Memoires of Minnie Tegart
McNeice-Brockman
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You see, my husband is a descendent of George McNeice’s brother Joseph, and we are writing a book about George McNeice and brother Thomas’ great adventure when they were captured by Chief Poundmaker during the North-West Rebellion of 1885.

- Julie A. McNeice

julie@mccasa.ca
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Chapter 1

The Collingwood Years

Well, if I am ever going to begin to relate the history of the things my grandchildren want me to, and those things my daughter, Irma, has been telling me I should commit to paper, I had better get busy. The old thief of time gets me every day.

I remember when we lived in Collingwood (I was born at Ravenna near Collingwood) Ontario, Canada. [They actually lived near Singhampton, a small community south of Collingwood, ed.] I must have been a very little girl, not three years old, of that I am sure because my mother has told me before we left there. One of the first things I remember was falling down a long flight of stairs. My oldest sister slept with me upstairs and I had awakened, found she had gotten up, and had left me there, so I was made and decided to go downstairs, which I proceeded to do. The result of my hasty actions was the catapulting the whole way down the stairs like a sack of potatoes. I found my sister, Maggie, in the big kitchen and called her an “old groundhog” for leaving me alone upstairs. Poor Maggie, I suppose she had to rise betimes to prepare breakfast for the family.

At that time there were in our family – let me see – there was Maggie, Wesley, William, Alex, George, Jonny, Annie, Ada, myself and Reuben. What a family! Then of course, my mother and Father! How on earth could one man provide for such a large family? Later, after we moved from Collingwood up to Sault Ste. Marie in Algoma, two more children were added to the family, namely, Henry and Ellie. The latter was christened Isabella Annette. We considered that quite an aristocratic name. My mother’s name was Isabella Robinson. However, I am getting ahead of my story.

Another memory that comes to me in my young life in Collingwood was, or is, of an old gander that used to chase me if he saw me and how I would run! I dreamed Mother cooked the old gander, feathers and all, and put him on the platter in front of me at the table. It must have been a dream because it couldn’t have been reality though for a long time I thought it was really so. At that time, I sat in a high chair at the table.

I also remember my brother Reuben, and I deciding to run away from home because Maggie wanted to wash our hands and faces. We got as far as the gate – by the way it was a big white gate which must have been made of lumber because I remember we couldn’t open it and crawled through between the boards. We turned to look back at Maggie standing in the doorway. Our hearts failed us and we crawled back through the gate, returned to the house and took our washing.
I remember, too, being forbidden by Mother to eat any apples from the orchard, and I remember distinctly one day when Mother was away from home I slipped out to the orchard, pulled an apple off a tree, hid somewhere and ate it. I felt quite guilty.

Then, too, one day my father and mother found it necessary to take a trip somewhere and I was allowed to go to school with Annie and Ada. I must have been very young because I grew sleepy and the teacher made me a bed with her cloak (it had a beautiful red lining) on a bench and I went to sleep. After school, I remember we all went to a little village called Ravenna and played on the sidewalk in front of a shoemaker’s shop and I remember his name was Mr. Bruster – Booster probably. All at once we saw our mother looking for us. I still remember how cross she looked! We all were hustled into the carriage and driven home. Annie and Ada were punished severely. I was not punished, perhaps because I was too small to know better than to go to the village.

Sometime later Annie was trying to explain to time the mechanism of the sewing machine. She said, “Put your finger in here under the needle and I’ll show you how it sews.” I, being a credulous child, placed my forefinger under the sewing machine needle. Annie turned the wheel while I turned into a howling baboon. Another wailing for sister Annie!

Our carriage which I mentioned a short time back, was one of those old fashioned affairs with high wheels, steps up the side and a canopy with fringe all around the top. It was very classy. My Mother always wore a bonnet with big ties in a bow under her chin.

I never knew a grandmother, only a grandfather. The only memory I retain of my grandfather Tegart – my father’s father – is of a dour old man who ate my egg at breakfast time one morning. I hated him for that, then then he brought me some bulls-eye candy which sort of made I all right. He must have been a greedy old man, I think, because I have heard my mother say he was always getting up in the middle of the night and eating up everything he could find in the pantry. We used to have pantries in those days. They were little rooms off the kitchens where our mothers made their cookies, pies, cakes, etc. In fact, did all their baking, washed their dishes, etc. We never hear of pantries now.

Well, one morning my grandfather was found dead, lying on the pantry floor. I believe in his own home. He had gotten up in the night looking for something to eat. The angel of death came and laid him there. Let us hope he died painlessly. But I always thought for years that God had punished him for taking my egg. I had been taught, even at my early age, that God always punished people when they were naughty.

I remember being sick, something wrong with my throat and father and mother took me to a doctor. I remember his name was Dr. Moore. He many years later lived somewhere in Manitoba, Canada. I cannot remember whether he lived at Brandon or Portage La Prairie; but anyway he is mentioned in a story book called, "Sowing Seeds in (sib for) Danny," by Nellie McClung. Dr. Moore had a number of skeletons in his office and I remember him
coaxing me to touch one. Was I scared! He was a very nice man. He must have lanced my throat because for years and years I carried the marks on my neck and I remember I though he put fire on my neck, it hurt so.

I had two long necked black bottles at home which I used for dolls. I do not even remember having a real doll then. I used to sit in a little rocking chair nursing these dolls and pretending they too had their necks cut and had fire on them. One I called Susan Lacey and the other Lacy Lacey.

My Sister, Annie, used to make me play baby when she would have her girlfriends in to play. I hated the role because she would make me stay covered up in bed and I couldn't see what she and the other girls were doing. Then she would order me to cry every little while and then she and all the girls could come running to see what was wrong with the baby. That part suited me fine.

There was one place I loved to go; to friends of my father and mother. Their name was Wallace. One of their boys was named Russel. He and I used to sit together in a big rocking chair and rock. Guess he was older that I because he would kiss me say, "When you and I grow big we will get married." I guess that was my first proposal of marriage!

We must have had a nice place at Collingwood. I remember the house was white and we had an orchard and a big barn.

According to what my mother and my sister, Maggie told me, after I was older my father decided to sell out and go elsewhere, where he could find land for the boys. In those days it seemed boys were more important than girls. Well, father went away to Portage La Prairie to look for land. He must have gone by boat, probably as far as Port Arthur, then how he went the rest of the way, I do not Know, but I have heard him say they travelled part of the way in either row boats or canoes and they would come to places where they had to carry their canoes on their backs. I remember he said they called that part of the trip, "portage," or "we had to portage our canoes."

Well, anyway, he must have secured property there because when he was returning to his old home in Collingwood, he met a man on the boat who persuaded him to give up the idea of moving out to Portage La Prairie and, instead of going out to that wilderness to buy land which this man had in Algoma, he found it was a dreary wilderness there. Portage La Prairie proved to be one of the richest wheat land in Canada.
Chapter 2

Algoma Bound

I do not remember any of the preparations for moving out to Algoma. I do remember being on the boat and how my brother, Reuben, and I used to argue. One day we were arguing, "It is, it isn't' and the stewardess came along - she had a broom and dustpan in her hands. She stopped, looked at us and said, "Tis, tisn't, t'is, tisn't." Reuben had scratched what he thought was a picture of a horse on the rocking chair and was the stewardess mad! Bet she thought we were little demons!

Funny, I do not remember anything more about our trip, nor arriving at Sault St. Marie. I do remember, however, we stayed with some people by the name of McKinley. They must have been Irish, I think, and I remember my father, mother, brother Reuben and I slept on what they called a shakedown, which was a bed on the floor.

McKinley's residence consisted of a log house. One room downstairs and one upstairs, and one reached the upper apartment by means of a ladder placed against the wall and, after mounting the ladder, one had to ease their anatomy through a trap door in the upper floor. I never did become acquainted with the mysteries of that upper region.

We must have stayed with the McKinley's quite some time, probably until my father prepared a house for us to occupy. I remember one night accidentally kicking my father's sore leg. Prince, a black stallion that my father owned, had bitten my father on the leg. It must have been very painful because when I kicked him he made powerful use of his lungs, finally, we moved into our own home, which, though in no way a palace, must have been more comfortable than that of the McKinley's.

From the first summer on in our own home, our mother always had a lovely flower garden. Each of us girls had our special rose bush. Mine, I remember, was a moss rose. Then there were violets, pinks, hollyhocks, pansies (which in the spring, as soon as the snow melted around them, would shove their little faces up to greet us). In one corner of the garden stood a stalwart balsam tree, under this tree was a mat of sweet clover and I remember how I loved to lie on this clover and watch the big, soft, white billowy clouds float overhead and I used to wonder if heaven was behind those clouds.

Then along one side of the garden stood three spruce trees, stately and tall. Out at one end of the house was a big pine and our father put a swing up in this tree for us children, and what a grand time we used to have there! At the other end of the house there was a big
rainwater trough, hewn from a monstrous tree; I think a cedar tree. In the summer, this
tree held all the rainwater required for the house.

One Saturday, in the summertime, father and mother went to town and left Reuben and me
at home alone. I do not know where the rest of the family were, but we thought we would
be extra smart and we got the mop and broom and raised the window, slopped mop and
broom into the rainwater, dragged water, mop and broom in through the open window and
proceeded to mop and clean the floor. Was Mother angry! Whew! The next day, being
Sunday, the preacher came for lunch and I remember Mother apologizing to him for the
dirty state of the floor. The preacher's name was Mr. Church.

Sunday mornings always seemed so peaceful in those days. Everything was slicked up on
Saturdays: windows washed, stove polished, all pots and pans shined; no work left for
Sunday, only to put some food on the table. We washed only the breakfast and lunch
dishes. The supper dishes were left for Monday morning and, after I was six years of age, I
had to rise early and wash Sunday night's dishes before breakfast.

On Saturday mornings, it fell to my lot to shine the knives, forks and spoons and shine the
Sunday-go-to-meetin' shoes for the family and set them all in a row ready for church. Then
Sunday morning we usually had prayers and, after prayers, we had breakfast and dressed
for church and Sunday School. In the summertime we walked to church and I remember
when the roses were in bloom going to the garden and cutting a rose to wear; how
delightfully fragrant those roses were! It seems to me no roses smell since those days.

Sunday School was a happy time to me. I loved every bit of it. My teacher in Sunday School
was Mrs. Bruce Yarwood. I thought her the most beautiful creature alive. She had a very
long chin, and it rather stuck out. I thought it lovely and used to spend no end of time in front of our mirror practicing to make my chin long and stick out like hers. She was so sweet and gentle. She always hoped I would be a missionary when I grew up. But church always scared me to death, except the singing. The testimonial meetings they used to have! Mother and Father always attended these meetings. One old Scotsman, Mr. Michel, always sang, "Son of My Soul," and another Scotsman, Mr. Penman, always gave his experiences and would up his speech with, "Until we meet around the Whitewashed Throne." I had visions of God with a whitewash brush in one hand and a pail of whitewash in the other, busy washing His throne.

Once in a while Mother would lead into the praying. She usually cried, and by the time she finished praying her voice was a wail. Oh, how I used to pray silently that God wouldn't let Mother pray, but for some reason God didn't very often answer my prayers about Mother's praying.

I used to be afraid to go to bed for fear I should die in the night and go to hell! And, if I had done anything naughty, I could see God's eyes. Great big yellow eyes staring at me on the wall behind my bed. I would cover my head with the sheet; once in a while take a peek to see if the eyes were still there. There couldn't have been much of the love of God instilled in the hearts of children in those days.

My father never took any part in public praying or giving his testimony but I often wonder if maybe he wasn't just a little nearer the pattern of our Saviour in his daily life than some of those who did so much shouting and wailing.

One naughty thing which I did, and which has always remained in my memory, I will now relate. Evidently we had to carry our water from McKinley's well for some time, because I remember Mother telling my sister Ada, who was three years my senior, to take a pail and go to McKinley's for a pail of water. Ada coaxed me to go along but Mother objected to my going for some reason and, of course, I knew Mother meant "no" when she said no. But after we got outside, Ada said, "Aw, come on; if you walk close up in front of me going down and close behind me coming back, Mother will never see you at all." So I proceeded to act accordingly, and was so successful that Mother never did know I had disobeyed her. Had she ever found out, I would have had what Paddy gave the drum¹, if you know what I mean. Nevertheless, I always felt guilty about disobeying Mother, and often wonder what made Ada tempt me to do so as she all her life was so honest and truthful.

We were not rich in those days, I am sure, and they must have been hard on both Father and Mother.

¹ To give someone the honest truth, usually in a blunt straightforward manner.
When I was five years old my brother Wesley died and was buried on the northeast corner of our farm under a balsam tree. A balsam is an evergreen tree. This plot of ground my father gave to the settlement afterwards for a burying ground for the community. I remember the morning Wesley died. Early, early, before daylight Mother came to my bed and wakened me to "hurry and dress: Wesley is going home to God, and to come and say good-bye." I put on a yellowish flannel dress which Mother had finished for me - one which she had spun and woven the material with her own hands.

Don't you think it rather too bad for children to experience such a sight as we did on that mornin. I think it must have been in January. Wesley had remained behind in Collingwood; also had Maggie and William when we left for Sault St. Marie. No doubt they had work there.

Then, shortly after Wesley's death, Harry was born. About a year after Wesley's death, our brother Alex, was buried beside brother Wesley. He had been working in a lumber camp near Marquette and, after the camp broke up (I believe they were on an island) the camp tried to reach the mainland and had an awful time. The ice was breaking and many of the men were badly frozen from being in and out of the water. My brother, Alex, was so badly frozen that he died in about a month. I remember a man coming with the news and my father took my mother away to nurse Alex. I can still see Mother when the man came with the sad news. Her face was ashen white. The man called Father outside and told him. Then Father came in and told Mother. Mother was at the long kitchen table molding bread dough into loaves. Her face was perfectly white.

Father went somewhere and secured a young woman by the name of Miss McGill to come and take care of us children, myself, Reuben and baby Harry, and Father and Mother left us in her care. They must have sent for William because I remember him being there after they left. So many times Mother has related her terrible experiences while nursing Alex.

Well, one day we received word that Mother and Father were bringing Alex home and they expected to be home for Christmas. William went out into the woods and cut cedar boughs and decorated the walls to make things pretty for Alex's homecoming. But Alex did not come for some weeks and when he did return, Mother and Father brought him home in his coffin and they laid him away under the balsam tree beside his brother Wesley. They both were so young - only 21 years of age.

There were plenty of hard times in those days. We had very few pleasures other than what we made for ourselves. Fortunately, some of us were too young to
realize the seriousness of sorrow and privations. The older children, that is George, John, Annie and Ada, attended school but I was not strong enough to plow through the snow in the middle of winter, so Mother taught me to read at home, out of the newspapers. In the mornings, after the other children went to school, it was my fate to stand on a chair and wash dishes. I learned to braid my hair, which previously had been kept in ringlets. Mother said she was very glad when I learned to braid my hair; it was that much less for her to do, and goodness knows she must have had plenty to do what with six children at that time and a husband to cook for, butter and bread to make, washing, ironing, and mending, knitting, sewing, gardening and soap making and a house to look after. How did she do it?

I remember the picnics we used to attend. I used to be excited for days; before the big event I would have such funny creepy feelings in my tummy for days and days. Really, I used to think there must be a mouse down there. I felt so funny I couldn't eat. Then would come the great day. By the way, this was when we lived near Sault St. Marie, which people called the "Soo." And here and now, let me say our township was name Tarentorus.

Well, the great day would arrive at last: Father, or one of my brothers would have the team of horses all shined up; curried and combed until they shone. We all would have on our next to Sunday best; baskets packed in the wagon. And, last of all, but most important, all the family would climb into the wagon and with a "gid-ep" away we would go. Father always had the nicest and best groomed horses in the community and they were the envy of all the neighbours.

I was always afraid something would happen which would prevent the picnic from being a reality and was all of a-quiver until we were actually on the grounds. We so often held our picnics at a place called Garden River. If I remember correctly, this was on an island in the St. Maries, or Mary's River east of the Soo.

There were a number of Indians in this vicinity; not like the Western Indians. I do not know to what tribe they belonged. One time the older children who were grown up went to a celebration which these Indians gave (they must have had a reservation there). They had a christening or baptism because they - the Indians - gave each white person an Indian name. The only one I can remember was brother Williams' - it was 'Wamway-ash.' At one time I knew the meaning of the name but I have forgotten it long since.

One time my sister Maggie, my brother William and a Mr. and Mrs. Boles, their little girl,
Della, and myself went to Garden River to pick blue berries or huckle berries. They are a small blue berry growing in low bushes. The ground was a solid blue carpet for acres. Della and I were made to stay in the wagon. Why, I do not know; and we were terrified! We suffered all the horrors of a bloody massacre in our imaginings! The Indians would not have harmed us in the least had they found us. But we put in a fearful time until the gang came back with their buckets, baskets and pails filled to overflowing with delicious blueberries. There was a bountiful supply of wild berries in that country, and in berry time all hands were kept busy picking strawberries, raspberries, both red and black, blueberries, gooseberries, and wild black currents. One time I went berry picking with my sister Maggie and ran into a wasp's nest and did I yell. I ran straight home howling like a wildcat all the way, and when I reached home there was a Mr. Manning there of whom I was very fond. He took me on his knee and petted me up and said he was going to call me "Wasp-Runaway."

My sister Annie was a dare-devil and a tease. She was always scaring me, telling me the bears would get me, and so on. She was always up to some devilry when Mother was not home. One time, on Ada's birthday, Mother and Father had gone somewhere in the evening (to prayer meeting, I suppose), and as a final ceremony to the birthday celebrations, just before we youngsters got into bed, Annie made Ada come outside and she (Annie) poured several buckets of cold water over poor Ada's head. Ada was meek as a lamb. Guess she was glad to get off without having to suffer more indignities. Looking back over the years, the realization comes to me how it feels to be an odd one in a family. Annie and Ada were older than I. They must have been born closer together than the most of us and seemed to been able to go places, while poor me seldom got to go anywhere. Annie never wanted me along and, if by chance I did go, she always ran away out of sight and hid somewhere just to frighten me. Well she was successful, sure 'nuff.

One day they two were going picking raspberries and to my joy I was permitted to tag along. We went back in the woods and mountains, of which there were plenty, and after climbing a short distance up the side of what seemed to me quite a mountain - I suppose it wasn't so far as it seemed to me - Annie exclaimed, "Oh, I left my pail down by the creek! Minnie, you will have to go down and get it for me," and she shouted, "Don't let the bears get you!" Like a goop I went back. I had no difficulty getting down, found the pail and proceeded to climb back up. Both girls were watching me. Annie giving directions as to how I could successfully make the grade. Annie kept saying, "Hang onto the tree roots; stick your toes in
the little pieces of rock that stick out." Well I did as I was bid when all at once the root to which I was clinging gave way, and I rolled down and back to level ground. I cut one of my knees badly and to this day carry the scar of that fray on my knee. You should have seen my sisters when they saw me fall and saw the blood pouring out of my knee! They carried me back to the creek, bathed my knee and Annie took one of my arms. Ada, the other, and with their support and my hobbling, we arrived home. Never again did I go berrying with my sisters.

This creek of which I speak was so pretty! It was probably twenty feet wide and flowed over pebbles and pretty stones. There were lots of speckled trout playing in it, big trees and lovely green grass on the banks and my father and brothers used to catch fish there and bring them home for mother to cook. I liked them fried. For some reason, Mother would never let me go along when any of the family went fishing. Reuben could go, though he was three years younger than I, but poor me! Home was the place for me, or so it seemed.

There was a beautiful maple sugar bush on the farm and every spring Father and the boys would tap the maple trees and make sugar and maple syrup. Father would make wooden spiels, or so he called them, hang a bucket under them and each morning would collect the sap, pour it into a big iron kettle under which he would have made a big fire, and then he would boil the sap and make a thick syrup. I so often saw them coming home at night, each with two pails of maple syrup. Then, when they had made what syrup they needed for Mother, they would sugar off. And, oh, the cakes of maple sugar they would make! They made them in big milk pans, and when the cakes of sugar grew cold they would turn the pans upside down and out would come the sugar.

We kids were forbidden to touch these sugar cakes. Why? I do not know, unless it was discipline but when Mother would go away anywhere, Annie would immediately help herself and give the rest of us a nice big piece of maple sugar! Sometimes she would bite a piece out of a cake; then Mother always said she knew Annie had been a thief because she could tell who had been at the sugar by the print of the teeth. Annie never was punished for her misdeeds and in the matter of stealing the sugar, she didn't much care anyway. She had the sugar and so why care if she was called a thief.

I always had to rock brother Harry just when I wanted to go out and play so badly. Babies in those days were rocked to sleep in their cradle. I would sit on one side of the cradle, place one hand on the other side, rock and sing to the baby and sometimes it seemed he never would go to sleep, especially if all the rest were out sleigh-riding.
Chapter 3

The Little Red School House

After I grew big and strong enough, Mother started me off to school and did I love it! School was Heaven for me. I loved the teacher, the singing and the lessons, and I am not bragging when I say the top of the class was my position almost always. If by any chance any pupil did get me down, I immediately worked my way back again to first place. We in those days had class in a row on the floor in front of the teacher’s desk. We had a chalk line on the floor and each pupil stood with toes touching this line. The teachers used a long wooden “pointer to punish naughty children. Only once was I punished and that time unjustly. Mary Ellen Edwards, who sat ahead of me, told a lie and blamed me for talking when she was the guilty one. The teacher had me come up to her desk and gave me two cracks on each hand with a pointer, but honestly I think she hated to do it for the did not hurt at all. However, in my heart I felt it was unjust because I had not been talking. Mary Ellen was a very mean girl and very cruel. She loved to stick pins in flies, kill bugs and so on. One day she and I found a nest of little newborn mice out in the school yard. I picked one up and Mary Ellen threw a big stone on the rest and killed them all. I took mine and told the teacher I had a present for her. She held out her hand and I dropped the little baby mouse in her hand. She hit the roof, but she did not punish me. Oft times I wonder which, Mary Ellen or I, most deserved to be punished.

Then, one time I remember there was a general examination of six schools; five townships and the town school (which was Sault St. Marie, or “The Soo”). What a time we had! Practicing arithmetic, spelling geography, reading, etc. For weeks our school was all excitement. At last the big day arrived! We were up long before daylight. I do not remember much about the procedure of preparations the other girls went through, but I certainly will never forget mine! Sister Maggie had made each of us three girls a new dress for the occasion. Annie’s and mine was a brown material trimmed with a sand material. Mine had a polonaise.²

We had a box stove in the big bedroom and Maggie curled my long red hair by winding it round and round a long iron poker heated in the coals in the stove. I

² A polonaise in the early 1800’s typically consisted of a gown with a cutaway, draped and swagged overskirt, worn over an underskirt or petticoat. It slightly differed in the late 1800’s (see above).
remember brother William watching the operation and repeating at intervals, "Vanity, vanity, all is vanity, saith the preacher." This I believe is a quotation from one of the apostles. [Actually Ecclesiastes, ed]

This hair curling was a long operation. Annie had naturally curly hair, a pretty brown, but poor Ada! Her hair was straight as a string and mouse coloured, and she was always so solemn and quiet!

Finally, we were all curled up, except Ada, and we had our breakfast. Father brought the horses and sleigh to the door - it was winter time - we all piled into the sleigh, wrapped in buffalo robes, which Father had brought from his trip out to Portage La Prairie, and away we went, accompanied by the jingle, jungle of sleigh bells, What a grand day! I remember Aunt Maggie\(^3\) had made us a chicken pie for lunch and was it grand!

I was a very proud girl that day. I spelled down all six schools in my class and won a big book called "Chatterbox" as a prize. I was so thrilled when my name was called to come forward and I was presented with the prize. Ada won in her class and Annie in some other branch in her class. Were we the proud family! Father drove in for us at four o'clock and I'll never forget that drive home. I couldn't speak, I was so full of excitement, and could hardly eat a bite of supper. Ada was quiet too but Annie was full of chatter. And were my parents proud of us. Afterwards, he heard the Lamon and the Edwards say, "The Tegart family thought they were somebody."

During the time of this examination there was a Miss Carnahan from one of the country schools. At noon she had an epileptic fit. Someone found her lying on the street in the snow. It seemed she was very subject to these fits and sometimes lay like one dead. Well, not long after that she was pronounced dead by her doctor. She was prepared for burial and lay in her coffin all night or part of the night. The casket must have been closed because when the lid was removed for the mourners to take a last look they found her indeed dead, but she had come to life and in a frenzy on finding herself in a coffin had torn her shroud to shred and had smothered to death. How or where they had put the coffin with supposed body I never knew, but overhead Father and Mother and some of the neighbours telling and talking about it.

The Lamon's lived north of us in a small house; they too had a large family. Here was John James, the eldest and quite a card he was, or thought he was. He wore his hat on the corner of his head and rushed the school marms\(^4\). One teacher we had was a Miss Munroe; we all loved her and were we proud when she came home with us to our place for supper. We always knew at school when she was going home with some of the children because on such occasions she wore a pretty dress to school. Miss

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\(^3\) Minnie’s Aunt Maggie.

\(^4\) School mistress, a woman who is a school teacher, especially in a rural or small-town school.
Todd was another teacher we had, prettier than Miss Munroe, though we did not love her the way we did Miss Munroe.

Ours was a little red schoolhouse with a picket fence around the yard and two "houses of parliament" in the back yard, one for the girls and one for the boys. One side of the yard had two tall poplar trees between which we had a swing. We had lots of fun in those days playing baseball, run-sheep-run, anti-over, blind man's bluff, drop the handkerchief, etc., all these in the summertime. In the winter we had to content ourselves mostly with pussy want a corner, played in the schoolroom. Occasionally we had a snow battle outside of course. The older pupils would make a barricade of blocks of snow. The snow was usually just right for rolling; then the boys would range themselves on one side and the girls on the other and pitch snowballs over the top at each other. When the battle raged for a while they would forget which side they were on and tear around after each other. Somehow I always got put out of commission early in the battle. Especially do I remember once when Willie Lamon hit me on the side of the head with a hard snowball and knocked me out.

Martha Lamon was especial favourite. I just loved her. Poor girl, she died of black diphtheria; also both her little sisters. Every home in the settlement was visited and lost one or more of their children in this dread disease. Every home but ours. Each was laid to rest in the little cemetery on my father's farm I shall never forget the day dear darling Martha Lamon was laid to rest. My father went to all these burials and assisted in laying the bodies to rest, yet never contracted or carried the disease home. We stood out on our grounds and watched dear Martha's coffin being carried out to the sleigh to be taken to the cemetery. I thought my heart would break and I cried for hours. Something went out of my life then - child though I was - that never came back to me again.

Well, in the Lamon family, as I said, there was John James, then came Sarah Ann, Bessie (whom her father called Bissy), then Becky, Willie, Martha, Dimple, and Violet. I remember they always had sour bread, and Mr. Lamon would say, "Bissy had a miss in her bread." Mother used to laugh at home about it because she said, "Bissy always had a miss whenever she baked."

I remember Mrs. Lamon always looked so sad. Years afterward she left Mr. Lamon and went to live with Mr. Plummer who had a store in the Soo. Mr. Lamon always sat in a chair tilted back against the wall. He wore a beard like der Captain. They must have been terribly poor because all they ever had for lunch at school was some sour bread with a dab of molasses in the center of each slice. They had no sugar bush on their place and they were envious of us because we had, and for years they would sneak over at night to where my father was preparing to sugar off and burn up all his hard earned syrup; burn it until it would take father hours to clean his kettles. In those days they boiled their sap for syrup, and their
syrup to make sugar in a great big iron kettle. Then usually the last night, when they were through sugaring off father made a taffy pull for the neighbourhood. There would still be some snow on the ground; usually plenty of it. And the road would be slushy. Father would pour the boiling syrup (after it was the right consistency) over some snow and it would at once harden into the grandest taffy. Of course, I never was allowed to participate in all this fun. "Minnie was too small." But Mother would sometimes make some at home and cool it on the snow.

Guess I was quite a problem as a child and must have been puny because I wasn't allowed to go to school in the winters much before I was 8 or 9 years old. There was one-time Mother thought I was old enough to go along with Annie and Ada, so I was wrapped and bundle up and sent along. After going some distance, I got stuck in a snowdrift up to my middle and couldn't pull myself out. Father must have been watching because he came on the run and extracted me and carried me back to the house. Of course when I grew a bit bigger I went along with the rest to school.

I was always daydreaming and imagining I was a grand lady in a pale blue satin dress and thought suicide the most beautiful word I ever heard and always decided I'd have one when I grew up big. I had no idea what the word meant, but thought it beautiful.

Then there was the time a bunch of the older girls were sleigh riding down Gravel Hill near the schoolhouse. They put me on the front of the sleigh (a long hand sleigh) because I was small and they said I could steer the sleigh. They said, "Now, Minnie, if the sleigh starts to go this way stick out your foot whichever way it is going and dig your heel into the snow and that will make it go straight." Well, I did and over top of Minnie doubled sleigh, girls and all and just about killed me. The girls ran to the schoolhouse for my brother William who came running and took me home on the sleigh. I remember how gentle he was. He could lift and carry me so gently he never caused me a twinge of pain. With that accident I was confined to home for a month, and did I suffer! Then one time I fell from the hayloft onto the hard barn floor and broke my left arm up near the shoulder. My sister Maggie was home that summer and took such good care of me.

All the Edward children died young; most of them diphtheria. Mary Ellen, the one who squashed the mice, and for whom I took the only licking I ever got in school, died after we left Sault Ste. Marie. She contracted TB. Her father bought my father's farm there when my father decided to go west. My father got only a few hundred dollars' cash and never did get the rest. They were poor Irish and always had fat boiled pork for dinner. The schoolteachers
always boarded with them and how they ever ate Mrs. Edwards' cooking is beyond me.

On my eighth birthday, Santa Claus brought me a beautiful wax doll; long golden curls, big blue eyes and the most beautiful face! I loved that doll. We kids (or children) were up bright and early, found our stockings packed with apples, candies, raisins and some other good things of which just now I can't remember. Anyway, I thought it was the grandest lot of goodies. I remember I was munching away contentedly on something and sister Maggie (I can see her still, standing by the stove preparing breakfast for the family) said to me, "What did you get, Minnie?" I proceeded to show her what I had found in my stocking and she said, "Is that all? Are you sure? Look on the table and see what is in that box; see whose name is on it." I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw my name on the box. Eagerly, and with wonderment I carefully opened the box and there lay the most beautiful doll in the world! They said I gave the most excited scream they ever heard. I just trembled with delight. Christmas times were wonderful; though now looking back I know our gifts were never lavish. A few little things, but scant as they were we were made happy.

The following summer I picked raspberries to pay Mrs. McDougal, the storekeeper's wife in Sault Ste. Marie, for dressing my wax doll. She made pretty undies for it and a red cashmere dress trimmed with white lace. That doll was the most precious thing I ever owned. I kept it in the same box from that Christmas day for years. I was never allowed to play with it. If I was very, very good I could open the box and look at it and once in a long, long time Mother allowed me to sit in the rocking chair and hold it in my arms. I named the beautiful doll Isabel, after my mother. She had such big blue eyes and beautiful yellow curls.

But, alas, Isabel came to a sad end! After I was married several years and had three boys, Eddie, Tommy, and Huntley, I had been outside hanging my washing on the line and had come into the house. I found Eddie and Tommy had made a windlass by putting two chairs back to back and putting a stick of wood across from one to the other. I suppose as nearly as possible like the windlass their father used to hoist a beef or hog, to skin and clean, and here they had my beautiful doll strung up with a rope around her neck, her hands, arms, legs, and body all cut to pieces and her beautiful head and mutilated beyond all semblance of a doll.
Did I punish them? I do not remember but probably did. Hunt was only about one-year-old so I suppose he didn’t receive a walloping; but I was sick!

However, I am ahead of my story. How lovely the springtime was when I was a child back at the Soo. Even after all these years I still can remember the adder tongues and their beautiful perfume. The wintergreen vines and their little red berries and the chains we children used to make with them; and the wild honeysuckle and lady-slipper we used to gather in the woods.

Mother and the older children used to go to sociables and tea meetings. One time we had a tea meeting in our little red schoolhouse and I spoke a piece. Annie did likewise, something about, "I’ll pack my goods in a carpet sack, I’ll hie me West and I’ll not come back." It created quite a furor because at that time Father and Mother were contemplating moving west. Annie was a very pretty girl. Our minister, Mr. Church (Methodist) was a very prominent figure in the program that night and there was a young woman playing the piano which must have been hauled out from the Soo in someone’s sleigh and she played and sang a duet with some young man - probably from the Soo. Her song was "I looked up and he looked down and his name was Charlie Brown," and there was something which ran this in the song, “Oh, who stole my heart away, riding on a load of hey, I looked up and he looked down and his name was Charlie Brown." I remember how thrilled I was! Such a beautiful song! Ah, me! Then after the program was over everyone had tea, cookies and cake. It was a grand night!

One time the teacher at the Indian School, situated a short distance north of Sault Ste Marie, asked Mother to bring me in for a visit on their way to town; so one Saturday afternoon when Father and Mother were going to town, Mother had me dress up in my Sunday clothes and dropped me off at the school and left me there. I rang the bell and was admitted by an Indian girl. I told her I had come to see Miss (I have forgotten her name). The girl said Miss had gone to town but would be back soon. The girl took me in to a big lively room and gave me chair. There I sat in state, it seemed for hours. Evening came and the same girl came in and lit the lamps. She spread a snowy white cloth on a table and set several places. Then, as Miss did not return, the girl had me sit up to the table and she served me a lovely supper. Miss did not return, but Father and Mother did and took me home without having seen my lovely lady.

Not far from our home in Torentorus there lived a family by the name of Greer. They too must have been very poor. There were Mr. and Mrs. Greer and a little boy about ten years of age named Bobby. I never liked him. Mr. Greer had been ill for some time one winter and one bitter cold morning Bobby came to our door with the news that "Dad is dead. Now I’ll have the old black horse." No tears, no sorrow at the death of his father, only jubilant over the fact that he was going to be the owner of the old black horse. Poor boy, I guess the old black horse was all there was to claim. They were poorer than the proverbial church mouse, as I remember them.
Sundays were long days when I was a child. The mornings were lovely with Sunday School and roses, but the sermons were hard to listen to, and the squeaking of the men's shoes when they tried to tiptoe quietly as they came in or went quietly to the old box stove to replenish the fire. When we returned home after church, if the minister came home for lunch or dinner, we ate. If he went home with someone else, we didn't eat until suppertime, so naturally we kids were glad when the minister came home with us. Of course, he drove his own horse and cutter in the winter and horse and buggy in the summer, as he had to drive over to the next township - Korah - to hold service there in the afternoon. All afternoon we kids had to be quiet on Sunday afternoons. No playing, no laughing or running around. When evening came Mother used to sing hymns such as "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand and view the landscape o'er," and "There is a gate that stands ajar," and I always thought there was an old wooden gate somewhere with a big jar standing on it. Then we had supper and the dishes were set-aside until Monday morning when "Minnie" was called early to wash Sunday night's dishes. Then after breakfast, always, I had to clean the porridge pot, and how I hated the beastly thing! And the smell of porridge! Bah! It used to make me ill. I was determined when I had a home, never would I have oatmeal porridge, and never would I clean or pluck a fowl but many a pot of oatmeal have I made and many a fowl have I cleaned since I had my own home. More of this later on.

When Miss Muroe was teaching our school, my brother William made a lovely desk for her schoolroom. It was a lovely thing. Just as nice as anything one could buy. When it was all finished, he took it to the schoolhouse after dark, for some reason. I remember so well the next day all the kids were looking at it and admiring it. I said my brother William had made it and Annie Greasel (the Greasel's were French half-breeds, and were they greasy!) said, "That's a lie, no one but God could make it."

There were so many people whom I later knew were funny and ignorant. There was a family by the name of McKinley's, Irish, and then the Moorlands, the Boles, Greer's and the Christeners. The Christeners were very nice and Mrs. Christener always wore pretty dresses.

There was also the Johnson family. They were Norwegians and Mrs. Johnson was always dirty. If ever we went to their house, she always took pains to explain, "I washed that side of the floor yesterday and this side today," and by Gorrah, both sides were positively black. Mrs. Johnson used to make bastlings and one day I was there with Maggie and ate some and they made me sick! They had a girl named Augusta. She wet pants one day in school while up in her class. She had asked permission to go out but it was denied her; hence, the flow! They also had one boy named Martin. One night a skunk got in their house and sprayed things in general. His clothes and book got the full benefit of the obnoxious perfume. Nevertheless, he still wore the same clothes and brought the same book to school so we called him Skunky. Long before this happened, when he was at our house playing with

5 Cannot find a definition of this except for basting and apparently Norwegians had a fondness for meat roasting in its own juice, with lots of basting.
us, he and I got married. He put on one of sister Maggie’s long white nightgowns, got the Bible and married us. My brothers, Reuben and Harry, were witnesses. Many years later he visited me in my home on the prairie in Saskatchewan. He still had his freckles and turned up nose.

Then there were the Penman’s. They were very nice too. Mr. Penman’s name was Johnny. They had a baby boy named Alex. Mother used to let me go down to their place to nurse the baby. I was so fond of babies that I’d walk miles to rock one.

How well do I remember one occasion when my mother and father were going to town! Mother said I might go with them as far as the Penman’s and stay there until they came by on their way home. Well, after they left me off at Penmans a bad storm came up and Mrs. Penman thought that perhaps my parents would stay in town all night. How I hoped they wouldn’t come for me. Mrs. Penman was cooking tripe; boiling it on the stove. Oh, how it stank! She liked it though because she took a piece out of the pot on a fork and sat down in the rocking chair and ate it. They had it for supper but I did not eat any. I never ate any meat unless Mother assured me it was "next to the ribs."

Well, I began to grow sleepy and it was getting late so Mrs. Penman said I had better go to bed because she was sure Father and Mother wouldn’t come as it was so late. Oh, how I wanted to stay there all night! Mrs. Penman put one of Mr. Penman’s shirts on me for the nightie, the sleeves dangled to the floor, but I didn’t care, and so badly I wanted to stay I got down on my knees and prayed, "Dear God, don’t let Father and Mother come for me tonight," sure in my belief that God would answer my plea, when up drove Father and Mother in the storm and Mother said no, I must dress and come home. Well, after that I somehow felt God didn’t always answer prayers.

A young man whose name was Eber Bradley was superintendent of our Sunday School. He was a rather nice fellow, so we children thought. He used to give us quite a talk after Sunday School was over. One Sunday he was discoursing on the text for that day which to the effect that "Surely the dogs may eat the crumbs from their master’s table. ’ I do not remember what all he said but he tried to explain what it meant and said, "We, being Methodist, call the Presbyterians dogs." Child that I was I thought that very queer and when we arrived home told Father and Mother. They were shocked, yet Father had a good laugh and Mother said, "I’d be ashamed to be so ignorant." None of us ever forgot that episode. Eber had two sisters, Martha and Becky. I thought their father and mother very ancient people, though I now doubt if they were so old at that.

The Christners had two boys who used to ride their big black Newfoundland dog to school in the summer. The dog’s name was Pluto. Later, he was killed in a bear trap.

The Christners, Bradley’s and another family lived about two or three miles back in the woods from our place. This other family was very uncouth. They were so queer. For their lunch at school, they had only dry bread, and I mean dry, and it was always cut in hunks, not slices. When noontime came, they ate it like wolves.
Poor Pluto, the big Newfound met a sad death. He got caught in a bear trap that Mr. Christner had set in the woods to catch the bears. There were plenty of them in that country. One day at our home a big brown bear came sauntering up our road and jumped over the fence into the garden. Father grabbed his old muzzle loader, fire at the bear, but the old bruin was too smart; he jumped the fence and went rolling down the path to what was known as the side road.

One morning in the fall of the year, brother William had loaded this same gun and was standing on the porch waiting for the dog, Nero, to eat his breakfast, when he and the dog were going bear hunting. William foolishly had the muzzle of the gun resting on his right foot and if the thing didn’t go off and blow off part of two toes. Consequently, the bear had a holiday and William was laid up, or least couldn’t walk much for about three months.

William was an artist and while confined to the house painted "The Empty Saddle" and a portrait from life of Ettie our youngest sister and, by the way, the youngest of the family. I curled her hair every morning and held her on my knee while he painted from life. He worked on her picture about two hours each morning. Then too, he painted a picture of Silver Creek Falls, which were near our place. They were beautiful falls. Father used to tell us how deep they were. He said they were deeper than Niagara but of course a much smaller falls. In fact, I don’t suppose they were over 30 or 40 feet wide except in the spring of the year when the snows and mountain streams increased their flow of water. You see, this was, and is, a great mountainous country. I do not remember the name of the mountain range. There were great silver and copper mines in this range and from our house we could hear the blasting in the mines.

Along the side of the falls there was a landslide and at the bottom of the fall a whirlpool. One day I tagged after Annie and Ada on one of their jaunts. Annie persuaded us to go with her to see the falls. She led us to the south end of this landslide, which really was quite steep and was composed entirely of sand and gravel and she said she was going to walk to the other end. Both Ada and I were scared stiff and were determined we wouldn’t follow. Annie called us ‘fraidy cats and of course we didn’t like that. I still can see Ada. Her face was deathly white but she started out after Annie and I followed Ada. Each step we took was torture for below us ran the swift Silver Creek and near and below the north end was the whirlpool. It's God's mercy we didn't all three roll down that sand slide and drown. Our bodies might never have been found had we ever gone down there.

Another time Annie led us out into the woods miles back of our farm into a boggy marshy place, among rocks and creeks, to a place where there was still water; a quiet pool with a lot of little islands in it. There were a lot of pond lilies growing in the water, beautiful lilies, so big and creamy white. Annie got a pole - part of an old tree that was lying on the ground - and walked out on a fallen log to one of these little islands. She shoved the pole down in the mud and the thing went clear down out of sight. Had we been foolish enough to step in the mud, I guess we too would have disappeared. However, Ada and I did not follow Annie that time and after she saw what happened to her pole, she hurried back and we went home.
I must relate the story of the picture my brother William painted of these Silver Creek Falls for Miss Todd our schoolteacher. He used to take his canvas, easel and paints and go down the Silver Creek and paint from nature - in oils -. When the picture was finished, all she would pay was five dollars. He told her it didn't pay for the oils he used. The picture was three feet long by two feet wide. Our whole family was disgusted with Miss Todd. Mother said she was too ignorant to know better.

One day when my brother, Reuben, and I were out getting gum from the spruce trees, he was up in a tree knocking the chunks of lovely pink gum off the tree, letting it fall on the ground, and I was picking it up. All at once he dropped the monkey wrench (which he was using to knock off the gum) right on my head. And, did I yell. All the consolation I received from him was, 'Well, you don't need to yell so loud.'

One day Mother had just dressed us three girls up in new print dresses and starched sunbonnets and told us to go out and play. Wells Annie thought it would be great fun to get some little sharp sticks and go breaking the blisters on the balsam trees. Every time you broke a blister, they would pop like a pistol and this juice (which was just like pitch) would fly out and spatter all over you. Needless to say, our lovely clean dresses and bonnets were ruined. The stuff stuck like tar. I do not remember whether Mother ever got them clean or not, but I do remember how mad she was.

Before I forget, I must relate one terribly naughty and filthy thing I did in school. It was really deserving of punishment and had the teacher found out a threshing would have been lavishly administered to my anatomy. "Skunky" had been sitting ahead of me that day and doing his best to annoy me. He kept sticking his lead pencil up behind his back and wiggling at me, He knew I would hesitate retaliating lest the teacher see me. Finally, I took it, which surprised him. He put his hand back (behind his back) and I put the pencil in his hand but kept the rubber, which was a cap affair and fitted over the end of the pencil. When he felt secure from the teacher's eyes, he stuck his hand back for the rubber and I dropped a big juicy gob of spit in his palm. Wow! He found a regular spider net of saliva clinging to all his fingers. How we ever escaped being caught by the teacher was and is a mystery to me. Skunky nearly died. Devil that I was, I remember I never even cracked a smile but shook inside with laughter.

In those days we used slates and slate pencils for nearly all our work. We had slate rags and, if lucky, a little bottle of water to sprinkle on our slates, then rub them with our slate rags to clean them. Lots of kids never had a bottle of water; they would spit on them and rub the slates with rags or leaves. Some of the boys would wipe them with their coat or shirtsleeve, whichever happened to be in use at the time.
Chapter 4
Life in Algoma

As usual, I am away ahead of my story. This should have been related much sooner. The summer or two following the Christmas when I received my beautiful wax doll, my sister Maggie curled my hair (by the way my hair was red), dressed me up in my Sunday-go-to-meeting dress and took me along with my beautiful wax doll across the Sault Ste Marie river to the American side and had my picture taken. Me sitting on a chair holding my dolly. It was a tintype and I kept one of the pictures for years and years. I do not know what became of it. Wish I had it now. For ever so long I remembered the man’s name who took it but have forgotten. I remember the man and his wife were very dirty. They were working out in their garden when we went to their place but came in and proceeded to make preparations for the taking of the picture. I remember the woman picked up her skirt and wiped (some) of the dust off the chair before I sat down.

Taking pictures then was not the instantaneous trick it now is. I had to sit very still it seemed for all of five minutes and did I itch! Every place on my body and in my head! All because I couldn’t move.

We went across the river in a sailboat operated by two half breeds. They laughed at me so because every time the spray would splash over us I would have a spasm.

We stayed on the American side for a couple of days at a Mr. and Mrs. Conlins. They were real Irish. One of these days while there we must have gone down town because I so well remember seeing a woman walking down the street wearing a big bustle. She would reach behind with her two hands and give her bustle a hitch, looking over her shoulder to see how it looked. And the funny part of it was, a few paces behind her came a soldier with his gun over his shoulder, taking in the effect of the bustle hoisting with both eyes.

There was a fort - a military fort - there at the "Soo" and I remember seeing a prisoner walking with a big ball and chain on his foot, so I suppose there were bad men in those days too.

That was the time I tasted my first orange and grapes. Tessie Conlin bought me an orange and a little bunch of grapes. Were they heavenly! Yum, yum.

Never has any fruit tasted so delicious since.

After we went to Algoma to live - near the Canadian Soo or Sault Ste. Marie, the railroad had not been built in there and everything had to be brought in by boat. The shipping season
was very short, from May, probably including May to the first or maybe the middle of November, at the very latest. When finally, the railroad was built in to the Soo, and I think it must have been the Canadian Pacific, though I am not sure about that, there were great doings. My father and some of the boys went to town to take in the celebrations. Father told us one thing about the speeches made that day which I remember, and also remember them reading the speech made by a Mr. Appleby who was then 80 years of age and who, in his speech, said he was present at the Ceremonies held when George Stevenson ran his first engine (or train) and that there were pessimists there in that day who said "it would never run." Funny, how I remember some of these things, isn't it?

When Maggie and I were having my picture taken we also went to see the "locks" on the canal and watch a boat taken through. Young as I was, it thrilled me to watch the water churn up and, if I remember right, those gates at that time were operated by horse power. I distinctly remember a horse being there and doing some work when the gates opened and closed. I do not now know whether those locks at that time were the first that were built or the second. Each time boats or shipping were larger than the locks could accommodate (of course years between) why a larger canal or locks were built. This must have been in the year 1880. A long time ago.

Later, boats that were built for Canadian commerce were built in Scotland; traveled across the Atlantic, up the St. Lawrence, St. Mary's River and through the St. Mary's canal at the "Soo" and on up through Lake Superior. The first three large ones to make this trip were the Campana, the Athabasca, and, oh me, I have forgotten the name of the third one. Anyway, I believe the third one was burned on one of her lake trips.

There used to be terrible storms on Lake Superior in the fall of the year and at certain times all lake traffic was suspended. One year I recall our folks talking about a captain of a lake steamer defied the elements and swore he would make one more trip up the lake in spite of all the warnings. He started out but never came back. A terrible storm came up and he and his boat (or ship) - with all hands were lost.

There were great rapids on the river between Lake Superior and the St. Mary's river. As I remember, the Indians used to "shoot" these rapids in their canoes. My brother, William, painted a picture of some Indians "shooting" these rapids in their canoes for a judge in the "Soo." I have forgotten the judge's name. He paid William one hundred dollars for it. Quite different to Miss Todd.

One time the Marquis of Lorne, who then was Governor General of Canada, paid a visit to

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6 There are at least three steamer ships that went down on Lake Superior during this time period.
the Soo. What a great day! Mother spent all day the day before, cleaning, pressing, washing and ironing clothes for those of the family who were going to town to see the Marquis of Lorne. Father, Johnny, Annie and Ada went to see him. Mother, Reuben and I stayed home. I cannot remember if we had Harry then or if he was born later. I do remember how sick we all were that day.

Poor Mother, she was so deathly pale. We had eaten new potatoes that day and for years after I hated the sight of them.

There were lots of hard times in those days. Everything had to be brought in by boat and consequently when the lakes froze over, which they did; nothing could be brought in or taken out. There was no railroad in to the Soo then.

I remember Father going to town one day for flour and coming home with only a pound or two in the bottom of a paper sack. Another time he went to town for flour and came home without any. That night we all went to bed without supper. That night both Father and Mother wept.

No grain ever at that time matured. Every year it froze before it was near ripe. Year after year, Father sowed but never reaped except for hay. It seemed everything he tried to do turned to "wormwood and gall". So Father finally sold the place to Mr. Edwards for $800.00. He got a few hundred dollars’ cash and never did get any more; but more of this later on.

Immediately Mrs. Edwards came up and took possession of the garden. That was a bitter pill for me to swallow to see her pull up vegetables that Mother had planted and cared for, also lovely flowers, and take them home. It was more than I could bear. The big, ugly Irish woman, and she was ugly. One day I took a bouquet of flowers to the teacher, as so often I did, and Mary Ellen Edwards jumped all over me. Said I stole the flowers, that they (Edwards) owned the place now and I had no right to pick the flowers. I said nothing, but I thought my heart would break. Previous to the selling of the place - it must have been early in the winter of 1885, a peculiar thing happened for which I never have heard an explanation. There was a heavy fall of red snow. The ground was completely covered with it.

The next day at school, of course all the children were talking about it and telling what our parents had to say about it, when Annie Gresel - the girl who said I was a liar when I said my brother had made the teacher’s desk, that only God could make it - that their priest said the red snow was a sign there was going to be a war soon. Well, be that as it may, and of course Annie’s people believed it, the Northwest Rebellion broke out. Louis Riel came across from the States I believe and incited the Indians to rebellion against the British. After the rebellion, he was hanged in Regina and Mr. Freethy made the scaffold on which Riel was hung.

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7 Biblical term, as this is what they might have given Jesus at his crucifixion.
8 Evidently ice crystals and algae with some sort of secondary pigment can cause snow to look red (Wikipedia).
One afternoon Johnny, one of my brothers, came home from town with the news that a rebellion had broken out among the Indians in what was known as the Northwest Territories and that troops were being sent out from Ontario to quell the rebellion. Of course, there was great excitement. It seems the troops were sent from Kingston and I believe they had to march several miles on foot, or sent by transport of some sort other than rail, to some place in what was called Assiniboia, afterwards called Saskatchewan. I may be wrong about this but I do believe the railroad was built in to Regina in 1882\(^9\). But more about this later on.

My father used to tell how his father had settled near Brantford in Ontario when he, Grandfather, was a young man and how he carried his first sack of wheat 80 miles to have it ground into flour and then carried the flour back home on his back.

As I have already stated, Father sold the property at the Soo (by the way our farm lay six miles north of Sault Ste Marie) and decided to move to the Northwest Territories, or Assiniboia, in the summer of 1886, the year following the Northwest Rebellion. I cannot recall just how long this rebellion lasted, but I remember how all the neighbors tried to persuade both Father and Mother to give up the idea of going away out there among the wild Indians. But it did not seem to make any impression on any of us and I will say the Indians never gave us a moment’s worry from the first day we arrived out West.

Of course, Mother had many things to do preparatory to making the journey, Quilts to be made and ever so many things to be done. I remember she gathered the bark from hemlock trees, boiled it and used the water from the bark to dye material to cover quilts. She carded the wool to make or fill the quilts. The neighbor women came in to help with the quilting. We had quite a few pictures, which Mother decided were too heavy to take with us. Each of us had one of our own. Mine was a parrot and a kitten, one on each side of a bowl full of eggs. There were some books on the table also beside the bowl. The parrot was supposed to be saying "might is right." I suppose because he felt he was stronger than the kitten; therefore, owned the eggs. Johnny’s was "The best jug to fetch beer in." It was an old shoemaker who was giving a boy a jug to "fetch" beer and it had a hole in the bottom. What the others were I cannot remember. But I felt very bad to think I had to leave mine behind. Annie was a picture of the Royal Family of England.

One near tragedy happened the last day, just before we left the house for town the day we started for the west. I had mended my stockings and they were red cashmere and when I came to put on my good shoes I couldn't find my stockings. In tears I told Mother but she said, "Oh, go along with you, they are around some place." Well, I was desperate. They couldn't be found. Father was nailing up the last box so I went to him and begged him to

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\(^9\) Regina was founded in 1882 but the Canadian Pacific Railroad wasn’t completed to Regina until 1885 (Wikipedia).
open the box to see if my stockings were there. Father was always so patient. He opened the box, and here-lay my red cashmere stockings. Mrs. Lamon had picked them up and stuck them in the box. What I should have done had they not been found, I do not know. Gone stocking less, I suppose.

George McKinley drove Ada and me to town to take the boat. How the rest got to town never bothered me; I never gave it a thought. Father must have had the neighbors help him because he had loads and loads to be shipped. He had a team of oxen with the longest horns I ever saw. He had cows and a pony named Dick and one named Jack.

Maggie remained at the Soo. So did sister Annie; by that time Annie had her teacher’s certificate and had a school on Manitoulin Island. George was in Detroit or Buffalo, supposed to be learning the shipbuilding trade with his uncles Will and George Robinson, who were in the shipbuilding business. William had work at the Soo also so he remained there. The bunch of us who made the trip was composed of Father, Mother, Johnny, Ada, myself, Reuben, Harry and Ettie. What a gang for a man and his wife to start out with to an unknown (to him) land, to make a fresh start. Mother was 44 years of age when sister Ettie was born.

Father must have been fifty years old at that time. He was thirteen years Mother’s senior and Mother was 48 years of age. She married my father when she was only fourteen years old. Only a child. She had a hard life when she was a child. She told me her mother, my grandmother Robinson, was an invalid, confined to her bed for, I think, two years before she died and my mother, though a child, had taken care of her and also of the house and younger children. However, Grandmother must have been able to be up at times because both she and Grandfather had gone to church on Sunday morning and when they came home from church, Mother had gone. Grandmother looked in the box where Mother kept her bonnet and it was gone so Grandmother knew indeed that Isabella, my mother had taken flight. Aunt Mary, in Portage La Prairie, told me that Grandfather and Grandmother did not forgive Mother for two years. So, it must have been after Mother and Father were married that Grandmother was confined to her bed and Mother must have gone back home to take care of her. But Mother told me many a time that when she was only nine years old she did the washing for the whole family and she had to wash the clothes by rubbing them between her hands. One day, a neighbor loaned her a washboard and when Grandmother found out she was terribly angry.

Grandfather Robinson and Grandmother Robinson were of the old Methodist style. They were so devoutly religious yet were so harsh with their children. No wonder Mother was so strict with her children, and yet maybe it was best for we surely were trained not to lie, steal or cheat. Not that we were model children or perfect when we were grown up; we were just ordinary children in every sense of the word. Most of us had talents that were never developed, or I might say were never allowed to develop. When I used to do something which I thought worthy of notice, Mother would never encourage me, she would just say, 'Em-hmm.'
She used to tell us children should be seen and not heard.

How well I remember one morning while we lived at the Soo some man came in to our house and was talking to Mother. Reuben and I evidently had been talking between ourselves while they were talking. After the man took his departure, Mother laid me across her knee and walloped me, then treated Reuben to some of the same medicine just to teach us to keep quiet when she was talking or when people were in the house.

Another time when Mrs. Bradley was in and she and Mother were talking, Ettie got a pin stuck in her mouth and couldn't get it out. I was distracted, tried to gain Mother's attention to the situation, but she paid no heed to me.

Finally, Ettie swallowed the pin. At last, Mother said to me, "Minnie, what is the matter with you?" I replied, "Nothing - Ettie just swallowed a pin." Then was there a to-do.

Well, do I remember the first money I ever made? One bitter cold morning some men came in to get warm on their way to town. They must have come in from some of the mines. Anyway, one of them as afterwards I learned was "three sheets in the wind." He had a funny smell on his breath, and he had bleary blue eyes. He came over to the breakfast table where I was having breakfast, put his arm around me, his face down to mine and asked me for a kiss. I wouldn't kiss him. Then he took a bright shiny coin from his pocket and said he would give it to me if I would kiss him. That was too great a temptation to me. It was twenty-five cents! Immediately I kissed him' I wanted the money so the bargain was clinched; but I hated the smell of his breath. Never did remember what I did with the money, but never forgot that kiss. I must have been about six years old at that time. The money lured me and I did kiss'

About this same time Father butchered a cow that Reuben and I had always called our own. Do you think we - Reuben and I - would eat any of that meat?

No, indeed! We wept every time it was served on the table.

Mother must have been out of patience many a time with me when I was a child. She had to almost swear that meat came off the ribs before I would ever touch it. She must have perjured her soul many times in order to get me to eat meat. And porridge I wouldn't eat it unless it had been standing for a time in a bowl and then turned out in a dish to that the shiny side was up. Well. I did not like the stuff anyway.

When Mother was going to have chicken for a certain day she had Father cut their heads off and then she had them waiting in bloody silence for us girls to pluck when we came home from school. How I hated that operation!
Chapter 5

On to Assiniboia

We took the boat at the Soo the night of the day on which Geo. McKinley drove Ada and me to town. I do not remember much about what Father and Mother did that day, but I remember sister Maggie came to the boat to say farewell and how sick at heart I was at leaving her. Maggie was always so good and kind to me; in fact, she gave me all and the only loving I ever got as a child. I was very fond of William, too, but Maggie was an angel to me always. When it came time to say goodbye, I remember I hid behind Maggie hoping that Mother would not miss one and that I could stay with Maggie. But Mother missed me and began calling me and at last spied me and, of course, I had to say goodbye to Maggie. I remember I cried as though my heart would break; cried for hours and some women watching me shed tears too; they couldn't bear to hear a child cry so.

Strange, I do not remember a bit of that boat trip up to Ft. William, where we then took the train for Regina. Mother, Ada, Harry, Johnny, Reuben and I stayed one night at a Mrs. Pettit’s in Ft. William. Mrs. Pettit was a daughter of Mrs. Penman. By the way, the Penman family went West with us. They, too, shipped their worldly possessions with ours, or with Father’s and Mother’s and their destination was Regina too. They had two children I believe at that time. What a crowd that was to travel together.

Well, we arrived in Regina sometime in the night and Father got us rooms in the Lorne Hotel. As I remember it, this hotel was in the west part of Regina. It was a measly hotel but I doubt if Regina at that time had a decent hotel. It was a frame building and poorly constructed. The people who ran it had a little girl much younger than I and every time I got her alone I tried to convert her to my idea of what constituted the right and only Way to reach the pearly gates. All at once she kept out of my sight. Came to find out they were Catholics and our folks were Methodists, or at least mother was. Father had been baptized into the Episcopal Church when a young man. The bishop who baptized him was Bishop Osler. One of the old, old bishops in Ontario, and when we were children we had Methodist Church and Sunday School with the Episcopal Church alternately Sundays, or alternate Sundays. Anyhow, I suppose these people who ran the Lorne Hotel felt I was jeopardizing their child’s chances for heaven and kept her away from me. This was in July in the summer of 1886, the year after the Northwest Rebellion, of which I shall have more to say after a while. We stayed in Regina for a few days. I do not recall just how long we stayed but I believe Mother, Ada, Reuben, Harry, Ettie and I came on ahead of Father and John. Mrs. Penman and her children, too, must have come on ahead of Mr. Penman. Father evidently had a carload of household goods, cattle ponies or horses and sundry things. Also Mr.
Penman. And if I recollect rightly, we waited in Regina for the men, Father and Mr. Penman, to arrive with their carloads.

Mr. Penman's brother-in-law, who lived back in the "bluffs" came all the way into Regina to meet the Penmans and help truck their goods out to their place. This man's name was Mr. Minty. Mr. Minty and his family must have been living at this place during the rebellion. They lived about 25 miles from Regina, north, and the greater part of the way to their place was traveled the Albert Street Road, a road running directly north from Regina to the Qu’Appelle Valley. At that time there were no settler’s north of the Qu’Appelle Valley in that particular section, though of course there must have been settler’s north of the Valley in some parts, though few indeed.

Well, I remember Mr. Penman couldn't get his goods released for some reason. I heard our parents talking something about "bond" or that his goods were in bond, what it was or why he couldn't have them released, I do not know. But anyway, we had to leave Mr. Penman at Regina for whatever reason it was. I can well remember we started from Regina around midnight and reached the Minty home sometime the next afternoon - a Sunday afternoon. Reuben and I rode in Mr. Minty's big lumber wagon. We sat up on the high spring seat all that night. Why we didn't lie down in the wagon and go to sleep beats me, but we didn't. It was a long, long night for Reuben and me, and we were glad when the sun rose in the morning, though it rose in the west, to our way of thinking. Mr. Minty at one time sat down on the dashboard and I was so afraid he would tumble off and go down behind the horses' heels.

Reuben was only nine years of age and I only twelve. What a trip for children of that age. How the rest of the family fared on the journey, I do not know. When we arrived at the Minty farm we all were tired and hungry. Mrs. Penman wept all afternoon because Mr. Penman had to remain behind.

Where we all slept is an unsolved mystery. There were four children in the Minty family, six children in our family, two in the Penman family besides the grown-up folks.

For breakfast, Mrs. Minty had oatmeal porridge with skim milk - blue in color - and how I hated it; my stomach just couldn't take it and I remember Mother telling Mrs. Minty she never served her children skim milk, at which Mrs. Minty became very indignant. Mrs. Penman and her children must have gone out to Minty's sometime before we did because she was there when we arrived there Sunday afternoon.

How long we remained at Minty's has escaped my memory, but it couldn't have been very long before Father found a place for us to live. He rented a farm from the Steeles, who had homesteaded together, each a quarter section, 160 acres each right side by side, and had built their houses one on each side of the line so it was one long house, each being 16x20 and joined together.

Funny, I haven't any recollection of our moving to our home from the Minty's, but I remember how dry and black the ground was; not a blade of grass to be seen. A prairie fire had swept through there a week or two before. There wasn't even enough grass left for the
gophers to eat. Every once in a while a bunch of gophers would appear and utter their squeal.

Looking back now I know those were hard days for Father and Mother, but we children didn't mind anything that came along. It's great to be young.

The Gore family lived three miles away and the Petri’s about three miles on the other side. The Gores, northeast, the Petri’s, west.

There were no screens on the windows and the big moths (millers) used to come in at night by the thousands. Our nearest neighbors were the Freethys who lived two and a half miles north. They were good neighbors. They, too, were on a rented place owned by two brothers, Rory and Faulkner McLellan. Rory was a champion hammer thrower. He lived in the east and at one of his exhibitions, he accidentally killed a child with the hammer; he never threw one again.

Faulkner came back to the prairies later after the Freethys moved to their own place. He was a great hulk of a man with a yellow curly beard about a foot long. He was sort of goofy and both Sister, Ada, and myself were scared stiff of him. One time some years later after we had a school established, he chased Alice Petrie about two miles across the prairie. Alice was nearly six feet tall and about 25 years old. There must have been some long legs flying over the prairie in that chase. The Petries later kept the Tregarva Post Office but at this time there was no Post Office nearer than Regina and we got mail once a week.
Chapter 6

Early Life on the Prairies

The next summer after settling on the prairie, Father broke thirty acres of land, which would be 1887, and then in 1888 had 30 bushels of wheat to the acre and sold it for one dollar a bushel.

We children didn’t do much of anything during these two years except play and study for two or three hours a day. I was the instructress. Held regular sessions of school and did my best to pass on what knowledge I had acquired to my brothers. Ettie was considered too young to study.

We experienced terrible blizzards those winters. Our house was quite low in structure and the snow used to drift in great banks as high as the house. Father had a terrible time to get to the little stable to feed what stock we had. He had a rope or wire stretched from the stable to house to hang on to or he never would find his way. My brother Johnny got lost in one blizzard with his team of oxen and sleigh and was out all night. He had gotten within a mile of home and wandered around all night so close to home but as we found out, he had traveled in circles and when the storm died down the next day he could see the house and made it home, worn out and nearly frozen. Fortunately, he had the big sleigh and buffalo robes. He’ll he survived that ordeal is a mystery.

Mr. Petrie got lost in a storm one night and after trying until he was worn out, buried the most of himself in the snow to keep from freezing. He had both feet frozen so badly his toes on both feet had to be amputated afterward. This happened over in "the bluffs" and how he managed to get to some homesteader’s place, I do not know, but evidently he secured assistance in some manner, because he lived for many years.

The Freethys were nice people and came to see us often. In fact, they were about the only people who came to visit. Once in a while someone who was going to Regina from the Qu’Appelle Valley, or vice versa, would come in and stay overnight or come in and ask for something to eat. One such was a Mr. Binger, who with Mr. Kerr, had a little ranch in the Qu’Appelle Valley. He used to ride horseback and being all Englishman, would ask for a cup of tea and some bread and butter. In those days we always gave whoever dropped in like that something to eat. Mr. Binger used to say, "I make a pot of tea, get a loaf of bread, some butter, and a good book and by the time my book is finished, the bread and butter and tea are all gone." He wrote his mother in England one year that his wheat was all frozen; she sent him several hundred pounds (in English money) to build a barn to keep his wheat from freezing. Har!
We used to have terrible prairie fires in those days. One I remember came like a racehorse from Boggy Creek way. There was no cultivated land between us and Boggy Creek and the fire came roaring through the tall prairie grass within about 50 feet of our house. The only thing that saved us was the summer fallow in which the house was sitting.

Father and Mother, after seeing there was no danger to our house, went out and fought the fire nearly four hours. It divided when it reached our place; the plowed land, which was a half-mile long, split the fire. It just divided - one part going or following the long grass to the west, the other following the grass around the east end and swept on over the prairie to the prairie north of us.

Mr. and Mrs. Freethy were living on their own place north of the springs, got into their buckboard and raced over to the little shack which was used by that time for a school house and backfired the grass around the shack and saved that. There were the springs and quite a creek about two miles or maybe a mile north and between the Freethys and our place which finally quenched the fire. This creek flowed miles through the prairie and emptied into the Qu'Appelle Valley and river.

I never will forget the night of that fire. Though Father and Mother assured us we were safe, I took my Bible in my hands and went away out in the summer fallow and prayed to be saved. Ada, Reuben, Harry and Ettie stayed in the house. This Bible had been given me by the second probation Methodist student by the name of Joe Callister who was stationed in our district; the first one, I have forgotten his name, was a little red headed Englishman. He was a funny guy; by that I mean odd. But at heart a very earnest fellow. The first one rode a little Indian buckskin pony. He wore blue overhauls and no hat or coat and always carried quite a long stick in his hands as he rode. One could hear him urging his pony along as he rode, whirling his stick round and calling out, “whoop Sam.” Sam was the pony's name.

These preachers used to make the rounds at the settlement every so often. They would read a chapter from the Bible and asked if you loved the Lord and kneel down and have a word of prayer and of course a meal or two or maybe stay the night. They had no fixed salary; just depended on donations from the people, and let me tell you, such donations, in money, were very little.

The church services at this time were usually held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Purdy who lived about four miles from us. Then soon after Mr. Callister had served his probation there, we had a Mr. Worley and then Mr. Redd. Mr. Redd was an up-and-coming young man, very different from the others who we had.
Before going further, I must relate an experience which sister, Ada, brother, Reuben, and I experienced the first summer we lived on the prairie. Mother had us three go back in the bluffs to the Minty’s to pick Saskatoon’s. We had our pony, Jack, and our buckboard. Ada did the driving. Well, we had our picnic lunch after our trip back there, then went out and picked our pails full of Saskatoon’s and started home. We had gone probably a mile or so when our pony took fright at something. Ada had difficulty in controlling him. Just at the same moment we saw a big prairie wolf that had emerged from the bushes trotting along by the side of the road. Of course, we were scared stiff, remembering all the stories we had read and heard about how wolves had attacked and eaten travelers. Ada was as white as a sheet and no doubt I was too. She put the whip to the pony and we lit out as fast as the pony could go, but as fast as we went, the wolf kept alongside of us, sometimes getting ahead of us, crossing the road, sitting down, opening and shutting his mouth, then trotting along beside us as before. He kept this up for miles, until we came out of the bluffs to the open prairie when he disappeared to our joy and our peace.

Believe me, we were still in a terribly frightened state when we arrived home and related our experience to Mother. She never allowed us to go away like that again, that is so far or in that bluffy country.

There were so few people living in the bluffs; merely a small settlement of Crofters from the north of Scotland, poor as it was ever possible to be.

Wolves used to follow behind the sleigh or wagon when my father would be going for wood or returning with a load of wood. These were prairie wolves or coyotes and never once tried to do any harm. Why they followed like that, no one ever knew. One day one came quite close to our house and, having heard they liked music, I took a mouth organ, went out and played a tune on it to see what would happen, Sure enough, Mr. Wolfe stood stock-still and listened for some time, then skulked away.

Father used to trap both wolves and red fox. One day he came back with a live red fox in his arms. The poor thing was caught, one foot in the trap, and made no struggle to free itself. Father brought it in to let us see it. It was beautiful, but alas father took it outside and killed it, skinned it and tanned the skin and sold it for $5.00. He got that for wolf skins as well.

In those days, the Government gave a bounty for gophers’ tails. The Indians used to snare the gophers, pull off their tails, and then let the gophers go. These little animals were very destructive and the idea of the government bounty was to rid the prairie of the pests. But what did the Indians care about that? They got five cents a tail.
Buffalo bones lay here and there all over the prairie and the Indians used to collect load after load and take them to Regina and sell them, to whom I do not know, but I do know they were shipped to sugar factories and used to refine sugar.

Father had to go away to these bluffs of which I have spoken, for wood and that was a lot of hard cold work in the winter. Sometimes the temperature would drop to 40 below zero. In the cold, frosty weather, one could hear the screeching of the sleigh on the hard snow for miles along the road.

We didn't have a hand sleigh, so we kids would take the big scoop-shovel, go up to the top of a big snow bank and take turns riding down the bank. Guess we did have plenty fun even in times like that. And there was beauty to be found even when the weather was cold. On moonlight nights the snow would glisten like millions and millions of stars, and the stars in the sky would shine brilliantly and beautifully. Then, another beautiful sight was the Northern Lights - Aurora Borealis. It is almost impossible to describe the beauty of these lights. They would start to shimmer along the northern horizon, then shoot up to the zenith, flicker, shimmer and shoot here and there, sometimes all colors of the rainbow; then they would recede, then flare up again. Beautiful, beautiful. One unusual thing I remember seeing was a lunar rainbow. Mother and I were somewhere in the evening and a thunderstorm came up which kept us from getting home until quite late. The clouds had blown over to the northeast and the moon came out clear in the west, shining on the black clouds over in the northeast, bringing out the most beautiful rainbow. I believe this is rather an unusual sight and certainly one that is grand to see.

There were plenty of fierce electric storms in the prairie. One would wonder they did so little real damage. They did enough damage to one's nerves; at least to mine.

I think it must have been about 1887 when we had our first real school term. The schoolhouse was four miles from our home and our first teacher was a Mr. Taylor who was English. I remember he used to teach us not to kill flies. He claimed they purified the air by picking up germs on their wings and legs as they flew around. Well, I guess he was right about that part of the beasts, but he never mentioned what they did with these germs. How they deposit them on uncovered food or how they swam around in the milk and cream or dropped in one's tea. Well, thank Heavens we think differently now.

My brother, Reuben and I walked the four miles to school and back again over the prairie every day through the summer. During the winter we had no school, so we held school at home, as I have already stated.
The next summer we had a teacher by the name of Bill Adams. I remember when Mr. Adams was teaching we had no clock that summer at home. We went by the sun, and I was so afraid I might be late for school that Mother couldn't hold me. I would be at that schoolhouse while the shadow of the shack in which school was held was long, long on the grass and long before the teacher came.

There weren't many pupils. Three of the Freethys. Sarah or Libb as she was called at home, her two brothers, Thornton and John James and sometimes Cecil Seed. Bill and Alice Petrie; oh yes, Maud Petrie; my brother Reuben and I.

This was the extent of my school days in Public School on the prairie. Then in 1888 sister Ada married Fred Cochrane. She had been teaching school over in Wascana district and fell in love with Fred Cochrane. That fall I went to high school in Regina.

When the Petrie’s heard Mother was sending me in to Regina High School, they decided to try to get Alice in too. Mother had been in to see the School Board about me getting in to high school as the examination had been held at midsummer.

The Board decided to give us, Alice and me, a special examination and if we were successful in passing, we would be admitted to High School. Well, I passed. Alice failed and the Petrie’s didn't like it. They thought the Board of Examiners had favoured me.

It must be remembered this history or story of things is written as they come to me and this next memory maybe should have been written sooner; I am not sure.

The Purdy family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Purdy, Annie, a daughter, Clifford a son and a goof - and Maud, a daughter, and their youngest. Mrs. Purdy was a lovely woman. Her husband, whom she always referred to as "Alfred" or "Pa" was an odd man. Everyone loved Mrs. Purdy. No one liked Mr. Purdy. Annie was a good girl with a decided lisp. She afterwards married a preacher by the name of Roberts. She died at the birth of, I believe, her fourth child. Maud was a queer girl. I never could like her, though she was quite clever and as she grew up became a fairly good singer. Her first husband died of TB. Later she married again and had a daughter named Ruth. Maud developed TB and passed away.

Well, anyway, Annie and I had been delegated to go out among the neighbours and surrounding country and collect money for Mr. Ridd, the new preacher who boarded with the Purdy family. We collected $30.00 for the preacher. One Highland Scotswoman said, "No, we belong to the Free Kirk," whatever that was I do not know but suppose it was a church run without money. "Scotch" I would ride my pony over to the Purdy farm in the morning then from there we would take the Purdy horse and buggy, be away all day, return to the Purdy home for supper, then I'd ride my pony home.

Well, one evening we were quite late getting back from our day's collecting, had our supper and Mrs. Purdy said, "Clifford, you had better get Minnie's pony saddled for her," so
"Clifford" went out to the stable for my pony and he was the longest time coming to the house. Mr. Ridd, the preacher, kept making cracks at me about Clifford. How he must be brushing up his horse to ride home with me and so on. The longer I waited for my pony, the madder I got. Finally, along came Clifford with his horse and buckboard and my pony saddled and tied alongside his horse. Was I mad, but I felt I couldn't hurt Mrs. Purdy's feelings and though they all laughed and thought it was a fine joke, I got in the buckboard beside their dear Clifford and off we went.

Well, Clifford started singing the 'Yellow Rose of Texas' for my benefit and with each verse I grew madder and madder. I hated him so. Finally, I said, "Clifford, untie my pony and don't you dare come home with me." He just gave a silly chuckle and went on singing. Again, I demanded he stop and untie my pony and I said, "If you don't, I'll get out and untie her myself." So he stopped his horse, got out and untied my pony. I sprung into my saddle and without a word tore off in a gallop and left him there on the prairie.

Mr. Ridd told me afterwards that Clifford came home in so short a time that they all wanted to know what happened. Clifford didn't tell them but I guess they figured it out for themselves.

Another thing, which I should have written about long before this, was when I was attending school on the prairie. One day while playing at noon I injured one of my feet. It hurt unmercifully all afternoon and I didn't know what I was ever going to do. I couldn't walk, it hurt so. I waited until the rest of the school children and teacher had gone, then tried to walk. I got a few feet away from the schoolhouse when the pain got so bad I couldn't stand up. I crept back to the schoolhouse and was sitting there crying, thinking I would have to stay there alone all night, and frightened at the thought, when a rig drove up. It was Mr. Taylor, our teacher. He had brought Mrs. Taylor and Grandma Seed to see his schoolhouse. They - Mr. and Mrs. Taylor - had been to Grandma Seeds for supper. Of course, they were so surprised to find me there, unable to walk. They took me back with them to Grandma Seed's, gave me some supper, and then Will Seed drove me home. That sore foot kept me home a month.

One night I stayed with Minnie Seed while her folks were away somewhere. All we had for breakfast the next morning was a plate of mush made of bran and some blue skim milk. Some feed!

My sister, Annie, came out to us from the "Soo" two years after we came out. She had been teaching school on Manitoulin Island for a while and then she had been staying with sister Maggie in the "Soo".
We had an old fashioned clock, which we had brought out with us from the east and which Annie had always wound every night while she was home. It had never run all the two years we had been out west. Mother had taken it in to the repair shop in Regina and though it would run while in their shop, once she brought it home, it just wouldn't run, so we were without time other than Mother could tell time fairly accurately by the sun. Well, the minute Annie came home, she saw the clock wasn't running. Mother explained how it wouldn't run. Annie walked over to the clock, opened the door, swung the pendulum and away it started and ran for years.
Chapter 7

The Qu' Appelle Valley

One winter, Father decided it would be better for the whole family to move to the Qu'Appelle Valley as the climate was somewhat warmer there than on the prairie. So we all went to the Valley. Father secured a small house there and we enjoyed it very much.

Fred Cochrane, Ada's husband, had given each of us (four) a pair of ice skates, the kind you clamp on your shoes, and my two brothers, Reuben and Harry, cleared off a nice big place on the river where we used to skate. Great fun!

Sometimes we would go down to the Boulding's and skate there. Once we went to bachelors to skate, a Mr. Everett. Eliza Boulding and I were the only girls in the crowd; oh, my sister, Ettie, sometimes came along. She was only about seven years old.

I remember what goops some of the men or boys were. I mean, the boys who were sent out from England to learn farming. They were called remittance men. Usually they were people or boys whom their parents did not want, sent them out to Canada to get rid of them and sent them "remittances;" money, every once in a while. Others were sent to learn farming. Some were quite apt and soon picked up new ideas, Others remained goops for all time.

Occasionally, some horses on the ranches would wander away and I remember on one ranch, I think it was on the Kerr and Binger ranch, some horses had gotten away and they sent one of these goops out to round them up. His name was Carnagan or Carnahan. He would ride the horse until he was out of sight of their house, then he would walk and lead his horse. You could hear him whistling as he plodded along through the snow. One time, he came to our door, why, I do not know. I went to the door when he knocked; there he stood with the bridle reins over his arm and he said, "It's just like a day in June! I'm looking for horses" My father, who was in the house said, 'Well, you had better ride your horse, you'll never catch them on foot." I suppose he had heard someone make the expression, "It's just like a day in June," and thought he was doing fine.

There was another sap who worked for Mr. Everett in the Valley, He was sent by his boss, Mr. Everett, to bring a load of household material, furniture or whatever it was, over to their new house. He did the craziest thing! He had a horse hitched to a stone boat on which he was to haul his load over from the old place to the new. To make things a little more convenient, so he thought, he turned the stone boat on its side to get it through the door, loaded it to the hilt, then discovered he couldn't get it out! Had he been Irish, one would have thought, "Just like Paddy," but being English made it more ridiculous. Then there was a
bachelor by the name of McCall who lived in a nice stone house across (on the north side of the Valley) from us. He was considered quite wealthy, though I wouldn't know, He had a man and his wife by the name of Mulligan working for him. Mrs. Mulligan was his housekeeper. They had a baby girl named Tootsie. Occasionally, Mother and I used to go over to visit Mrs. Mulligan. She was rather nice.

The Lambert family lived down near the McCall's in the Valley. They were quite a family. Old Mrs. Lambert was a source of much conjecture among the neighbors. She pretended to be very religious, but she would steal things or condone the questionable deals her sons made with the smooth suave cloak of righteousness with which her whole family covered their lives. She had three sons. William, Harry and two daughters, Maggie and Mary. Maggie married a man by the name of McKay and Mary married a Mr. Sam Gregg. The whole outfit was Plymouth Brethren - a denomination similar to Amie Semple McPherson's clique. Most people had very little time for the family because they pulled so many fast stunts. Still, they seemed to prosper, dressed well and were very sweet to the young ladies with whom they came in contact.

Occasionally, service was held at Mr. McCall's house and Mother, being a good churchwoman, would go and take me along to drive, though she was a grand horsewoman herself. Of course, I enjoyed going too for the simple reason it was some place to go. On one of these occasions, when service was over, William Lambert asked me if he could drive me home. Of course, I granted his humble request. Brother Reuben was with Mother and me that night. Well, we had a nice drive home, a distance of perhaps seven or eight miles, but, oh, the row when Mother got home!

Peter Stewart told me afterward that Mother was frantic when she found I had gone. She hunted all over the house, asking each person there, "had they seen Minnie," and when someone told her they had seen me leaving with William Lambert - oh me, oh my.

Of course, I should have told Mother I was going with him, but I knew she would not have allowed me to do so; therefore, I followed the path of least resistance. Anyway, I enjoyed the drive home, but there was plenty to pay the next day. Mother told father of my transgression and, of course, Father didn't like the Lamberts either so he threatened to order any and all of them off the place should they dare to come around again.

Then Mother advised our preacher of my sin, and he warned her against allowing me to have anything to do with the Lamberts' boys - told her they were "Wolves in sheep's clothing."

So then, having been out with our preacher for drives several times and knowing some of his weaknesses, I informed mother, "Say, you do not know Mr. Ridd (our preacher). He sure can hug and kiss like nobody's business. You should see and hear him talk." Wasn't I a devil!

However, that ended that episode. Mother didn't go to church any more for some time.
The Boulding’s were another family who lived in the Valley not far from us. Mr. Boulding was a cousin to Aunt Lizzie McNeice. They had two daughters, Ida and Eliza, and a son, Charlie. Eliza and I were the only grown-up girls in the neighborhood and there were about fourteen young men. (When I married, Eliza Boulding was my bridesmaid.) One thing I liked so much that winter were the blackbirds; there were thousands of them everywhere. The trees would be full of them all along the roads and the music they made! It was like hundreds and hundreds of silver bells.

One day Mother went over to visit with Mrs. Mulligan for a while, so I decided to make an apple pie. When it was finished, I put it out on a snowdrift to cool, and crack went the pie plate and all the juice ran out. I had baked it on a delft plate. Well, I had to do something with the plate lest Mother found out about it, so I threw it away and my pie was lost. A day or two after, Mother asked me how my pie turned out. How she found out, I don’t know, because I was alone the day I baked it and there was no one to tell her.

For several years, Annie was teaching over in the German settlement and boarding with a family by the name of Getner. As I said before, Ada had been teaching in the Wascana District but had married Fred Cochrane who had a farm there. More about these two sisters later.

In the spring of this year, we moved back to the farm. This must have been around 1888 - the year before I attended school in Regina. So, you see I am writing this in a rather jumbled way.

When I was slightly under fifteen years of age, my sister, Annie was ill while she was teaching a school at Boggy Creek. She came home and I finished her term there. It was only a summer school with about a dozen or fewer pupils. I boarded with a Mr. and Mrs. Gilchrist and drove to school, taking their daughter, Mary, with me each day. Mother drove me down to the Gilchrest’s the night before my first day’s teaching and told Mrs. Gilchrist that I was to be in bed by nine o’clock every night, and did she mean it.

Once, just before my fourteenth birthday, I had asked Mother how late I might stay up when I became fourteen. She replied, "You may stay up until nine o’clock when you are fourteen if you work all the time. "Now, wasn’t that something? Mother sure had me under her thumb! One evening while I was at Gilchrest’s, a young man came over to see me, but believe me, when nine o’clock came ’round, this little devil slunk off to bed lest Mrs. Gilchrist should report unfavorably to my mother.

I think the children who attended that school were the stupidest ever born. Some of them didn’t even know their own name.

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10 Lizzie McNeice was married to Thomas J. McNeice, brother to George and Joseph in this book.
11 Image is of a delft plate.
Then, the summer I was fourteen, Mother decided I would have to ride over to Wascana to where Ada was teaching with some dresses Mother had made for her. It was in the spring of the year when the roads were breaking up. One couldn't travel by sleigh, as there were places where there was no snow - other places where there was plenty and too much. The snow was melting, making the going hard even on horseback.

I had never been there before and did not know my way there, but Mother said, "Go straight south until you come to the Boggy Creek; there you will find a house where two bachelors live. Ask then where you can hit the Hudson's Bay Trail. You will know it anyway when you come to it if you keep on straight south. The trail runs east and west and you will know it to be the Hudson's Bay Trail by the many wheel ruts that run side by side. Keep west on that until you come to a little shack and the man there will tell you where to cross the Wascana river, then after you cross the river, turn north about half a mile and you will come to Mr. Callander's where Ada is boarding." I was to return the next day. So, off I went on my pony, followed the instructions implicitly and arrived safely. Many times since it has struck me that it was quite an adventure for a girl of fourteen because the settlement was so scattered. These two places where I inquired my way were miles apart and no people living between. However, I made the trip there and back safely.

When the warmer weather came and the trails were dry, I made the trip many times with horse and buckboard. The crossing at Boggy Creek was worthy of its name. It was so muddy and boggy one had to take it at full giddy-epp. In fact, there were times when it was impossible to cross if the water was high which it was at certain times of the year.

I used to love to go to Wascana when Ada was teaching there. Sometimes I would stay at the Cooney’s. Carrie Cooney, who later on married Billy Hamilton, a man who worked for the Browns but at that time kept house for her brothers, Ed, Tom and Ben. There was always lots of fun there. Ed was a great tease: he drove a lovely horse and buggy. His horse (or mare) was a pacer. Many a ride I had with Ed Cooney behind that pacer. Ed would, as soon as we came near any house, snake the reins, grab my hands, pull my arms around his neck, hold them there with one hand, guide the horse up to the door of the house and when the people came to the door would tell them what a hussy I was, wouldn’t keep my arms to myself but insisted on keeping them around his neck.

The first time or two I got mad at him but that didn’t do me any good, so I learned to take it all with good grace. There was always so much fun at the Cooney’s. Nothing could keep me away from there.

Poor Ed, he loved my sister Ada deeply and wanted to marry her but she preferred Fred Cochrane. Many times we wished she had married Ed instead. He would have taken care of her; as it was, she slaved herself to death for Fred. Ada had Bertha first; she was a blue baby and died. Her second baby was Clara. Clara died in convulsions as they were taking her to the doctor in Regina. It was in the wintertime, in bitterly cold weather, and I suppose as usual Fred drove at a snail’s pace. He was the worst and slowest driver I ever knew. Poor
Ada, she was heartbroken. A few years later, she had another baby girl, Flossie. She was a sturdy little thing. Black eyes and hair and rosy lips. Ada died when Flossie was about three years old. Poor Ada; she was so good and sweet. She deserved a better life. Everyone who knew her loved her.

The neighbor men gathered wild prairie roses and covered the walls of the little room where she lay in her coffin and they lined her grave with wild roses and laid hundreds of them around on the grave. It was June and she was only twenty-nine years old.

Mr. Reid, the Methodist minister, preached her funeral sermon and I remember he spoke of her being so young to die.

I shall never forget the expression on Ed Cooney's face as he stood by her casket in the little church in Wascana. He loved her so.

Sister Maggie had come out from Sault Ste. Marie to nurse Ada through her last illness, and it seemed Fred didn't think he could afford to send for her and our brother, William, had said perhaps the family could help with her ticket. I knew nothing of this so was shocked when Fred asked me for what he called "Your (my) share" towards Maggie's fare. Well, George - my husband - wouldn't contribute, saying Fred was plenty well enough situated to bear the expense. I know Fred was fond of Ada but he was thoughtless and self-centered. Ettie had been with Ada and Fred for some time and I, too, had stayed with her a good bit of the time until Maggie came. Poor Annie was there for the funeral, heartbroken; she and Ada had been so close to each other.

Annie had married a brute of a man - much to my disgust. He was a regular devil, though for several years she kept her troubles to herself. He starved and beat her and did not clothe her either. When we did discover how cruel he was to her, George - my husband - and sister Maggie went down there one day and took her away when her husband - Bob Nappier - was away from home. They took her to Father's home where Maggie was keeping house for him, and after a week or two she passed away. Glad and happy to go. Bob Nappier was a brute in every sense of the word.

Mother had passed away before Annie. Mother had been ill in bed for some time and one day while Father was carrying the mail from Craven to Tregarva a neighbor came to Mother's bedroom window and called her to get out, that a prairie fire was almost at the stable. Mother thought of the little calf tied in the stable so she got up hurriedly, took the butcher knife and cut the calf loose, came back to the house and, being exhausted from the fright and weakness, sat down on a bench outside the door and caught cold. She passed away in a few days. That was in the summer of Nineteen Hundred.

But I am years ahead of my story. Long before this, while we still lived on the farm, one day I
was driving to Regina with pony and buckboard and when I came to the Boggy Creek bridge on Albert Street, there was a herd of pigs feeding just below and to one side of the bridge. My pony stood stock-still! Refused to move. She was terrified of the pigs. I tried to urge her on, but no. So I got out and took her by the bridle and tried to coax her over the bridge, when she reared up, turned and lit off over the prairie on the tear. There I was six miles from home, 6 miles from Regina, on foot and no help in sight. Presently, to my joy, a man came galloping over the little hill. He took in the situation, at once turned his horse and ran my pony down, caught her, tied his horse to mine, got in the buckboard and brought her back to me. He asked if I would lead his horse over the bridge and he thought he could persuade mine to cross. I said I'd ride his horse, but he said, "Oh, lady, it's a Mexican saddle" and was so surprised to see me hop into the saddle and ride sidesaddle across the bridge with no difficulty.

He finally got my pony over the bridge. When I took over my conveyance, he took his and told me his name was Cochrane (not Fred Cochrane) raised his hat quite politely and said he had to be in Regina by three o'clock and went off on the gallop. Afterwards, I found out he was going to meet his prospective bride who was to arrive on the three o'clock train from the east.

Well, I went on to Regina, did my shopping and started home, wondering how I would make the trip home when I reached the bridge. The pigs were nowhere in sight, however, so other than my pony shaking and trembling as we crossed the bridge, I got along fine and had quite an experience to relate when I arrived home.

In those days, each of us had our own pony and saddle. The saddle I used was Mother’s. She had had it when she was a young woman and, of course, it was a sidesaddle. No girls rode astride when I was young, and if I do say so, there is no prettier sight than a properly seated lady riding sidesaddle. I remember when my brother, William, came west, he and I would go horseback riding on our ponies. He paid me many compliments as I rode. He loved to see me galloping my pony and my red hair flying in the wind. He always wanted me to wear my hair hanging, even long after I was married, which of course I couldn't do.

In December, or maybe November of 1899 (I may have the date wrong – Boer War), my brother, Harry, went to South Africa with the Strathcona Horse, which was under the command, I believe, of Colonel Steele of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police stationed at Regina. H.D.B. Ketchen was in command or at least a sergeant in the same group of men.

H.D.B. Ketchen married a second cousin of mine, Margaret Robinson. He sent word to me that if I would name the baby (who was my son, Huntley) when he or she arrived, he, Ketchen, would send the baby a silver mug from South Africa. However, that was the last I ever heard of the silver mug!

When my brother Harry left it was about the time, or shortly after, Huntley was born because I couldn't go to Regina to see Harry off. George went but I had to stay home with
the children and, if I remember correctly, Hunt was a couple of weeks or maybe three weeks old when they left Regina. Hunt was born Dec. 28th, 1899.

A year from that time (1900) George, the three boys, Eddie, Tommy, Huntley, and myself went to Ontario. Properly speaking, George and I went taking our three boys with us. Eddie was five and a half. Tommy two and a half or thereabouts (would be three in January) and Huntley was one-year-old. What a trip! Well, when we returned home in March, there was a silver mug – gold lined – on the sideboard, which Uncle Joe claimed he bought for Huntley. Maybe he did and again, maybe Ketchen had sent it from South Africa. At least, when Harry returned from South Africa, he told me Ketchen had told him that he, Ketchen, had sent the baby one from there. I always had an idea that was where the mug came from. I do not remember just now long Harry remained home, but he returned to South Africa after a short time as the war was still on, but before their ship, or ships, reached Cape Hope, the war was over, so home to Canada they returned. This was the Boer War, between the British and Dutch in South Africa.

It was during this time that Harry was in South Africa that Mother passed away. A very strange thing happened to Harry at the precise time of Mother’s death. He had no knowledge of her illness or her passing away, but he said he and some others were sitting in their tent playing cards when his attention was arrested by the sight of Mother standing in the door or their tent in, as he described it, “a cloud of glory.” He tried to reach her but as he approached, she vanished. He said the boys couldn't understand what was wrong as he had shouted, ”Mother” and then ran outside. He said they compared the time there with that where Mother was living and found out when he did receive the letter from home telling of her passing, it was identical with the hour of her death.

The same apparition was seen by my brother, William, the day of her death. He was then living in Indian Head. On receiving the telegram telling him Mother was not expected to live, he started on his bicycle to ride home. He was nearly home, between Craven and Father’s home; as he was riding up a little hill, or rise on the road, he said Mother appeared before him "in a cloud of glory." Mother had passed away shortly before he reached home.

These two instances are the truth. No one in our family ever was superstitious. Who knows why they were given to see this strange sight, but strange things do happen; they have happened to me, as I shall later relate.

While I am on the subject of things, shall I say supernatural, let me relate something that happened to me. I had just lost a little baby prematurely born and, a few days after the birth, while I was still in bed and was watching the sun going down (out of my bedroom window) the strangest thing happened. The sky took on the most beautiful rosy hue and the very sky seemed to open. Through this lovely, rosy cloud my brother, Alex, who had died and was buried many years previous, came floating down to me. He seemed to come right through the walls of the house. He took my hands in his and it seemed he drew my soul right out of my body. It was the strangest thing, the parting of my soul from my body felt
you would place your two hands together, palms facing, and then gently draw them apart. No pain in the least. Then he took my soul, which seemed the exact replica of my human body, in his arms and we floated up and up through space. I looked back to earth once and saw George - my husband - sitting by my body (which was lying in my bed) weeping for my departure. It seemed we had paused but a moment to look back, then continued on up to the gates, or it seemed beautiful curtains, where my brother Wesley was standing with my baby in his arms. I am sure I had not been dreaming or sleeping, because when the vision passed, I did not seem to awaken from a sleep or dream. It has always remained something unsolved to me. Why should this vision be granted me? It was a beautiful sight and remains fixed in my memory today, though fifty-two years have passed since then. Who knows?
Chapter 8

A Murder Mystery

Well, here it is Dec. 4th, 1945; a horrible windy rainy day and I am alone, hating the wind. Hunt and Marie are at work: Hunt at Camp Roberts, Marie in Paso Robles. I am not fond of it, but must be brave. How I wish I had taken time before starting to write this record to make notes and in that way this would not have been so jumbled as to happenings: but I didn't and one consequently has to take it as it is. These things are noted as they recur to me.

One person who I hope to be able to later speak of in detail was Lizzie Freethy. If I should repeat any of her part in my record, please overlook. She was practically my only girlfriend in the early days of my life on the prairie. She and her brothers, Thornton and John, used to come to our place to play very often. She was a very pretty girl. One day when we were playing out in the yard, my Mother appeared on the scene. Lizzie exclaimed, "Oh! Here she comes." I said, 'Who comes?' Lizzie replied, laughing at me, "Oh, Minnie doesn't know who She is." I suppose they called their mother "she." The three of them thought I was dumb, not knowing who they meant by "She," though I thought they didn't know very much. All through the years we loved to go to the Freethys because everyone had such a good time there, while on the subject of the Freethys, it might be a good time to finish the story of Lizzie Freethy, though the telling of her life as I knew her really occurred years later than the foregoing and after I was married.

When she grew up, she became engaged to Cecil Seed, a neighbour boy, a nice boy with no bad habits. They went together for several years and he had lavished gifts. I say, "lavished," because at that time such gifts as he gave her were considered out of the ordinary, such as a gold watch, bracelets, rings and boxes of chocolates. They were to have been married shortly when Lizzie broke the engagement. It happened this way.

A former preacher, Mr. Mussleman, came back to visit in our community. He had been stationed for a year or two in our district and had made many friends. By the way, he was a Methodist and should have been above suspicion, but he had the reputation of making love to practically every girl he met. While visiting in our community this time I write of, he went over to the Freethys for a few days and while there persuaded Lizzie to become engaged to him. He was very attractive, tall and blond and persuasive. Well, Lizzie fell for him and when Cecil Seed came to see her the following Sunday evening, she had all his gifts ready to return to him. Cecil asked her what she meant. She told him she was engaged to Mr. Mussleman. Poor Cecil was heartbroken. Lizzie's father was on a visit to his people in Ontario that winter.
and her mother, not being able to do a thing in the matter, either wired or wrote Mr. Freethy to come home at once, which he did, and sent Mr. Mussleman on his way, forbidding Lizzie to see or communicate with Mussleman in any way. Of course, Cecil never went back to her; he was through. Lizzie was like one in a trance for months and months after her father kicked Mr. Mussleman out. She would sit staring into space for hours at a time, refusing to talk to anyone. Mussleman was a fly-by-night no good sinner. He was engaged to a half dozen girls. They simply could not resist him, but he was not true to any of them. How he ever remained in the ministry is a mystery.

Then, in the course of a few months, she accepted an offer of marriage from Tom Gore, another young man in our community, a boy she never before would even look at, but who had always been crazy about her. I remember one time when we were threshing - and by the way we threshed with horsepower at that time - and which I shall describe later - Lizzie had been helping me in the house through the ordeal of cooking for the threshers. When we were finished threshing and Lizzie wanted to go home, Tom Gore talked her into going home with him, so off they went. Tom had a team of horses and a wagon without the box, just the wheels, axles and reach. He, of course, had to sit on the front end of the reach and Lizzie was ensconced in the back end of the reach. At that time, she detested him and we all got a kick out of seeing her going home with Tom on such a conveyance. Tom was quite thrilled at having her with him though a wagon reach separated them.

Well, the years passed. We at that time were living on Uncle Tom's place, then after three years we moved back to our own place. Lizzie Freethy married Tom Gore. They seemed very happy. Tom was devoted to her. They had two children, a boy and a girl. The boy was the elder of the two. Tom was rather sickly, as was his brother and sisters, Maggie and Mini. Jeannie seemed quite healthy and afterwards married Bub Raeburn. Maggie, Mini and George all died of what was then supposed to be asthma. Then, after about 16 years of married life the death of Tom Gore came as a shock to the community.

In the meantime, Mr. Freethy had passed on and a family by the name of Ford had moved in neighbors to both Mrs. Freethy and the Gores. It - this family - consisted only of Mrs. Ford and a son, Jack, who was about the same age as the Gore's son. I do not remember his, the Gore boy's name. The two boys were pals, sometimes spending their spare time at one home or the other. Well, it seems Tom went over to Mrs. Freethys one day and told Mrs. Freethy that he was sure Lizzie was in love with Jack Ford. Mrs. Freethy - remember she was Lizzie's mother - shamed Tom and told him to go home and forget his grievances, that there was no truth in his accusations. Time went on and we, the neighbours, had no idea there was any trouble between them. By this time, we had sold our farm and were living in Lumsden, Sask.

Tom was buried. We did not attend the funeral for some reason. I believe in Tregarva cemetery\(^2\). One day the whole country around there was electrified by the news that Billy

\(^12\) Tom Gore is indeed buried at Tregarva Cemetery.
Gore in Regina was having Tom’s body exhumed as he suspected Tom had been poisoned and if poison was found he held that Lizzie, Tom’s wife, was the one who had committed the crime. Of course, there were many that condemned her at once. I never believed that she did the deed and have always held to my opinion that he took the poison of his own free will.

Well, the body was exhumed and strychnine was found in sufficient quantities to cause death. Lizzie was arrested and taken to Regina jail. The story she told and the story her mother told was this:

They, Tom, Lizzie, Mrs. Freethy, the children, Mrs. Ford and son, Jack, had all gone to Regina the day of the tragedy. They had gone in their car and by the way before they reached home a blizzard had come up. When they arrived home they prepared supper. Tom complained of not feeling well, which was not unusual. He told Lizzie he was going upstairs to lie down and not to worry about him. It was his habit when he felt unwell to sleep by himself upstairs so he would not disturb Lizzie with his tossing about. Shortly after he had gone upstairs, Lizzie said she heard him making some strange sounds.

They rushed upstairs and found him in great pain and he seemed to be having a convulsion.

Well, Mrs. Freethy was sent for and came. Tom came out of his convulsion and Mrs. Freethy made him a cup of ginger tea and tasted it herself to see if it was too hot. Tom drank the tea. In the meantime, one of the family was sent back to Regina for the doctor, much against Tom’s wishes. He protested against having a doctor. However, they sent for one. It must have been a distance of fourteen or fifteen miles, or maybe more, to Regina, and if I remember right, before the doctor arrived, Tom had died. He was buried in the Tregarva cemetery, I think.

(It is now January 14th, 1948. Many things have prevented me from continuing this history for three years.)

However, now I’ll try to continue. This is so disjointed, but as I say, it is written as things come back to me.

Well, to finish about Lizzie Freethy. She was arrested for the murder of her husband and tried in Regina courthouse. Just before her arrest, a press reporter, I believe from the Regina Leader, came out to her farm to interview her. I remember reading his write-up in the Leader and especially the last part of it: it was quite dramatic. He told of the little widow sitting by the window, so sad and pale, gazing out through the deepening twilight, her heart aching for the husband who had gone, never to return. Well, it was only a few days until Tom’s body was exhumed, at the insistence of a half-brother, Billy Gore, living in Regina and, as I said, strychnine found in his stomach in sufficient quantities to cause death. Then came the arrest and Lizzie was taken to the Regina jail. Her mother, Mrs. Freethy, went in and stayed with her for some days.

It seems to me trials were much quicker then than here in California. There were no long
months of waiting after an arrest. I know Tom’s death occurred early in the winter and her trial was held before the following spring. Bryant, a red haired criminal lawyer defended her. He made a wonderful plea, and the jury acquitted her. She evidently went back to her farm to live, though of that I couldn’t be sure.

Then World War I broke out and practically all the boys enlisted. Jack Ford among the rest. They enlisted in Regina and took their training for over-seas there. Jack Ford’s billet was right by that of our two boys, Eddie and Tom and that of Ted Howe, Evelyn's brother. And, though they were so close, they never knew that Jack Ford had married Lizzie Gore (Freethy). No one knew it until after the boys were in France and Lizzie was going to have a baby.

Mrs. Freethy told me about it. Many people said they weren't married at all, but Mrs. Freethy said they were and I believe her. Probably Jack wasn’t eighteen when he enlisted - many of the boys weren’t - and it wasn’t long after the trial and acquittal that they were married. Mrs. Freethy said that Jack Ford said it was the least he could do for her after all she had gone through. When the death of her husband, Tom, occurred, she was thirty-six or thirty-eight years of age and Jack around eighteen.

Well, the boys went overseas April 23rd, 1915, Jack with them. Mrs. Freethy said Jack wrote lovely letters back from France to Lizzie, told her he would always take care of her and hoped to come home safely and be with her and their baby.

Then, all at once, his letters stopped coming. Lizzie’s letters were returned, unopened. Lizzie became anxious, fearing he had been killed. She wrote his Captain, Captain Blackburn, from Condie, and inquired about Jack, telling Captain Blackburn that she was married to Jack and that they had a little baby.

Blackburn replied he knew nothing of Jack’s private life, but there was no better soldier in France.

Then Lizzie received a letter from Jack himself, telling her he wanted nothing more to do with her, and that should he come back to Regina, he would have nothing to do with her; he never wanted to see her again. And, that she was to have nothing to do with him - she was not even to speak to him, should she meet him on the street; that he wouldn’t recognize her. Well, I guess it was a pretty raw situation, and sometimes I wonder if they were married, though Mrs. Freethy would hardly tell a lie.

The last I heard of Lizzie, she was living in Regina and had become quite a devout member of Jehovah’s Witnesses. I never saw her baby, her, or her two children by her husband, Tom.

Mrs. Freethy sold her farm to some of her sons and went to live in Regina. I visited her there one time when I was up from Winnipeg.

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13 Evelyn Howe married Thomas George McNeice, Minnie and George’s son.
What a mess Lizzie made of her life, though! I never will believe she poisoned her husband. I believe he took the poison himself because he wasn't well and allowed his mind to become perverted and imagined things where there was no wrong. But, why did Jack marry Lizzie? Jack was the same age as her son. No happiness could ever come or a union of that kind.

Poor Mrs. Freethy and her family. They were so grand, and it must have been a blow to them.
Chapter 9

Life Among the Indians

One winter when we were first on the prairie, Father came home from somewhere with the news that he had met a teacher or preacher (I do not know which), from one of the Indian reserves and who was looking for a boy, a white boy to spend a few months with the Indian children at their school to help teach the children there the better to speak English and the manner of white child’s living. I remember Father telling Mother about it. The boy would receive tuition, board and room free. Father and Mother thought it would be a good opportunity for my brother Reuben so decided to let him go. Reuben couldn't have been more than nine or ten years old. He was there probably two or three months when our parents brought him home. He probably grew homesick. He did learn quite a bit of their language and some translations into their language of one or two Sunday School hymns; also to count up to one hundred or more. I used to know these translations but have long since forgotten them. About all I remember is the figures from one to ten; viz, payie, neeu, nastu, waywin, nanna, tapego, inuas, katornato, matata. Even these I am forgetting. About all Reuben brought home with him was a bunch of dirty clothes and a good supply of creepers. Mother had to strip him, throw his clothes in the fire and scrub the child thoroughly. Mother said, "They can look elsewhere for a boy when they want one next time."

It seems better care might have been taken of the child, but I suppose being continually with the Indian children, and they always in that condition, it was rather difficult to keep the "vermin" from indulging in a white child's blood.

I so well remember how spotlessly the Indian school, north of the Soo, was kept. There were only girls there, but they were always clean and neat. Just spotless! I believe this school was the Chippewa Indian School. I have told about my visit there one afternoon when I was a child, in the first part of this history, memoirs, or whatever you like to call this jumbled account of my life. Whether one ever could train these Western Indians to completely break away from their wild life is hard to say. It seems to me there would always be the call of the wild in their blood. I believe their principal food consisted of pemmican, which was made from dried meat and then pounded and molded into cakes and, suppose, cooked. When we visited their reserves in the summer time, they always had great lines full of meat strung up to dry; not always very appetizing looking as the weather was hot, and flies very, very plentiful. But they ate it and to look at them they seemed healthy. However, tuberculosis was very prevalent among all of them. Sanitation was an unknown quality among them. They also dried many berries; how they cooked them, I couldn't say.

There is a very' pretty, though sad, legend which tells the meaning of the name Qu'Appelle,
which is a river running through Saskatchewan. This is the way it was told me. A young brave was paddling along the river, near sunset, when he heard the voice of his beloved calling his name. Her voice floated to him across, or along the river. He was startled to hear her voice, for he knew she lived a long way from there. Thinking he might be mistaken, he called out, "Qu’Appelle, Qu’Appelle," which means, "Who calls, who calls." Again, her voice called his name. At once he started for her home and, arriving there, found his sweetheart had died just at sunset. Thus, the river afterwards bore the name. "Qu’Appelle." A pretty, but sad, story.

The Indians relished a good fat dog. I have seen them put their hands on a dog, feel his back and exclaim, "Um-good, good soup." They were hungry very often, and cold. They were very poorly clad in the winter months; how they escaped freezing is a mystery. Their life was hard, and their luxuries nil. Of course, they did not miss luxuries because they never had any; simply knew nothing better than the way of life they lived.

Then, too, I often heard people say that gophers were considered a delicacy with them. No doubt that is true, and a gopher is a cleaner animal than many fowl, especially a chicken. Isn’t there something in the Bible to the effect, "Call not anything unclean." Their ponies were always so pathetic looking, so thin and dejected. Where they kept their ponies in the winter, I wouldn’t know. We never visited their reservation in the winter. Of course, in the summer, they kept them hobbled. I often wondered where they got their water; there was never any sign of a well or cistern on their reserve. Of course, in the winter they could melt snow, but they didn’t appear to have anything in their tents except themselves and a few blankets. They were said to be dying off with tuberculosis.

It is so long since I have written anything in or about things in my life that it is best to start a new part in this story, memoirs, or whatever you like to name it.
Chapter 10

The Petrie's

To go back to our school days on the prairie. Once in a while I would go over to the Petrie's to visit Alice. She had a sister, Maggie, who had had rather an unfortunate life. She had a little girl named Mable and I think it rather embittered her life. She claimed the father of her baby promised to marry her; but he claimed he never had. It seemed, or so their story ran, this young man was a bachelor, living about a mile from the Petrie's and Maggie used to go over and do his washing for him, and I suppose nature took its course! Anyway, Mrs. Petrie would start talking about everyone in the neighborhood, and especially the McNeice's. One time there was something doing in the neighborhood and she said she supposed all the gentry would be there. I asked who was the Gentry and she replied, "Oh, the Seeds, the McNeice’s and the Tegart's." It happened my family was the Tegarts.

Mrs. Petrie never seemed to have combed her hair, or at least to have it without a wisp of a tail hanging down on her back. Mr. Petrie was always quiet; never having a word to say to anyone. He is the man I wrote of previously, having been lost in a blizzard and having his feet frozen and having his toes amputated.

Mrs. Petrie was always complaining that "Pa" wouldn't give her any money. The age-old complaint of wives.

Well, anyway, the father of Maggie’s baby afterward married Lizzie Kelly, the daughter of Peter Kelly, who was considered the very aristocratic and well to do farmer in the district. When Mr. Kelly found out Lizzie wanted to marry Tom McNeice, the war was on, though Mr. Kelly had always made so much of Tom, but marrying his daughter was another matter, so he put a stop to that nonsense.

Well, as time went on, Lizzie went over to the Seeds to make a dress for Minnie Seed and someone, I believe it was George (my husband later) who found Lizzie was at Seeds, so he told Tom and they got ready, took their horses and cutter, went over to the Seeds, got Lizzie and took Minnie Seed along and off they started to get married in Regina, a distance of some twenty miles away. Someone found out and told Mr. Kelly and away he started to overtake the prospective bride and groom! But, alas! He was too late. By the time he reached Regina, they were already married! He had nothing to do with Lizzie for years, nor would he allow Mrs. Kelly to have a thing to do with Lizzie. nor did they until after Tom’s death.
This reminds me of the poem in our old reader:

"Now who be ye would cross Lochile,
This dark and storming water?
"Oh, I'm the chief of Ulva Isle,
And this, Lord Ulva's daughter."

One summer my brothers Reuben and Harry caught and tamed some gophers. The boys made a little box for them and they grew so tame they would run in and-out of the house, just like little kittens: We could pick them up and pet them just as we would little kittens. What became of them I can't remember. Probably we let them go.

When Reuben was only nine years old, Mr. Kelly begged Mother to let Reuben come over to his (Kelly's) place to help him once in a while. Mother agreed after some consideration, so Reuben went. He used to walk home - three miles - on Sunday mornings, and I think Mother would drive him back in the evening. He was always so tired, and on pumping Reuben as to his hours, found out Mr. Kelly was keeping him up until midnight every night and up at five in the morning. So Mother put a stop to that. He surely was a bear, that Mr. Kelly. A regular "miser."

I well remember Mr. Kelly coming to our place on the farm when we children were alone. Father was away somewhere, also Mother. I think that was the summer Mother was on a visit to Portage La Prairie to a reunion of the sisters in her family, and whom she had not seen for years. Now, Father had several piles of stones, which he had picked up and intended to use for building. Well, Mr. Kelly asked if Father was home and, when we replied in the negative, he immediately began to load the stones into his wagon. He was building a stone barn. Well, we children were very, very angry, but we were afraid of the old Sinner, so said nothing to him. There was one big flat stone partly buried in the ground, which he couldn't raise though he worked and worked to break it and so he had to leave it. We wanted Father to go over to Kelly's and make him bring the stones back, but Father wouldn't so Kelly kept the stones. The old thief!

All this was before Ada was married and before we went to the Valley for the winters. The summer after I attended high school in Regina, Mother wasn't any too well. Annie was home that summer and she cooked up the idea that we ought to get Mother away for a time, somewhere, but where? Brother George was in Detroit working for the Michigan Central Railroad. He had a secretarial position there, was married and had two children. Well, Annie persuaded me to write George and beg him to send mother a pass! He did, but I bet Carrie, his wife, was mad.

Mother was away about three months. That was the summer I became engaged to George McNeice. We used to go horseback riding, go to picnics, to church and to whatever social affairs were going on. Annie, poor girl, was very jealous of me and thwarted me on every occasion she possibly could, but often failed in her endeavors. I usually managed to do as I pleased.
One Sunday, George and I, and I believe either Sadie Swartz or Lou Smith (who was teaching school in our community) rode horseback away over to a church in a Crofter's settlement in the bluffs. It was somewhere to go just for the fun of it. On the way home, we were racing our horses. I was riding "Jack" a stallion. Jack stepped into a badger hole, went down and I went over his head, bang, onto the ground. It's a wonder both horse and I were not injured, but we weren't. The horse got up, shook himself, and stood there. I got up, got in the saddle and off we went for home. No need to say we did not tell our experience when we got home.

Then, one time I had been over to Swartz' and when I started for home, Sadie came along on her pony. Sadie looked so funny on her pony! She was so big and her pony so small! She was no horsewoman. We called at McNeice's (Tom) and coaxed Lou Smith to come along. Don't know where she got her pony, probably from Tom McNeice, she boarded with them. Lou came along, and as usual we started to race, went flying up the road and as we came past the Seed house, there was a seed drill there. It had the tongue sticking up in the air or tilted up, and I suppose to keep it out of the way. Well, Sadie's pony ran under the elevated seed drill tongue and it - the end of the tongue caught Sadie slam bang in the mouth' knocked her off the pony flat on her back on the ground where she lay for a while. Old Mrs. Seed came running out exclaiming, "You girls (she was Irish) will be the death of yourselves, the first thing ye know." Well, I don't know about Lou, but Sadie and I are still alive and that was 57 years ago.

One thing I must make note of. It was the summer Mother was in Detroit, before I was married. I had heard there was to be a picnic over at Carsdale, so I asked Sadie if she would ride over on her pony with me on mine and take in the picnic. I said I'd bake an apple pie. I don't know now what Sadie was to make, but anyway, we rode over and there was no sign of a picnic. No one was there but us two. We waited around for a long time and as no one came, so we decided to eat our lunch. I can still see the two of us sitting down to the big picnic table. Me with my pie! It was dried apples and I hadn't known enough to cook the apples before putting them in the pie. It was as hard as a rock. We managed to carve a piece or two out of it and bravely endeavored to eat it. I acknowledged it wasn't much of a pie, but Sadie gallantly said as she tried to bite into her piece, "Well. it has a very nice flavor!" It was one of those glorious golden September days. If you know what I mean.
Chapter 11

The Wedding

When Mother came home in the fall. I had the pleasure of announcing my engagement to George McNeice. Mother was surprised, but, I think, rather pleased on the whole, as she said she would be glad to see me settled in my own home. That winter, we went to live in Craven in a house owned by Colonel Stone. We were married in this house on March 24th, 1892.

I wanted a white wedding dress, but no! Mother bought a grey with a silver stripe running through it. Then I had a Navy blue dress and a soft pearl grey wool dress, a nice pair of shoes - a big price at that time - I think three and a half dollars. They were lovely and were a size three and a half. Mother had bought me a black fur coat. Astrican, I believe, it was called. She also bought me a bedroom set. I had the first nice dresser (with a nice big swinging mirror) in the neighborhood. People came from far and near to see my bedroom set. Other people had bureaus, but mine was a new style.

Mr. Harrison, a Methodist minister from Regina, married us at two or three o'clock in the afternoon. Aunt Lizzie had made my wedding cake. She had come down and stayed several days making the cake and helping plan and arrange for the wedding.

Mother sure had me under her thumb! She would have only certain people and refused to invite several people whom I wanted to have. She swore she wouldn't have Mr. and Mrs. Swartz - Sadie's parents - but George had asked for some of the invitation cards and sent them one. Of course, Mother invited Sadie because Sadie had made my wedding dress. Oh, yes, I also had a pretty plaid luster dress, which Sadie made.

Well, imagine Mother's disgust when Mr. and Mrs. Swartz arrived at the wedding. I was glad they came. They gave me a beautiful white marsalas bedspread. Years after, when washing this spread, I put it out on the line, just to get the frosty air, then was going to bring it in and dry it in the house, when a blast of wind tore it off the line and across the street. I never found but one half of it. It was torn or cracked straight across in the middle. One half lodged against Jim Mair's garage, the other half, 'Gone with the Wind'!

We had quite a wedding for those times. Mother wouldn't allow us to dance, but I guess we made out all right. I wanted to invite the Lambert boys but Mother threw up her hands in holy horror! (I thought they were nice "wolves."

Sadie had made a surprise party for me before I was married and had invited the Lambert boys. Shame on me Harry Lambert waylaid me on the stairs and gave me a farewell kiss (half a dozen). Oh, if Mother had only known!
At or after the wedding supper was over, everyone who could sing did so, accompanied by Isaac Sutton\textsuperscript{14} on his guitar. Sadie sang:

“I’ll be all smiles tonight, love, I’ll be all smiles tonight,
And when the door he enters, his bride upon his arm,
I’ll try to look upon them and be so cold and calm,
And when he smiles upon her, as once he smiled on me,
I’ll try to smile upon them though in pain my heart shall be.”

There was a lot more of the same.

You see, George and Sadie had been engaged at one time, and she was being sentimental. Har! She was some gal. She now is living in Vancouver and her skin is turning black. Could be there was a “nigger in the woodpile” sometime back.

Clifford and Annie Purdy were invited to the wedding, but did not arrive in time for the ceremony. They never were on time for anything. The ceremony was over and we were out on the front lawn having our pictures taken when we saw the Purdy conveyance coming across the valley. Clifford ordered one of the pictures, as did almost everyone. When next I saw Clifford, he was so mad! Said he was going to sue my brother William for making him so ugly in the picture! Har! Har! He was ugly as a monkey; to make him look otherwise would He stayed at the house where we were married for a few days, then went up to Uncle Tom\textsuperscript{15}’s and stayed there a few days, then set out across the prairie for the homestead. Got there about dark. Got a fire started to warm the shack, which was either 12x14 or 14x16, frame and lined up inside with building paper.

We had a bed in one corner, dresser in another, stove in another, table between dresser and stove, a homemade cupboard in another - a little square space in the center of the floor. There was a window in each end of the shack and a door in the side. That summer we built a little summer lean-to\textsuperscript{16} on the one side where the door was.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.jpg}
\caption{A group of people gathered in a yard.}
\end{figure}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{14} Isaac Sutton was Minnie’s new brother-in-law, for he had married George’s sister Amy.
\textsuperscript{15} Minnie calls her brother-in-law Thomas J. McNeice “Uncle Tom” (for the sake of her children, I suppose).
\textsuperscript{16} A lean-to was usually a one-room addition built onto a cabin.
\end{footnotesize}
Chapter 12

Early Married Life

A funny thing happened the next winter. We had a bad blizzard one night and the snow had drifted clear over the roof of the shack and clear over the door - the only door by which we could get out. There we were! Absolutely snowed in! What to do? Finally, George decided he would take the little window out and I would crawl out through the window, go to the stable, get the shovel and shovel all the snow away so he could get out. He was too big to get through the window, and I was commissioned, and though I was tall and skinny, I had to wiggle through.

That first summer on the homestead was very quiet. George broke forty acres with the walking plow and three oxen. I used to walk along beside him and watch the sod turn over. It looked so nice and the earthy smell was so invigorating. The furrow was one half mile long.

We had three oxen, Dick, Bill and Lazarus, so named because he used to lie down whenever he didn't want to work. He would lie there, refusing to get up, though George would lash him most unmercifully! But finally one day, George won. At last, Lazarus rose to his feet (he hadn't had that name until this occasion) and George named him Lazarus, said he raised him from the dead." Lazarus never offered to lie down after that when he was supposed to stand up. Occasionally when George was away, I would have to tether these oxen out to graze, or maybe change them to a new spot to graze. Dick and Bill were quiet and easy to handle, but Lazarus was a wild one! He would put his head down and rush at me and would run! But in the end I always managed to control him.

Mrs. Freethy came over one day, bringing us a hen and a dozen chickens. Then we had my little pony named Silver. He was the daughter of Bess, a beautiful grey mare father had bought from Kerr and Butner, ranchers in the Valley. Poor Bess! When my brother Reuben was taking the cows out one morning to pasture, he had left a tether rope dragging on one of the cows and Bess stepped on it, falling and breaking one of her legs. That was before I was married. George and I were going to a picnic that day and he had just arrived. Well, he made a splint for poor Bess' broken leg, but at that time when an animal broke a leg, they shot the poor thing, and Father was sure it was the only thing to do, so he had George shoot her. Poor Bess! She was so beautiful, so easy to ride and so gentle, and what a loss!

One Sunday morning George and I were going out to change the oxen to a fresh place, when a big jackrabbit hove in sight. George exclaimed, "Give me the axe, give me the axe." I was carrying the axe - as usual - he grabbed it, threw it and killed the rabbit. He took it back to
the house, after tethering the oxen out, cleaned it and cooked it for his dinner. I wouldn’t touch the thing, but he enjoyed it.

There were a couple of bachelors living over in the bluffs who said they ate so many rabbits the first years they lived there that they could never walk after that; they had to go on the jump ever after!!

There were some funny people living there in that new country. These two bachelors and two other Irish men and one day after a big thunderstorm, they were digging a big hole alongside a road, and a man going by on horseback stopped to ask what they were digging for, wondering what could be their incentive? "Shure," one of the Irishmen replied, "There was a big thunderstorm a while back, and bedad a great bolt of lightnin’ struck right here in this very spot an’ buried itself. An’ bedad we are going to dig ‘til we find the bolt." Did they ever find it? If they did, no one knows! Har!
Chapter 13

Prairie Storm

What fearful thunderstorms we used to have in Canada and how I suffered with fright when the elements seemed determined to tear the earth apart. George used to laugh at my fears and fright, but once or twice he was plenty frightened himself. One day we were coming home from town, when a storm broke just as we were entering the raving between our place and Sam Cullums, west of our place, and was it terrific! I had you, Irma, on my lap. George was driving. We had old black Dick, a beautiful horse, and really I believe old Dick was frightened too. He shivered and shook. Chain lightning seemed to be coming down all around us. We stopped the horse and waited until the fury of the storm had passed. I have seen the electricity sparkle across the top of the stove many times during these storms, believe it or not.

The first big storm we experienced (thunder, lightning and hail) after we were married occurred one sultry afternoon. George was plowing, using two oxen and a walking plow, the furrow was one half mile long and he had just come back from the farther end when the sky to the west was black - as ink. The wind had dropped and everything was breathlessly quiet, a sure sign something was going to break! I begged George to get the oxen in the stable and stay with me, but no! He was going to make another round come hell or high water! So, he started back up the break to the other end of the land. Well, he just got up the half mile stretch and was turning the oxen around to come back, when the storm broke in all its fury! The oxen started on the run for the shelter. George had the lines around his waist, the oxen dragging him and the walking plow; they going on the dead run, George trying to hang onto the plow! Thunder, rain, hail, lightning and wind all combining to do their worst. George's back was black and blue for days from the hailstones pelting him all the way down that half mile. I was in the house, or shack, all that time crying my eyes out. The wind blew the windows out and everything was in a fearful mess with water and even hail all over the floor. But the storm passed, the sun came out, and a lark - a meadowlark - raised its voice in a burst of beautiful song - all was well with the World.
Chapter 14

Home on the Range

George worked away from home quite a lot that summer and of course, I was alone with my dog while he was away. I didn't mind it too much in the daytime but the nights were long and full of torture. I used to cover the windows at night with heavy blankets, lock the door and either sit there or lie on the bed, in torture. The dog - Colonel - used to lie in the bed, or rather on the bed, at night beside me all night long. One night, about ten o'clock, I was lying across the bed. Every once in a while, I would lift a corner of the blanket over the window and take a peek out. It was quite dark! On top of the stable (a sod stable) I saw the figure of a man dancing around, waving his arms. I nearly died with fright! Then, honor of horrors, the man slid down off the stable and came toward the house. I froze. He came to the door and scratched all over it. I screamed and screamed. Finally, George said, "What's the matter? Aren't you glad to have me come home?" It was fun for him, but torture for me. He played many such tricks on me.

I was very foolish in many ways, not knowing things, which I should have known, and no one warned me of things which were vitally important. During that summer, I became pregnant, and since then have often wondered how I ever lived through all the experiences I went through. I expected the baby the following January. My Mother never came near me to help or advise me about anything. Sister Maggie came out from the Soo and stayed a couple of months with me. They did a funny thing one Sunday. I often wonder why either one of them did it. It was unlike Maggie to do selfish things when her doing anything hurt me. This Sunday morning, the two of them got ready and drove off for the day leaving me alone. They went over to Uncle Tom's. Why I didn't get ready and go too, I don't know. They stayed away all day. Wasn't that love for you. George said I had better stay home, so I stayed home. He was given to those tricks.

Well, one day before Maggie came out, Annie Purdy drove over and said she was going down to the Valley and pick chokecherries, would I like to go along. So I got ready, got in the buckboard and George came out with a big fur robe and said, "Stand up girls, I'll put this robe over the seat and then if you get tired you can spread it on the ground and rest. Well, the horse took fright at the rattle of the robe and made a bound and away he went, pitching me out over the back of the seat right out on my head on the ground, with my one arm caught and hooked around the railing around the back of the floor of the buckboard, dragging me for a quarter of a mile over the horrible rough prairie. Somehow I was freed from the buckboard and the only thing I remembered was lying on the prairie and I saw George running towards me. Then I fainted and knew nothing more. Annie Purdy finally guided the runaway horse home, got her mother and raced back to our place. She afterwards
told me she was sure I was dead, but I was still living. During the afternoon, I felt a lot better and foolishly Annie and I set off in the buckboard to pick chokecherries. What a foolish thing to do! I didn't pick any cherries. I lay on the blanket all afternoon. Then we drove back home, and never a well day again for many months. The one morning in November - the third of November to be exact - George was going over to help Tom thresh and I was feeling so rotten I was afraid to stay alone, so went with him. Aunt Lizzie was confined to bed, Cousin Joe had been born two days before, and Aunt Amy, George's sister, was there cooking for the threshers. She often was very mean, if she thought she could lord it over anyone. During the afternoon, she told me to lift the boiler (wash boiler) off the stove and set it on the floor. I, of course, was green and quite embarrassed (being pregnant in those days was something to hide), so I did as I was told, lifted the boiler, half full of clothes off the stove and set it on the floor. Uncle Joe was sitting there and never offered to lift it for me and Amy was perfectly well, but I guess she thought she was being clever. Well, that night I lost my baby, a little boy, just six months on the way. I had to stay there at Tom's for three weeks, then come home. Mrs. Purdy came and took care of me when my baby was born. She was an angel.

Then, after three weeks, we went back to our own place. It was bitterly cold weather, around the 24th of November. We stopped at Purdy's on the way home and Mrs. Purdy persuaded George to leave me at their place for the night and go over and get the shack warmed up thoroughly for me, then come for me next day, which he did.
Chapter 15

The Gopher

That winter passed without anything very exciting. We went over to Uncle Tom's a great deal and during the winter the community formed a literary society, meeting at each neighbors alternately. We edited a weekly paper, to be written only on brown wrapping paper, and called it the "Gopher." Each week, one of the members took turns writing it up and then when we met, someone was chosen to read the whole edition. It was lots of fun and very original.

One week it came George's turn to edit the Gopher. He argued me into doing it for him. I forgot to say, in this paper when we first started, I proposed we write a story, continued, each editor to follow up with a chapter or two and to be read by the one chosen to read the paper. Well, one day when I was all alone, George having gone for a load of wood, I proceeded to write George's continuance of the story. I do not remember what all I wrote but do remember quite an exciting episode I managed to work into it, about a couple of "tender feet" who were driving along Albert Street and going north to the Valley, driving in a sleigh, when a pack of prairie wolves appeared and followed them for miles. They lashed their horses to frenzy thinking the wolves would attack them and eat them alive, just as all greenhorns thought when first they met up with these prairie wolves. I forget how I finished the imagined tragedy, but to make it very impressive, stuck in a few mild exclamations enough to make it sound manlike and the story (my story) met with great applause. Everyone said it sounded just like George! That no one but George could tell such an exciting story and do so, so dramatically! I never squealed on George, but at the same time didn't think it very noble of him to keep quiet and take the credit.

Well, everything went along quite nicely, then when it was Tory Crispin's turn to edit the paper, she put in an Item reading, "Bill and Sadie went to town to meet Auntie". Sadie got mad (Sadie Swartz). She said it was very rude to put her personal affairs in, in such a discourteous manner, so she quit the society. Her aunt was coming out from New York State and she and Bill Lambert went (drove) in to Regina to meet her. In the summer the aunt went back to New York State, taking Sadie with her. Bill Lambert followed shortly after and they were married there. This Sadie was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Swartz and the girl who made my wedding dresses.
Chapter 16

Dear Old Mr. Swartz

We always called Mr. and Mrs. Swartz Uncle Sam and Aunt Beckie. Mrs. Swartz was a distant relation of the McNeice’s. They came from New York State. Mr. Swartz was a veteran of the Civil War. He could not read or write, except to write his own name, but he could make money and count it too. He took to drinking very badly after his first wife, Beckie, died. She died of pneumonia. They lived about 16 or 18 miles north of Regina and about 4 or 5 miles west of Albert Street Road. Dr. Low from Regina attended her. He used to be so tired he would put the lines around him and go to sleep in the cutter and let the horse go on. There was no danger of the horse losing the trail because there was no other road to follow, only here and there an occasional short track turning in to some farm house, at that very few, not more perhaps than a dozen between Regina and Mr. Swartz’ place. Poor old Aunt Beckie! In those days, they used to keep pneumonia patients packed with hot bran poultices; hot as could be borne. She died and was buried in the Tregarva cemetery.

After a year or so, he got a Miss Blanche to keep house for him, and did she spend his money! She was rather an attractive woman; big, fair and blue eyed. She cut quite a swath with the old codger. Had him fix up the house with carpets, drapes over all the doors, chenille drapes, new curtains and everything. Then he went east for the winter, to New York state, leaving Miss Blanche and a hired man to look after the farm; it was winter time and nothing to do but look after the stock and themselves. He returned in the spring, with a new wife; a very nice woman, a widow who had two children but who had left both children with friends in the east for a time. Mr. Swartz was quite a jolly bridegroom.

Well, as time went on with the Swartz, he began drinking heavily, getting worse all the time. Mrs. Swartz became very ill, finally died of cancer in the Grey Nuns Hospital in Regina. They were living in Craven then, having sold the farm to one of the Russell boys. Mrs. Swartz' body was brought home to Craven for burial. She had been a good friend of mine, so we went down to stay or sit up with the remains, which was the custom in those days for friends to do. Mr. Swartz celebrated the occasion by getting drunk and proposing to every woman there; that's the truth. He even proposed to me, and when I told him I was married to George McNeice, he apologized and "proposed I'd forget he proposed to me because he wouldn't want to hurt George." Well, poor Mrs. Swartz was buried the next day in a blizzard. Interment was in the Tregarva cemetery. He kept on drinking heavily and one day while in Regina, he went to see Sadie and Bill, who were living in Regina (I believe this happened just before his second wife died). Bill got him good and drunk, which wasn't hard to do, and
persuaded him to sign a check for three thousand dollars. Now, Mr. Swartz couldn't write, nothing but his name, and he was so shaky he couldn't hold a pen, so loving (?) Bill said to him, "I'll hold your hand, Dad, while you sign your name," which he did. Well, the old man drove home from Regina in the cold freezing winter weather and by the time he had a night's sleep, sobered up and remembered what he had done, got out his team and cutter, hiked off down to Lumsden and the bank and stopped payment on the check.

Well, shortly after his second wife died, he unearthed an old maid somewhere whom he married. She was quite a business head. She wouldn't marry him unless he first put ten thousand dollars in the bank to her credit, which he did. Then, when they were married (they were married in Regina, I believe, but am not sure), he took her to Regina and bought her a big car. The salesman gave her a few lessons and she drove it home the same afternoon. She was a good housekeeper and a very neat woman, but of course everyone thought it quite a joke he got married the third time. He was seventy-four. I do not know how old his third wife was when they were married. However, she did break up his drinking habits pretty well. She would go right in to the saloon at Craven and pull him out, take him home and put him to bed and get him sobered up.

When Mr. Swartz lived on the farm, he would have his clocks an hour and a half fast and thereby have his men out on the land at four o'clock in the morning. Up at three o'clock every morning in the summer time.

He eventually developed asthma and so did she, and finally he died. Then Sadie got everything. He had given this woman, his third wife, the ten thousand dollars, I believe, before they married, thereby keeping his bargain and I guess considered that her share of his possessions. Anyway, Sadie told my sister Ettie that she was "living life to its fullest now." This all I know about Sam Swartz and as the Scotsman would say "his ilk.' So, may their souls rest in peace. I suppose their little house in Craven still sits there. Someone probably bought it by this time. There wasn't much pleasure in their life.

http://saskhistoryonline.ca/islandora/object/saskpostcards%3A379

http://saskhistoryonline.ca/islandora/object/saskpostcards%3A65272
Chapter 17

After the Honeymoon

Now, to get back to my own story

The second summer we were married, Uncle Tom persuaded George to rent his farm. I was opposed to the deal, as I felt we were just getting started nicely on our own place, and it meant so much more hard work for me as Tom's place was larger than ours and meant more hired men, more cooking and washing and more work in every way. That must have been 1894.

Well, George rented it (Lizzie and Tom McNeice left the house full of bugs), and we moved over in the fall of this year and they moved to Regina. Tom had a job selling machinery for the Massey-Harris Company. They bought a house on Halifax Street and were quite swanky, while I undertook the task of making butter from five cows. I had made butter at home the summer Mother was in Detroit, but it was a small task in comparison to making it from five cows. That summer, or fall, I lost another premature baby at six months. I believe it was in August.

Just to let you, whoever reads this, know what I went through, I’ll relate this experience.

We had been in Regina overnight and stayed at Uncle Tom’s place. We left there about two o’clock in the afternoon and drove in the buggy home. Arrived home about five in the afternoon. I felt rotten all the way home. However, we got the milk skimmed, the calves fed and the cows milked, then I went to bed.

Now, the house was so full of bugs I couldn’t sleep in it and were sleeping in one of the granaries. Well, about five in the morning, I awoke in child labor. George roused my brother, Reuben, who was working for us, and they got a bed ready for me in the house, made a stretcher for me out of, or with, a robe (horsehide), carried me in that to the house and to bed. Reuben ran, or drove, for old Mrs. Sneed, a midwife and then for Auntie Swartz. My baby was born and died a few minutes afterwards.

That year our crop was frozen. We didn't know as much about grain and frost as we afterwards learned and we were raising red fife wheat, a grand wheat, but ripening so late it caught the frost, or the frost caught it before it was ripe. We had almost the whole half section on Tom’s place in wheat and oats and it was all frozen! We also had forty acres over on our own place in wheat. I think we sold the wheat for somewhere around twenty-five cents a bushel. The potatoes that year didn't mature either. We hardly had any potatoes for our use as the men decided to keep what we had for seed in the spring.
It was while we were living on Uncle Tom’s place that the whole neighborhood was in quite a dither. A man who had gone crazy was roaming through the neighborhood frightening people. He roamed around stark naked.

In the first place, before going further, I’ll relate how my father ran across him. Father was coming up from Craven to Tregarva Post Office with the mail. Father had the contract of carrying the mail between these two places. As he was passing Jack Kiln’s place, he saw a man up on the roof of the house going through some strange antics. Father stopped to see what he was doing and found he had been pulling up grass and had been stuffing it into holes in the roof. This house was abandoned at the time. The man asked father if he had any old papers or magazines, which he might borrow to read. So Father, on his way back to Craven came in to our place and asked me for some reading material for the man. We thought it rather strange for anyone to be at this old house - it was a sod or log shack with a sod roof and the people who had lived there were either dead or long since had vacated the place. However, I gave Father some magazines and newspapers and he went on his way. George drove over too, as he thought there must be something wrong.

Well, when they got over to the place where Father had come across the man, there was no sign of him; he had vamoosed. Then, the first thing we heard, the Mounted Police from Regina were searching for a man who had been working for the McBrains over at Wascana in the harvest. It seems this man (MacIlvain by name) had at one time years before, gone off his "beam" and had been in Selkirk and the police had had a difficult time taking him in custody. He was a powerful man and had stood off four policemen with an axe, however, they finally subdued him and had him put in Selkirk where he was kept for a long time. However, he was finally pronounced cured and was let out. He apparently was all right for some time and he worked for several farmers around Wascana. He worked for the McBrains for quite a while (the McBrains were Mrs. Ed Daykin’s parents), and then one day, when the men were resting after their lunch and sitting around outside as they always did a few minutes before returning to the harvest field, this MacIlvain quietly got up and walked off down to the Valley (Wascana), only a short distance from the house. At the time no one thought anything of it, but as the day wore on MacIlvain did not return nor did he come back at all. They notified the police and a search was instituted for him, as it was decided the man had gone loco once more, which decision proved correct.

By this time, the man had quite a start on the police and, of course, they didn’t know which way he had gone; but it wasn’t long before they heard from settlers about a man who had come to their door, stark naked, asking for food, reading material, etc., frightening the wits out of the farmers and, especially their women folk.

Of course, he finally wandered into the Tregarva settlement, and I lived in dread every minute of the day. Eddie was a little baby, born that summer, July 24th, 1895, and I had several men to cook for. The house was a small house with only one door by which I could

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17 Selkirk, Manitoba had the nearest mental institution at the time.
get out, or anyone else, either in or out, and I used to wonder whatever would I do if he came to our door when I was alone with my little baby. The men were busy in the harvest fields. Well, one day, the men had all gone out to the harvest field and, as I was washing the dishes. My mind was dwelling on the thought, "How will I get out with my little baby if that awful crazy man comes to the door?" when I heard a step at the door! I gave a scream, fainted and dropped to the floor! The first thing I knew, George was trying to hold me up and saying, 'What happened? What happened?' Of course, when I heard the step at the door, being so unnerved, I supposed it was the crazy man and here it was George, my husband who had come back from the field for something he had forgotten to take out to the field. As far as I was concerned, at the moment it might have been the poor crazy man.

I suffered tortures that fall. I remember one day while I was sitting in the rocking chair with baby Eddie in my arms, the dog started barking furiously, and thinking it might be this crazy man, I took such a pain in my back for minutes I couldn't get up off my chair. When I did get up and go to the door, I heard Mr. Freethy talking to the dog, so knew, once again, everything was all right. I often think, what a strain for a woman to go through with a baby not two months old, and so much work to do, with no help of any kind.

This crazy man had been to almost every house in the neighborhood but Denizens and ours across the road from us. He had been at Bob Raeburn's, stark naked of course as usual and Bob, feeling sorry for him, fitted him out with shirt, overhauls, shoes and so on, but the man hardly left the place before he had stripped everything off and was on his way, stark naked, once more. Then he went to Minnie Gore's house. Somehow she got out and ran across the prairie to a neighbor's.

The poor fellow was harmless, I suppose, because he asked one man why all the women were afraid of him; he said he wouldn't hurt anyone. But that didn't lessen the fear and dread we all had of him.

The days and especially the nights and mornings were growing quite cold as it was on in September, and how he did not perish is a wonder. The police finally caught up with him once more, to the satisfaction of everyone, but he was on the loose for weeks before they caught him. Where and how I do not remember.

Another time, before he was captured, I had another horrid experience. Very often when we would run out of coal oil for our lamps, we would make what we called a "witch," made by soaking a woolen rag in grease, tying a big knot in the rag and placing it in a saucer with quite a bit of grease in the saucer and lighting the end of the rag. It made a ghostly light but better than none. Well, I had such a light going, throwing weird shadows all around the room, when there was the most terrible scratching, snarling, and growling at the door and in burst a man with his face covered, snarling like mad! Down I went in a faint to the floor.

Why George loved to frighten me, I never could understand. It always seemed to me to be a cruel thing to do, but he always did love to scare me out of my wits. He could see so many supernatural spectacles, or professed to, and would go to great lengths to describe them to
me. For instance, one time he came home from Regina quite late at night, which he often did, and when he came in the house, he looked so funny and asked where Sam Swartz was. He could see he wasn't in the house, as there was only one room downstairs and a little summer kitchen where he (George) had to come through before coming into the main part of the house. Of course, there was an upstairs, but I'd hardly stow Sam up there! I said, "I don't know; he hasn't been here." "Well, he said, "that's funny, that is his white pony in the stable, eating out of the manager and has its harness on." He swore up and down that it was the truth. I didn't believe him, because, had it been Sam, he would have come in. George made no effort to go back to the stable to take another look; always thought it was one of his fish stories and paid no attention to it. He would tell the weirdest stories about Banshees, how his father and mother had heard them wailing many times just before they heard of the death of some relation or friend. His father was Irish, his mother English, and he had the characteristics of both. Eddie, as I mentioned a while back, was born on July 24, 1895. He was a dear little fellow and we were so proud of him. He was very tiny and I didn't know anything about feeding and taking care of a baby. I did my best. I often wondered why mother never came to see me. She never came into my house until Eddie was over two years old, and then wouldn't have come, I don't suppose, only George went over and asked her if she would come because I was confined to bed with measles and there was no one to care for me. He had to work on the land and Eddie was on his own. She came, but let me know she wasn't at all pleased about coming. This, however, was after we moved back to our own place.

The first year we were frozen out; the next year we had a pretty good crop and I had to have help with the cooking in the threshing time. Maud Robinson (whose sister was Maggie Robinson, who married H.D.B. Ketchen, a sergeant in the R.N.W.M.P. at the Regina barracks) came to help me. She was quite young, probably fourteen or fifteen years old. Her brother Bill came to help with the threshing, as did also my father. In those days, neighbors helped each other. They threshed by horsepower, using six or eight teams. The poor horses looked so tired, going round and round all day. A man stood on a little platform in the center of the power place with a whip in his hand flicking the horses a bit once in a while. There were arms that ran out from the revolving machinery and the teams were hitched between these arms and, from this contraption, ran a spindle which turned the separator. As the horses, going round and round came to the spindle, they would step over it and on they would go on their monotonous way. Two men stood up on a platform at the front of the separator, each with a knife, cutting bands on the sheaves of grain as they were pitched from a stack of grain, or from a load of sheaves which men hauled in from the field.

At night, the men who stayed slept on the floor in the house. We, who slept upstairs could hear, every once in a while, someone give the order, "Turn," and immediately everyone would roll over.
Sometimes, rather often, one of the men would have his violin along and in the evenings would liven the crowd with the Devil's Dream, The Arkansas Traveler, Little Brown Jug and an occasional Irish jig, a waltz called Dear Evelina, My Sweet Evelina, and Where, Oh Where, Has My Little Dog Gone, and many other selections famous in those days.

We women would have a stack of cookies and pies and cakes on hand for the men who were threshing. If we didn't our name would be blazoned across the neighborhood and men would dread going back to thresh there another year.

It was always a great day for the women and the children when the threshers and the machine arrived. The children especially enjoyed it. The women would take a walk out to see the machine operate; usually in the afternoon after the dinner dishes were done and before preparations for supper were started. At mealtime, the men came in with a rush, gathered around the table, where all the food was placed and, to use a vulgar expression, "dug in." Of course, the children spent nearly all their time watching the men and the threshing machine. They stayed at a safe distance from the machine.

We usually used half a beef and several wild fowl, which were very plentiful in those days. All this made lots of cooking, taking into consideration all the pies, cakes, potatoes and vegetables and all the bread they ate.

One year, bad weather with heavy snowstorms came on, and the grain, being in stokes in the fields, they couldn't finish the threshing and we had to board the men, twenty-three of them, for three weeks before they could start threshing again. Had we not boarded them, the gang would have broken up and would not have come back when we needed them. For three weeks I did all this work alone, no help whatever. All the baking, cooking, making butter, bread, taking care of the children, keeping the fires going; in fact, everything that needed doing for the crowd, I had it to do. The children were too small to help. After it was all over, I couldn't stand up, and no wonder, was it?

The year our Eddie was born (1895), Bill Robinson and his sister Maude were with us in threshing time. This, I have mentioned before. We didn't have as long a siege of threshing that year as we did later years. Bill used to sneak into the house once in a while for a cookie, and to look at baby Eddie and while in, he would dance the cork leg and sing, "Old Paddy Coon, He Came Along Too Soon; The Dance Won't be ready 'til Tomorrow Afternoon." The feature of the Cork Leg consisted of holding one leg perfectly stiff and stomping with the other foot, swinging your arms around and singing the above ditty.

Alma Sutton, Isaac’s sister would come down and help too that year and many years as well.
Years after all this, the steam threshers replaced the horsepower; that was quite a "come up" in the advancement of the science, or the art, of threshing. In the cold weather, the engineer would have to stay with his engine all night and keep the water from freezing. He must have had someone with him, I suppose, a fireman; they fired with straw, and it must have been a task indeed. It was very interesting, though, to us women. We became accustomed to the various whistles, which the engineer would blow. One to stop, two to start, three for straw, four for grain (sheaves), five for wagons to haul the threshed grain and six for water.

Several years later, we bought our bread in Lumsden. A baker started a shop there. This was a great help to the women, to be able to buy our bread. So much less to do.

While we were living on Uncle Tom's place, our neighbors across the road, in the summer time kept a flock, or herd, of turkeys, which roamed at will a great part of the time. They became a nuisance to the neighbors in this way. They would get into our gardens, gobble up all the green leaves off the vegetables and ruin the gardens. People complained to Mr. Denzin, and then he commissioned Alice, one of his daughters, then a little girl, and Arthur, one of his little boys, to herd all the turkeys. But, during school days, Alice and Arthur had to attend school; then the turkeys had free run of the prairie and of everyone's garden. They used to come over to our place and get in the horse stable, fly into the mangers and feed boxes. It made George so mad to find them there and find the mangers polluted with their droppings.

One day when the men had come in from the fields with their teams, they found the turkeys had taken possession of the mangers, eating grain and gobbling, gobbling away. George began throwing them out and, I suppose, using some tall language. Our dog - Colonel - was standing there and George yelled, "Sic him, Colonel" Colonel "sicked" him all right, made a snap at one of the turkeys and took his head right off! Why George didn't bring it to the house and have me cook it, I'll never know, unless he was afraid the Denzin's would find out. He buried it in the manure pile! Denzin's often wondered where that turkey went. George would say he saw a couple of coyotes around such and such a morning and I guess Denzin's believed him as it was a very common thing to see coyotes around.

One Winter, about this time, Mr. Denzin killed a big fat sow, weighed five hundred pounds, and took it to Regina to sell. The butchers wouldn't buy it because it was so fat so he brought it home. It was frozen stiff, so he brought it into the house to thaw out, so he could cut it up and saw it there. It took up nearly half the kitchen and was a frightening sight, lying

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18 Joseph McNeice's threshing machine.
there on its back, its stomach, or belly, slit from throat to its feet, and legs spread wide, its mouth wide open and its ears sticking straight up.

Well, when it, as Mr. Denzin said, "t'awed out," he cut it up and stored it somewhere and at meal time, he would say to the children, "Get more of dat fat pork into you dere, and not so much bread," and immediately all the children would have another piece of "dat fat pork."

Amelia, the oldest girl, stayed home and used to do some fancywork, embroidery with silk floss. One day when I was over there, she said, as she worked on her embroidery, "It is so different out here; back home we used to work with pigs and things, and out here we work with silk and things."

One day I remember so well. I had just finished churning and had set a bucket of buttermilk outside the kitchen door, where the men could pick it up and take it to the pig pen and feed it to the pigs. Well, it happened George had let the pigs out that day, which I don't know, but he occasionally would do that, to my dissatisfaction, and just after I had set the bucket full of buttermilk out there, along came the pigs and upset it and wallowed in it. I was so mad, I picked up a little piece of plaster that had fallen out of a chink in the log wall of the house, and threw it at the pigs. To my surprise and consternation, I hit one of the pigs right behind the ear, and he dropped to the ground and lay still for several minutes. Was I frantic! It was time for George and the men to come in to dinner and I knew George would be mad as hops if he found a dead pig lying at his door. I tried to think what I could do to hide the pig. Finally, I thought I would try and drag it down over the hill (the house was built on the side of a little hill) and at the foot of the hill was a little creek. So, I proceeded to grab the pig by the hind legs, preparatory to pulling him down the hill, which I never could have done, when he gave a wiggle and a grunt and jumped to his feet and ran away. Was I thankful.' However, I told George all about it and told him if he didn't keep the pigs shut up I'd shoot them, and I would have too. There is nothing more aggravating than to have pigs or fowl on the loose on a farm. George shut them up.

Many times I would have to get on my pony, which Father had given me when I was married, and which I named Silver, and ride down to Lumsden to get tobacco for George when he was busy. George used that black chewing plug tobacco, as well as plug smoking. It must have been as necessary to men in those days as cigarettes are in these days. When men would run out of this commodity, they became irritable so the best thing to do was hike to town and buy them some "tebaccer." So I would saddle my pony and ride to Lumsden.

Lumsden was merely a hamlet in those days. T.B. Hill from Regina had a little store there. When I went to high school in Regina, I boarded at the Hills, or at least lived there. I helped Mrs. Hill with her work and got breakfast for them before going to school. T.B. had a brother living with them and working in T.B.'s store in Regina. 19

19 http://library2.usask.ca/postcardsquappelle/lumsden.html
That was the winter "La Grippe" was so very prevalent and so many in the east died from its ravages. I contracted the Grippe and was unable to be up. Mrs. Hill made me get up and go down to a store for some medicine. I thought I'd die before I got to the store. It was owned by a Mr. Mowat or Moffat, I can't remember which. When I went in the store this man said, "Child, go home, and get into bed." I told him Mrs. Hill had made me get up, and was he mad. When I went back to the house, Mrs. Hill said, "If you are going to be sick, Minnie, you may as well go home. That was around Christmas time, so I went home. After the Christmas season, Annie and I both went to Regina to school. I boarded with a Mr. and Mrs. Elm who were keeping the Men's Club there. Mrs. Elm was very nice, but he was a nincompoop. Old Dixie Watson, J.C. Pope, Amide Bourget from the Government House, and many others belonged to this Club. Old Dixie Watson had a wife who at one time had been an opera singer and who was addicted to drink. She used to stop children, as well as adults, on the street and try to persuade them to get liquor for her.

All this should have been related long before this, but now I have started I may as well finish.

It was there while I was at the Elm's there was a Calico Ball being given in the old town hall. The Elms had a friend, a George Hambly, who wanted Mrs. Elm to let me go with him to the ball. Now, Mother never would countenance such a thing. Anyone who would go to a ball was on the straight road to the fellow with the cloven hoofs and the horns and the pitchfork.

Mrs. Elm was determined I should go and bought material for a dress for me and made the dress. It was white muslin over pink sateen, very pretty when finished with a full skirt right to the floor. I did such a terrible trick for a girl, bought a pair of slippers and, of all things, an ostrich fan-ivory ribs with ostrich down-cost $2.50. I should have been spanked. Annie heard I was going to the dance and she came over and gave me the dickens. Of course, I balled my eyes out. Dixie Watson had come into the Club-it was downstairs and we were living upstairs-and he came up to see what was wrong. He thought I was a bit of all right (old soak that he was). However, he persuaded Annie to let me go. Finally, Annie said, "All right, Minnie, we'll get you ready and you can go, but be a good girl." I was only fifteen and should have been spanked. Of course, I had a wonderful time, and didn't get home until three o'clock in the morning.

There were a lot of Mounted Police there and I met several who wanted me to come up a few nights later to their dance at the barracks. They would send sleighs down from the barracks to pick up those who were going. Of course, I couldn't go alone so I went over to a friend's house, knowing they were going, and went with them.

At the Calico Ball, I met a Sgt. Major DeBarr who afterwards plagued my life for a time. I didn't like him. He had come to see me one day and begged me to go with him to a dance, but I refused. He was so mad at me for refusing he left in a huff and went out and gave his
beautiful black horse a licking before he took to the saddle. He had told me his father was
German and his mother French, or vice versa, and that if I'd be his girl he would teach me to
speak both languages, but I said no, no. I may have missed a great opportunity (har') but I
think not.

At the dance at the Barracks, DeBarr wanted to dance with me, but I refused. He was on
duty that night at the dance and it was near the end of the dance when he asked me and,
when I wouldn't dance with him, he came in a little while later and closed the dance, or
ordered it over. That night saw the end of my frisk-a-vating. I went no more.

The next night after the Calico Ball, Dixie Watson and J.C. Pope came up-stairs (Mr. Pope
had a room upstairs for the winter --(his wife had gone east) -- singing "For She Was the
Belle of the Ball." Then another fellow came up and said it was between May McDougal and
me. Guess it was Miss McDougal. She was sophisticated and I was green. However, that
ended my frivolities; I didn't want my soul jeopardized.

In the spring of that year, Mother was ill and there was nothing for me but to go home and
take care of her and the three younger children and cook for Father and all the family. Annie
was home that summer too. She had taken her certificate, allowing her to teach in the
Northwest Territories. If I remember rightly, we still were Assiniboia, Northwest Territories;
had not been made Saskatchewan20. Do not know just when we were formed into
provinces.

Well, to go back.

As I mentioned a long while back, Eddie was born July 24, 1895. He was born about five
o'clock in the morning.

Mrs. Denzin and Aunt Beckie Swartz officiated. How glad we were when we found he was
going to live. He was very tiny; his fingers were like little straws but he was precious.
Everyone in the neighborhood came to see him. The first Sunday after he was born, there
was fourteen people in to see him. That night I really had wheels in my head. That was the
time, Irma, I have told you of the lunch George prepared for me, who had to nurse; a lunch
of two soda crackers and a glass of water.

Mrs. Denzin went home that day, seeing it was Sunday and George was home to look after
the baby and me. I was to have chicken that day and she said she would leave it cooking on
the stove and George could serve it; that there would be some nice chicken soup for me.
Well, I kept asking George when it would be ready. I was growing very hungry (my lunch of
two soda crackers and a glass of water not being satisfactory). George would say, "Oh, it
isn't done yet." Finally, about three in the afternoon, to satisfy me, he brought pan, chicken
and all in to show me, Mrs. Denzin had never cut the chicken up, but placed the fowl in the
pan whole. I was so mad and so disgusted when I saw the thing lying there with its neck

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20 Saskatchewan became a province on September 1, 1905.
protruding at one end of the pan and its legs sticking up. I didn't ever want to see a chicken again. When, if ever, it was ready to eat, I do not remember.

Somehow I got well. This was the time Mrs. Denzin left and had to go home to "look after the pigs and childer," according to Mr. Denzin. Of course, after a while we forgave the Denzins and became quite good friends. Mr. Denzin used to come over quite often, sit and tell us all sorts of stories about his early life and how he was a small boy; how they came in a sailboat and were eight weeks on the ocean. They, his parents, must have settled in the east somewhere, because he and his family came from the east out to Tregarva to live. They came to Tregarva right after George and I were married and settled right across from Uncle Tom's place. Whether it was a homestead and preemption, or whether he bought, I couldn't say, but I rather think it was the former. He used to talk and talk and it all was in his broken English. He would try to quote saying he had heard and sometimes get things so mixed up. For instance, somewhere he had heard some old copy book proverbs; I say "heard" because I do not believe he could read or write. He had heard "Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today" He would get it twisted like this: "Never do tomorrow what you can't do today." Of course, we would laugh too, thinking we were laughing at his bright wit.

Our collie dog didn't like him and if he (the dog) saw Mr. Denzin coming near our house, it was a race between Mr. Denzin and our dog as to which one got there first. If the dog got to the door first, Mr. Denzin couldn't get in until one of us went out and subdued the dog. It was fun to see them race for the door.

One winter while we were on Uncle Tom's place there was a wedding in one of the neighbor's house. Annie Crispin and Joe Freethy were going to be married. We were invited but George was working for the Massey Harris Company over at Moose Jaw. My brother Reuben was at our place (Uncle Tom's) taking care of the stock. Well, of course, I wanted to go to the wedding. It was going to be the biggest event of a lifetime and everyone else was going. I had a nice new black dress made, all trimmed up with beautiful jet trimmings and all peped to go. Mrs. Denzin said she would keep Eddie for me so I could have a nice time without having to look after the baby.

Well, George arrived home a day or so before the wedding, from Moose Jaw and had to go back to Moose Jaw the day after he came home. He didn't want me to go to the wedding! Of all things! He brought me a cute little watch (the open faced one, which you, Irma, are taking care of for me. You and Hunt are to have one watch each when I pass on), but I could have the watch on one condition only; that was, if I would not go to the wedding. I said no thanks, I was going to the wedding!! Well, then, I could go to the wedding and have the watch if I would promise I wouldn't dance with Bill Petrie. I didn't promise, but I went to the wedding, kept the watch and danced with Bill Petrie.

Then Amelia Denzin got married to Will Seed, who was a widower, and whose wife had died a year or so before. It was quite a wedding too, but no dancing. We sang hymns out of little red backed hymnbooks. I do not remember whether Amelia's two sisters, Beckie and
Hannah, who were working in Regina, were home for this wedding or not. They were working as housemaids for some wealthy people in Regina—Beckie for Mrs. Marsh and Hannah for someone else. When their pay-day came, Mr. Denzin used to go to Regina without fail and collect their pay until one day Beckie’s mistress wouldn’t allow him to take Beckie’s money. She told him Beckie needed her money to buy clothes for herself. They both were nice girls and pretty too.

Mr. Denzin was the man who when Uncle Tom asked him why he built such a small house when he had such a large family, replied, "I can always 'tach to." Beckie Denzin later on married Uncle Isaac Sutton. His first wife died in childbirth when their second child was born. They had a little girl a few years before who died from summer cholera—a beautiful little girl named Myra, after Myra McNeice, a sister of George, and who had married some railroad man and lived in the Coronado Hotel in San Diego for years. They were rumored to be quite well off.

Then, after Aunt Amy’s death (Isaac’s wife), Alma Sutton came out from Ontario to keep house for Uncle Isaac. She was a lovely woman and we became fast friends. After Isaac married Beckie Denzin, Alma went back to Ontario to live. More about that later on.

When Eddie was little more than a week or two old, I was giving him his morning bath and noticed a stain on his band that looked like blood. I was alone with him, George being at Moose Jaw and Reuben over at our own place. Eddie cried so much after he was two weeks old that he must have ruptured or did something to his navel. I was so frightened, I wrapped him up in a shawl and carried him in my arms all the way—a mile to old Mrs. Seed. She told me to make a good pad out of cotton, which I must sear on the stove, and keep it tightly bandaged on his stomach, which I did. I was so afraid he might die, as my other two babies died but he got better and was such a darling baby boy. So pretty, with his blue eyes and his golden curls. Then, when he was one year and two months old, he became ill with cholera infantum and nearly died.

One day he had been restless, and in the afternoon commenced vomiting. He couldn’t keep anything on his stomach and I didn’t know what to do. George was still at Moose Jaw and Reuben working over on our own place and wouldn’t be home until six o’clock, when he would come home to milk the cows. I was sitting on the rocking chair holding Eddie in my arms, when he took a convulsion and stiffened right out in my arms. I thought he was dead. After a while he came out of it and I laid him down on the bed and ran and called Mrs. Denzin who came over. Reuben came home at six o’clock and, finding Eddie so sick, just ate a bite of supper, got on a horse and rode all the way in to Regina, fifteen miles, to Dr. Willoughby for medicine for Eddie. It was after midnight when he, Reuben, got back home. The medicine checked the vomiting and he had no more convulsions, but the diarrhea continued for some time. Poor, dear little Eddie He lay just like a dead baby, and I was so alone. We sent for George, but George never thought anything serious and didn’t then.
However, he came home but went right back to Moose Jaw. When harvest started, he came home for that.

Eddie was so sick Isaac Sutton used to come down nearly every night to see how he was. He would sit beside Eddie’s cradle (by the way, Mrs. Freethy gave me the cradle; her children, all the way down from Lizzie had used it) and watch the little boy. One night, he said, "Eddie is getting better; see, Minnie, he is sleeping with his hands up by his face, and his hands are closed tight. When a baby is sick, his hands are never up like that." Isaac was a great comfort to me in those days.

Eddie had begun to walk when he took this sickness; he must have been ill a month or so, maybe not quite so long, but anyway, he used to creep over to the stairway and go up on his hands and knees. There was no way of keeping him down. If I’d put a chair across the stairs, he’d pull it away and up he would go. He was afraid of raw meat. He would call it "kitty" and wouldn't go near it, so one day, George was cutting up some raw meat and he took a piece, about four inches long and an inch wide and laid it on one of the stair steps. Presently, Eddie came along and started up the stairs in great glee; he came to the step where the meat was lying and yelled "kitty" and backed down the stairs. I never had any more trouble with him climbing the stairs. But I hated to see George put that piece of meat there!

During his illness, when his supply of medicine was done, I wanted George (he was home then) to go to Regina for medicine for him; his diarrhea was still bad. But George wouldn’t; he said Eddie was all right. Mr. Freethy said he should have more medicine. Mr. Freethy was there helping with the threshing; also some other men. I was frantic because I knew Eddie was far from well. Finally, on a Sunday morning, Jack Williamson, one of the men working for us, decided he would go in to Regina for the day. Men didn’t work on Sunday in Canada, at that time, so I asked Jack if he would go to Dr. Willoughby and get me some medicine for Eddie. I gave him a note to the doctor, explaining Eddie’s condition. Jack did this for me, for which I was very grateful.

When Eddie got well, one day I was putting the lining in a quilt, which I was making. Eddie crept over to the stairway and tried to get up on the lower step to sit there and couldn’t manage to do it. He came back to me, gave a big sigh, and sat down beside me. I was sitting on the floor. He didn’t try to move. He was very weak. But, gradually he grew stronger and finally well and strong. He was such a dear little boy.

One time when George was home from Moose Jaw, he butchered five pigs. It was in the wintertime and Reuben was home too. How I hated butchering time. Well, he cut up the hogs and, I suppose, he packed them down for summer use. That, I do not remember, but what I do remember, he instructed Reuben and I were to make headcheese. He, George, went back to Moose Jaw and left us to cut up and clean out eyes, brains, noses, etc. A horrible task! Very objectionable! Then I had to cook the awful things, take the bones out and spice it and work it up with my hands until it was all smooth, then pack it in crocks or
pans. When it cooled, it would be all jellied and, as far as taste goes, it was all right. But, after that siege, I couldn't look a hog in the face. That winter, church used to be held in our house. There weren't very many people came, but one family came regularly. There were at least four in that family who never failed to come to worship, principally to stay for supper and eat headcheese and other food. They were so hungry and so poor they would have eaten grasshoppers if they were cooked. They surely enjoyed a meal, which they never had at home.

Our men used to get our wood down in the Qu'Appelle Valley, or over in the bluffs, a long way from home. One time, they had left home fairly early after tending the stock and bringing in enough wood for the day. Father was with me part of this winter. Well, this day, a blizzard came up in the afternoon and I felt sure the men, George and Reuben, would not make it home, so I decided had better water the stock before nightfall. Night comes early on the Canadian prairies.

We had five cows, three oxen, several head of horses and some young stock. All these had to be untied and turned out and I had to run down about an eighth of a mile and draw water up with a bucket on a hook on a long pole. Of course, I didn't water the lot at one trip. I let the oxen out first, then ran down to the well to water them, and by the time I got down to the well, the oxen were down on their knees and some of them sticking their necks, heads, into the well opening and bawling for water. Believe it or not, there was hardly a bit of covering on the well, just a few odd boards. Everything was piled up with ice; the water, though, was one ice mound and I couldn't get very much water, but anyway, the oxen drank it up as fast as I could draw it. When they got too cold, they headed on the gallop for the stable. I followed up and tied them in their stalls. They knew enough to go to their respective stalls.

Then I took the cows down and went through the same performance, got them back in the barn, or stable, then the young stock. I think there were only three or four and they didn't drink much; then the horses. There were only a couple of teams, the most of our horses were running out.
Finally, I was through with everything but the pigs. I fed them their grain and carried some water from the house for them. Then I had to go up on top of the stable and shove oat straw down through a hole in the sod roof, then go down in the stable and fork it into the mangers for the animals to eat. It was blowing pretty hard, but no snow falling, though it was drifting badly. I really wasn’t so very cold. I had a pair of Dolger felt shoes on, a pair of buckskin mitts, with a pair of double knit woolen mitts underneath and a leather jacket.

George and Reuben did not come home that night; not until the next afternoon, about three o’clock. I did not try watering the stock again. The men had tried to make it home but they said they got so cold, though walking behind the load of wood, that they actually began to get stiff. They were coming up the old Hudson Bay trail and when they pulled into Jack Kilus’ place, a log house where Jack and his wife lived, they stayed all night. They got home the next afternoon about three. They said the stable at Jack’s was about as cold as outside, but the wind couldn’t bother the horses, poor beasts. Jack Kiln used to say his wife "wasn’t much for looks but she was good for ‘strong.’ " They were poverty poor. One day when Father was carrying the mail from Craven to Tregarva, he went in to Jack Kilus' to get warm and Mrs. Kilus had a dress made of coarse flour sacks. Father said across the rump of her dress were four big xxxx’s with the name "Hungarian Patent" printed in big red letters. That was the brand of the flour. The cheapest flour made.

I know it sounds incredible that I should say I did all this in the freezing cold weather, but it is absolutely true. Many women had it to do when their men were storm-stayed somewhere. That is the only time I watered all the stock. Poor beasts, they would suffer so without water. If they were running out and could find a straw stack to shelter them, they were all right, they would get some snow in the straw which would quench their thirst to some extent, but standing in the stables eating dry feed, they got no moisture at all. All our horses used to run out in the winter, except the teams we used for driving and hauling wood or grain. They would come in, in the spring of the year, rolling fat and with a coat inches long. No matter how deep the snow, they would paw right down to the grass; there would be acres of snow pawed not all in one place but in patches. People who never lived on the prairie will not believe it when you tell them how horses run out and live and grow fat in the winter. Some nights when it was bright moonlight, the coyotes would be on the rampage and start their weird howling, it would frighten the horses so badly, and they would all come on the gallop to the barns and sheds.

One thing I will say, if there should be only a few coyotes in a pack, when they start howling, they sound like there were a million.

I have known people who said the coyotes would follow them miles behind their sleigh in the wintertime. In fact, my Father and brother were coming home with a load of wood one cold moonlight night and several coyotes followed them for miles. They never did molest anyone and must have followed along out of curiosity. They were called prairie wolves, or coyotes, the "a" pronounced as "i."

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H D.B. Ketchen and his wife, who was the daughter of a cousin of my mother came out in the hunting season for a few days one year, when we were living at Uncle Tom's place; then, too, after we moved back to our own farm. He was a grand fellow. He afterwards went to South Africa in charge of a bunch in the Strathcona Horse. My brother Harry was in the group. That was in the South African War, the winter of 1899, the winter you, Huntley were born. I believe it was in the fall or winter. Lord Strathcona outfitted this group. I believe old Colonel Steel of the North West Mounted Police was in command. George, your father, went in to Regina to see Uncle Harry off. I, of course, with my three little children, had to stay home. But this was after we moved back to our own place, so maybe I am ahead of my story.

We must have lived on Uncle Tom's place until 1897. We moved back there in the spring of the year. When Eddie was born, on Uncle Tom's farm, our dog, Collie (a nickname for Colonel) was very jealous of him. For a long time, he used to often stay with me in the house when the men were away. After Eddie came, George brought him in and showed him the baby lying beside me in the bed. He took one long look at the baby, turned and went out and it was weeks before we could persuade him to come in the house.

When Eddie learned to creep, I had a hard time keeping him indoors. We had no screen door and at every opportunity he would get outside. Colonel had paid absolutely no attention to the baby, but I felt a little dubious about letting the baby go near him. Well, one day I had set a pan of milk out in the yard and gone about my work. All at once I missed my baby I ran outside. I had forgotten to close the door and Eddie had gotten out. To my surprise, here was the dog drinking milk out of the pan and Eddie was standing up by the dog, hanging on to the dog's hair and jigging up and down, laughing like everything'. From that time on, Colonel, this dog, was Eddie's constant companion.

It was during this time we were living on Uncle Tom's farm that Thornton Freethy came over to help while Reuben was away somewhere. I think Reuben (my brother) had gone over to work for Charlie Martin in Wascana. Thornton had a lot of trouble with his eyes. He had had some illness when a tiny baby that left him very nearsighted and there was other trouble too. He was a nice kid and brought his violin along with him. He could play beautifully. He was a brother to Lizzie Free of whom I have previously written.

After that winter, Thornton always came to our place for a visit; he would stay a week or two and I always enjoyed him so much. He went home one day in the bright sunshine shining on the snow and went totally blind. He always said, though, he would rather be blind than deaf or dumb. He knew what everything looked like; the shape and color of every leaf and flower, of birds and beasts. In fact, of everything known to the rest of us. He said he could hear music and the song of birds and he was content. He could knit socks as fast as
any woman. He would, in threshing time, go around from one grain bin to another in the
fields, pick up a handful of grain, talk about the sample and knew whether it was wheat,
oats or barley. He would tell how the mosquitoes would follow them in a cloud as they were
driving along the road to town. To hear him talk, one would never know he was totally blind.

I often wonder now, why, during his childhood years, his parents never took him to a good
eye specialist and had his eyes tested. Probably there was nothing could be done for him,
and then probably there were no good eye specialists to be found, and then, again, they
probably did not have the money to pay a specialist.

In the days when Thornton and I were young, people in moderate circumstances never did
pay much attention to the ailments of their children; or, in fact, to the ailments of
themselves. Oh, they weren’t cruel or hardhearted. I think they were fatalistic to a certain
extent; not that they would have considered themselves in that light. They were good to
their children and, in the majority of cases, good honest people. Of course, there were
exceptions.

There was a large family of the Freethys. They came from near Nottawasaga in Ontario, I
believe. The Crispin’s came from that vicinity too.

Something has just returned to my memory, which I’ll write about now before it slips my
memory altogether.

When we used to have our Literary Society and met each week in the early part of our life
after we were married, and which I should have recorded while writing about our good
times then, after our business part of the meeting was over, though we didn’t have much
business, and our weekly paper, "The Gopher" was read, and our editor for the following
week appointed, we sang songs, gave what we called recitations, had dialogues and
speeches and then danced old fashioned dances.

I do not believe Aunt Lizzie or Uncle Tom ever attended these social events. Aunt Lizzie had
too many little children to take along and out of loyalty to her, Uncle Tom stayed home.
Now, this part of my story took place before they rented the farm to us and before they
moved to Regina to live.

At these literary festivities, George was the favorite singer and the favorite song with the
crowd was "My Bonnie Black Bess." It had about fifteen or twenty verses to it. Nearly all
songs of that day were lengthy. It was about a highwayman, named Dick Turpin and his
beautiful horse (mare) Black Bess. I can’t remember much of it, but part of it ran like this:

"No vile whip or spurs didst thy side ever gall
For none did you need (drawn out like n-e-e-e-d)
You would come at my call."
Then, there must have been a posse after him because it went on:

"They never shall get you, my Bonnie Black Bess"

And finally he, Dick Turpin, must have been about to be captured, for he exclaims in this song,

“Oh, God, I have shot you, my Bonnie Black Bess."

The crowd would sit spellbound through the long song and at its finish there would be a great round of applause.

He liked to meet at Mr. Seed's house because there was an organ there and usually Joe Crispin, or Sadie Swartz, to accompany whoever was singing. Then, too, Isaac Sutton always had his guitar and Mr. Freethy his violin. Mr. Freethy was a wizard with his violin. When you'd hear him turning up his violin, it did something to your heart and feet. Of course, our dances were the old fashioned square dances mostly or the Virginia Reed and some schottisches. Favorite one was "The Spanish Cavalier." No one knew how to waltz correctly. We used to try it but, for the most part, it was a fizzle. I really don't know when or how it suddenly came to me, but it did. Then I was in demand. Lord knows, I used to practice the step and the time in our little shack when I would be left alone, which was plenty, goodness knows.

There was an Irishman who used to come frequently to our literary society affairs by the name of Jack Chambly; a queer little fellow, and every one would coax him to sing. He sang in a monotone all the way through his song. I think he knew only one song at that, "Nell Flaggerty's Beautiful Drake." I do not remember what all the "Beautiful Drake" was noted for, but someone evidently shot the poor thing. There were plenty of Irish cusses-not bad ones, but to the effect, "May this and that happen to the one who shot the poor thing," and it ended up, "For murdering Nell Flaggerty's Beautiful Drake." Jack would sing with the greatest gusto! Evidently this was a wonderful "drake." It was a long song and each verse ended with "Nell Flaggerty's Beautiful Drake."

Mr. Crispin, the father of the Crispin family, was a saintly old man. He always made me think of the description of Moses in the Bible. He had a long white wavy beard. It hung in waves way down on his chest. He was superintendent of our Sunday School; also taught the Bible class. One Sunday an argument arose over baptism.

Mr. Crispin was a staunch Baptist. Mr. Freethy was at that time, and I guess always, a Methodist. The subject of baptism came up, and Mr. Crispin being the Baptist declared one couldn't be fully baptized without being immersed. Mr. Freethy objected to that statement.
Mr. Crispin stuck to his guns. Mr. Crispin stuck to his guns. Mr. Freethy said if he, Mr. Crispin, wanted to believe that, fine, but he had no right to try to teach that to others. Mr. Crispin said Christ gave the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel." Mr. Freethy stood by his guns, too, and wouldn't have Mr. Crispin teach salvation only through immersion taught to his children or in the Sunday School. Mr. Crispin got up, took his hat and walked out. Left the Sunday School flat' His daughters followed him. One day, we went to visit the Browns. Mrs. Brown just had a new baby. It was on toward the spring of the year, because the roads were beginning to break up. The Browns lived in a sod house built in the side of a small hill. The snow had drifted around the house, and they had a walk dug out, just room for a person to walk through and about three feet high; on each side of the walk the snow was banked up. It had been thawing that day and the water from the melting snow had been running back into the house. Not so very much but enough to make the floor damp. If they didn't keep the snow shoveled off the roof, then when it melted, it would drip down through the roof. Mrs. Brown said in the summer time when it rained, the only dry spot she could put the children to sleep was under the table.

Mr. Brown liked his pipe and tobacco, when he had no tobacco, if there was any tea in the house, he would smoke that. Very seldom there was any tea. They lost one of their boys by drowning in the creek that ran from the springs which rose below the Freethys place and ran down through the Seed's farm and Uncle Tom's place and on down to the Qu'Appelle River. I believe they, the Brown children, and maybe some others, I don't know, were playing there. The creek or the water was not very high, but somehow one of the boys must have taken cramps; something happened, and he drowned. Some of the children got back to their home and notified the parents who came at once. No first aid was given, and Mrs. Brown held him in her arms all the way home, just like a baby. Mrs. Brown was a daughter of Mr. Crispin and a sister of Arnie and Tory Crispin. Joe, Dick and Will Crispin were brothers of the girls. There was another sister married to Mr. Blackstock.

They saw very hard times there in Tregarva. Mrs. Blackstock said she never ate so much boiled wheat in her life as she did after coming to Tregarva. To get the full effect of this word, "boiled," put your tongue flat in your mouth, make your mouth like a big round onion. Tory, whose full name was Victoria, was a very pretty girl. She and Annie were both lovely girls. Joe was a good looker too. He later became a veterinary, and very good too. Dick was rather a flighty boy. He claimed to be a detective; but I never heard of him detecting anyone or anything. Will was a big gangling fellow, but had a good kind heart. His wife's name was Clara. All the time she was carrying her first child, she used to sit in her rocking chair, holding a cat, face toward her, on her lap, looking into the cat's face. Her family said she marked her child and that when her baby was born, the baby looked like a cat!

Clara, the wife and mother used to tell some tall stories about her baby's accomplishments. One she used to tell, was how they wakened one morning. They had the baby sleeping in bed with them, and here the baby had her feet against "William's" back and was "shoving
him right out of bed." The baby was only about three weeks old at the time. One time she was telling me she didn’t care for "mood hens" William shot for food. She said she had cooked the "mood hen" (meaning mud hen) but it wasn't very good. I should say not. No other people ever ate a "mood hen" as she called them.

Joe Crispin married Sophia Adams, a girl from Ontario. Finally, old Mr. Crispin died and the family broke up. Annie had married Joe Freethy, Tory married Ralph Hardy, one of the Hardy’s who lived down the Valley. They moved to, or near Saskatoon. The Blackstocks also moved away. What became of Will Crispin and his family, I do not remember.

Maggie Petrie married Bob Cooper, who lived only half a mile from our place. Maud, her sister, died. Teena, another sister, married and went to Banff to live. George and I called on her when we were at Banff, taking Vinnie (Aunt lizzie's daughter) with us. When Aunt Lizzie found out where we went, she blew up. Teena was an aunt to Maggie Petrie's fatherless child. All this was later, after we moved back to our own place.
Chapter 18

The Picnic

We used to look forward for months to the arrival of the 24th of May; that was the big day for people from far and near. The big picnic day! Everyone with all their children came and enjoyed seeing each other. There was lunch served on a long table, under the trees; then after lunch nearly everyone went up the hill to the level ground and watched the foot and horse races. At one picnic Annie, my sister, Sadie Swartz, Eliza Boulding and I raced horses. Annie was a beautiful horsewoman. She had her own pony, Dick. I had Uncle Tom's old raw-boned horse. Sadie had her own little white pony. I don't know whose pony Eliza rode. Of course, Annie easily won. Sadie was so big and heavy on her little pony she couldn't make any headway. Eliza's saddle turned - they all were side saddles - and my horse was so rough to ride and was very ignorant; knew nothing about racing and the wind blew my dress and petticoats up over my knees, showing my white pants as I rode in last of all. All the women clicked their tongues when they saw my pants; the men laughed. I felt very embarrassed. When Eliza's saddle turned as she came in, she said, "Did you see my dexterity?" The men looked quite bashful. One old duffer said, 'Was that what it was." Oh, those were the days.

In the earlier days we used to picnic at Wascana - not the lake - but in the district. It was a beautiful spot, right near the Wascana River or Creek. On this occasion they would have the Mounted Police band out from the barracks to play for the day. What a thrill that was! And how our hearts used to go pit-a-pat when we saw the Mounted Police with their red coats, their dark blue trousers with the yellow stripes down the sides, their spurs clanking, clanking, clanking as they walked! Oh, My! Oh, my!

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21 McNeice picnic at Wascana.
Then on the twelfth of July there was a yearly picnic at Carssdale, the home of old Uncle Eddie, or Ed Carss. Salmon sandwiches and mock lemon pie and layer cakes were the special luxuries at these affairs. There was one family's baking everyone fought shy of; that was the Nevill's. Everyone thought they were not quite spotless in their cooking. One time we were at this picnic, our team broke loose from where they were tied and I guess went home, I do not remember. We had to send or have some one Stop at Lumsden and send a livery to take us home.

Mr. Carss was quite an interesting man. He had been with Uncle Tom and George in the Northwest Rebellion. Right here is as good a time to tell what he told me about their experiences in the Rebellion; not very much and not so much about while they were in the Rebellion, as what happened just before.
Chapter 19

Indian Country

The Indians were up in arms, under Louis Riel, as I have already written about. There was a flood in the Qu'Appelle Valley that spring. Mr. Carss lived in this valley. He called his place Carssdale and he had settled there a year or two before the Rebellion. Well, a great crowd of Indians came from the north and at almost dark and camped on the north bank of the Valley; the valley was filled with floodwaters from bank to bank, clear to the top of the hills. The Indians had not anticipated this, so camped on the north plain just at the top of the valley hills. Mr. Carss waited until dark, then sent a rider in to the barracks at Regina, where the Mounted Police were stationed - for help. There were no telephones through the country districts then anywhere. That was in the spring of 1885. Mr. Carss was afraid the Indians would cross the floodwaters in the night and attack them there on the farm and they would be utterly helpless. However, when morning came and brought daylight, the Indians were gone. Mr. Carss said he believed the Indians had found out a rider had been sent for help to the Mounted Police and had taken to the wind.

This was the time Uncle Tom, George, whom I afterward married, and who, when he enlisted in the transport was only seventeen years of age. Too bad no one ever kept a record of their experiences during the time they were engaged in the transport. There were quite a number in this group, I know. Mr. Condie, Ed Cooney and I am not sure about Tom and Ben Coonie. There were Arthur and Willie Jamieson, Ed Carss, the two McNeice boys, the two Brodie boys and many others.

The Rebellion\textsuperscript{22} did not last very many months. Riel was captured and hanged in Regina. The Indians, of course, were conquered and perfectly quiet. They occasionally had their sun dances when they made their braves. This, so I have been told, the candidates had two holes cut in their chests or breasts, a thong run under the skin or flesh, brought up and fastened by strings or straps of leather which were fastened to some contraption above the candidate. Then while the Indians beat their tom-toms and swarms of Indians and squaws danced and sang to the weird music of the tom-toms, the candidate was compelled to dance until the thong, which was run

\textsuperscript{22} Louis Riel was tried in Regina’s first courthouse, above.
through the flesh on their breasts, pulled through or out. If they stood the ordeal without a moan or sign of suffering, the Indian was pronounced a brave. If he showed any sign of suffering during the ordeal, he was pronounced a squaw-man and had to spend his life as such among the women of his tribe, and even there he was looked down upon as long as he lived.

There are many interesting things to be told about the Indians. While I am on the subject, I shall write of a few with whom I had personal acquaintance. One time when I was fourteen, I was visiting my sister, Ada, who was married to Fred Cochrane. One bright, sunny, cold day in the winter a band of some half dozen young Indians came riding along. They came in to the house to get warm. They just walked in, without knocking, as Indians always did. We gave them something to eat, which was customary, and they were very grateful for the food and warmth. Uncle Fred could speak quite a bit of their language, and he began joking with them. White Sky was among the band; he was a fine looking young brave.

Uncle Fred asked White Sky how he would like me for his squaw; the usual questions were, "How many ponies for this squaw?" White Sky saw the joke. Uncle Fred eulogized on my good points, the main one being my red hair, which was hanging down my back and which White Sky pronounced, "Good, good." He replied laughingly to Fred, "Many, many ponies." However, the deal was not closed. White Sky knew it was a joke; so did I.

Then, one time shortly before I was married, an old Indian came in to get warm and, of course, he was "buck-a-tee" which meant hungry, and he asked for tea, which all the Indians loved. We gave him something to eat and a cup of tea. Mother was sewing on her sewing machine, and the old Indian was thrilled with the work and the way the sewing machine operated. It must have been the first time he saw a sewing machine, and no doubt he had plenty to relate to his friends when he got back home to his camp.

Long after this, I was laid up with an injured knee. An old Indian woman came into the house and hurried to my bed and, between what little of their language I knew, and the motions she made with her hands, that someone she knew had a sore leg. They killed an animal, scraped the skin, and bound the scrapings around their sore leg, and then they got better and could walk,

I expect George, my husband, had been telling them about his squaw had a sore leg and couldn't walk; so she thought she would come to see me and tell me what would cure me. George used to trade horses a lot with the Indians. He knew so many of them in that way. They were his friends and I was told that when he was buried that many of them came to his funeral and that a number came to the church for the service in the Methodist Church in Lumsden.²³

²³ A picture of the Methodist church in Lumsden.
One bitter cold day in Lumsden, an old Indian and his squaw came in to the house to get warm. I had been rendering some lard, and the bits of fat lard that I had discarded were in a pan on the back of the stove. They immediately fell on it and ate it up. The old Indian had a bad cough. He had a fairly good overcoat on, but the poor old squaw had only an old cotton blanket to keep her warm. They had come with a load of wood all the way from the Pave-pot Reserve (25 miles). They would sell this load of wood for five dollars to someone in town, probably one of the storekeepers in town. Then they would buy a few groceries and drive back to their reservation, a distance of twenty-five miles or more from Lumsden. It is said if once you befriend an Indian, he is always your friend, but if you cheat them or ill-use them, they never forget or forgive. Years before, after we sold our farm and were living in Lumsden, a friend, Mrs. Bond, came to visit us. She came from Sudbury, Ont. We, George and I, drove over with her to the Pave-pot Reserve to let her see how the Western Indians lived.

They all were living in tents. Some of these tents were so nice and clean and tidy. Many of the young people had attended the Indian School at Regina and had been taught the white woman's way of keeping house. They evidently profited by their training; others back to their old way of living.

While we were wandering around, going from tent to tent, having a word with one and another of the Indians and squaws, we noticed an old squaw, by appearance, standing in the doorway of one of the tents, her hand shading her eyes. We stopped and talked to her. She spoke very good English and told us her very pathetic story.

She was born in Oregon, U.S.A., and had gone to school there. When she was quite young, she married a young Englishman by the name of Young. They had a little girl whom they named Helen. Shortly after Helen was born, Mr. Young left there, leaving his wife and little girl behind, promising to return for them. He never returned. She had a letter from him only once. This letter she kept at the bottom of a big bag, a grain bag, way down under all her handwork in a little tin box. On top of the box she kept all her beaded work and what few treasures she owned. She brought the letter out and had me read it. It was written on a sheet of hotel paper, a Winnipeg Hotel, written in the handwriting of an educated man and expressed love for his wife and little daughter, Helen, and stated he was trying to find work and make a home for her and their little one.

I asked her if she still thought he would return. She said, "Uh, yes, he will come back. My husband, he do no wrong." What faith and trust! She called to little Helen. She was very proud of her little girl. We praised the child, who really was a pretty little thing, but like all Indian children, very shy. We never saw Mrs. Young again, but as Helen grew up, she would come up to Lumsden with others from the reserve, she would come to see me and would do some work for me.

She scrubbed my floors several times and I paid her for her work. One day I asked her if she would come and stay with us and help me with my work and I would pay her and teach her
to speak English. She refused, saying she wanted to stay with her people. Her mother had died, still firm in her belief that her husband would return and take care of their little girl. But we knew better. Many white men were guilty of the same dastardly trick as her husband. She may not have been legally married to her adored husband.

We heard through some of the Indians with whom George, my husband, had dealings that Helen had a baby to one of the young Indians. Now, the Indians looked down very much on Helen for this, but seemed to think it no offense on the part of the father of her child. I think nearly all in their camp looked down on Helen after she got in this trouble.

We went down to their Reserve one day and I asked for Helen. She came reluctantly. Her face colored up when she saw me. She felt very much ashamed. I asked her if I might see her baby. I do not remember whether it was a boy or girl, but it was a lovely baby, about ten months old. Poor Helen, I think of her many times and can't help wondering if God has ever punished her guilty father for the sorrow he caused her mother who loved and trusted him so implicitly, or he ever gave her a thought. I never saw Helen again.

Then, there was a lot of trouble with an Indian, or Breed, called "Almighty Voice." I have forgotten what crime he had committed. He evidently had been arrested but had escaped from jail or prison. A cordon of Mounted Police was detached to bring him in, dead or alive. They searched for him for several days but he was always beyond their grasp. Finally, they got word somewhere that he was seen entering a bluff and believed to be hiding there.

The police surrounded the bluff, demanding and calling to him to come out and give himself up; but he didn't appear. They fired several shots in the hope that he would surrender. I believe they kept their watch all one night and to no avail.

Almighty Voice was reported to be heavily armed and a dangerous man. However, when daylight came, the Mounted Police who were after him decided to rush the bluff, half expecting to find him dead. They rushed the bluff and to their consternation, found he was not there! He again had escaped them sometime in the night. He was captured shortly afterward. I remember one of the Regina papers had quite a write-up about the bravery and heroism of the Mounted Police; how they had kept their watch all night and how courageous they were to rush the bluff, believing Almighty Voice to be there. And how the fact that he was not there did not detract from their heroic attempt to arrest him or capture him. Funny, I cannot recall what crime he had committed or where or how he was captured; but "the Mounties always got their man."

One springtime while we were on uncle Tom’s farm, I was cooking dinner when all at once the room seemed to grow suddenly dark. There were only two medium sized windows in the room, one north and one south. All at once the south window darkened. I looked up and here was the form of a big man squatted outside trying to see into the house. There still was some frost on the windowpane, and he couldn't see very well into the house. Then he got up and the next thing I knew, in walked a big Indian and his squaw! They saw me frying eggs and said, "Good, good, Indian Country wa! wa!" Wa-wa was their word for eggs. George
invited them to sit at the table and eat with us, but no, they squatted on the floor and I fed them wa-was to their heart’s content. When the plate of eggs got down to one, she would shove the plate with the one remaining egg over to him, he would shove it back to her, and so on, until she finally persuaded him to eat it.

After dinner, George had quite a talk with him, or rather with them. The squaw hadn’t much to say, but took his wild tale in for Gospel; swallowed it hook, line and sinker. They both did. The squaw shaking, or rather wagging her head from side to side and clicking her tongue. The old Indian giving mumbled grunts every once in a while.

George had the marks of a gunshot on his left arm, right from his wrist to above his elbow. He got this shot wound one time he and Tom had been bringing in a load of hay and George had his loaded gun along. When they came home, he proceeded to get down off the load, and as he did so, he took the gun by the muzzle and pulled it towards him. It went off and the shot skidded with full force up his arm. It certainly left a bad scar and he never did get all the buckshot out. He showed this scar to the old Indian and his squaw and went to great lengths to make it very clear that it was a wound he received during the Rebellion. They expressed great sorrow. He was quite a yarner; had a great gift in that direction.

After Uncle Tom had lived in Regina for a couple of years, they moved to Lumsden and opened up a store there. He and John Dawson. They had a general store, kept a bit of everything and, among their supplies, plenty of flavorings for cakes and so forth.

Now, it was against the law to sell liquor or alcohol to Indians. One noon, however, when the men had gone to lunch, Edna Stewart was looking after the store. She was quite a young girl and evidently did not know these flavorings contained alcohol. A bunch of Indians, who were camped nearby, came in the store and asked for these flavorings. Innocent Edna sold them every bottle of flavorings in the store. The Indians were jubilant! They took their departure and, when Tom and Nelson Burrows returned from lunch, Edna proudly reported her big sale. The men were horrified! If the authorities found out, or if the Indians got noisy and created any disturbance, it might go hard with Tom or Nelson. However, no harm came of it. A bunch of us went over to where they had been camped and was that ground where their tents had been staked ever covered with empty flavoring bottles. Many more than they had bought from Edna. They must have made a cache somewhere else.

Deadbody was the chief at Paye-pot. It was said he was the only chief who remained loyal during the Rebellion but he was deemed an old reprobate just the same. People said he would steal every chance he got; something unusual for an Indian to do. But no doubt there are bad Indians as well as good Indians.

Mother, my brother Reuben and I went to visit old Deadbody and his family when they were camped near where we were living. Mother took some cookies along for their papooses.
They were cute little things, shy as rabbits, black-eyed and really pretty.

Old Deadbody and his squaws were seated on the floor in the tent, their papooses hiding behind their mothers. Deadbody had, I think, three squaws. We only stayed a few minutes. Mother persuaded the papooses to take the cookies she brought and we left.

After we went to Lumsden to live, our dog, lion, could detect an Indian's footsteps a block away, and would he bark at them. Usually, they would cross to the other side of the street to avoid passing where the dog was. This dog didn't stay with us very long in Lumsden. He left of his own accord and went to live with the Shelton's, who had a little girl named Bessie.

Previous to this, Uncle Joe had this dog for a while; he lived down in a little valley north of our farm and at the time had a man and his wife working for him. They had a little child about a year and a half old. One day, the child was lost. They searched for a long time for the baby before they found him, and when they did find him, here was the 'ol dog stretched out full length on the ground wide awake, and the baby lying fast asleep with his dear little head resting on the dog's side. He was a wonderful dog. Part Newfoundland, part collie. He came to our place as a stray when Irma was a baby. He was very fond of Irma, but as she grew to be a bit bigger, around school age, he grew lonesome for a tiny child and left us, and made Shelton's place his home.

One more thing in which the Indians figure has come to my mind, so I'll make note of it here in writing about the old Indian and his wife who came to town with their load of wood and came in to our house to get warm. As I said before, the old squaw had only a thin old cotton blanket around her to keep the cold out while the old Indian had a big overcoat. At that, I do not suppose he was very warm either. He had a bad cough.

I felt sorry for the old squaw and brought a fur neckpiece that I had had for years but was still real good, and put it around the old squaw's neck. She immediately took it off, saying, "No, no, him," and put it around the Indian's neck. She kept saying, "Him, bad cough," pointing to his chest, "and me warm, me good." Such pure unselfishness! Just as the two who were eating eggs at our place, each trying to have the other one have the last egg. I have seen many white husbands eat the last egg or piece of meat without their wife having a ghost of a chance to indulge in the tasty morsel.

Evidently love reigns in the hearts of Indians just as it does in the hearts of white people.

One Christmas Eve, while I was busy with my Christmas preparations in the kitchen, a big Indian came in, and as usual, was hungry. I gave him something to eat, which he enjoyed. He went out and presently another Indian came in. He, too, was hungry; so I fed him. He went out, and another Indian came in; and he, too, was hungry. This went on until I had fed six Indians.

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24 Uncle Joe is Joseph McNeice, George's younger brother.
The last one could speak English fairly well so I asked him, "How come, so many coming in one after another?" He replied, 'Well, one Indian comes in, and he gets something to eat, and gets warm, he goes out and tells another 'Good squaw in there' so another comes in. You feed us all." Then he informed me that three fourths of the Indians on the reserve were Christians. They are a very picturesque figure when dressed in their colorful blankets, beaded moccasins and their feathered headdress, but the majority of them in Saskatchewan wore someone's old discarded suits.

In the early days, after we first moved to the prairies to live, almost all wore blankets and they used to gather buffalo bones by the cartload and haul them to Regina and sell them to some company which then would ship the bones to a sugar refinery somewhere in the southern States. The bones were used to clear and refine sugar.

When we first moved to the prairies, these buffalo bones lay in profusion over the prairie. I once heard an old man say that around Lethbridge and Medicine Hat, when he first went there, one could walk over an acre in many places and never step off buffalo bones. Hunters, he said, came from the States by the hundreds and shot buffalo just for their hides and, maybe if they were hungry, they would cut a steak from the buffalo rump and leave the rest to rot. They killed them by the hundreds; more for the sport of killing than anything else.

One could see dozens and dozens of "buffalo wallows;' places where the old daddy buffalo had pawed up large places in the sod when they were in a fighting mood. The hills along the valleys showed worn trails tiered around the hills, where they walked one after another. These memos are nearly gone now.

When we were over at the Reservation one time wandering around, seeing what we could see, we ran across a young Indian woman, wheeling her baby in a little crude wagon made out of a soapbox. The baby was drinking sour, curdled milk out of a dirty bottle with a long rubber tube and dirty nipple. The child seemed perfectly well and happy. She ran across us, rather than we rail across her. Huntley, my third boy, was only a few months old and we had him in a hammock, swinging between two small trees. The Indian woman stopped and looked at my baby; guess she thought he didn't measure up to her standard of a baby. I said to her in a joke, "Trade babies," explaining by motions as well as words what I meant. "No," she said, my baby will make his own living. Your baby too pale face." Evidently her opinion of a white man's ability to provide for his daily needs was very low.

Our next door neighbors in Lumsden criticized us very much for allowing Indians in our house; but I will truthfully say in many respects the Indians we knew were superior to the neighbors who criticized us. Of course, they were not educated in the ways of society; but they were honest and hurt no one.

It always seems sad to me to think how the white man took their country, put them on reservations, dealt unfairly with them in many, ways, and have done so little to raise their standard of living. Many say, "Oh, you can't do anything to elevate an Indian. They just want
to go back to their wild life." I say, not always; some do, but many do not. Anyway, we white people have done very little to help them.

Traders in the early days cheated them in many ways. The Indian is very fond of bright, pretty things, such as beads, pretty buttons and trinkets of almost any description. These, the traders would pawn off on the poor Indians for hides, furs and beautiful handiwork done by the Indian women. Often, too, taken in marriage for their own convenience. Young Indian girls rearing or bringing into the world children. Then when the white man grew tired of his family, just moving on and leaving his wife and children to tend for themselves, probably forgetting all about them. I wonder, did they always forget the wrong they had done? It seems to me, there must have been moments when their conscience bothered them.

The Indian ages very quickly; their women work hard, gathering and cutting all the necessary firewood. Cleaning and cooking all the animals their men bring home. Taking care of the children; making all the clothes worn by the whole family, and, in fact, doing all the menial work to be done. If I remember correctly, the Indians we knew belonged to the Sioux or Cree tribes.

I once heard a Dr. McClain (or McCloud) who was a missionary among the Blood and Blackfoot Indians in British Columbia give a talk on their life, habits and their religious rites. He said these tribes were warlike and fierce, but that when he went among them, they already had a play similar in every way to our Passion Play, although no missionary that he had heard of had ever worked among them before. He was informed the Indians had had this play and enacted it in full detail years before the white man had come among them. I do not know or remember whether they enacted the actual crucifixion or not, but I wouldn't be surprised if they did. They are a very stoic race, and bear their pain and suffering with great fortitude.
Chapter 20

Ain’t Love Grand

We must have moved back to our own homestead in the spring of 1897 or maybe 1896. Reuben helped us move and George came home and I rather think must have stayed home then. The snow was going, and everything slushy. George took my brother, William, baby Eddie and me over in the afternoon, on towards evening. He and Reuben stayed at Uncle Tom’s place for the night and brought the furniture, what little we had, and our cow and the oxen; in fact, all our possessions over in the morning.

What a night we put in! William and I fortunately. Eddie was too small to be troubled about things. The shack had been vacant so long it was full of mice - and I do mean full! William caught eleven of them by the tail and whacked them bang on the floor, killing them dead! The shack was lined with building paper tack ed on the studding and the pesky things had eaten holes galore in the paper. They would run up the paper on the inner side, poke their noses out the holes and watch us.

That night we slept on the floor. William had his own bedding and we each spread a few blankets on the floor for a bed or bunk. I think I had a straw tick. I kept a lamp burning all night beside my bed, thinking the mice wouldn’t bother me when I had the light, but I had an awful time. They kept running over the bed all night. What a night!

I can’t remember what we had to eat that night, or the next morning, but one meal will always be fresh in my memory and should have mentioned long before this. It was the first meal we had in our own home after we were married in 1892. We had left Craven, where we were married in the afternoon, and come as far as Uncle Tom’s and stayed there overnight, leaving there in the next afternoon when we went to our new (old) home. George took a team of Uncle Tom’s horses and his bobsleigh without the sleigh box. Folded one bob up on the other, and there we sat. Why we didn’t take our own cutter from there, I do not know, but we didn’t.

All the provisions George had in the shack to eat was a piece - a slab - of old salt pork and a jar of what once had been syrup, made from white sugar and water, which had crystallized, and which, in the summer time, the ants had taken possession of. They had either eaten too much for their own good, or died a sweet death just from sheer happiness. There they were, stretched out in all their beauty. Oh, I think we had a loaf of bread and a little pat of butter,
which Aunt Lizzie donated us. Then we got fairly well ensconced in our 14x16 shack. George made a cupboard out of a packing box, in which I put my set of dishes which Aunt Lizzie, Aunt Amy and Uncle Joe gave me for a wedding present. I had several other pieces of china and glassware. There was a nice lamp which Uncle Tom gave me, and which aunt Lizzie rather objected to his doing, as she said he told her she spent more than she should on the dishes, more than either Uncle Joe and Aunt Amy. Anyway, I had the lamp. Someone else gave us a lamp too I do not remember who.

Moses and Cecil Seed gave me a jewel case. James Seed gave me a silver napkin ring. Miss Swanson, Mrs. Hoskins’ sister, gave me the egg cruet, which I have given Noreen. The Swartz gave me a lovely Marcellais bedspread, the one I related which I hung out in the frosty air and which cracked in the wind, one half blowing away never to be found. Mother and Father gave me the bedroom set. Eliza Boulding gave me a little tray with vinegar pitchers and pepper and salt shakers. There were several other gifts but I have forgotten them, or who gave them.

We had an old wood stove in one corner, with cracked lids. George afterwards riveted the lids, a couple of kitchen chairs, and one little rocking chair, which made up our furniture effects. We had the stove in one corner, cupboard in another, bed in another corner, dresser in another and table between dresser and stove. George claimed the rocking chair, so I had to sit on a straight back chair. "Ain’t love grand!" This was love on the prairie and a wonderful honeymoon, eh?

One day the preacher came to call and, as usual, had a word of prayer - that was the custom. We were down on our knees, he was praying away and I peeked with one eye and saw a bedbug running around on his coat collar. I watched the thing guardedly and saw it crawl down inside his collar. Then I closed my eyes.

All this from the beginning of another part of this recounting should have been written in the part which happened before we moved to Uncle Tom’s place, but as so many times I have said, things keep coming back to my memory as I write. The very next day after we arrived at the shack (for our honeymoon) George saddled Silver, my pony, and rode away over to Tom’s, leaving me alone with the salt pork and the crystalized syrup. Alone until nearly midnight (Again, ain’t love grand.)

Well, the Purdy’s moved away from Tregarva, but before they left there, in fact before Uncle Tom moved to Regina, Uncle Tom and Mr. Purdy had some trouble. Mr. Purdy never liked Uncle Tom and they had some dispute. I really do not know exactly what, but Mr. Purdy had a frog pond right alongside of the road where many people had to pass, and a good many people objected to it, but whether that was what started this disturbance or not, I can’t say.
But, anyway, Mr. Purdy started telling or writing ungentlemanly letters to the Regina Standard, mentioning Tom's name (Uncle Tom). He continued doing this for some time. In one letter, he said McNeice was jealous of his frog pond, so Tom wrote a letter to the paper and in the letter said, "Why should I be jealous of his stagnant frog pond when I have a half-mile of fresh spring water meandering through my land." There were no more letters from Mr. Purdy.

Mrs. Purdy was a lovely woman. They had two daughters and one son. Annie, the oldest girl, married Mr. Roberts, a Methodist minister. They had several boys. Just before the last boy was born, Annie contracted pneumonia and, I believe she died in childbirth. They were living in British Columbia. Mr. Roberts was stationed there. Annie had been home on a visit to her people with her three boys and when going home she caught cold. I believe the last child was a boy too.

Maud married out in British Columbia but her husband died out there. Then she came home, lived with her parents for some few years and then married Mr. Caster. Maud had a good voice for singing and was quite in demand. Maud died, leaving a little girl named Ruth. Their son (Purdy's son) was quite a goof. As time went on we prospered, though we had losses too.

The first summer we were back on our own place we built a big room to the front of our shack, a room twenty by sixteen, with an upstairs. This was the stairway where George put the piece of raw meat on one of the steps to keep Eddie from going up.

Eddie was two years old the summer we built this addition to the house and what a time I had keeping him away from where the men were working. They were so afraid of him getting hurt.

George had been doing some plowing that spring and every little while I'd miss Eddie; would look up the field where George was working and there would see him, in his little pink sunbonnet, travelling along in the furrow behind the plow. I would have to run like the wind to get him before George would turn the horses around for the little fellow might get under the plow.

There was a creek a short way from the house running through our pasture. Eddie persisted in trying to get down to the water. One day he started down, laughing as he ran. I ran after him, caught him and held him over the water, shaking him. He really was frightened and never offered to even try to go down there again. He was such a lovely little boy.

When Eddie was two years old, I took the measles and was very sick.

George went for Mother. I had been delirious for two days. Mother came. That was the first time she had been in my house. Why, I couldn't say. She stayed until I was up, then never came back for a long time. Then I wasn't much more than out of bed when Eddie came
down with the measles. He, too, was very sick It was the real old fashioned measles and it surely left us both very weak.

Eddie did not recuperate as quickly as I. He had no appetite, and we were worried about him. Then, one evening when we were having supper, my brother Reuben dropped in. He was very fond of Eddie and Eddie of him. Eddie always called him 'Wogee" Eddie gave a great sigh when he saw Reuben. Reuben took him on his knee and talked to him, and from that moment, he commended to improve. In November of that year, Uncle Tom, Aunt Lizzie and their four children came up one Sunday from Lumsden to see our new house. That was the last time I saw Uncle Tom.

I was expecting another baby in December or early January and didn't go out at all. The weather was cold and travelling none too easy.

Tom took appendicitis and died the 23rd of December. He had a ruptured appendix. He took sick one afternoon in the store. They had moved from Regina, built a new home in Lumsden and opened a general store in the town. They sent for George about one o'clock at night. Chris Scott and someone else came up for him. He wanted to go right away but I was so nervous and so near my time and so afraid to be left alone, with only the hired man, I insisted George go over to McFadden's and bring Mrs. McFadden over to stay with me, which he did. She stayed for a couple of days and I sent the hired man for George. Tom was buried on the day after Christmas. He died the 23rd of December. George went back to Lumsden to help settle up his brother's affairs and I was left alone with the hired man.

George came home Sunday afternoon, and was going back Monday morning, but my baby, dear little Tom, came that Sunday evening. George sent for Mrs. Louis Kiel, who was a midwife. She delivered the baby and stayed with me ten days. That was the length of time women were kept in bed after giving birth to a baby in those days. All sorts of dire things were supposed to happen a woman if she got up any sooner.

George came home the following Sunday and, as Mrs. Kiel would be going home in a few days, he went for Aunt Alma, who was keeping house for her brother, 'Uncle Isaac.

On the ninth day, I became very ill; chills and fever. Alma became alarmed and sent the hired man to Lumsden for George, who came home at midnight. I then had to stay in bed for several days longer. Tommy was a dear roolly- baby. I then had two boys to care for.

George stayed away all that winter, except he would come home on Sunday, back again Monday morning. When Tommy was six weeks old, he brought Lizzie and her children up for the day. She had five children -- Edna 9, Vinnie a year and a half younger, then Joe, another year and a half younger than Vinnie, Johnny, or Jack, a little younger and Stella, thirteen months younger than Johnny. It was too bad Uncle Tom had to go. He was needed so. He took sick one afternoon while in the store. Lizzie had taken the children and gone for a visit to the Dixons. Mr. Dixon had driven down from the farm to take Lizzie and the children to
their place for the day. When they returned at night, they found Tom very ill. They sent for a doctor to Regina, but by the time the doctor arrived, Tom was gone. The doctor said no one could have saved him; that if they had tried to operate, Tom would have died on the table. It was very sad. Lizzie was left with those five little children. Her father and mother came, and all was forgiven. Tom is buried in Lumsden cemetery up on the hill, north of the town of Lumsden. Then, shortly after Tom’s death. Little Stella took sick and died.

A lot of things could be written about that winter, but better left unwritten. Let us just say I got better in spite of it all; my baby, Tom, grew like a little hero.

Uncle Oliver, who was Uncle Isaac’s brother and lived not far from us, used to come over often and visit us. He would bring his gram-a-phone and records over and play them all for us. He would stay for midday dinner, usually going home before dark.

Oliver had a big black stallion, which was the terror of the neighbors. He let it run at large and it used to chase people who were driving along the road. One day, someone shot his stallion. Oliver blamed Mr. Joe Wylie and had a warrant issued for him. Mr. Wylie was summoned to stand trial in Lumsden. The trial was held there but he was acquitted. Uncle Ed Carss acted as Judge. This was the Mr. Carss who told me about the Indians camping on the north side of the valley when the Indians under Louis Ref arose in rebellion.

Mrs. Wylie was quite a character. She wore a false bang, evidently made of her hair when she was much younger. It was sandy color and her hair was quite gray and very thin. She was a good cook, but no better than she thought she was.

If one went to her place; she would always say! “You should have come yesterday, I had roast chicken,” and she would enumerate a dozen other delicacies, which existed only in her imagination. One Sunday morning Aunt Maggie26 and I drove over just to say hello. Mrs. Wylie had made some Jelly and, as was her custom, she brought out a little bit of jelly in a tiny dish and a spoon for us to sample her jelly. Maggie took a little and handed it to me. I finished it. When we drove away Maggie started to laugh. I asked what was so funny. Maggie said, "Why, you ate all Mrs. Wylie’s jelly sample; she intended that sample to do this whole neighbourhood." I replied. "Too bad; that will teach her a lesson. Many times we have had a good laugh over Mrs. Wylie’s jelly sample.

We had a beautiful pair of black Russian wolf hounds, Nero and Caesar. The men used to take them out in the winter to hunt prairie wolves, or coyotes, so one day on towards spring, George said to me, "Bundle the children up, we are going wolf hunting, and we will stop at Wylie’s and have a visit there." We did, and it was around noon when we got to Wylie’s and, of course, Mrs. Wylie insisted on us staying for lunch (which we intended doing anyway when we left home!). Well, while we were eating lunch, the wolf hounds got into

26Likely Maggie Tegart, Minnie’s sister.
the wood shed and ate Mrs. Wylie's soft soap which she had made and which was in a pan on the floor! Mrs. Wylie said, very graciously, "I don't mind them eating the soap, but I am afraid of what it will do to the dogs!" Very likely, huh?

When Tommy was one year and eleven months, Huntley was born. He was a great big baby and we loved him very much. Mrs. Petrie said when she heard we had another baby, "Now Minnie will have to put her curls away." Well, that was over forty-eight years ago and I haven't put "my curls" away yet! I will be seventy-four years of age on March 20th, 1948. So Mrs. Petrie missed her guess.

During those years, things went along as usual on the farm. Seed time and harvests, bread, butter churning, setting hens, looking after chickens, knitting socks and mitts for the men, long stockings for the children, making their clothes; making buckskin mitts for George to wear over his double woolen mitts.

Piecing quilts and making the quilts, making rugs, sewing carpet rags - made enough for a rag carpet to cover the sixteen by twenty floor. Often sitting up nights as well as all day, taking care of the children when they were ill.

The winters were so terribly cold the children couldn't play outside but a few minutes at a time. By the time I'd get the last one bundled up to go out, the first one would be in with his feet and hands so cold he couldn't stay out. One couldn't hang their washings out for months in the winter. I would have to put lines up in the house at nights after all the rest were in bed; they would be dry in the morning.

One winter I never saw another woman for three months and, in all that time was compelled to stay in the house on account of blizzards and cold weather. That particular winter when it was so cold, Uncle Oliver really saved me from the blues. He brought over a whole set of Dickens novels for me to read. Often at night, after getting the children to bed, I would read for two to three hours. What a blessing it was to have those books to read!

People said the snow was five feet deep on the level that winter. I do not doubt it. I remember, looking out over the prairie, the snow lay in great waves resembling an ocean billowing in a great wind.

More winters than one we had blizzards so severe the men wouldn't venture to the barn to feed the stock for two days. One couldn't see a foot in front of him. We usually got a supply of stove wood on hand piled up where we wouldn't need to go outside for it, and about all the men would do was sit and play cards. The children would play around and I would knit, sew and cook, get meals and wash dishes. When the storm broke, the men got busy outside,

27 Charles Dickens
I would bundle the children up and let them play outside for a few minutes while I went on with the usual household work. They were long monotonous winters, those winters on the prairie, but somehow they passed, as all winters do. Then, in the spring, when the snow began to thaw and the days grew warmer, what a joy it was, as soon as the grass was visible to go walking and pick the prairie crocuses. The crocus actually would actually be blooming before the snow would all be gone.

Then in May the summer school would open. It was about three miles from where we lived. It closed in November each year. One day, just after the men had gone out to the harvest fields, after lunch I heard a peculiar noise, looked around and here were flames going up the wall of the summer kitchen!

Fortunately, I had four buckets of water, which the men had brought in from the pump and I drenched the wall, or fire, with water and put the fire out.

A moment or so later, I went out for an armful of wood, which was at the back of the summer kitchen, and here there was the end of a sill ready to burst into flames. There was no foundation under the old kitchen. It was an old shack, just sitting on some rocks and someone had stuck pieces of old broken window glass, several pieces, one on top of another, some of them crisscross, and the rays from the hot sun, striking through the glass, had started the fire; the fire evidently took the path of least resistance and first went up the wall inside, as there was only siding on the kitchen and building paper on the inside. I wasn't long getting the fire out, but it was a near tragedy.

The ground used to form hummocks badly; in fact, the hummocks were always there. Cracks surrounded these hummocks, sometimes quite wide and deep. These hummocks were found only on the heavy soil. There were quite a few back of our house and some big cracks. In the spring, when the ground was soaked with the water from the snow, the cracks were not so noticeable, but as the ground dried, and the weather became hot, these cracks would expand.

One day, I could hear a chicken peeping, peeping constantly at the back of the house, and finally went to investigate and here, a half grown chicken had fallen into one of these cracks and couldn't get out. I found a narrow strip of board, shoved it down the crack and lifted the chicken up to safety.

One of our neighbors, Mr. MacKay, owned a billy goat. The thing liked to come over to our place for some reason. He used to put us all to flight, all except the men. One morning he came over and chased Tommy and Huntley up a ladder (it did not attempt to climb the ladder) and they sought refuge in a bin of wheat. They must have stood on a crosspiece to which the boards were nailed on the inside of the bin; otherwise they might have sunk down in the wheat. They stood there looking down at the old billy goat stomping his feet - stomp, stomp, stomping on the ground. Poor little kids! They looked so pitiful up there, nothing to be seen of
them but their heads sticking over the wall of the bin, consternation showing on their faces.

Then, another time, the old goat gave me a run for my life. I had occasion to take a trip to "ye little old backhouse" -a two-holer -- which stood a short distance from the house. I must have momentarily forgotten the billy goat. I just got nicely on my way, when I heard a fearful sound behind me, and realizing it was my friend (?) the billy goat, I lifted up my heels and made for "little house." I managed to get inside and slam the door shut just in time. The goat stood there stomping his feet on the ground, waiting, I suppose, for me to come out, so he could again put me to flight. He kept me there for quite some time; then decided I was either not coming out, or had gone down the hole, and went away, but not far enough. I peeked through a crack and could see no sign of him, so cautiously ventured out, but, alas’ the billy goat spied me. Did I take seven-league steps for the house? He followed me right into the kitchen, but I made it into the dining room and got the door shut just in time. The old beast stood there by the door for ever so long, stomping up and down at the door. When the men came in for dinner, the hired man took the billy goat by the horns and dragged him home to MacKay’s. Shortly after that episode, the goat disappeared. MacKay’s said the coyotes got him, but George said he bet they ate him. Anyway, that was the last we saw of the billy goat.

One thing that I forgot to relate long ago and which should have been told about after, or no, it was before we moved over to Uncle Tom’s place and happened the first summer we were married. It has just occurred to me now, so I had better set it down right now. George had been away for a day or two, and I had run out of oil for my lamps. I did not expect him for another day or two at least and, fortunately, he didn’t come home. I knew the Moorehouses had gone away in the morning and had not returned, so I took a bottle and went over to their place, found their kerosene can, took some and started back to my shack. I got about half way home, when I heard a wagon in the not-too-far distance. It was quite dark by this time and I knew they weren’t near enough to see me as I couldn’t see them, so I ran a little way off the trail and hid my bottle under some weeds. Then I ran back on the trail again. Trail it was; not then a surveyed road. Well, the Moorehouses came along and seeing it was I, supposedly thought I had been over to their place and, finding them away, was returning home. They felt sorry for me when they found I had been staying alone, and made me get in their wagon and go back to their house and stay the night with them. I felt very guilty then and still do, when I think of that bottle of kerosene lying hidden in the grass.

Tom Burrows afterwards bought that half section and plowed it up and raised wheat on it. He bought the whole three hundred and twenty acres at two and a half dollars an acre. Wonder if he ever found the bottle of kerosene?!! Why George didn’t buy that half then when he could have had it for so little, I don’t know. He afterwards bought a half section north of us for a much higher price. Funny, I never did find that bottle of oil, though I searched many times for it.
Another thing I forgot to tell about, when we were living on Uncle Tom’s place and Amelia Denzin was married. As I said before, we were invited to the wedding. She was married to Will Seed. She wore a Navy blue dress which she made herself. She looked very nice, and, as I said, we could not dance - against the rules of their religion - they were Plymouth Brethren. So we sang hymns out of little red hymnbooks and played some games.

One thing I had actually entirely forgotten on the evening’s program until I received a letter from Beckie Sutton yesterday. She recalled the thing I want to relate here. During the evening of the wedding, along about ten o’clock, Mr. Denzin went out to the stable and came in with a box containing a litter of new born pigs and put them by the stove in the kitchen. Beckie said in her letter, “Everybody thought it was time to go home, and went.” I am glad Beckie recalled that episode to my memory.

The Denzin family is all grown up. Some are missionaries in India (no, it’s Beckie’s sister Ida’s son who is a missionary, he and his wife in India.) Her brother, Arthur and wife work among the Indians up north.

The fall before Irma was born, we had Ethel Bond come out and help me through harvest. She was a beautiful girl. We had visited at their place in Ontario some time before this, and of which I shall write later. She was grand help and did a lot of sewing for me too.

She made me a very pretty flowered muslin dress, and just because it had sleeves a little below the elbow, George wouldn’t let me wear it. He sure was funny. Wouldn’t let me wear a dress open at the throat, elbow length sleeves and hated to see even an inch and a half heels on my shoes. Why I let him rule my life the way he did, no one can tell. I got partly away from some of his ideas. Once, years later, I bought a beautiful big grey hat with a pink rosette on one side of the brim. He ordered me to put it in the fire. I wouldn’t do it. I loved it and everyone said how becoming it was. George said all the men on the train coming out from Regina kept looking at me. You can see where the pain hurt.

Well, Ethel made Huntley’s first suit. I had made all kinds of pants and blouses, but never a whole suit. One day, when she was trying to fit the suit on him, he was jiggling around and she said to him, "Whoa, Pat." He immediately snapped back at her, "I ain’t a Pat."

Uncle Joe bought a mouth organ for Huntley when Hunt was only about six months old and was quite proud of the child because he would blow in it and make all kinds of weird noises.

It was when Hunt was about two years old they, the three boys, had whooping cough all at the same time. We never heard of shots being given for whooping cough at that time. Children just whooped for months, but the old folks had some very strange remedies. One was to dissolve egg shells in vinegar and give them a teaspoonful of that concoction. Another was to give them a teaspoonful of ground eggshell every morning and I remember Aunt Lizzie holding Vinnie down and endeavoring to force the ground eggshell down her, with no success. There was eggshell all over the outside of both of them, but none went down inside.
One day while Ethel Bond was with me, George and the hired man were going for a load of wood and before they went George killed a couple of chickens for me. We were going to have them for supper when the men got back with their load of wood. George said, "I killed the chickens and put them in that box behind the woodpile."

After I got my dishes washed, I went out to get the chickens and pluck and dress them. There were no chickens to be found. There were a lot of blood marks and, I wondered what could have happened to them. I looked all around the yard, but could find no trace of them, so gave up looking. I told George when he came home at night and when he was doing up the chores, he came across the chickens sitting up on the chicken roost large as life. George always killed chickens by cutting a vein in their necks and I guess hadn't gone deep enough. Anyway, they got it right next time.

Then, another time, George was south of our place not so very far, shooting geese (wild) as they were flying north from the grain fields at noon. I was standing in the doorway watching to see if any fell, when I saw one goose getting lower and lower from the flock. I kept my eyes on it and saw it light just at the west end of our field, a full half mile from the house, and under a clump of bushes. I started out, and kept my eye on that clump of bushes all the way to just where I saw it fall. And there was my wild goose. It made no effort to get away, and I picked it up, and believe it or not, carried Mr. Goose back to the house in my arms and put him in a box and covered the box with weighted boards. Imagine the surprise the men had when they came back shortly after and I showed them my goose. Wild geese in those days were in such large flocks. The western sky would be black with them as they traveled from Long Lake south to the grain fields for their food and back again from noon 'til night, sometimes long after dark, to the water. Lots of them would light on our grain fields among the stokes of grain. George would take a horse or cow and his gun, keep the animal between himself and the geese, shoot and kill several and bring them in for me to clean or rather prepare for the oven. One year I kept count of the number of wild fowl that I prepared for the table; it was 70.

Occasionally the men would return empty handed from their game hunt. At such times we (the hired men and myself) would razz them unmercifully. One night they rather disliked any reflections on their ability to bring down the game; we said all right, we will clean and prepare for cooking all the game you can bring in tomorrow. Uncle Joe said, "Well, by God, that's a bargain," so the next afternoon off they went again on the hunt, guns and ammunition galore, shouting back, "Get your knives sharpened; you'll need them tonight." We gave them the "Haw. Haw" feeling sure they would return as usual empty-handed. But they returned at night loaded down with twenty-three prairie chickens!

Lloyd, one of the hired help, and I rolled our sleeves up without a word and went at the fowl! It didn't take long. We skinned them and just used the breast and upper part of the legs. There isn't much on a prairie chicken except the breast and legs. Anyway, the next day I stewed the whole lot. Are they ever good! Irma used to wish the prairie chicken were as big as cows!
We used to have a great many wild ducks for the table too in those days but, oh, the geese! One Saturday morning when I was up to my eyes in baking break churning and doing the Saturday's general cleaning, George came in with eight wild geese. They had to be plucked, drawn, stuffed and cooked all that day. I finished up the whole lot somewhere around midnight. This was in the early harvest and, having no refrigeration (no one had in the country at that time) the geese simply had to be cooked to keep from spoiling.

This makes me think of Mrs. Chatterton, an English woman, who was telling the Ladies Aid of the Methodist Church in Lumsden, about the lovely goose they had on Sunday for dinner. It was so tender. She said, "Of course, it had been hanging awhile." Which makes me think of a story George used to tell about the Scotch old maid who was keeping house for her brother near Lumsden. When her brother shot a rabbit or fowl, she would hang it up behind the cook stove on a nail and, when the bird or animal became sufficiently "high" - enough to drop off the nail and fall to the floor - then she proceeded to prepare it for the pot. Tasty, what? This is a true story. They liked them high.

George was a good shot. I have seen him take the head off a duck with his Winchester rifle, just like that. Once he nearly took my head off too' I was standing at our kitchen table on the farm, washing my noon dishes. George was sitting at the end of the table cleaning his Winchester rifle; didn't know it was loaded, when bang! It went off. The bullet or shell missed my face about three inches and tore a big hole in the door! That, I think, was the nearest call to eternity I ever experienced.

In the early days, George and some others would go to the foot of Long Lake, where there was a lot of marshy ground covered with long grass and bulrushes, and kill ducks by the dozen with nothing but a whipstock. The ducks would hide in the tall grass and it was very difficult for them to rise out of it. The water in the land was very low in those early days; there must have been a shortage of rain those days. That was long before I knew the McNeice's.

We had a lovely farm in Canada and I never wanted to sell it. I wanted to rent it and go with the family to Lumsden where there was a yearly school, as our boys were of school age, and on the farm we had only a summer school, which opened in May and closed not later than the first of November; sometimes in October.

The boys had a pony, which their father told them was theirs; they would drive the pony and buckboard to school in the morning and back in the afternoon. I still can see them -- three little boys with their lunches, sitting on the seat, side by side, Eddie doing the driving.
By the way, George afterwards sold their pony, forgetting to divide the money between the boys. He one time gave them a pig, promising the money when he sold the pig, but he forgot that too.

Remember, he sold my pony Silver, and forgot to give me the money. He afterwards gave me a colt that he thought was going to die. I raised the colt and she became a grand driver, fast and beautiful. I named her Marengo. I surely loved her. Well, after a year or so, George, unknown to me, sold her to Fred Cochrane and forgot to give me the money. To compensate me for selling my mare he gave me another mare, named Nell. She, too, was a beauty and I felt some better. Nell was a bright bay; Marengo a dark brown. Nell always carried her neck bowed up or arched and lifted her feet so high when she traveled. She was a picture to look at, that one. She looked awfully wild when driven double but was gentle as a kitten when driven single. The first time I drove her to Regina, when I took her to the livery stable to put her up, the men wanted to know if my husband knew I was driving that wild horse. I told them she wasn't wild, and besides - I guessed he knew, seeing he was the one who had harnessed and hitched her up for me.

One day, Aunt Maggie and I drove Nell to Regina; after turning off Albert Street to South Railway, we came to a new culvert that had just been put in. Nell shied at the new lumber and did not want to cross. I did not urge her too much. Rather than compel her to cross, we turned her down an alley. Almost at once, I spied an American dollar in the rut. It was on its edge, bright and shiny. I stopped Nell, got out, picked up the dollar and drove on in to town. We spent the great treat in those days - dollar by going to the Alexander Hotel for dinner -- and enjoyed it very much.

One time we were expecting some friends to arrive at Condie, a little box-car station, or stopping point for the train on its way to Lumsden. I drove down to Condie to meet them but they didn't arrive. There was no station building there, just a boxcar sitting alongside the track. As I stood there, I saw a young fellow being hustled off the train, struggling at the same time to pull his overcoat on and looking so bewildered. The brakeman was none too gentle with him. He looked so woebegone. I felt sorry for him and asked him where he was going. He replied he was going to a Mr. Riley's to learn farming. As soon as he spoke, I recognized his accent. He was from London, England, and as I was going his way, or he wanted to go the same direction as I was going, I told him he could come as far as our place with me and perhaps my husband would take him the rest of the way. He looked very dubious, probably thought I might kidnap him.

However, he took the risk and got in the democrat, which I was driving and I headed for home. Driving along the road, which, by the way, was newly surveyed but not graded, the young Englishman was astounded to see a woman handling a team of spanking horses, and after commenting on that, passed the remark, "It must be very dangerous driving after dark without carriage lamps." When we got to my home (we still were on the farm at that time) I jumped out of the democrat, started unhitching the horses and the fellow stood there, practically with his mouth open. Then, when I picked up the lines and drove the horses to
the barn and he watched me unharness them, it was almost too much for him to take. He said, "My word!" We gave him his dinner with the men - it was harvest time - and after dinner, George took him over to the Riley’s. I do not remember this lad’s name, but he evidently knew the Riley’s in England, or his people did. Now, he was not dumb or ignorant; he just hadn’t been around. He had worked in an office all his life and had never been in the country. Actually, he had never seen a cow in his life. One time after working at the Riley’s, he asked George Riley, "How can you tell a bull from a cow?"

Now, the Riley’s, too, had come from London, England, but they were smart and very observant and had picked up Canadian ways very quickly and had become prosperous farmers.

I remember a long, long time before this, two young Englishmen living in the Qu'Appelle Valley, writing home to their mother in England and telling her their wheat was frozen that year. Their mother immediately sent them one hundred and sixty pounds from England to build a granary to keep their wheat from freezing. Now, she was an educated lady, but unversed in wheat growing. These two young men were, indeed, very well educated, polished young men. The first time we saw either of them was one summer afternoon. Mother was working out in the garden and one of these young men came riding to the house (on horseback) and asked if he might "have a cup of tea and some bread and buttah (butter.)" Mother gladly obliged. He said he loved to sit down at home with a pot of tea and a loaf of bread and some "buttah" and a good book propped up on the table beside him, and by the time his book was finished, there wasn’t much of the bread and "buttah" left.

Our house, that is father’s house (this was when I was about twelve or thirteen years old) was twelve miles north of Regina on Albert Street, which was a road running north from Regina to the Qu'Appelle Valley. Many Mounted Police as well as other people were constantly stopping in - sometimes overnight or on their way to and from the city. The town of Regina and the Qu'Appelle Valley was very interesting to us kids and to Father and Mother as well. I imagine many changes have come to that country since those days.

The home we had after I was married was about four miles west of Father’s place and a mile west of a road that was put through from Regina. That road went on past the old Tregarva Post Office-not the one in use now; that one is on the C.P.R going north from Regina up the west side of the lake, or maybe the east side as it goes through Holdfast, Valeport and Craven, which all are on the east or northeastern side of the lower end of the lake (Long Lake). I shall ask Marie about this as she comes from Holdfast.

On the farm, I finally persuaded George to plant some Balm of Gileads. The way we did it was this. In the spring of the year, just as the frost was out of the ground enough to plow a furrow, we took the walking plow and one horse and plowed a furrow, then laid the Balm of Gilead (poles) down lengthwise in the fur-row. We first trimmed the branches off,
then plowed another furrow, throwing the turned up soil from the second furrow over the poles which were laid in the first furrow. Then new shoots come up through the soil. We put in two rows around three sides of the house plot. We also put in some golden willows. And was I happy. I loved beauty in the form of trees and flowers and there, at that time, wasn't much of either on the farms on the prairie in Saskatchewan. The man who bought our place grew roses right there on our old farm; but I heard he cut my beautiful trees down because the snow drifted badly around them in the winter.

One time, I had a number of little soft maple trees started in my garden and was so delighted! Well, that year we had a little English fellow working for us. He had been a sailor in the British Navy for years and was the shortest man I ever saw outside a circus. When he tried to put a bridle on the horses he was given to harness, he would have to stand on the manger in the stable and he actually would curse his maker for making him so short. Well, one morning George sent him out to the garden to do some weeding. I should have known better than let him in the garden! When he and the rest of the men carne in to their dinner at noon, I slipped out to the garden to see how he had been getting along with the weeding. He had cut down all my little maple trees! Whacked them clear out of the ground! What I said to him was plenty. I even forget his name. He left soon after that. We surely had a mess of hired men at times. I used to do their washing and mending until I found none of the other farmer's wives would do that for their hired men, so I quit.

In the spring of 1903, Irma was born. My sister, Ettie, was staying with me that winter and was to stay until I was able to be up and around. Uncle Johnny was with us too, that winter. Of course, Irma decided to arrive in the middle of the night and, when her actual arrival was announced, I happened to be alone. Ettie had gone down-stairs to mend the fire and George had gone for Mrs. Kiel, the midwife whom I had engaged. Uncle Johnny had lit out to the bam (it seemed it was improper for a man to hang around the house on an occasion of this kind). So when Irma came along, it just happened for the actual arrival, I was alone.

Ettie came upstairs to find the baby had arrived and I asked her to give me the essentials and I cut and tied the cord myself, then collapsed. George arrived with Mrs. Kiel shortly after the baby was born and all went well. We had a little butterball of a baby girl and were we happy! Just what I had prayed so hard for. She grew and was so healthy and we all loved her so. We loved our little boys too. They all were so lovely and sweet. Eddie and Tommy each had golden curls and blue eyes. Hunt had no curls but he was just as dear to me as the rest. As Huntley grew a little older and could read for himself, he liked poetry so well. I remember him lying on the kitchen floor on the farm reciting,

"One sunbeam ran in at the l'il cottage door,
And played hide and seek with the child on the floor,
'Til the baby laughed loud in its glee.
And chased with delight that 'Playmate so bright,
the little hands grasping in vain for the light
that ever before them would flee."
And then he would say, "Isn't that lovely, Mmmm?"

Eddie was a lover of books. If one missed him any time, one would find him reading somewhere. He had such a darling laugh just like a silver bell. Tom was such a loving little fellow. One instance I so well remember occurred in the fall of the year when the men were all away at a neighbor's threshing. We had a grand collie dog, and when dusk was approaching I would say to Collie, "It's time for you to get the cows home." Collie would trot off and bring them home.

But this night he came home without the cows; I tried to persuade him to go and get them, but he would just go a short way from the house and come whining back so I knew something was wrong.

Huntley was a little baby in the cradle and Eddie was sitting on a chair by the table reading one of Horatio Alger's books. I told Eddie to take good care of the baby and I would take Tommy with me. Tommy was only about two and a half years old then. Eddie was so trustworthy! I knew he would watch the baby faithfully. So I set off, following the dog and Tommy by the hand. I had taken a stick with me more to guide the cows than anything. The ground was rather soft; there had been some snow, but had melted, yet not thoroughly dry under foot. The walking was rather difficult and poor little Tommy's legs soon grew tired. I picked him up in my arms to carry him and he so lovingly said, "I'll carry the stick, Mamma," thinking he was making my load lighter.

Irma loved animals. One day I found her with a big dead gopher in her arms, carrying it around and loving it like she would a kitten. Another day, I caught her dousing her little black kitten up and down in the water in the horse trough. When I scolded her for that she said, "Well, the poor kitty was so dirty."

After we sold the farm and went to Lumsden to live, the boys got work delivering groceries after school and on Saturdays. They always bought something out of their hard-earned money for me.

One time the family was supposed to go to the lake on a picnic; it was a holiday and Eddie wanted to stay home and work at the store to earn more money. I gave him 50c to have his dinner in the hotel, but instead he bought me a pretty hatpin.

Another thing or two which I should have written about sooner, was the fact that when Irma was born, Aunt Ettie received a letter from Charlie Jones's, who she afterwards married, asking her to join him somewhere on a certain date, and she up and left me. George went down to the Valley and brought Aunt Maggie up. She stayed with me the balance of the ten days that I was to stay in bed.
Then, from that time out, I was on my own. One feels pretty shaky starting in to do all one’s own work after one has had a baby, even if one has been in bed for ten days. Now, women are gotten out of bed in two or three days.

Then, another thing which I intended to say was, when Tommy was only two or three months old, he, for some unknown reason, slept for two days without waking even at night. I wanted George to get the doctor, but no, he wouldn’t. Finally, Tommy wakened and seemed to be alright. George simply wouldn’t have a doctor. For fourteen years, we never had a doctor in the house (plenty since).

Then one time George took Eddie in to Regina to Dr. McClean and had his tonsils out. He wouldn’t let the doctor give Eddie an anesthetic; just made him sit up in the chair and let the doctor take them out. Poor little fellow. They had driven in seventeen miles and he brought him home the same day (in the buggy) the seventeen miles back home, not even a cot to lie on all the way home. That was such a cruel thing to do, and in my heart I never forgave George for that. The poor little boy. I still can see him as he suffered for days and no medical help whatsoever.

I shouldn't say hard things about the dead, but George in many ways was absolutely heartless. Yet, in many ways, a good man.

When Irma had her finger injured, he wouldn’t let me take her to the doctor until it was too late to save the tip of her finger. I was to blame myself. I should have insisted on taking her to the doctor; but women in those days obeyed their men more than they now do, and more than I later did. I learned, through time, to disobey quite often, much to the betterment of my soul.

We had quite a time deciding a name for our baby girl. Finally, we decide on Irma Margaret28. I had chosen the name Irma before she was born. George was quite satisfied. In fact, he said he wouldn’t choose a name for her because I didn’t like the one he selected for Huntley, when we named him. He wanted me to name him Della Hay! Why, I can’t imagine. I said, "Oh, no. All the kids will nickname him Hay, Hay! And, then what did George do? He went in to Regina and added two more names to the two we had decided on. Irma Edna Ann Margarite! I nearly fell down when he came home and told me what he had done! But, of course, I should have gone with him, but I had so much to do at home. We named Eddie for his grandfather Tegart and his grandfather McNeice - gave him the name of James Edward McNeice, which everyone thought very nice.

We named Tommy George Thomas, for his dad and Uncle Tom, who died shortly before Tommy’s birth. We named Huntley for General H.D.B. Ketchen, our friend, who went with the Strathcona Horse to South Africa in charge of troops of the Royal North-West Mounted Police from Regina. Uncle Harry was in this bunch, which went over to the Boer War in

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28 Irma Edna Ann Margarite was born April 5, 1903 at Tregarva.
South Africa. Uncle Harry made two trips over to South Africa. The first one when the troops were sent from Regina barracks, and maybe some went from other points. That I cannot say. As I previously noted, the Strathcona Horse was sent, as far as I know, from other places. They were fitted out entirely by Lord Strathcona.

Then, Uncle Harry returned from South Africa and must have been discharged, because he re-enlisted and went back. The war (Boer) was over\(^29\) before their ship docked at Cape of Good Hope, so he came home. He still was wearing his uniform when he returned. He looked real nifty in them.

But, during the period Harry was in South Africa in the war, George decided we were going to take a trip to Ontario for the winter. I did not want to go because we had the three little boys. Eddie was five and a half years of age. Tommy was three and Huntley was barely a year old. Right or wrong, I had to go. Aunt Alma took full charge of Eddie all the way down, which was a big help. My father went along as far; I think as North Bay. I’m not sure, but he was going to visit his brothers at Allandale and I think had to change trains at North Bay.

He was far more bother than the children. I couldn't keep track of him at all! Poor little Huntley nearly starved on the trip. I do not know whether there was a diner on the train or not, but I never got the opportunity to find out. We had a big lunch packed, both Alma Sutton and ourselves, and that was what we ate all the way down.

We got to Strathroy on Sunday about noon. Mr. Bond met us and took all of us out to his farm and that was home for all of us for the winter. There was George and myself, our three boys, and Aunt Alma all piled in at once.

I was completely exhausted, and my poor baby had his first real meal in five days. Yes, it took us five days to make the trip to Strathroy, but we had stopped overnight in Toronto. How well I remember that stopover. I cannot recall the name of the hotel. It was very nice and we were comfortable enough though the four of us slept in one bed. Alma and Eddie had a room to themselves. I rose early, went down to the kitchen to get some warm milk to make Huntley some food.

The janitor was there and turned the lights on for me in the kitchen, and you should have seen the cockroaches take to cover. I didn’t know what they were, so asked the janitor, and he said, "Only a few cockroaches, missus." It still was dark when we took the train for Strathroy.

We made the Bonds our headquarters while we were in Strathroy. I was a stranger to everyone, but people were grand. The Bonds took us to London for Christmas dinner. We all were up early to get a good start as Mr. Bond said we had a long trip ahead of us—eighteen miles! We had two separate rigs—who’s the second one was, I don’t remember. Mr. Bond drove the head one, a team of horses and conveyance in which were George, Mrs. Bond, and me.

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\(^{29}\) May 31, 1902 the Boer War ended.
myself, Tommy and Huntley. These were in the first, or head, one. Mr. Bond, his two daughters, Ethel and Edna, Harold and Aunt Alma (Mrs. Bond’s sister). It seemed a long seventeen miles and did take us longer than it ever took us to drive twenty-five miles on the prairie.

We went to Sam Sutton's for Christmas dinner and, after dinner, Sam took us down cellar to see all the apples he had packed in barrels, ready to be shipped to market, and after showing rooms' full of beautiful apples, he never offered us a single apple. I couldn't get over that. We drove back to Bonds that night and considered we had had a big day and a very long drive. The Bonds were grand people.

From there, we went to Uncle James Brown’s. Uncle James Brown was George's mother’s brother. There was quite a family of them. Uncle James and Aunt Josephine, Annie their daughter, Al, Ed and Ira, their sons. There, all five of us had to sleep in one bed. The Browns were very nice and good to us too.

Uncle James and Ira used to get up very early to do their chores, but before going out to the barn, would always make themselves a pot of tea, strong as lye.

That reminds me, when we were on the train going to Ontario, George's main duties were keeping a pot of hot tea on hand and playing the mouth organ. He would put some tea in the pot, fill the pot with cold water, set the pot on the floor by the hot air pipes and let it brew. He felt very proud of himself when he found he could make tea that way, for he was terrifically fond of tea.

We went to Aunt Ellen’s, George’s sister, from the Browns, but didn't stay there very long. They weren't very cordial. Poor Uncle Johnny was living there that winter too and Ellen was berating the schoolteacher. By the way, this teacher was getting only between two and three hundred dollars a year! Think of that!

From there, we went to the Wilson’s, Mrs. Wilson was a distant relative of the McNeice’s in some way. She had been dead for years. Mr. Wilson was a crazy old bat. He was very old and stone blind and almost deaf. George had told me a lot about him and I was scared stiff, I didn't want to go there, but go I must. He was nowhere in sight the first night, but I expected him to appear around a corner or through a doorway any minute.

We were given a room upstairs to sleep in and, after supper when the children's bedtime came around, I took them upstairs to put them to bed, I think either Ev or Lila (the two girls in the family) went up with me to the bedroom, Fortunately, there were two beds in the room.

On going up the stairs, right at the turn of the stairs, there was a landing there, a square place where, as I say, the stairs turned and went on up. There was a door opening into a room of some sort, and there I decided the old man was kept. Well, I got the three children to sleep, and then, how to get down past that door on the landing! The old man would
surely pop out of that door and I just knew I would pass out. I got past the door without being "took" but when I got downstairs I just tumbled over on the couch! Everyone thought I was ill and I didn't tell them different. Nevertheless, I was determined to find out where that old man stayed or was kept before I went to bed that night.

As was the custom, one of the girls, I think it was Ev, escorted me to the outhouse before we retired for the night. What an invention of some satanic mind those outhouses were in the winter! The seats were so cold, all the desire for a comfortable release was abandoned. The wind had a very cute way of stealing around one's unmentionable parts and by the time nature came to one's aid, one's feet and legs were almost powerless with cold, the leaves from the catalogue were like so much ice to one's nether parts. One hastened the final operation quickly as one could, straightened their garments, lit out for the house on the run, and sat by the cook stove for a considerable period until one thawed out.

In the summer time, one did not suffer from cold; it was the heat, flies and aroma. Pounds of chloride de lime and ashes were freely distributed and kept down the evil odor to a great extent, but one looks back and wonders how we ever lived with those antiquated contraptions.

When the winter's snow and ice were gone, it was a solemn rite performed by all tidy housewives to make a pot of paste, and if one had it, some wall paper. Usually there would be some wallpaper left after papering the walls in the house. Then one would adjourn to the outhouse and paper the walls there. If one did not have any wallpaper, one took newspapers or some magazines and user the pretty pictures to decorate the walls.

Sometimes in reading the items on the walls, one imbibed very useful information. Once I obtained a recipe for cookies from reading said recipe off a leaf from a magazine which was pasted on the outdoors toilet wall, which had entirely escaped my notice when reading the magazine in the house before relegating it to its now menial service.

Now, back to my trip with Ev to their house of relief. I noticed a rope strung along the path from the house back door to the toilet and made some remark about having to do that on the prairie when we had our bad blizzards. But Ev said it was for their father to hang onto when he went out to the toilet to make sure he would reach the toilet; otherwise, he would wander away. Now was my chance to find out where the old man was kept in the house! So, I said to her, "It must be very hard for your father to go up and down the stairs from his room, isn't it?" And, to my great relief, she answered, "Oh, he doesn't sleep upstairs, he sleeps downstairs in a bedroom off the parlor" So I felt a great deal more at rest!

Well, we were there several days and, until the last morning when we were leaving, the old fellow kept to his room. His meals were taken in to him every day; but this morning he staggered out, carrying a cane and feeling his way. He found the rocking chair near the stove and settled himself in it. Every once in a while he would poke around with his cane, give his chair a hitch, scratch his bald head viciously and mutter, "I'll have to send Walter to Watford to buy me a fine comb." And he hadn't a hair on his head! He sure was nuts. This operation,
or antic, was repeated every few minutes. Thank the Lord he was no blood relation of the McNeice’s!

While we were staying with the Bonds, George, Eddie and I went to Detroit to visit my brother and his wife in Detroit. This was my brother, George who was a lawyer, working for the Michigan Central Railway. If I don't forget, shall write more about George later on.

From Detroit, we made a trip to Niagara Falls and saw the sights there. We left Eddie with my brother's wife, Evelyn. Part of this trip has faded from my mind, but I remember we went under the Falls on the Canadian side. The tunnel, which we went through, was not like it is now. It could not have been completed then and I hear it is much safer now. It was a great gorge hewn out of the rock and was lit here and there along the way with either gas or electric lights; very dismal. Then we came to the place where we went under the falls. We had to climb out through a large opening in the solid rock and could stand there under the great mass of water pouring its thunderous might out over our heads and roaring on its way. It was a wonderful sight, and awesome, and never to be forgotten. Before going into the tunnel, we were equipped with Mackintoshes, head gear and rubber boots; in spite of all this protection, we got quite damp.

From there, we saw the "Maid of the Mist," a little ferry-like boat that I believe took passengers for a trip on the river; how far, or just across from the American to the Canadian side, or vice versa, I do not remember. She was well named the Maid of the Mist, for at our first glimpse of her, there she was, mist from the Falls all around her. On the American side, I believe it was, we stood at the railing along the river almost as it tumbled down, and, if one wanted to, I believe one could almost touch the water as it tumbled over the edge. I didn't do that though.

Then we went on to Captain Webb's Wave, which was another beautiful sight. It was quite a little distance down (or up?) the river. This wave was named for a man by the name of Captain Webb who had undertaken to swim the river and got only this far and was lost. Whether his body was recovered, I can't say.

The wave hit a great rock there, dashing against it with terrific force, sending the water many feet into the air to break and return in millions of drops of spray in all rainbow colors. When one realizes this is an endless repetition, day in and day out, year in and year out, and century in and century out, one really can hardly grasp the immensity of it all.

We had dinner on the American side, and while eating dinner, we heard people talking about a doctor who had come from Detroit and had committed suicide by leaping into the Falls from where we had been standing only a few minutes before. They said many people committed suicide from this self-same place.

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I do not remember just where the museum was that we visited, but it must have been at Niagara Falls. I believe there was a painting in oils called, "The Maid of the Mist." It was a beautiful maiden standing in the mist at the foot of the Falls, with one arm upraised, beckoning to her lover above as he gazed down and luring him to his death. The lover, of course, was not shown - just the beautiful maiden.

There certainly was a tremendous power in the lure of that mighty water; that is, there would be for one morbidly inclined. This painting is a beautiful thing to behold. I shall never forget it.

We returned to Strathroy and to the Bonds, to find all well with them; but the sad part of our return was, little Huntley had forgotten me, his mother, and would have nothing to do with me. However, in a day or two I had retrieved my place in his heart.

It was while we were in Ontario that winter that Good Old Queen Victoria died. She had reigned for fifty years and Edward VIII came to the throne. We were visiting at some cousins of George's, by the name of Johnston, when someone came out from Strathroy with the news of her death. She was a good Queen and loved by all. It is said that even the Indians living on the prairie mourned the death of the Great Mother across the water. I remember saying when we heard the news of her death that I surely felt bad, and Mrs. Johnson said, "Pooh, she wouldn't feel bad if you died."

I begged to have pictures taken of the children before we left for home. George reluctantly gave his consent. We had a few of ourselves taken with the children and a few taken of the children alone. Also I had a few taken of myself alone, to show off my new hat and opossum neckpiece.

My hat was a small sailor shape, grey, with shot taffeta folds around it and a beautiful grey and green bird perched, with wings partly spread, on the side of the crown. Oh, me.

Everyone rose early the morning we left Bonds for home. Mr. and Mrs. Bond drove us in to Strathroy to take the train, and away we started for our trip, about eighteen hundred miles, home to the prairies.

Before we started east for the winter, George got Eddie a green (dark) suit - corduroy with brass buttons - pretty and he looked so nice. I had made Tommy a kilted skirt like the Scotch men wear, a few lovely white blouses with ruffles all around and a black velvet jacket to wear over the blouse. Huntley wasn't quite a year old when we left home on our trip, so he wore white dresses. No one thought of rompers for little baby boys in that day and age.

While we were in London, Ont., the lady we were staying with took me through the asylum there and all the old ladies went crazy over Tommy. He didn't like them very well. They sure were a screwy bunch. One inmate, a man, called out to me, "You fetched fine weather with you, Miss Galbraith!" We listened at the door (closed) of the music room, where some of
the patients were playing, preparatory to their monthly ball, and I never heard better music than they were playing.

The lady with whom I was visiting told me they had a ball once a month and that they dressed in formal evening dress for it and had a swell time.

There was a banker there who they said went crazy on his way to work one day. He spent his time counting bills - cutout newspaper, just the size of real paper money. He held it between his thumb and fingers and counted all through then smoothed it out and started all over again. The attendant told me that he spent every day from morning to night counting this imaginary money.

When we left the institution, I made the remark that it was hard to tell the crazy ones from the attendants. Only a few, whom we could tell by the way they talked and I observed to my friend, "No one would know that man sitting by the door reading was crazy." My friend laughed at me and said, "He is not crazy; he is the warden there." As a judge of mentality, I guess I was the world's worst.

When we were at Niagara Falls, and I should have written about this sooner, we hired a cabby to take us sightseeing. He was a funny little man with a great big grievance. He drove an old sorrel horse and a yellow cab and wore a grizzly moustache and a mustard colored overcoat. Every time we stopped to visit a place, he always disappeared. When we came out, ready to go on, he would come popping out from somewhere on the run, smelling of whiskey, pick up his lines and away we would go, clomp-clomping along the street. His horse, I am sure, never won a race, but got there just the same.

The old cabby would relate his woes and as he clomped along, would say every few minutes, "There ain't no jayustice," (If you can pronounce that more like "shayustice." Slur it a bit). Why the poor fellow wanted justice, we never did find out; probably he didn't know.

Then, too, I mustn't forget. We were over in Sarnia that time and visited another cousin of George. Ontario seemed to be full of the McNeice's' cousins.

For the moment, their name has slipped my memory. Oh, I believe their name was Simpson. While there we had a ride on a horse drawn streetcar. The car ran on rails, but was drawn by a team of horses that jogged peacefully along. I think we stayed at Simpson's only one night. Mr. Simpson was a conductor or brakeman on a railway. He returned from work a few minutes after we got there, dead tired, and went upstairs to get some sleep. He had been in bed only a short time when a callboy came for him with orders to go out on another run so up and away he went. We did not see much of him.

We bought a few souvenirs at Niagara Falls, which, at that time, were wonderful to me. I remember one thing, which I bought, was a stickpin. It was made of the stone, which they told us was found only at Niagara Falls - a milky white stone - and was like a
little barrel with a gold hoop around it. In one end was a magnifying glass and, when you held the little barrel close to your eye, and looked through the little glass; you could see all sorts of pretty things inside the barrel. I am not quite sure, but believe it was at Niagara Falls that George bought our stereopticon outfit too. Often times I wish we had kept it.

I forgot, too, that when we were in Ontario this first trip, George went on to Dansville and got Mrs. Swartz' daughter and brought her back with us all the way to Regina. She was a very backward child, or girl, of about fourteen.

I wish I could remember to write these things in the order they happened but even though I make notes, then have written quite a few things, I remember others that I should have written long before, so there it is.

Well, as I said a while back, we left Strathroy and started the long, tiresome trip home. It was no joyride going either way. The trains were slow, not at all comfortable; packed with farmer tourists, who slept and ate in the same clothes all the way. There was a smoker attached to the car and the men spent most of their time in there, smoking, playing cards and some, by the odor they brought with them when they returned to the day coach, was a little stronger than tea.

One night about ten o'clock, we - our family I were asleep, stretched out on various seats. When the brakeman touched me on the shoulder, I awoke and he asked, "Is that little curly headed boy yours?" I jumped up and here Tommy had wakened and was having a high old time with a bunch of men. The brakeman was plenty mad. He said, "Well, he has let all the water out of the tank and we can't get any more until we reach," naming a town further on. I was so mad at Tommy and I was going to punish him severely, but the men pleaded his case and I relented. Eddie seldom ever got into trouble, but Tommy kept me on my toes.

I remember one thing Eddie got into trouble over at the Bonds. He and Harold, their son, had been playing down at their barn and had thrown bricks into the hay. Mr. Bond didn't like it any too well.

Our trip home was quite uneventful. Just long days, and a long time getting to Regina. It seemed we stopped every little while along the way. Trains weren't very fast in those days; even in best weather, the average along the north shore and the prairies was about thirty miles per hour, though the Grand Trunk running through Ontario was said to travel eighty miles per hour. It had a wonderful roadbed and travelling on it was smooth as sitting on a rocking chair at home.

When we went east, there was a bride and groom in our car. The bride was about eighteen and the groom about forty. Poor bride, she was a nervous wreck from fear. She said if she ever got back home to Lethbridge, never again would anyone get her on a train. The groom slept most of the way, when he wasn't in the smoking car, leaving his bride alone. Quite chummy, eh what?
Well, we arrived several hours late in Regina to find the only passenger train for Lumsden that day had gone. Well, George went off and lay down on a bench and went to sleep leaving me, as usual, with the three little boys to look after. We were hungry, tired and cold. I do not remember whether we had eaten on the train, or not; probably not. I wanted to take the children to a hotel and give them breakfast, but fortunately fate intervened.

I overheard a man at the wicket saying he wanted a telegram sent to the Superintendent asking permission for transportation on a freight leaving in a few minutes for Saskatoon. I at once stepped up to him and asked him if he could get transportation for me and my family, which he at once included in his telegram, "for himself and party of friends." As soon as permission came from the superintendent, I wakened George and told him to hurry, we were leaving at once for Lumsden. He wouldn't believe me, but when he saw this strange man helping me with the children, he then realized I was in earnest and came along. I think he was a little bewildered and surprised that I, his 'umble' wife had bested him.

We got to Lumsden around noon and, of course, went to Aunt Lizzie's for dinner. Then, after dinner, Mr. Kelly drove us out home to the farm, and our sporting days were over for a time. This trip was taken in the winter of 1900 and 1901, before Irma was born. She was born April 5th, 1903.
Chapter 21

Trip to Winnipeg

It must have been the following summer George and I went to Winnipeg to the Fair. We left the three boys with Aunt Maggie in the Valley. I think it was a house near Craven they lived in.

We had quite a time of it, so we thought, at the time. There were some wonderful stunts performed; some as good as I ever saw at fairs in later years.

I persuaded George to go to the Winnipeg Theater one night, against his wishes, but I wanted to see something besides pigs and cows and chickens. Do not remember what was showing at the theater, but it was something like East Lynne and was a bit unusual for me.

Then, on going home on the train, I grew quite ill and surely was glad when we got to Regina. There we ran across Marian Colton, who had bought Uncle Tom’s farm and who had his team and democrat in town; we went home with him. He was always so dirty, and I had to sit in the middle between Colton and George. I remember I had a new coat on and when we got home I discovered the side of my coal, which was next to Collen, was all smeared with grease.

I think the first real thrill and sight of the splendors of my life was before we went to the fair. It was before Tommy was born, when Eddie was running around and talking. We went to a circus in Regina; George, Eddie and I. Just as we were going in, a fellow stepped up to a young gawky couple and asked them to wait a minute, placed them, looking a certain way. He already had his big tripod camera, or what looked like one, set up and the couple took it for granted he wanted to take their picture. After he got them placed just so, and had their eyes concentrated on something the other way, he sneaked off and left them. They stood there for a few moments and everybody began to laugh. All at once they realized a joke had been played on them and were they embarrassed!

George said the fellow would be after me next 'and I was so scared! George got a great kick out of me. Of course, this was an old time joke, but to me then it was very serious. I hear were a couple of clowns who sang, "Father, dear Father, come home with me now, the clock in the steeple strikes one," and so on through the song; and whenever the one who was doing the clock striking, the other clown would whack him across the seat of his pants with a stick. This caught Eddie as very funny, and for days the little fellow would go around singing, "Father, dear Father come home with me now, the clock in the steeple strikes one" and whoever was near him got a whack with a stick across the beam. Eddie had a great sense of humor, even at that early age.
Chapter 22

This & That

One cold stormy day in the winter, George and Uncle Joe lit out for Regina. They took the bobsleigh (one bob folded back on the other) and their team and set off, the two of them, and of course I was left home with the children. They got home somewhere around eight at night, reeking with brandy or whiskey. They weren't drunk. I suppose they bought themselves a bottle to fortify themselves against the cold. Anyway, I was mad and gave them the dickens! They both swore they each had only one sip out of the bottle, but the bottle was nearly empty. Of course, I wouldn't believe them, but they still declared themselves innocent of drinking the contents of the bottle.

They had bought a new cutter in town and had tied it on behind the folded bobsleigh and Joe had ridden in the cutter; why, I don't know. Anyway, he had ridden home in the cutter, while George sat on the bobsleigh and drove the horses.

It seems they had each taken their "sip" from the bottle, then Joe had put the cork back in and laid it on the seat of the cutter. He hadn't put the cork in tight and the whiskey had all run out, all but about two or three tea-spoonful's and had saturated the cutter seat cushion. This was their story, which I scouted. Joe got mad, and he said, "Well, by God, I'll prove it to you," went out and brought the cushion of the cutter seat in and held it up to my nose and said, "Smell that." Too true, the cushion was saturated with booze!!

George said I should be ashamed to doubt their word, when Joe wouldn't let him finish the little bit in the bottle because he - Joe - said, "No, I'm saving it for Minnie." That was me. Of course, I do not suppose either one of them had me in their mind when they bought the bottle.

One time when Irma was quite little; in fact, only about two or three months old, we had been having several day's rain and the children had been con-fined to the house most of the time. So, when the weather cleared, the children begged to go out. I said they could if they did not get in the puddles of water lying around in the yard. They assured me they wouldn't even go near the puddles, let alone go in them; so out they went, the three boys - Eddie, Tommy and Huntley.

I was busy washing and suppose paid no attention to what they were doing. Finally, just as the men were coming in to noon dinner, I spied the children cavorting in the biggest puddle of all - mud and water from their feet to their necks. Did I bring them in! I did, and stripped all their clothes off them, put each one in the tub full of water, scrubbed the mud off them, put their night clothes on them and ordered them upstairs to bed. I had to put all their clothes right into the water in the washer and wash through many waters to get the mud and slime out.
They, the boys actually looked as slimy as pigs that had been wallowing in a mud puddle. I was so annoyed! Tommy and Huntley went up to bed quite resigned, but poor Eddie, his dignity was hurt and, though Eddie seldom shed a tear no matter how badly he was hurt, paused on the lower step of the stairs and two big tears rolled down his cheeks and he said, "Mamma, if you will let me stay up, I'll swing the baby." (He hated taking care of the baby.) Irma was the baby and George had made a hammock out of a box and strung it with a rope - clothesline rope - to the ceiling. When Irma was cross we would give the box a gentle push and it would swing for several minutes; the motion was soothing and quieting. If there was one thing Eddie hated, it was to be asked to swing the baby; he just abhorred that task. But the poor little fellow would swallow his pride and "swing the baby" rather than suffer the ignominy of being put to bed in the daytime with his nightclothes on. Of course I relented and let him "stay up and swing the baby."

They were pretty good little boys, after all. Eddie always remembered the circus he had seen when he was quite small and he used to "acrobat" as he called it every day. He would have Tommy help him carry the sawhorses and all the board and sticks and boxes he could find right up to the front of the house and perform their stunts there. Huntley was too small to do much of the carrying but he did his share of whooping and yelling. Their father would get so vexed about all the junk they would bring up to the yard. He would carry it all back where it belonged every night and threaten what he would do to them if they ever brought it back. They brought it back every day and nothing happened.

One Saturday morning I had been very busy baking and cleaning and Tommy had been naughty. I had put my custard or pumpkin pies in on a rack on the dining room table to cool. We ate in the kitchen. I also put Tommy in the dining room all by himself for punishment. He was very quiet and good, as I thought; he had to stay in there while the rest of us ate dinner. When we finished dinner I went in to see how he was getting along. Here the little demon had eaten the entire filling out of the pies and left the shells devoid of their fillings. He, Tommy, was sitting on the stair steps; pumpkin spread over his face and looking quite contented. He felt a little more uncomfortable when I finished with him, but he had the pumpkin.

We used to have good times, the children and I playing together. We would play bear and all sorts of games and I'd tell them stories. We would play ball, anti-over, run-sheep-run and all the games we knew. I never was too busy to gather them round me for a little while every evening and sing to them. I would have the baby on my knee and the rest gathered around me singing along with me.

Then get them ready for bed, go upstairs with them and hear them say their prayers. One time, Tommy made a mistake; he got down on his knees by the bed, closed his eyes, put his little hands up by his face and started in, "One, two, three, four five," then realized he was not playing hide and go seek and looked so ashamed. However, I assured him it was all right and
that God wouldn’t care. What a wonderful being God is! If we only would keep our childhood faith in Him.

One morning in the fall of the year, Bert Gemmell came over to our place saying Mable was very sick. Our men were away threshing at one of the neighbors and I had the three boys and Irma to take care of. However, I gave Eddie instructions as to the fires, and got promises from Tommy and Huntley to be good boys and do what Eddie told them. I couldn’t very well refuse to go, for Mable had stayed with me sometime when I was ill, and she and Bert had come over every night while George and Joe had gone looking for land at Zealandia.

I stayed all day with Mable, but left in time to get home before dark.

I had one horse and the buggy; Irma bundled and sitting on the buggy seat beside me. When I got home, Eddie was sitting by the table reading one of the Horatio Alger books, but Tommy and Huntley were nowhere in sight. Eddie said they had gone over to Johnston’s, about two miles away and across a big ravine. Eddie said he couldn’t make them stay home. I think I left Irma with Eddie and I started out to look for the boys. Just as I got to the hill on one side of the ravine, I saw, coming down the hill on the opposite side of the ravine, the most outlandish outfit one could imagine. By this time, it was quite dusk and I couldn’t make out what in the world it was. Finally, I decided it was a pony hitched up to some sort of a contraption. Every once in a while, the pony would give a half hop with its hinder parts. As they came close, I thought there was a big dog or something hunched up on a box behind the pony; then there was a hand sleigh behind the box with something else hunched on that.

All at once, as they came to the bottom of the hill, I realized it was Tommy and Huntley. They had the pony rigged out in a harness with no britchen strap. Just tugs fastened to their makeshift sleigh, and on coming down the hill, the box or sleigh would run up on the pony’s heels, then she would give this funny jump. What I thought was a dog, was my brave Tommy hunched up on his hands and knees. Huntley was squatted on the hand sleigh that was tied on the back of the box.

Just as they came along to where I was waiting for them, a coyote or two started howling; sounded quite close, and were the two boys frightened. This was one time I did not try to allay their fears. Huntley was frightened when he heard them howl and I told him that he never again must go away like that because he might get lost and have to stay away all night and we couldn’t find him and he wouldn’t know how to get home. I took Huntley in the buggy beside me, and Tommy drove the caravan home. Believe me, they were a pair of frightened boys by the time they got home. Irma couldn’t have been more than two years old at this time. When Eddie and Tommy started to go to school, they first walked all the way there and back. It must have been about three miles to the little schoolhouse. One morning they noticed something sticking up in a furrow which ran along our school land property. George had bought this piece of land, a half section, and the furrow was a mile long. The two little boys went over to investigate and here it was, the two ears on a prairie wolf that was lying sound asleep in the furrow. They must have crept up very quietly because the animal never wakened, I think they were brave little boys to go on to school
and then to walk home past the place where the prairie wolf had been sleeping. Eddie said, "We walked very quietly and made no noise" Eddie wrote a letter to the children’s column in the Family Herald and Weekly Star, a Montreal paper, and told about their experience on their way to school. His letter was published and believe me we all got a kick out of it. We took the Family Herald and Weekly Star for years. That was the paper Mrs. Moses Seed she liked so well, "because there is so much kindlin’ in it."

In those days, we used to go picking Saskatoon’s. We usually went in the wagon and took our lunch. We made a day of it. Then next day we picked them over and canned them. They grew in profusion and were very luscious. Then we found out about the frost berries. These grew on thorny bushes and the only way one could get the berries was to cut the branches off and beat them and the berries would tumble off. We first would spread a blanket on the ground, beat the branches and let the berries fall on the blanket. We had seen the Indians doing this. The berries were a bright red but funny thing, when one boiled them, the water was milky white. They were supposed to make a bright red jelly. The first time I tried making jelly of them, I was disgusted and was going to throw this white milky water away; then out of curiosity decided to try a little of it with some sugar and, to my surprise, when I added the sugar, it all turned red! The result was I finished making the lot.

There was an abundance of wild fruit in Saskatchewan, such as Saskatoon’s or June berries, red and chokecherries, gooseberries, black currants, and some red currants. Mrs. Purdy always made catsup from the red seed apple of the wild roses. It was very, very good.
Chapter 23

A Trip to Banff

One summer, George and I got Mrs. Jeal to stay with the children and we went to Calgary to the Stampede. I do not remember the Stampede at all; the only thing that I remember about Calgary is the buildings which were made or built of sandstone, and I remember a little child lying asleep on the sidewalk, her face covered with jam and flies by the hundreds around her.

We went on out to Banff and got there about three o'clock in the afternoon. The station was quite rustic, built of logs. I remember we walked to the little town, some distance from the station, and carried our grips. When we got to the hotel, George ordered me to wait on the porch until he got Aunt Lizzie, Johnny, Vinnie and Miss Wallace located. I was boob enough to do so. I had been waiting there some little time when Bob or George Kinnon came along and asked me what I was standing there for. I think it was George Kinnon, Jean Mutch’s uncle. He and his wife had come out on the same train that we did. I replied to his question that "George had told me to." Why was I such a boob! Well, Mr. Kinnon said, "You come on in with me," which I did. We went upstairs to where the rest of our party was being located and I got the dickens from George for coming up. Well, he had Lizzie and her gang settled, then found out Lizzie, Miss Wallace, John and Vinnie were located in the room that we were registered in, and we were settled in the room to which Lizzie and her gang were registered. The room he had settled Lizzie and her gang in was a lovely big bright room, and the room where he had planted himself and his loving wife was small, dark and dreary, and at the back of the hall. George said it was my fault for the mix-up, though how I couldn't see, because he had them settled in their room before I came upstairs.

Well, anyway, George was so mad at me that he made me go and inform Lizzie and Miss Wallace they were in our room and we in theirs, and would they please change. They didn't like it very well when they saw how shabby their exchanged room was. I don’t blame them. They picked up their belongings and moved to the other room. I was a simpleton to inform them of the mistake, and should have told George to tell them himself. He was nowhere in evidence while Lizzie and her gang was making the transfer. Then, later on in the evening, we went touring the town. Somehow, we got separated from Lizzie and her party. They wanted to buy souvenirs; George wanted to go exploring the town, so we drifted from each other. We ran across the Kinnons. Mr. Kinnon was always talking of looking for "putrefied" souvenirs. I shouldn't chronicle that expression, but that was how he designated his search. When we arrived back at the hotel, I went in to say goodnight to Lizzie. She was mad at me.
because we hadn’t waited for them but had gone on by ourselves. She was comfortably seated on the "thunder-mug" with which every room was supplied, and all she said was, "Well! What happened to you folks?"

One morning while we were in Banff, the gang decided to go on a drive. I wanted to have a blouse washed or laundered and told George before I could go on the drive, I would have to locate a laundry. He said, 'Well, you'll have to find one yourself," so off I started. There were no paved streets or sidewalks in the place that I can remember. Someone told me there was a woman "off down that way" who did washing. So I followed the direction they designated with their thumb and found myself following a wagon trail through the woods. A young Englishman came by with his horse and milk cart, so I asked him about the laundry. He said, "Yes, it's down a bit further on; I am going there now to deliver milk. If you'll 'op in the cart, I'll take you there and bring you back." So I 'opped' in the cart and left my blouse to be laundered - the woman said she would send it to the hotel by three o'clock if it didn't rain - and I 'opped' back in the milk cart with 'my gallant English milkman and he took me back to the hotel where the gang was waiting for me, all ready to go on their drive. Imagine the cold reception I got! Driving up in a cart with a milkman, a perfect stranger! I didn't much care. I had a nice drive with a perfect gentleman through lovely woods; and thanks to him would have a nice clean crispy blouse that afternoon.

I do not remember how long we stayed in Banff, but it was beautiful. We visited the old extinct volcano. An old man, a Scotsman dressed in a Scotch suit, kilt, sporran, cap, stockings and all, and with a lantern (lighted) in his hand led the party of us into the old volcano to see a beautiful sight. It was quite dark when we first entered. Then, as we got farther in, through the opening at the mouth of this extinct volcano poured a beautiful ray of sunlight into the blue waters in the pool. This ray of sunlight was all rainbow colors. There was a boardwalk part way around the pool; we did not go all the way on the walk.

We also visited the swimming pools, and some of our group drank copiously of the sulfur waters.

Then, one day we boarded the train for home, back to the farm and to the usual grind; but feeling we had benefited by our trip and the things we saw.

While in Banff, George and I, with Vinnie along, called on an old girl-friend, Teena Petrie. She had married, but I forget her married name. She was a daughter of the Petrie’s who kept the Tregarva Post Office. Lizzie was mad at us for going to Teena’s.
Chapter 24

A Trip to The Fair

Another time, I left the children with Aunt Maggie while Father, Ettie and I drove to Indian Head to the Fair. Father wanted to go, so Aunt Maggie said she would keep the children if I would drive Father down there. I do not remember how Ettie came along. Our brother, William, had a photo studio there and we stayed at his place. Ettie made some Saskatoon berry pies, which did not suit William at all. Oh, now I remember, Ettie was already there keeping house for William, but she came back with Father and me when we returned to the farm in Tregarva. The fair was the usual affair - bread, cakes, pie, pickles, fruit, quilts, fancy work, horses, pigs, cows, chickens, grain and vegetables.

On our way to and from the fair, we walked and had to pass a livery stable, smelling of horse droppings, and swarming with flies, and a bunch of men sitting on tilted back chairs, smoking and "chawing "terbaccar" and watching the ladies trip by. I was unlucky enough to really trip on a bump in the sidewalk, right in front of this gallant group of gentlemen, and would have fallen had not several of them jumped to my rescue, pipes, "terbaccar" and all! My family knows how easily I can "trip." Ettie declared I did it on purpose, just to see what the men would do, and that if she had been wise enough, she would have tripped before I did. We stayed in Indian Head for a few days and then left for home, taking Ettie back with us.

We didn’t make very good time, as it had rained and the roads were muddy; having only one horse, it was slow going, and to make matters worse, we got off the road, which was only a trail part of the way. Our trail led us right into a big field of grain. We couldn't go through that, so for a minute we didn’t know what to do. It was evening and, before long, we would probably be hunting a trail in the dark. However, we saw a few lights off to the left and decided to make our way to them, which we did. We arrived at a little place called the "German Settlement' and, where (by the way) my sister Annie had taught school for a year or so and boarded with the Getner’s, where we called while in the German Settlement.

Father knocked at the door of one of the houses and asked if we might stay for the night. He explained how we got off our road and, as it was dark, we were afraid to go on. These people were really German; but they gave us permission to stay for the night, for which we were very grateful.

We (Ettie and I) were ushered into a big bedroom with a bed in one corner and another along the wall. These beds were piled high with feather ticks. Everything was spotlessly clean; sheets and pillow cases snowy white. The bedrooms were clean; the walls whitewashed snowy white and white curtains at the windows. Father was allotted another room somewhere in the house. In the room to which Ettie and I were assigned were a young
girl about sixteen and a boy about eighteen. The girl had nothing to say, but the boy was quite talkative. He spoke very broken English. He regaled us with tales of travel, and informed us how one time he went to Regina, which he called "Rayeena" and which was about twenty-five miles from where he lived. Quite a traveler, eh what? The girl soon crawled in, clothes and all, between feather ticks on the bed along the wall. Ettie and I were so tired and we waited and waited for the young man to leave the room so we could undress and go to bed. He made no effort to leave the room and finally in his German accent said to us, "Air you not sleepy?" We said, "Yes, very." "Well," he said, "There is a bed, tumble in." So we "tumbled in" clothes and all. He then blew out the lamp, or rather the light, and we heard him flop on the floor and roll himself up in another feather tick and with a pleasant, "Good night" was soon fast asleep. Ettie and I then sat up in bed and disrobed as best we could in the dark.

When we awoke in the morning, both boy and girl were gone. We rose, dressed, and met Father who was up waiting for us. Father asked the woman of the house if we might have some breakfast. She put a loaf of black bread and some fat pork and black coffee on the table. We couldn't stomach the looks of the fat pork, so Father asked if we might have an egg each. She then brought each of us an egg, barely warmed. I think I ate mine; maybe Ettie ate hers, but Father couldn't eat his; it was so soft when he broke the shell the egg ran out like water. Father never would eat an egg unless it was really hard-boiled. Father asked the woman what he owed her for our stay and breakfast. She charged him fifty cents for each of us. We thought that was terrible as we hadn't eaten anything but our egg and a little piece of black bread and Father hadn't even eaten his egg.

While Father was busy looking after our horse, Ettie and I visited the little church close by. This settlement was very, very poor. Yet that little church was beautiful inside, no sign of poverty there. The priest was not at home; the German woman said he was away. Ettie disgraced me and shocked the woman by asking where the priest's wife was. The poor woman replied, "Our priests do not marry." Ettie's face grew red because she knew, had she stopped to think no Catholic Priest marries.

Then we went to the Getner's for a little visit. They were very kind and sorry to hear that both Mother and Annie had died. I can hear Mrs. Getner still saying, "Ach! And now the poor father with the gray hairs is left alone." They were very fond of Annie who, when she first went to teach in the settlement, found she did not have a single pupil who could speak a word of English and she could speak no German. Some very amusing, if crude, things occurred. One instance of this was, Annie noticed that a certain little boy was missing from his seat; on asking if anyone knew where Herman was, one little boy raised his hand and said, "He has gone out to shit." The poor boy knew no better than use plain English and to the point. Strange but true, all foreign people learning to speak English have a knack of learning vile words much quicker than poetic phrases. We then went on home to Tregarva.
Chapter 25

Murder on the Prairies

One winter in particular stands out in my memory. It was a terribly cold winter and coal was at a premium. All trains were late, and especially those that carried coal. Word was noised abroad one day that the next day a car of coal would be brought in to Lumsden. I remember George got up early and set off with the big sleigh and team for Lumsden in order to be there as soon as the car came in. It turned very cold and blustery that afternoon, and I had just finished up the chores at the barn, such as milking and feeding all the stock, gotten in the wood and water for the night. We had to pump and carry the water in from a pump in the yard. Now, if there was one thing I was scared of, when alone, it was a peddler. One drove up to the door and asked if he could put his team in the barn and stay with us for the night. He was poorly clad and hungry looking; his team was thin and miserable looking too. At first I said no, that there was another house about a mile further on - Mr. Binnie’s - and by the way Aunt Mary's father’s place - and they had lots of room and could put him up. The poor fellow looked around at the gathering storm, then back at me and said, "Lady, my ponies are tired and hungry. I am cold and tired and hungry too. It is almost dark and it is stormy. If I were not a good man, I would not ask you to let me stay. Please, lady, let me stay." I said, "Very well, but remember, I am alone with my little children and my husband may not be home tonight; but put your ponies in the stable and give them some feed, then come in and get warm and I'll give you something to eat." So he did just that. With a prayer in my heart, I began to prepare things for supper. I was terribly afraid. Peddlers, or some men pretending to be peddlers, had been causing a lot of trouble in our vicinity that year and I was so terrified of anything that looked like a peddler that I just about passed out with fright if one came near our place.

Well, George arrived home just about the time I had supper ready, to my great relief. He and the peddler became quite friendly. George was a good talker and they soon were chatting away as though they had known one another for years. The peddler was very interesting. He came from a country called Syria. It is spoken of in the New Testament. The Turks had killed his parents and persecuted all people who were Christians. He had hidden when the Turks came, and had escaped their cruelty! He had often been to Joseph's Well, also written about in the New Testament. He told us of having seen the place where Christ was crucified and many other interesting things about places that we have read about in the New Testament. I was ashamed of my fears; he was the nicest and most interesting person we ever had in our house.

30 Mary Binnie married Joseph McNeice and was his second wife. His first wife, Mary Elizabeth Gemmell, had died in childbirth.
But, still my fears persisted even after that experience. There was a band of men, about eighty of them, supposedly from Armenia, who infested that part of Canada one summer. They were reported to have separated, or broken up their band at Brandon, each gone a separate way, and roamed all over the country. They each had a printed card with - supposedly - their name on it and a plea printed also on the card, asking for help to aid them in returning home to Armenia where their people lived. The card stated they could speak no English and each was supposed to have lost an arm. At least two of these men came to our house - not at the same time - but several days apart. The first one just presented his card and I do not remember whether I gave him any money or not - most likely not for it was seldom I ever had a penny. He went away and was no more trouble. But, one morning after we had finished breakfast, another one came and tried to force his way into the house and, only that Uncle Joe was there, would have succeeded. Uncle Joe put the boots to him. He was very insistent on getting into the house. Then, that very same day, he came back and tried to get in again. George was in the house and frightened him off.

One stopped where the Stewarts lived in the Qu'Appelle Valley. He, too, had his card and an arm all bandaged up. One of the Stewart men made him take the bandage off his arm, suspecting it was a fraud, and, sure enough, here he had a piece of raw meat bandaged or tied on his arm, making it look like a raw sore. Of course, they kicked him off the place. The police (Mounted) were notified and before long had a lot of them in jail. I never did hear what was done with them.

Then, too, one winter's day a man came to Charlie Stewart's house and asked to get warm and for something to eat. Mr. Stewart had gone to Regina and she was there with her little children. She gave the man his dinner and, after eating it, he grabbed the butcher knife and chased her around the room and tried to kill her. She said she would never know how she had strength to fight him; but she grabbed the carving fork and fought him off. She said she never knew how she got the door open and got him out. He then started walking away. She watched him until he hit Albert Street, a short distance from their house and saw he continued north on the road. Shortly afterward, her brother-in-law came in on horseback on his way to Regina from the Valley. She told him what had happened and where the man had gone. He said, "That must have been the fellow I met a mile or so back on the road," so he got on his horse and started in pursuit of the fellow, caught up to him, gave him a horsewhipping and drove him ahead of him all the way to Regina, where he found the man was an escaped lunatic and had been in jail at the barracks, but by some means had made his get-away.

Then, a mile or two out of Bethune, a man entered the house of his best friend, when the friend had gone to Regina on business, dragged his friend's wife out of the house to a wheat field raped and murdered her. It was a wonder he did not kill her two children as well. They saw him pull her down the stairs and out the door and her body was found in the wheat field. Her husband came home on the midnight train from Regina, to find his children panic-stricken and to find his wife dead and murdered by his best friend.
So, you see, it wasn’t much wonder I was so terrified to see a stranger coming near the place, and the longer I lived on the farm, the more terrified I became.

There was another murder case at Disley, not far from Lumsden. A Mr. Warwick was murdered in his stable. His wife was arrested on suspicion of having committed the crime. George and I went to her trial in Regina. The story she told was they had been to town that day, and then when they returned home in the evening, she went in the house to prepare supper. Her husband took the team of drivers to the stable and, as soon as he had them unharnessed and fed, was to come in for his supper. Well, she said she got the supper ready, waited and waited, but he never came in. So, after waiting a long time, she went to the stable to see why he was so long about coming in for supper and found him lying under the driving team’s feet, his head smashed and covered with blood. She said the team was still there with their harness on, so she took the team out, hitched them to the buggy and went for help.

Previously, she had told how this team was so wild that she always had dreaded something would happen to Mr. Warwick (or Warick) when he was around them.

The Prosecution asked her how, when they were so wild, was she able to get them out of the stable and drive to a neighbours? She said she would never know. The trial lasted only a day or two, but a lot of evidence was brought out against her as an accomplice, both before and after the murder was committed. It came out that she, on her own testimony, had been very intimate with a man by the name of Price and that Mr. Warick knew all about it. She told of different times meeting with Price and of having been intimate with him; of having kept house for him and that he had been intimate with her while she was keeping house for him. Others told things about her when called to the witness stand, which were very damaging to her reputation. Told of how she was seen meeting him in lonely places at different times, and many other things.

One witness was a neighbor woman who, when she heard Mr. Warick was murdered, went over to the Warick place and took Mrs. Warick back with her to her place that night. She told how, after Mrs. Warick had gone to bed and was asleep, Mr. Price had come and wanted to see Mrs. Warick and how she had refused to let him in. And that he came back the next night and, at Mrs. Warick’s suggestion, had allowed him to come in and see Mrs. Warick. She said that after Price had gone, Mrs. Warick was in a terrible state of mind and told her neighbor how Price had told Mrs. Warick that he had killed her husband. He had clubbed him to death with a heavy piece of timber about three or four inches thick and about three feet long. This piece, covered with blood, was found in the stable.

Price then left Mrs. Warick, drove to Moose Jaw, got a room in a hotel there and shot himself to death, leaving Mrs. Warick to face the music. It came out at the trial that Mr. Warick had been suffering with stomach disorders for a long time and that Dr. Anderson had been called to attend him during the summer, also Dr. Ball of Regina. But whether Warick had told them of his fears, or not, they did not testify to that. But, according to some of the witnesses, he had a hunch his wife was trying to poison him.
People were very bitter against her. Bryant, her criminal lawyer, pleaded her case. He was a wonderful pleader and ended his plea with the words of Christ, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." Court was adjourned shortly before noon after the judge had addressed the jury. The jury filed out and the crowd all went out for lunch. Court resumed about one o'clock; the jury filed in and took their seats. On being questioned by the judge as to how they found the prisoner, the foreman rose and, addressing the judge, said, "Your honor, we find the accused not guilty." One could hear a pin drop. The silence was terrific. Many felt she was guilty, if not of the actual crime, then as an accomplice both before and after the crime.

However, many others felt sorry for her, because both she and some of the witnesses had testified that Mr. Warick had ill-used her in many ways and that she, herself, was innocent.

I never heard anything more about her - where she went, or what became of her. This crime was committed near Disley, up the line a short distance from Lumsden on the C.N.R.

It is strange, in a way, how crime affects one’s whole life. This woman had had her friends before this murder was committed but I heard they had nothing to do with her after the trial. Whether this is the Christian way to treat one who has been a friend, or not, is hard to say. In the minds of so many, although she was acquitted, there still hung a suspicion of her guilt, although no one breathed it to another. The law had pronounced her innocent: what more could they want. Yet everyone shunned her. There were so many instances where she had been, by her own testimony, unfaithful and intimate with Price, it was hard to brush that part of it out of their minds. Perhaps she had been unhappy in her marriage and, as in so many cases, had turned to Price for sympathy. Who can tell! Her life was ruined.
Chapter 26

So Sick I Could Die

One day, when George and I and Irma were sitting at the station at Chamberlain, I think this was the time we went up there to a picnic and the train ran off the tracks, we saw a man coming over to take the train too. He was carrying some heavy luggage and, as he set it down on the platform to rest and wipe his brow, George made the remark to him that he "must have gold in those grips." He smiled and said, "It is gold." He then opened his grips and showed us they were full of beautifully bound books. We got talking and he selected a book and handed it to me, saying he would like us to have it - that he had written it himself. I accepted very graciously. The book was entitled, "My Journey's Far and Near." His portrait was on the flyleaf and his name was, if I remember correctly, Shields. He was English, I believe, and had a big handlebar mustache. I never saw him again, though his book remained in my possession many years. When we left Lumsden, nearly all my books remained behind; in fact, I sold a lot of them at our sale.

One summer while still on the farm, I had a terrible siege with stomach trouble. Couldn't even take a sip of milk or water without the most excruciating pain. I had to work hard that summer. We had carpenters there building a barn, besides my husband and four children. Then, when harvest started, we had four hands hired and, of course, I had it all to do alone. Eddie and Tommy would help all they could after school, but though I was grateful for their help, it did not by any means lift the burden from my shoulders. Then Ev Wilson came to stay. She had only one hand. Her other hand been cut off by a mowing machine when she was little. She had toddled out to the hayfield where her father was working, grew sleepy, they think and lay down in the hay. Her father, unknowingly, drove right over her or on to her, cutting her hand off.

I grew more and more ill. Finally, one Sunday morning George said he would go down to Jeal's and see if Mrs. Jeal would come up for a while. (I think he realized II was at the end of my rope.) All that Sunday I kept going, though I had to hang onto chairs or table to keep from falling as I went about the room.

Ev sat there all day long and never offered to help one bit. Finally, I grew so weak I could hardly get up the stairs to bed, George didn't get back until midnight with Mrs. Jeal.

Now Ev, although she had only one hand, could do anything. She could peel potatoes faster than I ever could, wash dishes and dry them, make beds, sweep floors, knit and do all kinds of fancywork. She had lost her hand when so young that she never remembered having two
hands, but there she sat and wouldn't offer to do a thing. How I ever got through that day, a day of pain, weakness and misery?!

The next morning, Mrs. Jeal and George got the breakfast for the men. I got up and, by a superhuman effort, got my clothes on and got downstairs. I can still see the table full of men. Then I collapsed (fainted) and dropped to the floor. Some of the men helped carry me back upstairs and there I lay for two months. I had the most terrible pains in my head. It seemed to expand and retract to about the size of an orange and with each pulse-beat there was a noise like the screaming of a train whistle. Still no doctor was summoned! Mrs. Tom Burrows came over in the afternoon to say they were going to Lumsden and would tell Dr. Anderson to come out but George didn't want him to come; said I'd be all right. However, I told Mrs. Burrows I wanted a doctor and to send one out. Mrs. Burrows said to George, "You should have a doctor; don't you know Mrs. McNeice is terribly sick and has been for a long time?"

Well, Dr. Anderson was away and Dr. Boyd came out. The first thing he said, "Are you always that colour?" They afterwards told me I was chalky white. Boyd left some pills and said he would have Anderson come out in the morning. I couldn't sleep and this awful pain. For days and nights I couldn't sleep and someone had to sit by my bed all night long.

Dr. Anderson tried to get a sample of my blood, but all he could get was a couple of drops of pinkish colored blood, which he put on a slide. He told George he couldn't give me anything to ease the terrible pain in my head, because if he gave me anything strong enough to ease the pain, it would stop my heart.

Every little noise hurt me so, and when the men learned how ill I was and how noise hurt me, they tried to be so quiet. They would tiptoe in to their meals and eat so quietly. They would also drive their loaded wagons away around so they would not make a noise passing the house. Ordinarily they drove right past the house to the barn. They were stacking a lot of grain by the barn so that if it rained when the threshers came, they could thresh from the stacks. In wet weather, they couldn't thresh from the stokes in the field.

That was a terrible illness. I grew delirious and imagined George was trying to poison me and would take no nourishment unless they swore to me that George never touched it in the preparation. I can remember so much about that illness.

I remember Uncle Isaac and Aunt Beckie trying to get me to take something. Uncle Isaac was on his knees by the bed, coaxing me to take it and I said, "No, George put poison in it." I was just as sure of this as of anything in my life. Of course, had I not been delirious, no such thought would ever have entered my mind.

Then finally, Dr. Anderson did give me some powders for my head. Gave them very reluctantly. George told him if he didn't, my heart would stop anyway, so the doctor consented. He had been keeping me on brandy and milk for over a week. Well, I hadn't had the first down, George said, more than ten minutes when he said I looked up and said, "The pain is all gone," and from then on I began to grow better, though it was a long hard pull.
After the pain subsided, I went blind for days. Couldn’t see a thing. Then, one day, my sight began to return, slowly, and for days and days everything danced and trembled about me.

Mrs. Jeal stayed for some time and then Aunt Maggie came and stayed.

Then we got a Mrs. Oldham, an English woman to come. Dr. Anderson told George that I would have to go away for two or three months to recuperate.

I took to bed around the first of September and by the last of November was allowed to sit up five minutes. I thought I was able to get up and dress but before the five minutes were gone, I was begging to get back into bed. However, I grew stronger and before long was able to be downstairs.
Chapter 27

Back to Ontario

After Christmas, we decided if I had to go away, I would go to Ontario, to Strathroy and the Bonds. Mrs. Oldham kept house; her husband worked for George and Aunt Beckie kept Irma for quite some time. Then, one day George, Mrs. Oldham and I went to Regina and George bought me a Grey Persian lamb coat, cap and gauntlets. We got them at the Glasgow House. I remember I wanted a beautiful brown cloth coat - fur lined and oh, it was lovely and fitted me so well and looked so beautiful. It was $85.00. George thought it was too much, so we decided on the Grey Lamb, which was $65.00. George afterwards bought himself a fur-lined coat for $80.00, but that was different. Anyway (Oh, well) my Grey Persian lamb outfit was quite a sensation in little old Strathroy.

Just before my train pulled in to the station, George brought a fairly old man and introduced him to me. This man was going as far as Toronto and George asked him to look after me on the way down. He was a nice old man, not so very old either. His name was Mac(something), I have forgotten what. Well, when the train pulled in, for two cents I would have backed out and gone home with George and Mrs. Oldham. A funny sensation, isn't it? One wants to go, yet something seems to pull one back.

At last, good-byes were said, and I was off on an 1,800-mile trip all on my own. This old man sat by me quite a while and then said, "I am going to bring a friend who I think will be a better companion for you than an old man like me." I assured him I enjoyed his company very much. However, he went away and returned with a young man whose name was McCleod. Both these men came from farther north than where we lived, and both were going to Toronto, but taking another route from there.

Then Mr. McCleod brought a couple of friends of his along and introduced them. One was a commercial traveler, the other a Mr. McClain. The traveler was a "Mac" too. I believe his name was McLellan. The day we got into Winnipeg, these men insisted I go to a hotel with them and have breakfast, which I did, although George insisted I would take my eats along, as all tourists did. Mrs. Oldham had made me a meat pie and packed in several other nice things to eat. We had breakfast and lunch at the CPR hotel in Winnipeg. The CPR at that
time owned the railway line, which afterwards was sold to the CNR. These men, my travelling companions, even got me a room where I could lie down and rest. They surely were nice to me.

About five in the evening, we boarded the train again. It was so cold! Everything covered with snow. The old engine looked like a miniature mountain. So covered with snow and ice, it was. At Winnipeg, there was a young lady took the train for Wingham, Ont. She, too, was going as far as Toronto then from there in the morning would take a train to Winnipeg. I got to know her quite well; she was a lovely girl and was going to be married shortly to a man in Wingham. She had been working in Winnipeg.

Well, we were quite a jolly party; six of us and each had the prefix "Mc" or "Mac" to our names. The next morning after we left Winnipeg, I opened my grip which contained my travelling eatables, and found them steaming hot! The meat pie smelled to high heaven. Someone had taken my grip down from the rack and set it beside the hot water pipes, or hot air pipes, and was my lunch a mess. The men wanted to know what I ever brought a lunch for anyway! The commercial traveler picked up the grip and said, "Come on." I came and he stood on the platform and threw all the eats out into the snow. The bunch saw I had plenty of good eats all the way down.

I do not remember how long we were on the trip but it must have been four or five days anyway. Some of the men were good singers and one played the harmonica. The commercial traveler taught me to play blackjack but I forgot all about it in no time.

We all separated in Toronto; that is, all but Miss McDougal, the girl from Winnipeg, Mr. McClain and myself. We stayed overnight in Toronto. In the morning, Miss McDougal took her train to Wingham. Mr. McClain and I saw her off. Then Mr. McClain took me to my train. Really, I felt lost when each of us had gone our respective way. We had spent the best part of a week together with not a dull moment; but that is the way of life.

Aunt Jane, George’s aunt by marriage, and by the way, a McNeice, though I do not recall which McNeice she had married, but he long since had died, met me at the train. She had only one son and no daughters. Her son’s name was Albert. He was married but spent a great deal of his time with his mother. Aunt Jane made good pies; at the time she was boarding two boys about the ages of 12 and 14, who were going to school in Strathroy. George had me so scared of Albert. I was scared still to be left alone with him one minute. But there was nothing wrong with Albert. He was a lot of fun. George told me so many things about him, which I afterwards discredited, but at the time made me afraid.

The first morning, Albert came over to Aunt Jane’s and said if I would give him the check for my trunk, he would bring it up from the station for me. I gave him the check but actually wouldn’t have been much surprised if I had bid good-bye to my trunk and Albert too, so

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31 George’s cousin Thomas Robert, who died in 1883, had married a Jane Brown, who lived until 1934. They had a son Albert, who was born in 1871
scared of trusting Albert was I. He came back presently with my trunk, and I was ashamed of myself.

I believe Aunt Jane had a daughter, Beckie; if not a daughter, a niece, who was going to school in London. Aunt Jane was reported to have a sweetheart, who lived across the street from her. If so, she was very discreet about it all. The neighbor men used to tease her about her squeaky gate, and tell her to get her sweetheart to buy some oil and lubricate the hinges!

While I was at Aunt Jane’s I bought some black serge and some cream satin for a yoke and had a nice dress made. There were twenty-one gores in the skirt. Some girl, who Aunt Jane knew, made it for me. She was two or three days making it and charged only two-and-a-half dollars for her work.

I stayed with Aunt Jane for a while, then went out to Uncle James Brown's about two or three miles out in the country. This James Brown was the grandfather of Ira Brown who married Myra McNeice, Uncle Joe's second eldest daughter. I felt rather lost there, especially on Sunday. We went to church in the morning, but Uncle and Aunt slept most of the afternoon and all there was in the house to read were two leaves of an ancient Sunday School paper. Uncle and Aunt were lovely people. Uncle James had spent one harvest with us on the farm; he came out to Saskatchewan on a harvest excursion. The CPR used to run harvest excursions in harvest time to the prairies and tourist excursions east for the farmers and anyone who wished to travel east in the winter. Each ticket, or tickets either way or both ways were good for three months.

The time Uncle James came out to our place I was sitting in the corral milking the cows. The men were away threshing and would not be home until quite late. All at once I saw this man standing by the corral fence. My heart stood still! I was so terribly afraid of a stranger, I just about fainted. He asked me if George McNeice was home, and I said, "No, not just now," and asked him if he knew George. He said, "I ought to, I'm his Uncle James." Everything was all right then. George had told me how grand his Uncle James and Aunt Josephine was that I felt he was a long lost friend. He stayed a couple of months with us and we loved him.

While I was at their place, their son, Ed and his wife and their son, Tra went out to either Calgary or Lethbridge. No, Ed's wife remained with Aunt Josephine, Uncle James' wife. Ed's wife was expecting the stork and everyone thought she should stay with Ed's parents until the event had transpired and she was strong enough to travel and also until Ed had located out there. I believe he located near Lethbridge.

When Minnie, Ed's wife, was packing his grip, she showed Ed a little two-ounce bottle of brandy, which she slipped in his grip in case he should get train sick. Ed gave me the wink.
Guess he could manage that much without trouble and more besides, though his wife didn't know it. Funny, how sometimes a wife doesn't know as much about her husband's failings as does his neighbor.

One day we drove out to their daughter's place. I forget whom Annie married - some farmer. Uncle Joe felt pretty sick when he got a letter from Annie saying she was married. They had been very fond of each other and, if I can add two and two and make four, Joe was in love with her.

Well, then I went back to Aunt Jane's for a while and while there had a lot of dental work in Strathroy. One Sunday night Aunt Jane and I went to a revival meeting in one of the churches. The minister was shouting hell and damnation on everyone who went to dances; He was quite a sensation. The Glory Song was being sung almost to death that winter. It is pretty.

Then one day I went out to the Bonds, after I had finished getting my teeth all fixed up. The Novocain had upset my stomach and I had quite a siege with indigestion. I quickly bought some Gude's Pepto-mangan and was better very soon. This medicine is what Dr. Anderson had me take when I was recovering from my long illness on the farm. I forgot to mention in this illness the doctor had told George that I never would recover and the news had spread abroad through the neighborhood that I was expected to depart this life at any moment. All this, I learned after I recovered. Ev got mad at George at the time and she transferred her affections to Uncle Joe and went home with him one day and stayed with him for months. His wife and baby had died in the spring of that year. George was disgusted with both of them. They had come down to our place one night, or evening, and had supper at our place, and after supper, while George was out at the barn doing up the chores, Joe asked me if we would let Tommy go home with them and live with them. He previously had asked George to give him Tommy. Of course, George had refused. I also refused to let Tommy go home with them. When George came in, I told him what Joe wanted, and he said "No" very emphatically. Joe was displeased, but after they had gone home, George said, "All they wanted Tommy for was a blind," and he wouldn't have anything to do with it. Joe was sore about it for a long time.

On in the next summer, Ev got mad at Joe and went down to Lumsden to Aunt Lizzie's. She grew very despondent and queer, like her father (the old bald man who wanted Walter his son, to go to Watford and buy him a fine comb for his hair, which was minus entirely). Aunt Lizzie was scared stiff of Ev and was glad when Ev's brother sent her money for her fare home to Ontario. She was a strange girl.

Well, I have digressed, once more, but things keep coming back to me as I write. I was rather glad to go back to the Bonds; they were so lovely and always made one feel so at home.

I had been down in Ontario about one month when I went in to Strathroy with Mr. Bond one morning and went to the Post Office expecting a letter from George. The postmistress aid said, "There was a gentleman in this morning who asked for your mail and I gave what
there was to him." I was flabbergasted, couldn't imagine who the gentleman was. She said he wore a fur-lined coat.

The mystery thickened. Well, I went out and decided whoever it was would probably make him known sooner or later. Had been strolling around only a few minutes when I came face to face with George. I was astounded! Because, when I left home to start on my trip he had said he was so short of money and my trip and clothes had cost so much, that he couldn't afford anything for himself. I felt like a fugitive from a chain gang when he would talk like that. Cheery way to send one's wife on a trip for her health!!! Eh, what!

And, here he was! Fur-lined coat and all! He had left a hired man to look after the stock and left the children with Mrs. Oldham, the housekeeper and taken the train for Ontario. Looked like he was poverty stricken, didn't it?

We both went to visit Aunt Jane and some other friends. While at Aunt Jane's, I persuaded George, after some strong arguments, to take me to the Lyceum Theater. It was a vaudeville show and considered quite risqué. The girls were dressed in tights and did plenty of tall kicking and sang some rowdy songs. In comparison to the way girls on the stage dress now, these girls were fully clothed. Such is life. All the men got quite a kick out of the show. We also went to see McEwen, the great hypnotist; he was real good.

Then, as time for our return home came, another great argument. My ticket allowed for stopovers along the way home. George's didn't. I wanted to stop over at Port Arthur and go out to Kakabeka Falls to see my Sister, Ettie, who was married and living there. George didn't want me to. He wanted to go straight home, but I knew if I didn't see her on our way home, it might be years before I would have an opportunity to see her, so we argued the matter over and got nowhere. Finally, we decided to quit arguing and let matters take their course. Then George decided we would go to Buffalo before we went home; so away we went to Buffalo, taking Edna Bond with us. She was a very pretty girl and lots of fun. George got her a room near ours. He would go out after breakfast and Edna and I would chat in my room. When we first went to our room there was a big placard in the window with "Rooms for Rent" painted on it in big black letters. It was still there the next morning and, when George went out, Edna and I were standing in the window, struggling to get the placard down, when we noticed that our window faced the windows in a college across the street. The windows in this building must have been in a dormitory - two windows - and were filled with young men, all waving and throwing kisses to us. We, of course, reciprocated, devils that we were. So, every few hours this pantomime proceeded to transpire. Well, this continued for about a week, then one day we took our place for the usual play, and the boys were there doing their stunt, and we, all set for the return compliment, when Edna said, "Wait, look down there at that man sitting on the bench. I looked. Oh, me! There was George sitting on a bench watching our window!! Evidently he had gotten wise to our little game. There was really no harm in it at all. We put the placard back in the window and waved good-bye to the boys.

Well, the next day we started back for Strathroy, and the Bonds. Then in a few days left for the prairies and home. The snow was beginning to go in places and the roads were bad. We
got out home by livery and our holiday was over. Before George left for Ontario, he had brought Irma home from Aunt Becky's and Mrs. Oldham had taken care of them all. The children were so happy to have me home again, and I to be home with them.

But, again, I shall have to go back to our trip home and tell how we settled our argument. We still hadn't settled it when we boarded the train at Strathroy for home; but Mrs. Bond said, "I'll bet you win, Mrs. McNeice." Well, I did. Every once in a while the subject came up while we were en route to Port Arthur. I kept telling George we would get off the train at the junction east of Port Arthur, go out to Kakabeka, then when returning we would take the train at Port Arthur, and the conductor there would be a different man to the one whom we traveled with from Strathroy to this junction where we took the train out to Kakabeka and probably would not noticed that he had stopped over. Other people at Bonds told him the same thing too, but he wouldn't listen. No, he was going straight through to Regina and I was going with him.

Well, the nearer we came to the place where we changed for Kakabeka, the stronger his arguments became. However, when the brakeman came through calling the name of this station, I rose and started putting on my hat and coat and George said, "If you will come home now, you can come down in the summer for a visit with Ettie." I knew how that would be; if I went on home now, I'd never get back for a visit; and anyway, I wasn't going to live on promises. I had done enough of that and knew full well if I gave in now; this promise of a return trip in the summer would fizzle out as so many other previous promises had.

I continued my preparations for leaving the train, and when it stopped at the station, I picked up my suitcase, then George jumped up, grabbed his coat and hat, got into his coat, grabbed up his suitcase and out he went. There was a traveler going out to Kakabeka and was sitting just across the aisle from us and when I started out he gave me a big wink. Evidently he had overheard our discussion and was amused to see I had carried my point.

We arrived at Aunt Ettie's about noon and, of course, had a good time. Seems to me the name of the town was Schreiber, or else that was where we changed trains to go out there. While there, Uncle Charlie fixed me up with his trousers and shoes and putties which he had worn in the South African campaign some years previous and took me through the snow to see Kakabeka Falls. They were as deep as Niagara but of course much narrower and very much less volume of water, but very, very tremendous and magnificent. One night at Ettie's we were sitting playing cards when we were startled by the sound of a bell slowly tolling, tolling, tolling mournfully. We stopped playing and listened. Ettie and Charles knew what it was; George and I didn't. Ettie said it's a funeral, and was quite upset. It was such a mournful sound in the night. We went outside and found there was a funeral procession winding its way slowly down the mountainside. It was a company of the Black Watch bearing the casket to its place in the cemetery. They had their bagpipes, weirdly wailing and members of their clan bearing torches, and all the while the church bell slowly tolling.

Some poor soul was being carried to his last resting place, a place so lonely and probably far from his loved ones. Away down the mountainside; and though the night was dark one
could see the blur of trees covered with snow against the darker background of the mountains.

There were men from many parts of Ontario in this district working at putting a power line, I believe, through to Fort William. I believe Ettie said it was a power line, and this man who was being laid to rest by the Black Watch had been killed on the job. The sight of this funeral procession stayed with me for many days; in fact, just now as I write I still have that sinking feeling that overcame me as I watched that night so long ago, a funeral procession winding its way down that lonely mountainside.

I never did like the mountains anyway. A friend of Uncle Charlie drove up to Port Arthur, from where we took the train home to our town of Lumsden, Saskatchewan, and back once more to the prairies.

Something else I have forgotten to relate and will do so now, though I should have done so a while back.

Anyone who has ever traveled in those old CPR coaches in the wintertime can remember how smelly they became in the night. Windows closed, heat on, and the smell of many unwashed bodies stagnating the air. When one looks at the trains of today, especially in these United states, one can't help but compare them to the tourist trains in Canada, back in the years of the 1880's and even later. This period, though, must have been around 1905 and by this time the coaches were much improved, but many of the tourist passengers to be minus a bath for ages.

Father Sinnott from Regina was in our coach and at some little station along the way he left us, probably to officiate at some affair or to visit friends. Just as he left the train, a group of new passengers boarded our train.

Coming in from the cold, fresh air, the atmosphere in the coach offended their nostrils. Someone said, "Phew! What have they got in here, a corpse?" And a little boy piped up, "No, sir, there ain't no corpse in here, but we had an old priest in here for a long time; he just got off the train."
Chapter 28

Scarlet Fever

There was still a lot of snow on the prairie when we arrived home. Spring preparations for seedtime began. The men bluestoned their wheat for seed; harness was gone over and repaired; workhorses were rounded up and brought in off the prairie where they had run at large all winter.

Hogs were butchered and the meat cured for summer use. Oh! The big, lean hams! Housecleaning began. Quilts and blankets washed; children's clothes made for the school season; cows freshening; lots of butter to be made. And, as the weather grew warmer, hens to be set, chickens to be hatched and cared for, and, when the snow disappeared, gardens to be made. The meadowlarks were singing so sweetly, making one feel it was good to be alive.

This brings Llewellyn Love to my memory. His mother had set a hen and had marked the eggs by scribbling on each one with a lead pencil. One day, Llewellyn discovered this nest with all its eggs scribbled on, and in great excitement, ran to his mother calling out, "Mamma, I found a nest full of eggs and the old hen has writ all over them."

The next year after our trip to Ontario, and probably the next two years, passed quite uneventfully. Just the usual round of work and a little play.
Then, one winter's day I developed a bad case of scarlet fever. We, George and I, had been to Regina a short time before, I to get some teeth filled and the only places I had been for a month or more was to the dentist and to the Alexander Hotel for our lunch. First, one whole day, Irma lay and slept on the couch with a kitten in her arms. She had a slight temperature, but when I would ask her if she were sick, she would answer no. I remember in the afternoon, I was ironing some dresses for her, when all at once a sharp pain shot through my neck, and I suddenly grew quite ill. I didn't do any more work that day, but I did undress Irma and put her to bed; and when I undressed her, I found she was completely covered with a bright red rash. And, of course, we didn't send for a doctor. George said it was nothing - just pooh-poohed the idea of a doctor. Next day her rash was gone and she seemed perfectly well. But, was I sick! I do not think I ever was so sick in my life. A raging fever, headache, sore throat and covered with a rash, and to make matters worse, my neck swelled to an enormous size, my tongue also - it filled my mouth completely. I couldn't speak and had to write anything I wished to say. This went on for days, me begging for a doctor, and being refused. Finally, one Sunday afternoon, I wrote on my paper, "George, if you won't send for a doctor, I'll get Jack to take me there. He then sent Jack Middlemas - our hired man - for Dr. Anderson. He brought the doctor up and had to take him back. Before the doctor got there, the abscess in my throat oozed oodles of dark gray matter. The doctor said I was lucky to be awake when the abscess broke, otherwise this matter might have gone into my stomach and poisoned me. I went nearly crazy with my limbs; they were red as scarlet and I never had one thing done to ease the terrible itching or pain. Not even the doctor gave me anything; no, not even a pill. The doctor said he forgot his grip, had been out on a case and just returned when Jack called for him; had just gotten into the cutter with Jack and so had forgotten his grip. So, there I lay and suffered until the disease wore itself out. The children had been in and out of the room at will until the doctor came, then George kept them out, but for days they had been running in and out as they pleased. Not one of them came down with the fever. Irma probably had a slight attack the day she slept all the time and had the rash, but the boys escaped it.

However, George came down with it, but would have no doctor. And, was he covered with a rash. He had it good and plenty, but fortunately for him he had no abscess in the throat. This was in the early winter.

But in the harvest time that fall, I had been confined to bed for some time and George had kept Eddie home from school to cook for the harvest hands. Poor little Eddie! He had no easy road to hoe. George told him if he would stay home and get the meals, he (George) would give him a gold watch. Eddie was only ten and afterwards, some years afterward, lost it in some way in a load of wheat he was taking to the elevators in Lumsden for his Uncle Joe. This was after we left the farm and were living in Lumsden. He grieved for that watch.

Then, it was only a year or so until I broke my arm. We had sold the farm one fall. I think it was the fall of 1907 and was to give possession sometime in the spring: of 1908. I was opposed to selling the farm. I wanted to put a tenant on it and take the children to Lumsden where they could attend school the year around. As I related before, we had only a summer school, from sometime in May until the weather became rough in the fall, usually October
or maybe the first of November. I couldn’t see my children growing up with so little chance for an education. But, anyway, we sold, or George sold. A woman had no choice in money matters then. Of course, most men consulted their wives, but not mine. What George said went. Of course, I should have asserted myself, but one grows weary of arguing. It was a big mistake to sell.

The CPR had surveyed a line through our farm. It ran through our pasture and passed just a few rods just south of our house, and since coming to California, I hear that the spring which flowed summer and winter has been developed and has supplied the city of Regina with water.

The little spring from where, for years, until we dug a well up at the house, I used often to carry a pail of water, and other times took a team of oxen and the stoneboat and hauled a barrel of water for the house. One time, Willard Humphries, a cousin of George, went with me. When we had the barrel filled and started back to the house, me driving the oxen. They kept edging to the left too far. I kept saying, "Haw," and the oxen still kept edging too close to the fence. Willard started to laugh, and said, "I think you had better say 'Gee.' Try it for a
while." Here, I should have been saying gee all the time. I was rather nonplussed for a while, for I surely knew which was which.

One thing I forgot is, Huntley was riding on the gangplow one day with his father, who was plowing. Someway Huntley fell off the plow and the plow ran over his head. It must have been one of the wheels and not the shear; otherwise, he would have been sliced to pieces. Another time, he and his brothers were playing on the top of the old stable, which was a log building and had a straw top. Huntley fell off on the ground and was pretty sick and dizzy for a while. Then, there was the time Eddie stepped on a rusty nail; poor boy, he pulled the nail out of his foot himself and I got a pan of hot water with a lot of turpentine in the water and soaked his foot for a long time. The pain was so intense he actually turned green. There was no such thing as rushing him to a doctor for a tetanus shot in those days. The turpentine evidently took the poison out. It got better.

Then there was the time Irma drank a lot of Hive's syrup. That was when I was confined to bed and Eddie was doing the work. I had this syrup for their whooping cough the fall before and had it up on a shelf in my bedroom upstairs. I, at the time, had my bed downstairs. Now this shelf was up so high I couldn't reach it unless I had a chair to stand on, and here the little monkey climbed up on a chair, then on the dresser and got the bottle down and helped herself. Dr. Kerns happened along at the same time that she came downstairs, looking so queer. I suspected what she had done and told Dr. Kerns. He didn't seem to worry much; only he said to keep her walking and not let her go to sleep. The silly man, he should have pumped her stomach then and there. She got better.

Then, the following spring, in March, just three days before our auction sale, I fell on some ice outside the kitchen door and broke my right arm. I had so much company that day for dinner. Mrs. Purdy and Clifford, Mr. and Mrs. Swartz and some other people. Bert and Mable Gemmel drove up. They had Irma with them. They used to "borrow" her once in a while. They were very fond of Irma.

As I say, I ran out to greet them, slipped on some ice and broke my arm. George sent for the doctor to Lumsden. Dr. Kerns came out and set it and told George to keep me full of whiskey to deaden the pain. George obeyed his orders, because they said I sure talked the most of the night like a drunken sailor. This happened only three days before our auction sale. Mr. McInnis, from Regina, was the auctioneer. Mable Gemmel, Aunt Beckie, Aunt Maggie and Mrs. Swartz took charge of things around the house. George had advertised a free lunch at noon, and if we fed one, we fed two hundred. People came for miles and miles around. They started coming about four o'clock the day before. The sale was in March, the roads were breaking up; snow and slush made travelling difficult. Where these people ate and slept that evening and night, I couldn't say.
It grieved me to see all those beautiful horses and lovely cattle go under the auctioneer’s hammer. I did not want to sell; however, there was nothing I could do to persuade George to rent.

Everyone came in at noon to eat. The place was full of men. They stood while they ate and drank their coffee. Old Donald Jeffrey made himself comfortable on a chair by the table, and did he stuff himself! He ate as much as any three men put together. Donald always bought all the old bolts and nuts and waste iron at sales. He drove a lousy roan pony and cutter. He wore an iron gray beard and had catarrh. He sat at the table stuffing himself when someone came in and said, "Donald, your pony has taken off somewhere." Poor Donald, he was figuring on more stuffing for his elastic stomach, but had to go in pursuit of his pony. He said, 'Why, I leaned her up against the clothesline post." He was too lazy to tie her. Donald was renowned for his laziness. He never got up in the mornings until he felt like it. He saw to it that his wife and daughter (Lena) got out in the fields in good time. They did practically all the farming that was done on the place. Mrs. Jeffery was a wonderfully good-hearted woman; Lena never had a chance. She was seldom at school and had no, or very little, education.

I remember one time, when I was about fourteen years of age Aunt Annie, Maggie Petrie and I went picking Saskatoons and we went over near Jeffery’s place. We weren’t picking the berries long when old Jeffery came along and informed us that we were "transpessln" on his property. He stood there, pointing to practically all the surrounding hills, saying, "This is mines, this is mines, this is mines." However, he allowed us to fill our buckets, or pails, as we call them in Canada. He insisted on our coming to the house when we were through filling our buckets and visit his "missus." We went to the house and Mrs. Jeffery had some lunch for us. She had several pies cooling in the woodshed, off the kitchen. They looked really nice; but, on, the flies. Poor Mrs. Jeffery, everything was spotlessly clean, but every time one opened one’s mouth to take a bite, there were a dozen flies ready to take the dive down one’s throat. Just as Annie was going to take a sip of tea, three flies took a swim in her tea. That finished Annie’s lunch. Well we finally got everyone fed and out to the sale. It started at 12:30 and was not over until after dark.

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32 The picture is of the George McNeice auction sale.
We had such a beautiful farm, 640 acres with a fresh water spring and creek running through it. A beautiful herd of horses and cattle, a fairly comfortable house and no better land anywhere than that land of ours. But George would sell. I did want to get the children to a good yearly school and I was so physically unable to do the work that a woman was compelled to do on a farm; but I did not want to sell. I wanted to put a good tenant on the farm. Of course, some of our dearest and nearest relations blamed me for selling. As the years went on, I became so accustomed to censorship from them, that I just let it slide off my shoulders. Everything that went wrong was blamed on Minnie. That was me.

We must have gone to Lumsden that night, though we left the three boys at Johnson's, who were living at, or on Sam Cullum's place. They were to stay there until we got settled in our new place.
Chapter 29

Our New Home

George had bought a big ten room house in Lumsden. It had been a rooming house and was run by a family by the name of McClain. It was in deplorable condition, but we had the front room papered and did have a beautiful Axminster rug for the floor. The dining room walls were painted an ugly brown. We afterwards painted them a cream. There was linoleum on the dining room floor that we did with for a few years and afterwards replaced with real pretty linoleum. The kitchen was about 16 or 18 by 20, or maybe 22 feet. That floor was bare. In a few years we also covered it with linoleum.

Before putting the new linoleum down in the dining room, George laid a new floor there. The old floor was breaking through in several places.

Then we papered some of the rooms upstairs as well, and I afterwards gave the floors upstairs four coats of paint; mised the paint myself, then waxed them and they were really nice.

Aunt Maggie, Mable Gemmel, Irma, George and I stayed at the Maple Leaf Hotel for several days, intending to stay there until the rug was laid, and the stoves were up. George bought a big hard-coal heater for the front part of the house and a big cook stove for the kitchen. He also went to Regina and bought some furniture such as a couch, platform rocker, occasional chair, dining room bed, table, chairs and sideboard. I had a table that had belonged to mother. It was solid walnut, black walnut that was grown on my father's farm near Collingwood. This table lasted for several years. Uncle Peter had made me a lovely cabinet while we were living on the farm. This, we kept and brought with us to Lumsden. Then we had a big cupboard made for the kitchen. We never got the outside of the house painted, but I did try to have the inside cheery and bright and think I succeeded in doing just that.

We stayed in this Maple Leaf Hotel in Lumsden only a few days, when Aunt Lizzie came in and insisted on us going to her place, which we did for a time. Then, in a day or two, George took Mable Gemmel home and Aunt Maggie home to her place down below Craven.

Dr. Kerns neglected my hand, or arm, and as a consequence trouble developed. He bound it so tight the blood couldn't circulate, and forced an opening up by my elbow.

We finally moved into our house and got settled; though as I was suffering so with my arm, I couldn't do very much. The children got started to school, or in school. Irma was five years old and I think did not attend school for a while. Tom and Hunt went to school, at first, in the Council Chambers, just a few doors from our house.

Well, my arm still kept quite sore, but the doctor took the splints off at the end of six weeks.
and I was supposed to start using it, which I did. The work was too much for it, or me, and it began to pain pretty badly. Then Dr. Kerns wanted me to go to Dr. Seymour in Regina, which I did. Old Doc Seymour put me in a tent at the old Victoria Hospital in Regina, where I roasted by day and was drowned out by night. I refused to stay there, and they moved me into the hospital. Dr. Seymour operated on the wrist, and then left me for over a week without leaving another doctor to care for me. When he came back, I lit into him and told him I was going home. He then, or rather George, called Dr. Ball to attend me. After three weeks stay there, I went home and we got a tent set up over on a little knoll and I stayed there until the snow came. Dr. Kerns tried to persuade me to have my hand amputated; said I wouldn't live if I didn't. He had even persuaded George to urge me to have it amputated and George tried to persuade me to have it done. I flatly refused. I told Dr. Kerns if I was going to die, it would be with my hand on. Well, I kept it on and I am still alive. Dr. Kerns moved away from Lumsden, but some years after came back for a visit and, when he saw me, he said, "My God! Are you still living?" Well, I guess if it hadn't been for Dr. Ball, I might have died, but I was under his care for some months.

In the meantime, Eddie developed pneumonia and we nearly lost him. I always will have a warm spot in my heart for Dr. Kerns, for, though he neglected me shamefully, he did save Eddie's life. I don't believe any other doctor would have done what he did for Eddie. He used the cold treatment; ice water. We kept Eddie wrapped in blankets wrung out of a tub of ice water for hours at a stretch. We got Lucy Kidd to come and nurse him and she stayed days and then we took care of him at night. Aunt Lizzie came a couple of nights and was there the night he passed the crisis.

They were days and nights of terror for us all. The doctor had warned us to be prepared for the worst, but the night of the ninth day, Eddie passed the crisis and steadily grew better. I often wonder why he was allowed to recover from that illness, only to die in France, so far away, and go through the tortures of war. He recovered rapidly and grew strong and healthy.
Chapter 30

Bound for Seattle

Then, that fall, George took the notion to go to Seattle. Previously, Tom and Hunt had gone out there with Lucy Kidd and were staying at Uncle Joe’s. George took a dislike to Dr. Ball and told him he was going to take me to Seattle. Dr. Ball encouraged him to do so. So, off to Seattle we went for the winter. Irma had a wonderful time on the trip. She earned quite a few shekels, singing for the passengers on the train. She was a cute little girl, with her long golden curls and her lovely eyes.

I do not remember how I managed on the way out, because my right arm was in a splint and I couldn’t do much with my left hand, though I did learn to write real well with my left hand before I was able to use my right again.

We arrived in Seattle about 10:30 at night and took a cab to a hotel. When we got there, George ordered Irma and me to stay outside while he registered. The cabby had taken our grips in. All of a sudden, George came storming out, carrying the grips and fairly frothing at the mouth, and started off down the street. Finally, I found out he thought they wanted too much for a room at the hotel, and I guess there were some words over it. Well, Irma and I followed along and then he got mad at me because the cab driver expressed sympathy for me having to start off following George, and me with my arm in a sling and with a little child trudging along at my side.

We finally "took up lodgings" in a crummy hotel. Guess George got tired of walking and turned in there. It surely was crummy. The bed was alive with bed bugs. We three got in bed - the one bed - and after the lights were out, the bugs introduced themselves to our blood bank. We turned on the light and murdered all we could catch, and then I dressed and sat up all night. George left the light on all night and he and Irma slept, but I didn’t.

In the morning, George piloted us out to some Chinese joint for breakfast. What a breakfast! I simply couldn’t eat a bite. Then we set out to find Uncle Joe’s residence. We got there shortly before Tom and Hunt got home for lunch. When I saw poor little Huntley, I was shocked to death! He was so thin and pale. Aunt Mary had their lunch set on the table, and believe it or not, all she had had for Huntley was a little plate of cold gooey potatoes that he had left from lunch the day before, and which he couldn’t eat. She said, with her smirk, "Joe said he had to eat them." When I look back and think how mean Joe and Mary were to those boys and how mean Joe afterwards was to me. I also remember how I used to have his kids stay at our place in Lumsden when they were going to school, and of the many things I did for them all. And then how Joe lied about me. I wonder why I was such a fool as
to ever have any use for them. In fact, I had very little time for them, but he was my husband's brother, though one would have thought he was my deadly enemy the way he treated me. While we were in Seattle that winter, Uncle Johnny, George's brother, stayed with Eddie, took care of him and kept house for us.

We were at Uncle Joe's until shortly before Grace was born. Then Uncle Rube and Aunt Stells insisted we go over to their place, which we did. They were good scouts. Aunt Stella was not at all well and I guess the children must have driven her nearly crazy. She used to have terrible headaches.

One time Irma had been asking too many questions and Aunt Stella said to her, "If you don't stop asking me questions, I'll go straight up." She said Irma just stood there, looked at her and said, "Well, Aunt Stella, you can't go up very far 'cause you can't go through the ceiling." Then another day, she had tried to get Uncle Rube on the phone. She tried off and on all day and couldn't succeed. Uncle Rube investigated and found the telephone wire had been cut. A thorough questioning followed and Huntley confessed he did it.

Aunt Stella must have been glad to see the last of us, though George showered gifts on her. Of course, she was awfully good to us. And so was Uncle Rube. Uncle Rube took a day off and took us to see a big merchant ship that was just in from somewhere on the other side and had had a terrible trip, especially rounding the Horn. The Captain said they encountered the worst storm he had ever encountered in all the years of his seamanship and that it took twelve men at the helm to keep her nose into the storm. She was covered with ice and had just pulled into port.

THE END
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Endnotes

1 Ravenna is located in The Blue Mountains of Ontario, now a very touristy spot. It is located in Grey County on the southern tip of Georgian Bay in Southwestern Ontario. Ravenna is the setting for the novel Ravenna Gets by author Tony Burgess.

2 Algoma is a district in Northeastern Ontario of which Sault St. Marie is the largest community. It is 818 km from Ravenna.

3 Tarentorus seems to be absorbed by Sault St. Marie, as it is now described as an area of Sault St. Marie, Ontario.

4 Minnie’s mother Isabella Robinson (1834-1900) was the child of William Robinson (1810-1855) and Mary Ann Willoughby (1815-1860).

5 This is a picture of the post office at Boscurvis, another small Saskatchewan community, but typical of rural Saskatchewan during this time period, when someone’s farm served as local post office.

6 A view of the St. Nicholas Anglican church (now called Kennell Anglical Church) in the Qu’Appelle Valley on Catley Road 10 km. northeast of Craven, Saskatchewan. This church was built by Mark Catley in 1900. It was originally located about nine km northeast of its present site and relocated in 1910-1911.