaced Miss Gordon in January 1887.

The university professor was Dr. Charles Andrew Huston, a son of Mr. James Huston, a pioneer merchant of Manitoba City and Manitou. When Prof. Huston died in June 1917, he was Dean of Law at Leland Sandford University in Palos Alta, California where he had been employed since 1911. He was also serving as a legal advisor in Washington to one of the departments of President Wilson's administration.

Ernest Armstrong, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Armstrong, also pioneers of Manitou was a graduate in Law from the University of Manitoba and practised in Moose Jaw until his death. He was married to Minnie Grace Ruttan, (a daughter of W. D. Ruttan), who had a provincial reputation as a concert pianist.

A. E. Vrooman also entered the legal profession and was admitted to the Saskatchewan Bar. He was eventually appointed King's Counsel and a crown attorney. His later years were spent in Winnipeg where he died in May 1949.

Dr. Chas H. Vrooman, a son of Nelson Vrooman, the first furniture dealer in Manitou, served as interim administrator of the Ninette Sanitorium from the time of its opening until the first permanent superintendent, Dr. D. A. Stewart, assumed his duties. Following this, Dr. Vrooman was appointed Superintendent of the TB sanitorium in Kamloops, B.C.

Moving - yes, as surely as Father Time ticks off three times three hundred and sixty-five days. The thought is banished for one clear year. The first year a different house to live in - different churches in which to speak and worship, and most of all, new people to meet and learn to understand.

The children are told to make friends slowly so as to be sure it will be a lasting friendship. The minister and his wife soon find who the earnest, reliable workers are - but as Paul says, "we must be all things to all men". As the children grew older, it was not easy to leave friends behind and go out and make new ones and never easy for the parents.

One move was more tragic than humorous. Although there were both sides in the move from Manitou to the four hundred square mile Carman Circuit, the former outweighed the latter. The unexpected? "farewell" party over, packing was pursued diligently - the two big bags of pieces of garments, coats, dresses and underwear added to during the three years pastorate were again brought into requisition. These, with bedding, formed the packing material for dishes and pictures and were packed in large and small cases, not any too snugly put together. The four hand-made chests lined with tin for precious documents, (the handwork of the minister), made safe the library books, rain or shine and move after move were always packed in the same manner.

Sue had learned to have a bonfire of piles of accumulated papers when her parents were visiting at the far corners of the circuit; rubbish which had lost its usefulness. She hesitated over an old carpet bag which had disintegrated over long years of use. "I'll not burn the dear old thing," she said to herself, "but will hide it away up in the shed", hoping Mother would not look away up, as she knew her long training in keeping everything which had a shred of use left, feeling it might be needed.

Father, to save the Conference the expense of a freight bill to Winnipeg, then out to Elm Creek and from there carted by wagon fifteen miles to Carman - a big expense, had decided to make the trek overland and expected to do it in one day.

All was in readiness to make an early start. The cavalcade was made up of four wagons with the carriage bringing up the rear. Mother, as was her custom, took a last look around to see all was left spick and span; floor clean, the stove shining with fresh polish and a fire set ready for a match, and out to the stable and shed where, with an upward look, spied the relegated carpet bag and down it came. "We really haven't room for that Mother, anyway it's worn out," said chagrined Sue. But it joined the two ducks under the seat. Day's seat on an upturned pail was none too comfortable as the carriage floor sloped down. Added to this the pails at that time

were made of staves held together by bands of metal, the staves projected at the bottom and finished with a band of protruding metal. So Day had to sit squarely on the upturned pail, none too comfortable with the thought of the duck under the pail panting for air. "There's a wide crack in the floor and will give it air," pointed out the lover of all kinds of fowl.

It was a dull morning and hopes that it would clear were dashed as, well out on the prairie trail, it spat rain. Unfortunately for our peace of mind, the big coop full of hens was on the back of the rear wagon. The Buff Cochins and Plymouth Rocks were not going to stand around and placidly take this outrage, and their intentions of getting free were quite plainly demonstrated. One sturdy "Buffy" pushed itself almost free. Cries for help broke the quiet air as Mother called, "Father!" The wind being in the wrong direction, Father did not hear. Then "Andrew" was called. Again no answer. The hen was almost out when "Mr. Gordon" heard his name called and just in time pushed Buffy back. But a little later a "Rockie", just as determined, succeeded in pushing its smaller self out, and again the air was rent with "Father!" and the obedient Mr. Gordon had to chase his coat tails over the prairie and see the little black hen behind bars. When it rained harder, the prisoners closed ranks and settled down.

We intended having dinner at Thornhill, just above the hilltop, but it was deemed expedient to push on to Nelson where we knew the hotel had not been moved to Morden. We had just started down the rocky, rutty and very steep hill, when it started to pour in torrents...not drops. The ducks, which had appealed for release, now clamoured to be out in their beloved rain. But the rain falling on the big umbrella drowned out their continued 'quacks'. The rain soon poured itself out and suddenly ceased. The sun came out and with a freshening up and a good hot dinner, we continued our trek, although knowing we could not reach Carman that night. But we were invited by one of the drivers to his large farm house, which we reached at a late supper hour.

It was the only time I ever heard dear Susie murmur. Abbie was not free to leave the school where she taught and the two merry cousins, almost like sisters, were left behind, as well as a host of young people. The Manitou days were unusually happy ones with a number of young men cousins, J. T. Gordon, Charlie Gordon and J. W. Gordon as well as Robert Ironside, Fullerton and Ross and Jack Laidlaw. It was a town full of young people who were full of life and hope of success in the several businesses in embryo that they were establishing. Susie's love of fun had been filled to the brim and to turn away from it all was not easy.

So tired were we that we did not hear the torrents of rain which fell during the night. It was a cloudburst. The men declared it rained a patten pail to the level. Those precious hens had a soaking and such a good clean up that it proved a blessing in disguise as no hens ever gave such a rich reward in eggs and that continued all

fall and winter.

We did not see the road all the way to Carman as it was one long lake, but the sun shone brightly to make up for the night's deluge. We reached the parsonage to find it devoid of a single piece of furniture except a lumbering big cook stove in a very small kitchen. Not a stick of wood was to be seen and not one soul to welcome us. Mother must have a cup of tea and Father somehow managed to borrow a few sticks of dry wood and we stood around a packing case and ate a few sandwiches. Later in the afternoon, dear Mrs. Lorce invited Father and Mother to spend the night in her home a block away, but poor bilious Rob had an acute spell and they could not leave him. Dry bedding was found in one case and a shakedown made on the floor. Sue and I, as there was no other dry bedding, accepted Mrs. Lorce's kind invitation.

We found out later, the circuit was torn by politics; the previous minister had been at variance with the man who was afterwards premier of Manitoba.¹ Politics outshone Christianity and people vowed they would not come near the parsonage, though they never knew if the new minister had any political leanings.

All the bedding, linen and clothing which had been packed clean had to be washed and dried. All the pieces of goods used in packing were opened and dried on the roof of the lean-to, dining room and kitchen. It took two weeks, everyone doing their part. It was heavy work for Mother and Susie as it was all done by hand on a washboard. During that time Father had organized a committee to attend to the furnishings of the parsonage and after three weeks those appointed went to Morden, the nearest furniture store, twenty five miles south, and brought the needful pieces for four bedrooms, dining room, kitchen and study. The campers on the floor for three weeks were glad to once more sleep on a bed with a straw mattress.

The walls in all the rooms, after having been used by two large families, badly needed a face-lifting and wallpaper had been included in the furnishings from Morden. Mother, the experienced paper hanger, had papered three bedrooms, the study and the hall and was papering a long stretch along the stairway from the second to the first storey when she took suddenly ill with angina pectoris, a pain so fearful as to be unexplainable.

Dr. Harry Cunningham, who had been practising a year in Carman, was taking a post graduate course in Edinburgh hospitals so Dr. McConnell of Morden answered the telegraph call. (We could telegraph from Elm Creek, 15 miles to the north, into

¹ The Methodist Episcopal Church in Carman City was formally opened 29 July 1881 by Rev. Thomas Argue, assisted by the pastor Rev. F.W. Warne. Mr. R.P. Roblin, (later Sir Rodmond), premier of Manitoba, 1900 to 1915, presented the keys to the building.

Winnipeg and out to Morden.) So deep was his sympathy for Mother, than on his first trip to Carman from Morden he broke all records of the twenty-five mile drive. Called a second time, he drove so furiously that his horse, a very valuable one, later died. So great was his esteem he would have done it regardless of results.

Nursing and finishing making the parsonage habitable excluded all outdoor activities and the geese had a grand inning again in the potato crop which filled a large piece of land to the main road. When the great anxiety had eased, we knew roast goose would have a distinct Irish flavour as not one green leaf was left. The slough, just a short distance west made an abundant and joyous life for these feathered fowl. When Mother was recovering the old gander would answer her call - climb the deep level bank, crane his neck to the window sill and give his salute. Mother believed she would meet her geese in heaven. Why not?

Less than four months away from reaching the ripe age of ninety-three, the life stream fell in gentle rapids. During the three months he was confined to bed, visitors would hear, "I'm not sick; there's nothing the matter with me but old age." Snuggled in a downy feather tick, (a gift of his sister), over the regular mattress, his very thin body had complete rest. He was very little trouble, happy and contented. Mother read to him. Through the years of retirement, and indeed before that, they had been omnivorous readers, reading aloud to one another. Two days before the Manitoba Conference of the Methodist Church opened, Dr. John McLean came to ask for a message from Father who usually suggested a passage of Scripture as a theme.

When Dr. and Mrs. McLean rose to leave after a couple of hours of conversation, the usual question was asked, "What is your message to Conference this time?" Like a shot came the answer, "Tell them to keep a large place in their hearts for Christ."

There were many callers the following day, a Sunday. We always had a short service in the evening - a hymn, a Scripture reading and a prayer. "We had better dispense with this, Mother," I said, "as Father seems very tired," and she agreed. On Tuesday, at four o'clock, just before the first session of the Conference adjourned, Dr. McLean shared Father's words with those in attendance. As he was doing so, Father passed peacefully on. The next day when the ministers and laymen opened their newspapers, Father's picture was on the front page with an account of his life. His message became the keynote of the devotional period of each session.

Conference adjourned on Thursday and the delegates filled the center pews of the church. Rev. Gordon had been the oldest chaplain of the Orange Lodge in Canada and the back of the church was filled with his fellow Orangemen. All remembered how firmly and how frequently Father had stated the fact that if Orangemen lived up to their constitution they would be Christians. Many times, when guest speaker at the festivities of the Glorious 12 of July, this was his theme.

Dr. Chown, the Moderator, was joined by three or four other ministers on the platform and all took part in the service. Rev. E. Church, our pastor, had charge of the service, and Dr. Chown, (for a time our neighbour on Grosvenor Avenue), also spoke. Dr. John McLean gave the address which appeared in the next issue of the Christian Guardian.

There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the City of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. Ps. 46:4

This is the prophecy of Rev. 22:7, "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb".

How Mother longed to wander along the river and drink of its pure, cool water. "The dear Heavenly Father is keeping me as an intercessor," she would say as she was taken hither and thither to open a meeting with prayer or to lead in a devotional period. At over ninety years of age, she addressed the Sunday School on Mothers' Day. I can see her in her lacy silk shawl leaning on her Diamond Wedding silver-mounted cane which was ever her companion when out of the house.

Coming home one day I saw her "cane-ing" it at a very quick rate on Ruskin Row and ran and caught up with her. "Why this great haste?" I asked. "I was trimming the vines which cut off the private lane and my scissors fell on the other side", was the gardener's answer. This lane ended at our lot and we used it for a wide flower garden.

In the spring of 1931 a bronchial cold with constant coughing weakened her and our dear one dozed much of the time, but at times was much brighter. How amused we were when she asked "Is Ramsay Macdonald still Prime Minister of Britain and is Bennett still Prime Minister of Canada?" We were more surprised when one Sabbath day she asked for the newspaper. She was nearing the place "when time shall be no more", and knew not that it was the Sabbath day. But her much-worn Bible and a little brown-covered book of *Salvation Hymns*, which she constantly used, were on a bedside table and had been her close companions by her reading lamp in the living room.

Shall we ever forget the shining glory of her face when Dr. Wm. Armstrong, with only one hour between trains, hurried by taxi to have a brief prayer vigil at her bedside, or the thoughtful comforting dispensing of the Sacrament by Dr. Charles Bland.

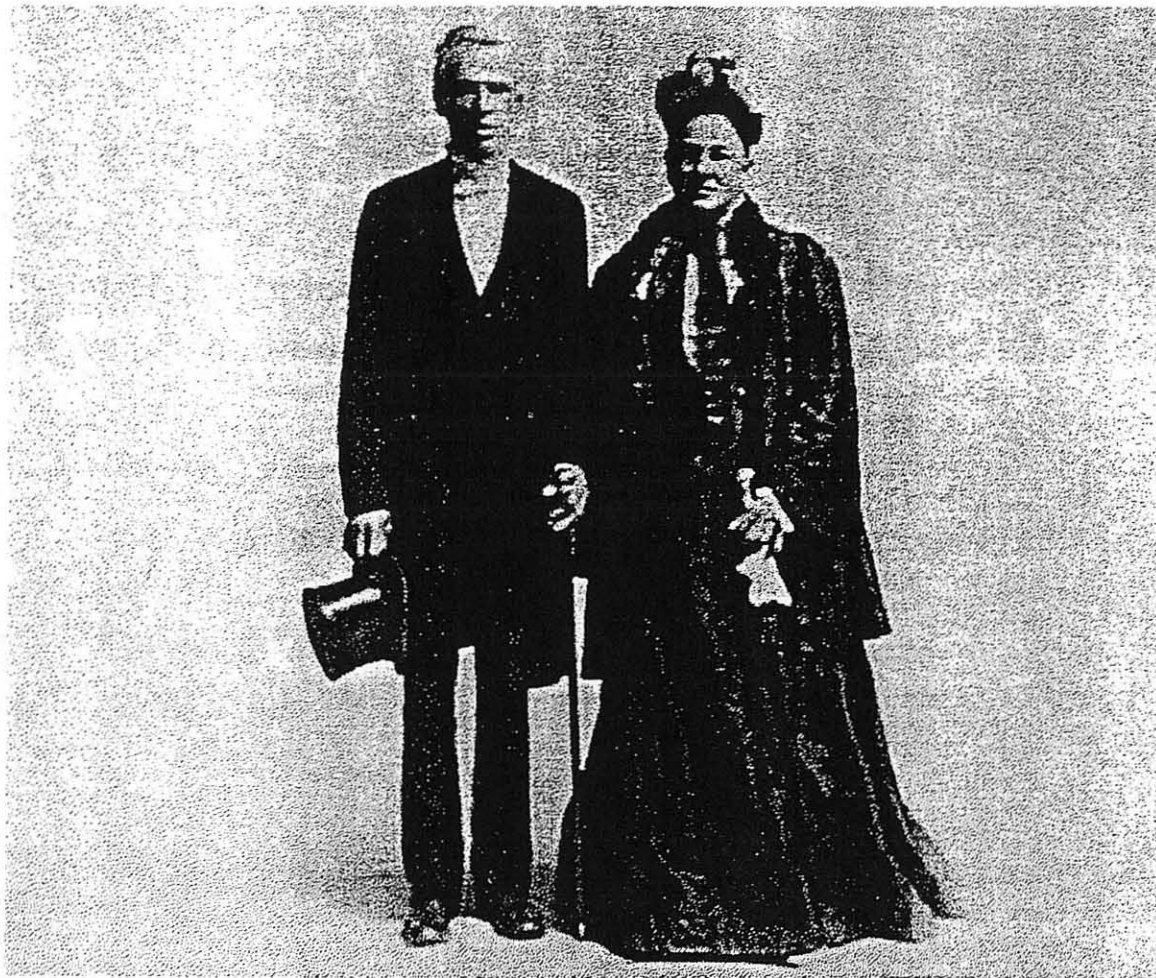
Pneumonia took a rapid course and August 9th, during the evening service, the pearly gates swung open and she met her Pilot face to face in the Glory Land of Light.

"Dr. Bland, this is to be a triumphant service - not a note of mourning, and grief must abide its time", was Day's injunction. People said they had never been at such a service, as Dr. Bland would laughingly tell of how he used to keep a good story to tell the "Shut-in" and she would match it with another, and they would have a

good laugh together. "But her laughter could leap in a moment into a Hallelujah! as all laughter should do, and her mirth would melt without a jar into prayer. She was conspicuous for her power to speak. She had clear ideas, force, and readiness. The qualities of an orator were revealed in her sermons and addresses. It was said she always captured her audience and held their undivided attention. Her interest in life was varied and remained keen until the end. As to her intellectual gifts, she owed much to natural endowment. And she had originality, independence of judgement, strong convictions and an unusual power of utterance. She wanted to know what was going on in the world. She was no cloistered saint but was, in no sinister sense, a public woman. She was a notable woman preacher, among the first, if not the first, in Canada".

In his won way, Mr. J. S. Woodsworth reiterated much of what had been said. "With Mrs. Gordon Christianity was not something apart from ordinary life but rather identified with it. She saw the world through the glasses of her own experience and that was essentially religious. To many of today her outlook may have seemed narrow, but her world had an essential unity and her attitude was characterised by singleness of purpose".

Her remarkable vitality was shown in her interest in many things and she followed public affairs with keen interest. In her youth she broke the conventions of her day and set forth preaching the Gospel. Nothing deterred her from following the dictates of her heart. So throughout her married life, though no one could be more loyal to her husband, she continued to have a mind of her own. She valued greatly Father's sermons outlines, but many in the congregation preferred her sermons. She was among the first to advocate womans' suffrage, but the family life was where she really reigned. She loved her home and cared for her husband and children.



CELEBRATION OF GOLDEN WEDDING

**Rev. Andrew Gordon and Wife
have been married Fifty Years**

Fifty years of happiness - their Golden Wedding Anniversary - was last night celebrated by Rev. Andrew Gordon and Mrs. Gordon at their home on Wardlaw Avenue.

Over fifty of their descendants and relations arrived from all parts of the province to keep the anniversary and a golden shower of gifts came as tokens of affection and esteem from those further afield. Each present was fashioned of real gold and they formed a glittering array set out on the snowy napery of a table.

The reception rooms were tastefully decorated in crimson roses and smilax and Mrs. Gordon carried a shower bouquet of the same flowers. Mrs. Gordon wore, in honour of the race of her husband, a dress trimmed with Carrickmacross lace especially sent from Belfast for the occasion.

Although the whole affair was an informal family gathering, some speeches had to be made. Dr. H. A. Gordon, Portage, proposed the King and Empire, Dr. McLaughlin spoke to the health of the bride, and Dr. H. A. Gordon talked of old friends to which W. C. Graham responded. Dr. H. A. Gordon also proposed "The Hope of the Gordon Race" to which Charles Gordon, the son of J. T. Gordon, M.P.P. replied. Mrs. J. T. Gordon poured tea and Mrs. R. E. Gordon, of Arcola, cut the ices.

Rev. Andrew Gordon was born MacGuire Bridge, Enniskillen, Ireland, but came to America when a boy. He lived for a brief time in the United States and then moved to Tweed, Ontario. He arrived in Winnipeg in 1882. Mrs. Gordon came from Devonshire. They have two sons and three daughters, all of whom were present last night.

Winnipeg Tribune, June 24, 1909

REV. ANDREW GORDON RECEIVES FINAL CALL
Venerable Methodist Minister dies at his residence
Fort Rouge, age 92

Rev. Andrew Gordon, aged 92, probably the oldest Methodist minister in Canada, died yesterday at his residence, 821 Grosvenor Avenue, Winnipeg. For the past 20 years, or since his retirement from High Bluff, his last charge, Rev. Mr. Gordon resided in Winnipeg. He is survived by his widow who was Miss Annie Copp of Bideford, Devon, England, and five children, three sons and two daughters; Robert E. of Winnipeg; Dr. H. A. Gordon of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, and W. F. Gordon, Kaslo, B.C.; Misses A. J. and A. R. Gordon, Winnipeg.

Born at McQuires Bridge, Fermanagh County, Ireland, the late Mr. Gordon came to Canada with his parents as a boy and was educated at Hungersford in the Belleville district of Ontario where he was received into the ministry of the Methodist church in 1850.

On June 24, 1919, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary, the bride being 82 and the bridegroom in his 92nd year. Mr. Gordon, entering the church, was a minister of what was then known as the Bible Christian Church. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon came to Manitoba in 1882 and served the following circuits: Thornhill, Manitou, Carman, Prospect, Methven and High Bluff.

Message to Conference

What proved to be a message from the dying to the Methodist Conference in session yesterday afternoon was delivered by Rev. John MacLean, D. D., for Mr. Gordon. The old minister had been ailing slightly and Dr. and Mrs. MacLean called on him a few days ago. Before leaving him, Dr. MacLean reminded him of the near approach of the conference and asked if he wished to say anything as the ministers and laymen would appreciate such a message from him. "I have," he said, "but it is only this. Tell them to keep a comfortable place in their hearts for Christ and everything will go on alright." The message delivered after the election of the new president of conference yesterday was received with all reverence, though none of those present were aware how near to the "pearly gates" the aged minister was at that moment.

The Winnipeg Free Press, 15 June 1922

REV. ANDREW GORDON

The angels stopped in their flights through boundless space and listened to the music of the stars as they shed their light upon the horsemen and chariots bearing the soul of the aged veteran of Calvary, the Rev. Andrew Gordon, along the Milky Way toward home.

Born at Maguires Bridge, County of Fermanagh, Ireland, Rev. Gordon came to Canada when a boy. He entered the ministry of the Bible Christian Church in 1850 and, after an earnest and successful career as a preacher of the message of peace in Ontario, came to Manitoba in 1882 where he laboured at Thornhill, Manitou, Carman, Prospect, Methven and High Bluff. On superannuation he took up his abode in Winnipeg where he resided for more than twenty years till he went "sweeping through the gates of New Jerusalem" on June 14, 1922 at the age of 92 years.

On June 22, 1859 Rev. Gordon married Miss Ann Copp of Bideford, Devon, England, who still lingers by Siloam's shady rills, waiting the Master's call, having a grip on the strong hand of Christ, and with a deep faith in immortality, so sweetly expressed by the poet Swinburne; "It is so beautiful and delightful to think of being together when this life is over and of seeing things no longer in a glass, darkly."

Death becomes monotonous to the aged with the passing of many friends, but this pilgrim of eternity went beyond the great adventure, for as he came to the end of the trail, and just as he was at the bend of the road and was turning the corner, he stopped a moment to send back the message of a prophet and poet to his old comrades and friends assembled in the Manitoba Conference, "Tell them to let Christ have a large place in their hearts and all will be well". Within two hours after the delivery of this appropriate and inspiring message to the Conference, he fell asleep and went home to God, while his brethren in the great fellowship tarried awhile under the charm and spell of the voice from Heaven, and all the world is changed with the glory from the sky.

For forty years this breaker of the long trail on the western prairies sang undying songs for weary hearts. "He wrought in the poverty of the dull, grey days, but with the night his little lamp-lit room was bright" with the glory that is not of land or sea, for the Pilot of the Galilean Lake stood by his side, and the angels found haven in the old log hut.

This pioneer with a vision wore no outward garb of saintliness - the true livery of the soul shone through the garment of flesh; his gentle disposition found an outlet in beautiful thoughts, tender words and great deeds, and wherever he went on lonely trails, finding a small congregation in an old shack stricken with mud, lonesomeness and weariness, it was transformed into a cathedral of spires and stained glass

windows, while the footprints of angels were seen outside, as they had lingered to hear the man of God, who had caught the vision splendid. Up on the Mount of Vision with Moses, he held high fellowship with God, and coming down "He wist not that the skin of his countenance shone."

A preacher of the everlasting message, the wonder of the story of divine love, the great doctrines of grace, the eternal truths of life had a constant grip on his soul and, with intense loyalty to Christ, he spoke in the ears of sinful men and, with an eloquence born of the vision of the Cross, the glad news of pardon and holiness, until those who came to scoff remained to pray. As he held up Christ to a dying world the glory of God shone on the common road and souls were won from sin to service and Heaven.

This circuit rider with his saddlebags knew the meaning of poverty, and hardship was his companion in the early days, but there was never a murmur or complaint for he was one of God's Gentlemen, possessed of such fine courtesy and dignity that he had not fault to find with his Master. When the trumpets sounded and he came down to the sea, where the strange boatman waited with his barque to row him away, no words of weariness or disappointment with life in the world fell from his lips, no anxiety to go home was expressed, just a sweet contentment with the will of God while divine beauty lit up his face and he felt the kiss of God, there was a gentle smile and he fell asleep to waken tomorrow on the other side of life.

Nine children were born, of whom five still abide with us, clad with the memory of a saintly father, one of the grand old men of the century, and a great host bear testimony to the power of the simple life in Christ as seen and felt in the life of this western pioneer.

One of the breakers of the long trail has gone home, but our faith is strong as we cry with Browning in the closing lines of "Prospice" - "O thou Soul of my soul, I shall clasp thee again - and with God be the rest".

John McLean
Wesley College, Winnipeg
June 19, 1922

The Christian Guardian, 15 July 1922

**MRS. ANN GORDON, OLD
RESIDENT HERE, DIES
One of the First Women Preachers
of Methodist Church;
was Aged 93**

Mrs. Ann Gordon, aged 93 years, a pioneer resident of Manitoba, widow of Rev. Andrew Gordon, died Sunday at the family residence, 821 Grosvenor.

Mrs. Gordon, whose maiden name was Ann Copp, had the distinction of being one of the first women preachers of the Methodist church, having become a lay preacher at the age of 18, in the Old Country. Mr. Gordon predeceased her in 1922.

Women preachers in the early days were almost unheard of, and her ministry had attracted wide attention. In 1858 she came to Canada on account of ill-health, settling at first at London, Ontario, where she later became active in religious work.

After her marriage to Rev. Andrew Gordon of the Bible Christian Church, St. Thomas, Ontario, two years after coming to this country, they lived successively at North Bay, Ontario, Port Hope, Belleville, Peterborough, Pickering, Tweed, and Uxbridge before coming to Manitoba where they settled in the Thornhill district. Their nearest grocery store, at that time, was Emerson, 60 miles away.

In this district her husband had a wide circuit in the religious field and on many occasions Mrs. Gordon preached at three different points each Sunday. Mrs. Gordon was one of the most enthusiastic temperance workers during the campaign in the Carman district in the late 1880s.

Mrs. Gordon was a member of the Fort Rouge United Church and four years ago she was one of the speakers on the occasion of the Mothers' Day celebrations.

On a Sunday in June, 1919, the congregation of the Fort Rouge Church presented an illuminated address and purse of gold to the esteemed couple, and the same year the Manitoba Conference passed a complimentary resolution which was forwarded to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon in appreciation of their services.

Funeral arrangements have not been completed and are in care of the A. B. Gardiner funeral home.

Manitoba Free Press, Monday, August 10, 1931

Gordon: Major Herbert Andrew, M.D., Physician and Surgeon, McQuay Clinic, Portage la Prairie, Born at Perrytown, Durham County, Ontario, 1868. Son of Reverend Andrew Gordon and Anne (Copp) Gordon. Married Annie L. Bowman. Has three sons and three daughters. Was educated at Durham County School, Manitoba University. The Gordon family came to Manitoba in 1881; father, a clergyman of the Methodist Church, was stationed at Thornhill, for many years a pioneer of the Methodist Conference; retired in 1899. Interned with Winnipeg General Hospital. Major Gordon graduated in 1899; opened practise at Strathclair; came to Portage in 1900 where he has practised continuously. Joined C.E.F. (C.A.M.C.) June 1915. Overseas July, attached No. 3 Canadian Stationary Hospital, saw service at Mudros, Island of Lemnos; invalided to England, Duchess of Connaught Hospital, Taplow; Canadian Convalescent Hospital; transferred to King's Canadian Red Cross Hospital, Bushey Park; rejoined No. 3 Canadian Stationary at Boulogne; afterwards at Doullens; Red Cross Hospital, Buxton; Princess Patricia Hospital, Bexhill; Medical Officer, S.S. Metagama. Returned to Canada, Senior Medical Officer, S.S. Camania; discharged. Member British, Canadian and Manitoba Medical Association. Medical Health Officer, Portage la Prairie. Past Worshipful Grand Master, A.F. & A.M. Past Principal, Royal Arch, Past Grand, I.O.O.F. Address, Portage la Prairie, Man.

Pioneers and Prominent People of Manitoba
1922
