

Homesteading in Canada

James Alfred Oakes ca. 1960s
Transcribed by Daniel Hallock, 2023

The fall of 1906 was a time of feverish activity, we had recently arrived at Didsbury, Alberta, with two emigrant cars loaded with horses, cattle, and household effects, in fact all the earthly belongings of the Oakes and Frank Murdock families. Homestead land had been filed on the previous spring and we were now in the process of becoming residents of this new land.

[1905]

We had sent for literature the previous winter, telling of the wonderful opportunities north of the border, and three members of the family had gone north to investigate the possibility of homesteading there. They returned in a few days, and announced that they had located and filed on five quarter sections of land, two of them by proxy, which was possible at that time.

[1906]

The following summer had been spent in making preparations to migrate north as soon as possible that fall. We were farming in Minnesota, and of course we had to harvest and thresh our crops before setting out on this new adventure in a strange land.

Eventually the time came to depart for Canada, and two railway cars were ordered to transport our livestock and other belongings to Didsbury, which was the closest point on the railway to our homesteads. We were not exactly strangers to pioneer life as both the Murdock and Oakes families' fathers and grand-fathers had been early settlers in Minnesota. So we reasoned that we being of pioneer stock, possessed all the necessary qualifications to successfully hew out a new life in the last great frontier.



Didsbury Main Street 1905

Thousands of people were flocking north from the States, and from the old country as well, to pit their brawn and skill against the rigors of this vast unsettled land. We set out with high hopes but little else, confident that we could overcome any and all obstacles we might encounter. We were used to long cold winters in Minnesota, but we didn't reckon with the numbing cold we were to encounter the winter of 1906 and 07.

The women folk had spent long hours canning fruit and vegetables with which to stock the larder of our new homes, as yet unbuilt. We had raised a large garden so we had plenty of potatoes and other vegetables to take north with us. Chicken crates were built in which to transport our future egg supply, and every thing was made ready for the day when the railway company would notify us that our emigrant cars had arrived.

We all looked forward to this new adventure with great anticipation, and could hardly await the day when we would depart for the north. Bill and Emma had been married about five years, but their first child, a boy which they named Kenneth, was born only a few weeks before we were to depart. Frank and Laura [Murdock] also had two children - Guy and Bernice. George and Alta had one son, Donald, which was about one year of age.

Mother, who had come to Minnesota along with other early pioneers, was now 60 years old, and starting out to once again face the hardships of a pioneer life. Father had died in 1901, some five years previously, but four of his sons were included in this new enterprise. Bill the oldest one of the brothers, then George and Guy, and, I, James A. the youngest of a family of nine.

Leonard, another brother, was to come two years later. Hattie and Clara had both been married for some time, and were not among those which made up the vanguard heading north. Bertha, another sister, choose to stay behind also, and soon after this was united in marriage to Edwin Boyd of McVile, N. Dakota.

At last the day arrived when the railway company notified us that our cars were ready for loading at Elbow Lake, some eight or ten miles from the farm we had been renting. Some machinery and other equipment had been moved to Elbow Lake in advance so as to eliminate some of the hustle and bustle we knew would be inevitable when the time of departure arrived.

We only had 48 hours in which to load without paying demurrage [charges for using railroad owned railcars too long during loading or unloading] on the cars. The railways were then offering reduced rates to emigrants, but they charged so much per day for every day spent in loading beyond the 48 hour grace period.

Crops in 1906 had not been too bountiful so we were not too well heeled financially considering the monumental task that lay ahead. George and Alta, and Bill and Emma had been working in N. Dakota the summer of 1906, while Frank, Guy, and myself had been farming in Minnesota. None had any money to spend unnecessarily. So it was with all possible haste that the bulk of our belongings, and the livestock were moved to town and placed aboard the cars.

Frank and Guy accompanied the cars north to care for the livestock enroute. George, Alta, their infant son Donald, and Bill had gone to Alberta a few days in advance of the departure of the emigrant cars. It would be necessary to live in a tent until the first house could be erected, so arrangements were made to leave Alta and Donald at the Dunam James home in Elkton until the first house was being built. Elkton was only a Post Office in the home of a rancher by the name of Bob Brown. Dunam James and his brother-in-law, a man by the name of Otterbine, operated a small saw mill on the Little Red Deer River at Elkton. This was 18 miles west of Didsbury.

No regular trail existed west of Elkton, only [one] in a southwest direction, so it was necessary to locate and chop out a trail through the timber the last seven miles to the homesteads. Following the line of least resistance, across muskeg [peat bog], up hill and down dale, a makeshift trail was cleared down to the Fallen Timber River [now Fallen Timber Creek].

This was only a small stream during the dry season, but in spring time when the snow was melting and during the spring rains, it became a raging torrent. There were times when it was impossible to cross with a team and wagon. There was a bridge over the river on the south township line, but

this required to long a detour to make it feasible for our use. The last three miles were fairly open country but the ground was rough and the wagons swayed and creaked as they were driven over this rough terrain. Fording the river at the most feasible spot, the country was fairly open the last three miles. However, the terrain was rough, but it was possible to get through.

As soon as Frank and Guy arrived in Didsbury with the emigrant cars, all possible haste was made to move the livestock and necessary equipment the 25 miles to the homesteads. A makeshift barn with a dirt roof was hastily erected to stable the horses in, but the cows and young calves were turned loose to shift for themselves. There was an abundance of wild peavine and vetch through the woods for the cows to feed on, and as long as no heavy snow came they could do very well. The chickens were likewise released from their crates and left to forage for themselves.

The most pressing task was to erect some housing with all possible speed. At this northern latitude, winter could descend in earnest most any time. A tent was set up and a wood range installed to cook on, some loose hay placed on the ground in one end of the tent served as a place to sleep. Bill was chosen to do the cooking with the understanding that the first one who complained of his cooking was thereby elected to take over the job.

And so the task of building the first house was undertaken. Logs were cut and skidded out of the bush to the building site, then hewed flat on one side. Two of the largest logs were selected to serve as the foundation, one on each side of the 14x20 house. Eventually the side walls were in place. Openings for a door and two windows were then sawed out. The floor, made of six inch tongue and groove lumber, was then laid on the round spruce logs that served joists. Next, round pine pole rafters were put in place, and the same material for the floor was used for roof sheeting. No shingles were available so heavy tar paper was used for the roof with lath to hold it in place.

Eventually the first house was completed and then began the task of chinking the cracks between the logs. In some low spots close by, moss grew on the ground to a depth of about one foot. This was gathered up and hauled to the house in a wagon, and with a piece of one inch board and hammer, it was driven in tight between the logs. Next a mixture of water and clay was mixed into a sort of mortar, and this was plastered into the cracks on the outside of the house which made it fairly weather proof. The inside walls were then papered with a heavy building paper. The house was ready for occupancy. Alta and her son Donald were brought out from Elkton to take up the household duties, and thus became the first woman to set up housekeeping in the new home.

Mother, Laura and her two children Guy and Bernice, Emma and son Kenneth, and myself were left in Minnesota until such a time as the first house was ready for occupancy. This was a time of considerable unrest for all of us, we were anxious to join the rest of the folk, and so the arrival of the letter telling us to come was joyfully received.

At last we were northward bound little realizing what we would find at the end of our journey. Arriving at the Canadian line at Portal, all our baggage had to be inspected, and I was the one elected to point out to the inspectors which pieces of baggage belonged to us. At last everything was declared satisfactory and we were once again on our way.

Arriving at Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, it was necessary for us to change trains as this particular one went no farther. So we all disembarked, and were notified that some time would elapse before there

would be another train west. The women folk were all pretty tired so we decided to get rooms at a Hotel near by so we could get some rest. But on arrival at the hotel, we were informed that no rooms were available, so back to the railway station we went. The place was crowded with travelers like ourselves, and there were not seats for everyone. Some were stretched out on the floor trying to get a little sleep, others were standing or sitting on their luggage.

After several hours wait, we were once again on our way, this time on a real emigrant train from the Canadian east coast. Our tickets called for first class passage, but this was anything but. There was no upholstery on the car seats, just wooden slats, the conductor told us for reasons of sanitation. The passengers were made up mostly of emigrants from Europe and the United Kingdom, many of them dirty and unkempt from their long sea and train voyage. These railway cars were built especially to transport emigrants, and each car was equipped with a stove for the people to prepare their meals. Some were frying onions and others a conflagration of any and everything. The stench of dirty, sweaty bodies and cooking food was almost too much for our stomachs.



Colonist Car

When the conductor came through, we demanded that he let us off at the next stop and we would catch the next train westbound, but he informed us that there would not be another train for some time and anyway he could not let us off until we reached Calgary. There we had to change trains anyway as this one continued on through to the west coast, and we had to go north.

We arrived in Calgary shortly after daylight, and found the northbound train ready to depart for Edmonton, so it was necessary to again make haste or be left behind until the following morning. Our baggage had already been transferred to the train heading north, and soon we were embarked on the last 50 miles of our train journey. This was October 25, 1906, and as the train made its way north to our destination, there was mixed feeling in all our minds as to what we would find on our arrival at Didsbury. The men folk had been notified of the date of our departure by letter, and we fully expected some of them to be there to meet us.

It was with considerable disappointment that we scanned the scene for familiar faces, for we found none. We learned later that our letters had not yet been delivered or called for at the Post Office. Just across the street from the depot was a three story frame hotel called the Golden West run by two Irishmen named Miclehardy. So we went over to the hotel to enquire if any of the



Didsbury Post Card after the School was Built

men folk had been in recently as we knew that was where they stayed when in town. We were told that none of them had been in for about a week.

This was discouraging news to a bunch of travel weary women, and a consultation was immediately in order to decide what our next move would be. Should we engage rooms at the Hotel and await the arrival of some of the men folk, or should we arrange other means of transportation out to the homesteads? The location of the homesteads were in section 20, township 31, range 5, west of the 5th meridian and that was all we knew about them, only that it was 25 miles as the crow flies, from town.

I was dispatched down to the Peter Dick livery barn to find out how much it was cost to be driven out to the homesteads, and was informed that he would drive us out for five dollars. I went back to the hotel and told the folks, and they decided that was the wisest thing to do. We had no idea when some of the men folk would be in town again, and we were more then anxious to reach our new home.

The days in that northern latitude are short at that time of year and it was noon before we got started. It was 18 miles to Elkton, and over common dirt roads with a heavy load our progress was slow. The sun had set by the time we reached Elkton and the driver informed us that he would not be able to take us any farther. So arrangements were made to stay with some people by the name of James and Otterbine over night, then Mr. James would take us the rest of the way the next morning. There was some snow on the ground and the temperature was about at the freezing point.

Following an overnight stop at the Dunam James and Otterbine homes, there was not room for all of us at either place so we had to split up, Mr. James hitched a large team of black horses to a sleigh, and we all piled in and took off on the last several miles to the homestead. The trail through the woods had been slashed out in a hurry and while a wagon would clear the many stumps in the road, a sleigh would not. Many times, stops were made to cut short poles to place cross ways of the road to raise the sleigh over the stumps.

This was a pretty nerve wracking experience for the women folk, and as we penetrated deeper and deeper into the forest, the women began to cry. They thought the men folk had completely lost their mind to settle in a backwoods primitive place like this. It was so different from what they had expected that they were utterly discouraged and frightened. However a little while later some one made a remark that broke the tension, and they all began to laugh. I was only 15 years old, and though my spirits were pretty low, I had to put on a brave front to convince Mr. James that I was in reality a man.

As we proceeded on west by and by the form of a house was seen in the distance, and as we came nearer brother George was recognized as he was applying the last mud mortar to the house. This little old log cabin at the end of a long trail looked like heaven to us all. When we at last drove up in front, Alta, who had been brought to the homestead as soon as the house could be occupied, came out the door and a happy reunion was celebrated by much hugging and kissing.

We learned on arrival that Frank had gone to town the day before to meet us, and some how we had missed him on the way. This was a great disappointment to Laura as it had been over a month since she had seen him, but along about dark that night he arrived back from town. When he arrived in Didsbury, he had went to the Post Office and found the letter telling him of the date of our expected

arrival. Realizing that he had somehow missed us on the road, he inquired at the Depot and found that our trunks and other baggage were still there, so he loaded them aboard the next morning and proceeded back to the bush.

With all hands now on the scene and with 13 of us all packed into one small house, it was now necessary to build a second house with as much speed as could be mustered. There was now four of us to tackle the job and though I was young I was strong and willing and we all set to with a determination to build Frank and Laura's house in a hurry. Speed was essential as it was almost the first of November, and winter could come in earnest at any time. Lucky for us that the weather stayed mild, and day after day the chinook winds blew out of the west keeping the temperature well above freezing during the day. The nights were frosty, but as soon as the sun came up clear and bright, the frost would soon be gone.

With women folk now on the job to do the cooking, we set to work with a vengeance working long hours cutting and skidding logs out of the woods to build a second house. Frank's house was considerably larger than George's, and it had an upstairs with plenty of room for three beds. The house was finished some time during December, and Frank and Laura with their two children, and Bill, Emma, and their boy moved into the new house. This relieved the crowded condition we had been living under the first few weeks, and now we turned our attention to other necessary jobs to make the houses more secure against the winter cold.

The houses were banked with dirt all around to a height of two or three feet, to prevent the frost from getting under the houses and to our canned fruit and vegetables. Next a space was dug out of the side of the creek bank, and a crude chicken house was built. Up to this time the chickens had just been roosting in trees and bushes and foraging for themselves. Needless to say they had long since quit laying any eggs, most likely none since they left Minnesota.

As Christmas time approached we were all running desperately low on funds, and it was necessary that the men folk find some jobs if possible. A man by the name of Macintire, who lived on a farm about twelve miles away, and who was also game warden and forest ranger for that district, had a small logging operation a few miles southwest of where we lived, and Bill and George and Guy went to work for him. His log buildings, such as bunk house and cook shack, were very crude having nothing but dirt floors.

[1907]

The weather turned desperately cold about the first of 1907, the temperature dropping to 60 below. The boys were put to work felling trees, and they did not have heavy enough clothing for such extreme cold. They suffered intensely from the cold, and after a few days George and Guy decided they would have to quit. Bill decided he would stay on awhile longer. George and Guy started home across country which was entirely strange to them, but by some miracle of good luck they reached home just before dark.

Bill was subject to periodic attacks of stomach hemorrhages caused by ulcers, and he would at such times vomit a wash basin full of blood. He was supposed to keep medicine on hand at all times to take in case of attack, but sometimes he would run out and it would be weeks before he could get to town where he could get any more. He could usually tell when an attack was coming, and shortly after George and Guy left for home he felt that he was about to have another attack. He didn't want

that to happen in this logging camp where there was no one to care for him, so he [decided] to quit and started to walk home. It was dusk when he left camp, and before he had gone many miles he became lost. He wandered all night in a northwesterly direction, not daring to stop and rest as he had no matches and the temperature was at the 60 below mark. The good Lord must of been watching over him for there was not a soul living in the westerly direction, the forest stretched unbroken for miles into the foothills of the Canadian Rockies.

As daylight came he noticed a plume of smoke rising on the cold frosty air, and making his way toward it he discovered another small logging camp operated by a man by the name of Butts. He was taken in, and given shelter and food which by this time he was badly in need of. Mr. Butts was a very nice man, and after Bill rested awhile Mr. Butts hitched up a team on a sleigh and brought him home. It was this accidental contact that provided the men with their next job.

Mr. Butts was short of help and so the boys, George, Guy, and Bill made a deal to go to work for him. He also needed some teams of horses to haul the logs to rollways on the river bank, where they were to be floated to the mill at Red Deer when the ice went out in the spring. Frank had two teams, and he hired out to Butts to haul logs.

This left only myself to look after things at home as the men were gone all week only getting home on Saturday night and Sunday. There was wood to be cut every day to keep the fires burning night and day. Then we had to carry water from a creek some hundred feet down a steep bank from the house. I was not yet quite 16 years old, but I did a man's work by force of circumstances.

I would wrap a wool scarf around my neck and across my mouth to breath through as at 60 below zero one doesn't have to breath long and hard without danger of frosting the lungs. I cut wood from daylight until dark when I wasn't packing water, and piling it on the small porch beside the door where it would be handy to get at night. The houses had been built of green logs and were not too weather tight to began with, so without a fire going constantly, we would have froze to death in our beds. After working all day in the extreme cold, as soon as I hit the bed at night I was dead until morning. Mother kept the fires stoked at night and Alta in the day time.

The extreme cold continued day after day until not a drop of water was left in the creek, it became a ribbon of ice. I selected the deepest spot in the creek as a water hole and it was about six feet deep there, but it too soon froze solid clear to the bottom. No time had been found to sink wells and now with the creek frozen solid it was necessary to melt snow for all our needs. A wash boiler was kept on the stove all the time and I packed snow in to the house in a wash tub to keep refilling the boiler.

One day on going into the root cellar through a trap door in the middle of the house, we discovered that all of our vegetables and canned fruit had frozen solid. This was indeed a major calamity as we depended mostly on that for our living. The corner grocery was 25 miles distance, and we didn't often get there. There was nothing to do but eat frozen potatoes which were left frozen until ready for use. Enough was taken out of the cellar for each meal and thawed and cooked immediately.

I won't try to enumerate the things we didn't have, it was much easier to spell out the things we did have. Bread was our main diet as flour was about the only thing that didn't freeze. This with frozen potatoes and water gravy was about all we had. No butter, milk, eggs, or meat, but we did have karo syrup to put on our bread. Some times molasses was substituted for the syrup.

Working hard on such a diet was enough to break down the constitution of a bull, but somehow we survived. For paychecks at the logging camp where the men worked, a time slip showing the number of hours worked at 25 cents per hour was all they got. The bank in town would not honor these time slips, but the grocery stores would take them in trade. If and when they ever got their money for these time slips, we never knew.

About this time Guy came home sick with pneumonia contracted by working in the extreme cold. To get a doctor out 25 miles from town and no money to pay him with if he did come was out of the question. He was put to bed in one corner of the room that served as kitchen, livingroom and bedroom, and Mother started doctoring him with simple home remedies which were all that was available. After about a week his fever was so high he was out of his head much of the time, and the rest of us were in almost as bad shape from worrying over him. But at last the fever broke, and he slowly started to improve. I'm certain that it was silent prayer and constant nursing by Mother that pulled him through.

Laura was expecting her third child that spring or winter I should say, and on January 30, 1907, Elwin was born. No doctor was available but a woman living at Bergen, a small Norwegian community north east of us about four miles, was engaged to come and care for her. Mrs. Pierson was a midwife and often went out on such occasions in lieu of a doctor who were few and far between. She was a kindly Christian soul, and served to the best of her ability.

At last the cold began to slowly moderate, and never was mortal man more happy than when spring finally came. The logging camp was closed for the summer, and the men folk came home to stay for awhile.

Homestead laws only require residence six months of the year, so about the first of May we prepared to move out to Didsbury for the summer where we could get work.

Two of the men went to Didsbury to locate a house for rent and found a fairly large two story house in the south east part of town which they rented for about five dollars per month. When they arrived back at the homesteads with the news, all possible haste was made to get out before the Fallen Timber River reached flood stage from the spring thaws. What articles as were necessary to take along were loaded into a wagon and we started for Didsbury. George was driving the team and Mother and Alta were seated on some mattresses and bedding with Donald who was the only infant along.

We had only got a short way on our journey when it began to snow. It was a wet heavy snow which was about as bad as rain to wet one through. Mother and Alta covered themselves with quilts to keep dry and warm, but George and I had to take it as it came. Bill and Emma had moved out a few days earlier, and Guy was with Frank and Laura who had rented a farm about half way to town. After some eight or nine hours we finally arrived in town and it had snowed every foot of the way. Needless to say, we were all tired and wet and it was a big relief to have the trip over with.

As soon as we were settled with Bill and Emma who had arrived a few days ahead of us, we men folk began to look for work. A large school house was to be built [in Didsbury], and a Mr. Morrison was the contractor on the job. We contacted him and were immediately hired at 25 cents per hour ten hours a day. The foundation was just being laid and we went to work mixing concrete by hand. This was hard work and too much for a 16 year old kid, so I was transferred to the water wagon.

All water used in mixing the concrete had to be hauled to the job in a ten barrel tank aboard a wagon. To fill the tank it had to be pumped from various wells around town, and it was my job to pump the water. This was no soft job as one had to pump steady for hours to fill a ten barrel tank, and as soon as it was full another was hauled to another well so as not to pump any particular well dry.

Frank was dissatisfied with the farm he had rented on the Dog Pond Creek, and he moved to town and went to work on the same job with the rest of us. We all moved into this one house, and we lived there all summer in peace and harmony.

Eventually I tired of pumping water all day and I quit, and got a job with a farmer by the name of Krampeen a few miles out of town. He was an elderly Ontario German man, not too easy to get along with, and after a month I quit and went to work for another farmer by the name of Ben Good, who by the way was a son-in-law of Krampeen. I didn't know this when I hired out to him or I would not of said what I did about his father-in-law, Mr. Krampeen. I learned about this later.

We were cutting and stacking hay as Ben had a lot of horses and quite a few head of cattle. We were supposed to start harvesting grain on a Monday morning Sept, 3rd 1907, but when we got up that morning it was snowing hard and continued to do so for three days. The straw was very rank and heavy that year and the two feet of snow that fell layed it all flat as a pancake. The snow eventually melted and the weather turned nice, but the crops were all laying flat on the ground.

To harvest now meant that extra guards had to be ordered that worked on a hinge which would run along on the ground and raise the wheat up enough so the sickle bar could cut it. It went into the binder in a tangled mess with the result that several bundles would all be tied together. This made extremely hard work in shocking and later stacking and threshing the grain. This prolonged the harvest, and it was November before the farmers started to thresh.

In the meantime Bill, George, and Guy had quit the school house job, but Frank stayed on until it was finished [he possibly would then be in the picture of the nearly completed school]. A man by the name of Harry Tracy shipped in a threshing rig from the states, and was looking for a crew to operate it, so my brothers and I all went to work for him, George as engineer, Bill as fireman, and Guy and I as spike pitchers. Farming methods have changed so much over the years I doubt if some young men on farms today would know what a spike pitcher was.

There were not too many threshing rigs in the country, and so the work dragged on into December. Many of the farmers didn't even get threshed that fall, and had to wait until the next spring. The grain was all put in stacks those days before threshing began, so it kept nicely through the snows of winter. We were all anxious for the job to be finished as we wanted to move back to the homesteads for the winter before it got too cold.

Eventually the time came to move, and we were happy to get back to the bush and settled once more. The job of building a small house on Mother's and Bill's claims was undertaken. These were both smaller than the two previous ones we had built, and with the benefit of the experience we had obtained in building the first two, these houses were built in a much shorter time. They both were one room with a room on the second floor for sleeping quarters. When they were finished Mother, Guy, and I moved into the one on Mother's homestead, and Bill and Emma into theirs. The winter of 1907 and 08 proved to be very mild and nice, and we all enjoyed it.

As soon as I was relieved of the house building job and everything was organized to everyone's satisfaction, I with my trusty(rusty) old 4065 winchester rifle I had brought along from Minnesota, started roaming the woods in search of game. The deer season opened September 15th and lasted until December 31st, but I did not even have a licence and anyway the season meant little to me. In this remote section none of the settlers paid any attention to the game laws. They were in need of meat and took it whenever an opportunity presented itself. Guy didn't seem to care much about hunting but I was in seventh heaven when I could get out and hunt.

I reloaded my own shell evenings at home, and to me it was a very interesting job. I melted the lead from which to cast the bullets, and dumped them while still hot into beef tallow to lubricate them. Next I re-primed the casings with new primers, and filled them with powder and inserted the lead bullet and all into a reloading tool which crimped the bullet into the casing. I spent many an evening at this particular job, thus my ammunition cost me but a fraction of what it would had I bought them in town.

[1908]

Mother was one who could make a good meal out of most anything, and so we got along very well. We had brought along all our staple articles when we moved back in the fall, so we seldom needed any thing from town.

We had built a small barn on Mother's place, and we now had two cows that were milking and we supplied both George and Alta and Bill and Emma with milk. Our vegetables never froze again after the first winter - we made sure of that.

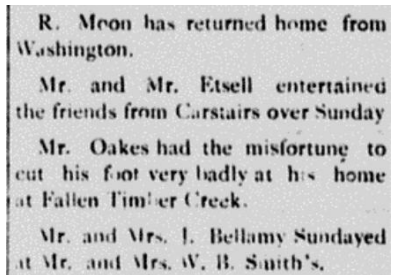
Frank kept busy hauling fence posts and mine props to town, which were available in various spots where lodge pole pine groves had been fire killed from grass fires. The fence posts were cut in 14 ft lengths which would make two posts each, and the mine props were cut in 18 ft lengths which made three six foot props. The grocery stores and even the Chambers Drug store in Didsbury would take them in trade, then they sold them to the farmers on the prairies and to the coal mines. It took a man with a team and wagon three days to cut and haul a load of these to town, and he received from 16 to 18 dollars for his three hard days labor. Never any cash, only groceries and horse feed in exchange. It was grueling hard work but it did provide a means of making a living.

A bachelor neighbor by the name of Tom Christensen had a homestead just east of us, and in the summer time he used to go to the coal mines at Fernie B.C. to work, then come back to his homestead for the winter. I used to spend many evenings with him in his snug little log shack. The fall of 1908 when he returned to his homestead, he brought an Englishman by the name of Alfred Jury home with him to spend the winter, and who later homesteaded an adjoining quarter section. He was from London, and he had a brogue [accent] that was almost impossible for me to understand. But as time went by I was finally able to decipher his peculiar manner of speech, and we became good friends that lasted as long as we remained in Canada. We used to go hunting together, and the next fall he and I worked for a farmer just west of Didsbury by the name of Clark.

He had never worked a farm before, and knew nothing about harnessing a horse or hitching a team to the wagon. He put the horse collars on upside down and wrong side too. I got many a good laugh out of the boners he pulled but he always took it good-naturedly.

[1909]

We decided to remain on the homesteads the summer of 1909, I had bought a cow, and Bill and Emma bought a cow so we were milking four head. Bill had cut his foot the winter before while working in the woods, and he was still laid up with that, so he, Emma, and Kenneth moved in with us. Frank and Laura had remained in town the winter of 1908 and 09 as Frank had a job in Sinclair's blacksmith shop. So Mother, I, Bill, and Emma moved into their house and took care of Frank's stock that winter. Guy alternated, staying part time in town with Frank and Laura, and part time with us. We had no pasture so just let the cows run on the open range. There was an abundance of wild pea vine and vetch in the woods which made wonderful feed and the cows gave an abundance of milk.



R. Moon has returned home from Washington.
Mr. and Mr. Etsell entertained the friends from Carstairs over Sunday
Mr. Oakes had the misfortune to cut his foot very badly at his home at Fallen Timber Creek.
Mr. and Mrs. J. Bellamy Sundayed at Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Smith's.

Didsbury Pioneer - Mar 17,
1909

George had bought 20 head of stock, mostly milk cows, the year before so he had quite a herd. Brother Len, his wife Inez and their two children had arrived from N. Dakota the fall before, and he located a homestead six miles south of the rest of us.

When he decided to build a house on his homestead, he hired a German neighbor by the name of Joe Tiner and myself to put up a log house 24x24 for him. It was the only log house in the country with a concrete foundation, and about the best built house of any around that part of the country. Joe Tiner had come to Canada from northern Michigan, and building log houses was nothing new to him. He and I didn't get along too well together, but we managed to complete the job without coming to blows. That we didn't get along was probably more my fault than his. An 18 year old often hates to take orders, and as we had to batch in a tent while building the house. I was not only assistant carpenter but bull cook and flunky besides. This was sort of a degrading job for a young fellow who was just beginning to believe that he had all the answers.

Whenever a backwoods baseball game was organized like on the 4th of July, I was put in as pitcher, and between times I kept my pitching arm in condition by throwing rocks. One evening after supper I was limbering up with a few rocks when I accidentally threw a left curve that curved too far to the left hitting Joe's carburendum [sharpening] stone breaking it in two. Well in Joe's estimation this was about the last straw, and he was going to teach me a lesson. He was a much bigger and older man than I, but with more nerve then sense I stood up to him, and lucky for me he backed down. I guess he decided it might cost him his job to fight with his employer's brother.

Needless to say, I was glad to be done with the job and get back to the homestead where I could get some of Mother's good cooking again. I had filed on a homestead the winter I became 18 which was located about six miles southwest of the other homesteads.

An old acquaintance from Minnesota had arrived in Alberta that summer and knowing that we were already located there, naturally he looked us up on arrival. His name was Albert Eddingfield, and he was married to Frank's oldest sister. As there was no more land available in the immediate vicinity, he asked me to go with him to look for some land that was open for homesteading.

According to some literature he had obtained at the Land Office in Calgary, there were several quarter sections of land available in township 30 which was the next township south of us. Packing

some grub in an old suitcase, we each took a rifle and started out to look at these quarters. There were both black and brown bears in the country, and not being familiar with their behavior we went prepared for trouble in case we ran into one.

The mosquitoes were terrific, they would boil up out of the waist high grass, and almost eat you alive. We put big bandana handkerchiefs over our head so they would cover the back and sides of our head, then put our hat on to hold them in place to keep the mosquitoes off. With twigs of branches off the trees, we would keep them away from our face and hands as much as possible, but they made life miserable for us.

We spent the night in a little old tar paper covered shack we came across, and had no bedding of any kind. We spent a fairly comfortable night only for the mosquitoes, they gave us a bad time until about midnight.

We had no difficulty locating the land we were looking for which lay on a river bottom, and was about the only open land around. We each picked out the quarter we wanted which adjoined, and the Fallen Timber river made a circuitous route across both quarters. On the quarter I selected, the river came in from the north making a sharp bend and out to the north east.

In this bend there was a deep hole made by the current, and it was completely alive with greyling and trout. They laid in there so thick in that crystal clear water you could literally see hundreds of them. The trout were more shy then the greyling keeping close to the bottom, but rose instantly to any kind of bait. We shaped some light copper wire we had along into a slip noose, and fastened this to the end of a light willow stick. Putting the wire down into the water, we would work it around the largest greyling and give a light jerk which tightened the noose around the fish, and we caught all the fish we could eat in this manner. Coming out of that ice cold mountain stream they were wonderful eating.

On returning home we decided to go to Calgary and file on these two quarters, but on arriving at the Land Office In Calgary, I was advised that the quarter I had selected was not open for homesteading because it contained too much merchantable timber. Albert filed on his, and we returned to the homesteads.

I was determined to look for another quarter in that particular neighborhood, and returned to look over more of the land. I run across a quarter that did not suit me as well as my first selection, still it was not too bad. It was about a mile east of the quarter Albert had filed on, and it was intersected by the same river. Following down along the bank of the river, I came upon a large pile of logs that had been cut and placed on rollways on the river bank preparatory to dumping into the river at high water. Fearing that this too would be exempt from homesteading because of the merchantable timber it contained, I decided to write a letter of inquiry to the land office before going to Calgary to file on it. I estimated that there were in the neighborhood of one hundred thousand feet of logs piled on the river bank and I mentioned this in my letter. A few days later I received a letter from the Land Office informing me that the logs I mentioned had been cut by some one unknown without a permit, and had been seized by the Crown.

This was disturbing news, and I all but gave up the idea of trying to find a homestead in that area. However a few days later to my surprise, I received another letter from the Land Office, informing me that they had decided to make my first selection available to me for homesteading. I immediately

went to Calgary, and filed on this quarter section which was the north east quarter of section 35, township 30, range 5, west of the 5th meridian.

It contained about forty acres of nice open level river bottom land which was covered with a fine crop of wild hay. Frank, Guy, and I later cut and stacked about 35 tons which Bill and I hauled the winter of 1909 and 10 to feed to Frank's horses and stock.

As I reflect back over the years to those days so long ago, it brings pangs of sadness to my heart. It was a time of life when youth look to the future with a heart full of hope and confidence. World War One was yet to come, the event that shattered so many hopes and dreams on the battle field of Europe. Many young man's life was sacrificed there in the cause of freedom, which as the years go by seems to become more and more elusive. The second World War that was fought to make the world safe for democracy was as vain as the first. Never in this world's history has the world become so unsafe. Never has there been so much unrest or uncertainty of the future. Never has the threat of still another world war cast so dark a shadow across the land. Almost forty thousand of our young men have died in vain on the battle fields of Korea, and still other thousands are in the Jungles of Vietnam, and still no lasting peace in sight. I am glad that I was born in an era when there was still a modicum of hope of the future, it seems so remote at this late date of the world's history.

It was with great hope and anticipation that we embarked upon this venture I am feebly trying to record. Hope springs eternal from the human heart and this is good, otherwise many would long ago have given up in despair.

[1910]



Didsbury, about 1910

The spring of 1910, we again moved out to town for the summer, but as it happened, we never again all moved back to the homesteads. George and Alta stayed on their homestead as they now had quite a few head of cattle, but Bill and Emma, Leonard and Inez, and Mother, Guy, and I moved to

Carstairs where we contracted a job of breaking two hundred acres of virgin land for a Mr. Clark.

We started the job with two one bottom riding sulky plows each drawn by four horses. However the sod was tough and the season dry, and it soon became evident that we needed more horsepower. Guy and I went to town and bought an extra team for our rig, but I can't recall just where Bill and Len got an extra team for their outfit. We both had six horses on each plow, and with the extra horsepower we were able to extend the plow shear and moldboard so that we turned a 20 inch furrow. Bill and Len would alternate for half day driving the rig, and Guy and I did the same. We all lived together on one of Mr. Clark's farms where we were doing the breaking.

During July we learned that the Canadian Pacific railway was having an excursion train run to Banff, so we all decided to go, but at the last [moment] the women folk backed out, however us men folk and Frank decided to go anyway. The fare was very reasonable, and the train returned the same day. None of us had ever been in the mountains before, so this was a real treat especially for me. I couldn't see enough through the coach window, I had to go out and set on the steps of the coach.

Later the same month the Calgary stampede was held only it was called the Calgary Roundup at that time. Guy and I decided to go and we had a wonderful time. We took in all the shows and it was really a gala time for us. We had been out in the bush so long where the only entertainment was an occasional party or a dance among a few of the homesteaders. When a dance was held the only music we had was Fred Bush and his battered up old fiddle. We attended the grandstand entertainment every afternoon, and the shows in the evening.

Later that year after the breaking was finished, we took a contract of cutting and stacking the hay on 640 acres of land that belonged to an Englishman and his sons, name of Standing. This kept us busy until late fall. In the mean time, Frank and Guy bought the Vernon home on the south edge of Didsbury, and that fall Frank, Laura and their two kiddies, Mother, Guy and I moved into this place. Bill and Emma rented a place nearby and Len and Inez moved back to their homestead. We did teaming and anything we could to make a little money. During the winter Emma got a bad attack of rheumatism and she sent for her sister Anna to come out from Bellingham to take care of her.

I had bought a beautiful black horse from Mr. Vernon called Nigger, and he was a wonderful driving horse. I also had a nice top buggy which was equivalent to a nice automobile those days. I thought Anna was pretty nice, and I took her riding occasionally.

[1911]

As spring approached we had been told about all the work that was going on around Red Deer 50 miles north of us. So we decided to go up there and work for the summer of 1911. Bill and Emma went up first, and they rented an old boarding house in the town of Blackfalds about eight miles north of Red Deer. Frank and Len went up next, and they rented a place near by and Inez kept house for them. Guy and I were the last to go, Mother and Laura with the kids stayed on in Didsbury that summer.

W. M. McIntyre has been appointed forest ranger by the Dominion government. Mr. McIntyre will likely make Banff his headquarters.

Miss A. Erickson of Bellingham, Wash., arrived here on Thursday on a visit to her sister, Mrs. W. Oakes, who has been very sick for some weeks past.

Walter Smith, who had the misfortune to cut his foot with an axe a few weeks ago, is now able to get around on crutches although the foot is still very sore.

Didsbury Pioneer, Mar 29, 1911

A family by the name of Wheeler with their three sons and three daughters had arrived at Blackfalds that spring from Dakota, and Mr. Wheeler operated a livery and feed barn which was just across the street from the boarding house where Bill and Emma and Anna lived. The day I arrived in Blackfalds, two oldest Wheeler girls were over visiting Emma and Anna, and we got to meet them. Our first impression was that they were nice but I was not too interested as I still thought of Anna as my girlfriend.

Guy and I were to stay here with Bill and Emma as they had lots of room, and there was also a barn large enough to accommodate our six head of horses. Frank and Len and Bill had already taken a contract of building some railroad grade east of town, so we had a job on which to commence work immediately. Two railroads were building out of Red Deer to Rocky Mt. House some 65 miles west so the place was a beehive of activity. Some were hauling culvert pipe out along the railroad grades, others bridge timbers and all the supplies and appurtenances that are necessary for such a job. My brothers and I and Frank went to work on the railway grading job. We had six teams of horses and scrapers necessary for the job, and the job progressed satisfactorily during the following weeks.

In spring young man's fancy turns to other things beside work, and after a few weeks separation I once more took up the more pleasant task of courting Anna. It wasn't long though until I realized I had an opponent in brother Guy. At first I was pretty upset about this, but I soon discovered that Anna was trying to court us both at the same time. She was afraid that one or maybe both of us might discover someone more to our liking in the Wheeler girls.

I soon came to the conclusion that I would drop out of the race and give Guy an open field in courting Anna, but before I did I waited up for him one night. We both occupied the same room and when he came up to go to bed I had a heart to heart talk with him. He felt bad that I, or he supposed that I, resented his cutting in on my romance and he promised that he would drop out right then. Well that isn't what I wanted to talk to him about. I had come to the conclusion that Anna was no good for either one of us, and I told him so. I pleaded with him not to become too seriously involved with Anna, that she was too fickle minded and would never make him a good wife.

In the mean time I had seen Zetta and Frances on several occasions and I had also met her brothers Tracy and Jet, and her father. I also seen the three younger children Grace, Creth, and Grant, and had glimpsed Mrs. Wheeler at a distance. Mr. Wheeler impressed me as a pretty stern individual, and I wasn't sure if I liked him or not. Jet was a little younger than I, but we soon became friends. We would go down to the pool hall evenings, and he taught me to play pool.

Eventually the 24th of May arrived and as it was the Queen of England's birthday, Red Deer was holding a celebration. If memory serves me right, it was that 24th of May 1911 that King George of England was coronated. Tracy and Jet, and Zetta and Frances were going down to the celebration, and Jet asked me to go along with them. I readily accepted the invitation, and with a team of driving horses on a two seated open buggy we drove down to Red Deer.

As I was to learn later, Zetta and Frances were both engaged to be married to young men they had left behind in N. Dakota. I liked them both, but I wasn't sure which one I liked best. I took Frances to dinner at the Hotel - all went together that is, but I paid for Frances' dinner, then later we all went to a show and I bought Zetta's ticket. During the forenoon while we were at the race track watching the horse races, Guy and Anna came down there. They drove up near the Grand Stand and I happened to look around and seen them. Anna had been crying, and I got the impression that when

she seen me sitting up in the grandstand with Zetta and Frances, she became jealous. However this didn't disturb me, I was having too good a time.

About noon a black cloud came up in the southwest and the wind began to freshen so we decided we had better make our way back up town. There was no roof over the small grandstand, and no other place of shelter in case of rain. We had got about half way back to the business district when it commenced to hail. Not wanting the girls to get soaked, we darted up the steps of the first house that was handy. As it happened, it was a Mr. Gate's home, a local merchant. We were invited into the house until the storm was over, then made our way to the Hotel Windsor, where we all had dinner.

Those days the cady plug hat was popular and when we went into the Windsor Hotel for dinner, I hung my hat in the lobby. When we came out from dinner I went to get my hat, but it was gone. There was a cady hat hanging there, but it was much too small for me. Walking around town the rest of the afternoon without any hat, I felt half naked. All places of business were closed for the day so it was impossible for me to get another. A few days later I returned to the hotel, and to my surprise I spotted my cady hat hanging in the lobby. The clerk explained that a traveling salesman had taken mine by mistake, and had not immediately discovered the mistake.

This trip to Red Deer was the first of many other occasions that summer when the Wheeler girls, Anna, Guy, Jet and I, went on various short trips together. We planned trips to surrounding towns most ever Sunday, but sometimes the weather was too wet for outdoor excursions. We had organized a local baseball team, and we were to go to Bently, a small inland village a few miles northwest of Blackfalds, to play ball against them, but the weather continued so unfavorable Sunday after Sunday, we never did get out there. Later on we planned a trip to Sylvan Lake, a small town on the south shore of a lovely lake by the same name. The weather proved favorable this time, and we all spent an enjoyable day at the lake.

Eventually the railway grading job was finished, and during the interval before another job was located, I had a few days spare time. I asked Zetta to go for a ride with me down to the dam on the Blindman River. The dam formed quite a nice little lake above, where we rented a boat and went out riding on the Lake.

On returning to our rig, a sudden rain storm came up, and to drive against the rain meant we would get wet. I had a buggy with a top on, but to keep dry it was necessary to have a rubberized lap robe to put over ones lap when it rained. So I headed the team down a road leading away from home where the rain would be in back of us. Eventually the rain let up and we turned around and headed back to town. My effort to keep my lady escort from getting wet became the subject of much good natured ribbing later.

One day Jet and I were walking around town together when we saw a large watermelon in one of the two grocery stores, so we bought it and took it down to his Dad's feed barn. After he scrounged a knife from the cupboard at his house, we went up in the hayloft, and proceeded to eat the melon. We had just finished the melon when a man came riding in on a saddle horse and asked to put his mount in the feed barn. After putting his horse in a stall, we noticed him take something out of his pocket and hide it in the manger. After he had left to go down town, we looked in the manger to see what he had hid there. We weren't long in locating it and it turned out to be a bottle about half full of whisky. Well, neither one of us was used to drinking, but this was too good an opportunity to pass

up lightly. After some discussion we decided to sample it, not once but two or three times. We carefully put the bottle back in its hiding place, and it wasn't long after until we started to walk with a decided list first to one side and then the other.

This was an amusing situation one we had never experienced before, and we began to laugh at one another and everything in general. The more we laughed the funnier the situation became. We decided to go down to the Bergstrom general merchandise store where Nels, the owners son was in charge. We were very friendly with Nels, and on entering the store I grabbed a wool sweater off the counter and began to beat Jet over the head with it. He ran up one isle and down the other with me flogging him with the sweater. As it happened there were no customers in the store, and Nels watched the proceedings with amusement. Strong drink was no stranger to him and I guess he surmised what was behind our odd behavior.

A few minutes later, we decided to return to the feed barn and sample the bottle again, but as luck would have it before we reached there we met Zetta and Frances coming up the street in front of a blacksmith shop. Not wanting them to know that we were not exactly as we should be, I got down on the tongue of a disk setting in front, and taking a monkey wrench out of the tool box, I got suddenly busy working on this machine. The girls stopped and engaged us in conversation, but I was too busy taking the tongue out of this disk to take much part in it. Jet had found a place to sit down to so he would be more stable, and he found the situation very amusing. It was anything but that to me. This was the first and last time any one ever saw me under the influence of alcohol. Though in the years since that time, I have taken an occasional drink of whisky, never again did I allow myself to be under its influence.

[1912]

On the 24th of May, 1912, the town of Blackfalds, where we used to live, decided to hold a celebration. It was the Queen of England's birthday and that was usually celebrated in various towns and cities throughout the Dominion of Canada. I was working at the Cruckshank livery barn in Red Deer at the time. I asked the boss for the day off so I could go to Blackfalds, and take Zetta to the celebration.

I rented one of the nicest teams of horses that Cruckshank had and started for Blackfalds. As I was driving down the main street I stopped at a book store and variety store, and bought four small American flags which I put in the horses' bridles.

As I was crossing the Red Deer river I met a Frenchman that I knew with a team and wagon loaded with gravel. As we passed, he hollered what I took to be a greeting, but the wagon [made too much] noise on the bridge planks and I didn't get what he said. I waved to him and kept on going. When I arrived in Blackfalds some eight miles north, I stopped at the Wheeler home to pick up Zetta, then we drove out to the baseball field where a game was in progress. In a matter of a few minutes a crowd of angry Canadians gathered around us making any farther progress impossible. They began to holler at us wanting to know what I meant flying the American flag in Canada.

It wasn't until that moment that it dawned on me what I had done. If I had of flown some Canadian flags with them no one would of thought anything about it. Before I had time to explain, a Canadian North West Mounted Police noticing the crowd gathered around us, came riding up forcing his way among the crowd. He repeated the same question the others had asked, why are you flying the

American flag in Canada. I told him that I didn't do it to be smart, that it was thoughtlessness on my part, that I had been used to flying the American flag and never stopped to realize my mistake. He says well get out and take them down. I asked him if I couldn't drive to the livery stable and take them down there. He said all right but get going. Just then another mounted police rode up that I was well acquainted with, and between the two of them to clear the way I drove out of that crowd with a considerable feeling of relief. I put the horses in the livery barn, and removed the flags. Then we walked back out to the ball field which was only a short distance. That was the only time I ever flew the American flag in Canada, and I was lucky to get away with it that time.

Our next contract was hauling and loading gravel on gondola cars for shipment to some town north of Red Deer. Each time we made a trip we passed Jimmy Cruckshank's livery stable which was on the main street of the city. One day I stopped and asked him about a job driving for him, and he hired me right there. The pay was 35 dollars per month, room and board furnished. I had sold my horses some time previous to a man by the name of Roy Trout at Blackfalds. So I went to work for Jimmy along with about six or seven other young men.

Three of these I remember in particular because we soon became good friends. They were Charlie Gillis, Clair Mitchner, and Bob Jorgenson. Clair was the son of an Alberta legislator, out to make his own way in the world. Charlie and Bob were both steady young fellows, and we got along fine. Our barn boss was an Irishman by the name of Tom Parkinson who liked his liquor much too well. He was a good fellow when sober, but as time passed he became more and more addicted to drinking. This went on for some time, but eventually the boss tired of it and fired him. He then asked me to take the job which meant an increase in pay to 50 dollars per month. This was more money then I had ever earned before in my life, and I felt like I was getting along in the world. I was now just 20 years old.

The Wheelers still lived at Blackfalds, and Zetta took a job in the telephone office at Didsbury. I didn't get to see her very often in the next few months, but whenever she got off duty she would visit with Laura and Mother. Eventually she transferred to the telephone office at Stettler, a town some 50 miles northeast of Red Deer. I only got to see her once that winter but we corresponded regularly. Around Xmas time I took two or three days off and I went to Stettler to see her. It was during this time that we became engaged. I had a friend who worked nights in the telephone office at Red Deer, and any evening after ten o'clock, he would put through a call for me to Stettler, and Zetta and I could talk free of charge.

The fall of 1912, a man by the name of Jerry Iverson, who ran a livery barn on the next street south of Cruckshank's, had a new brick stable built, and he talked me into coming to work for him as barn boss. It was a smaller operation, but he gave me the same wages and I had a nice room over the office, and a meal ticket at the nicest restaurant in town.

Zetta's folks had moved to Sylvan Lake and her Dad was running a livery and feed barn there, which was 15 miles northwest of Red Deer. Alberta had not as yet advanced to a place of paved roads and automobiles. True there were a few automobiles around the larger cities, but you never saw them any place but around town where the roads were better maintained. Roads out in the country were just dirt roads and mud holes were numerous, and so all travel from one inland town to another was by team and buggy.

Numerous small towns sprang up along the two new railways that were being built to Rocky Mt.

House and the Brazeau coal fields. Tent camps for the railroad crews were located at intervals of a few miles apart, and the crew were made up of bohunks [a brawny or coarse person] of every nationality. One camp in particular which was located at the edge of a large muskeg [a peat bog], was made up almost entirely of Finlanders.

The railway grade across this muskeg was built by first laying small trees and brush on the marshy surface. Then dirt was wheeled and dumped on top of the brush in wheelbarrows. It was impossible to grade this section with horses, they would of been sunk in the mire all the time. Thousands upon thousands of wheelbarrow loads of dirt were dumped upon this section of grade, then more brush was laid lengthwise of the grade and the railway ties placed crosswise on the top. Eventually the steel rails were put in place and work trains began hauling gravel and dumping it beside the track with which to ballast the right of way. At first the weight of the train squashed the ties and rails so deep in the mud that the axles of the cars would drag in the muck. It seemed like an endless and hopeless task, but eventually a firm grade began to take shape.

I was around these operations quite frequently while driving for Cruckshank. Salesmen of all kinds made trips put to the villages along the new railway, and I sometimes was out a week or ten days driving them from place to place. No freight or passenger service would be in operation for many months yet. I recall one salesman in particular, a Jewish fellow from Winnipeg, who was selling watches. I was out with him for ten days going from camp to camp where each night after work he would gather a bunch of workers around to look over his case of watches, and he sold quite a few in each camp. Naturally he could not watch ever one who was looking at and handling his merchandise, so he asked me to go along with him and keep my eyes open to prevent any one from acquiring a watch that he hadn't paid for. There was nothing else to do so I agreed.

These camps were most all tent camps, and the accommodations for outsiders was pretty limited. However we ate and slept after a fashion in any and all of the camps we visited. During the day while the men were out on the job, there was nothing for us to do but catch up on the sleep we missed at night. I would take care of the horses, and that was about all I had to do. After a night or two in one camp we would move on to the next one. Eventually we reached the last camp, and it was time to head back to Red Deer. The boss had a set limit on the mileage I could drive in any one day, and that was 35 miles, so from Red Deer to Rocky Mt. House was a two day trip one way.

We had traveled about half way back to Red Deer when we saw a man standing beside the road. He was one of the customers who had bought a watch from this salesman, and he had discovered from marks on the works that it was a second hand watch, and he was out to get his money back. The man was mad, and the Jew knowing that he was right soon refunded his money. It so happened that all of the watches had been left in a pawn shop back in Winnipeg, and never redeemed. New cases had been put on some of them, and they were sold as new watches. How long he was able to get away with this sort of thing I never knew, I never saw the man again.

Rocky Mountain House was located on the bank of the North Saskatchewan River and the western terminus of the C. N. R. and Alberta Central railways. It was a typical frontier town consisting of an array of log and crude frame buildings, and many tent houses along the river bank. Counting the construction workers stationed there it had a population of perhaps 3,000 people. It was a rough tough town, but the Royal North West Mounted Police succeeded in keeping a fairly tight reign on it. There were no regular gambling houses to my knowledge, but sporting girls were allowed to operate there openly, and would set up for business in tents until crude shacks could be erected.

There were several restaurants in town and a few lodging houses where one could put up over night. The construction workers were housed mostly in large tents even through the winter months. I spent many a night in a tent house when the temperature was well below zero.

One winter I was sent out with a civil engineer and a survey crew just the day before Xmas. They had been detailed to revise a section of the original location of the railway, near Rocky Mountain House. Though it was very cold weather and about two feet of snow on the ground, we had nothing but tents in which to live. Two tents for sleeping quarter for the crew and one tent for a cook and mess hall.

We had a Chinaman for a cook, and every time he heard a wolf howl, he would come running into the crew tents. This kind of life was new to him, and he wasn't to impressed with the wilderness. Before setting up the tents we had shoveled away the snow to get down to solid ground, then we took fir boughs to make our beds on. We had no mattresses of any kind, just blankets.

It was my job to drive the engineer where ever he had to go, and this sometimes took us to established construction camps which we managed by design to arrive at about meal time. Needless to say, with the very minimum of equipment our China boys [had], meals left much to be desired. So at every opportunity we managed to get our meals elsewhere, but the crew were not so fortunate. There was no shelter of any kind for the horses, so I put blankets on them at night and tied them to trees. I was more than happy when this job was done, and to get back to Red Deer where a good bed in a nice warm room at night awaited me. In looking back over the years these are the parts I would want to skip were I privileged to live my life over.

During the winter of 1912 I quit my job at the livery stable, and went to work for the C. N. R. on a survey job. What was known as the S line was building out of Red Deer north and Boomer, and Hughs Construction company of Spokane had a large railway steam shovel building grade along the Red Deer river. This required a resident engineer on the job, and I was his helper. There were only the two of us, and we lived in a big old farm house nearby and boarded at the Boomer and Hughs camp. It only required about two days work a week to keep grade stakes set ahead of the shovel and to measure up the yardage so we had a lot of leisure time. We went bowling occasionally, and later in the spring we took in the stock show at Calgary. S. H. Bernsted was the name of the civil engineer, and the boss of the construction crew was a man by the name of Phil Dunn. He was an orphan, and had been raised in a foster home. He had a crew of 40 or 50 men, and I often wondered how he managed to keep a crew he rode the men so hard. He would call them all kinds of names which today would cause someone to sink a pick in the top of his head. Off the job he was a different man.

The fall of 1912 the Wheelers moved into Red Deer, so Zetta and I got to see one another several times a week. We decided to be married on May 30th which was her Mother and Dad's 30th wedding anniversary.

[1913]

Frances and Jim Stewart had been married that winter, and had gone back to N. Dakota to live. Anna had returned to her home in Lawrence Washington, and that spring Guy decided to follow her and they were to be married. Guy and I had been so close during the years it was a hard blow to me when he boarded the train for the west coast.

Zetta and I were married in her home with only the family present. A Rev. Brown of the Presbyterian

church performed the ceremony. I had quit the survey job a few days before, and the day after our marriage we took the train to Calgary where I hoped to get a job and set up housekeeping. We found room and board at a place on fourth Ave south in Calgary, and I immediately started looking for a job. I wanted to get on with the Pacific Cartage Co who ran a large dray business (equivalent to a trucking business), but there was a mild depression in 1913 and I was unable to get a job.

In June my brother Len came to Calgary to consult a Doctor. He had a lump on the side of his neck which had got so large that the pressure on his vocal cords made it impossible to talk above a whisper. He consulted a Dr. Chambers, a graduate of a London medical college, and was informed that an operation was imperative. He returned home for a few days to put things in order so he could return and enter the hospital for the operation.

For some reason while he was home, he decided to consult another doctor when he returned to Calgary. I went with him to see this other doctor, and I took an instant dislike to him. I was not in favor of his changing doctors, but against my advice he decided on this other doctor whose name I have forgotten.

He entered St. Joseph hospital at night, and was operated on early the next morning. When I arrived at the hospital he was already in surgery. I remained at the hospital until the operation was over, and he was returned to his room. He was still under sedation, and I remained at the hospital all day but he never regained consciousness. About midnight [12 Jun 1913], he died, and I was the only one beside a nurse that was with him. This was a sad blow to all of us, especially his wife and two children.

The following morning I phoned Alma Murdock, who worked in the Pioneer News Paper Office at Didsbury, and asked him to notify Mother and Laura, and if possible to get word to his family who were still out on the homestead some 30 miles from town. I then went to a local mortuary in Calgary, and made arrangements for them to prepare the body for shipment to Didsbury.

At ten o'clock the following morning Zetta and I accompanied the body to Didsbury by train. Word had reached Inez and shortly after our arrival at Didsbury, she and the two children arrived at Frank and Laura's place. The following day the funeral was held in Frank and Laura's home. Frank had been working east of Calgary on an irrigation job, but I had notified him by telephone and he arrived home the morning of the funeral.

Leonard Oakes, who was taken to the hospital of the Good Shepherd, Calgary, last week to undergo an operation for tumor in the throat, died on Thursday night last. His age was 35 years. The body was brought back to Didsbury on Friday and was interred in the Didsbury cemetery on Sunday. Mr. Oakes leaves a wife and two children, his mother, Mrs. James Oakes, sister, Mrs. Frank Murdock, brother, James Oakes, in Didsbury, and three brothers and three sisters in the States to mourn his loss.

Didsbury Pioneer, Jun 18, 1913

There was no one to look after things on the homestead so Zetta and I took Inez and the children home, and we remained there with them while I arranged for and held an auction sale of stock and machinery and all household goods. Inez had decided to return to relatives in Minnesota. We spent about six weeks with Inez getting her affairs in order, so we did not return to Calgary.

We rented a small three room house in town, and set up housekeeping for ourselves. Mother was living with Frank and Laura, but stayed with us part time. I went to work with Frank and Ness during the summer and fall, and on August 15th our first child was born, a boy we named Horace

V. after his grandfather Wheeler. Dr. Reed of Didsbury was in attendance with sister Laura and Mother to help.

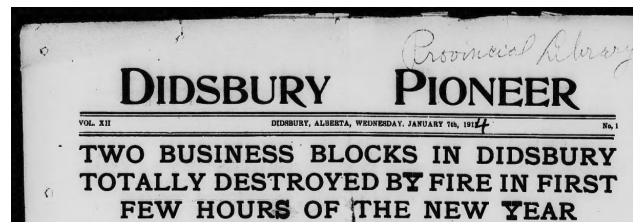
That fall Frank and Arnie Ness who were teaming together, made a deal with me to move back to the bush and get out fence posts and mine props for them through the winter. They would come out twice a week and pick up the loads of fence posts, mine props or wood, which ever the case might be, and haul them to town. Zetta's brother Tracy came out and stayed with us and helped get out the material. Where we had to go to obtain the desired material was several miles west, so Tracy and I would leave home about daylight each morning, and Zetta insisted that we be home by dusk as she was left alone all day with the baby, and she was nervous after dark.

It was a hard life for all concerned, but it provided a way to make a living, and that was very essential. There was no relief, welfare, or unemployment insurance those days. It was everybody for himself, and what you couldn't earn you went without. The major advantage was that there was no rent or light bills, and no fuel or water coming [due] first of each month. We always carried a .22 rifle with us, and frequently we brought home grouse that we killed along the road. There was an abundance of large snowshoe rabbits, but Zetta would not eat those. However Tracy and I liked them, and we made many a good meal on them.

Frank had planned to bring Laura and the three children with Guy, Bernice and Elwin out at New Year's time and spend two or three days with us. We had been looking forward to this for several weeks, but when the day arrived we looked and waited for them in vain. Zetta was so disappointed as she and Laura were so close, and this was to be the highlight of the winter. We had no idea what had caused change in their plans until Frank and Arnie arrived three or four days later.

[1914]

A fire had broken out on the north end of the main street in Didsbury New Years Eve [1 Jan 1914], and with a north wind to fan the flames, the major portion of the business district went up in flames. Firefighting equipment was by railroad from Calgary, 50 miles to the south, but the water supply was inadequate to combat the flames. The remaining weeks until spring finally passed and Zetta was very happy to move back to town.



I had one team of horses that spring, and I bought another team and I contracted jobs of breaking virgin sod for different farmers in and around the town of Carstairs. I received five dollars per acre, and averaged about two acres per day. Ten dollars per day was not very large wages for a man and four head of horses, but work was not to plentiful and I was glad to get it.

Late in the summer Frank and I contracted to cut a thousand acres of hay east of Didsbury. The owner with a crew of men followed us up [cutting] and stacking the hay. We batched in a farm house on the property, and as we were running four mowers we hired Mr. Wheeler and Tracy to come and work with us. This job lasted about seven weeks. As the little house we had been renting was now occupied by another party, I obtained a 12X14 tent which I set up near Frank's house to live in. I bought lumber and made a floor and side walls, and the tent made fairly comfortable living quarters

for us.

Shortly after we moved into this tent, Frank was at the barn taking care of the horses early one morning when he noticed that the house was on fire. He had built a fire in the kitchen range before going to the barn and an overheated stove was probably what started the fire.

Zetta and I were still in bed but we heard Frank holler fire, and I was out and dressed in short order. Mother and Guy and Bernice were sleeping in the upstairs room and the fire had started near the stairway, so Frank's first concern was to get them down the stairway and outside. By this time I was there to do anything I could, but the fire had gained such headway there wasn't much anyone could do. In a matter of minutes, the house and contents were completely destroyed.

The next few days we all ate in the tent and extra beds were put on the floor at night to sleep the women and children. Us men folk slept in the hayloft of the barn. We continued this arrangement for several days, but it was now late in the fall and winter was fast approaching making it imperative that we find some place to live through the winter.

Frank's plans at this time were uncertain, anyway it was too late in the season to think about rebuilding. We knew of a large two story house in the east part of town which was for rent, and it was exactly what we needed. There was a barn on the place, and this was essential as we had several head of horses. We contacted the man who was looking after the place, the owners were away, and we rented the place. There was a large kitchen at the back which Zetta and I moved into and a bedroom above. Frank and Laura and children, and Mother occupied the remainder of the house.

Laura had been wanting to return to Minnesota and Mother also, but Frank realized there was little opportunity for him back there and he wanted to remain in Alberta. However just shortly before Xmas it was decided that they would go back to Minnesota. Frank disposed of his horses and other equipment, and in a few days they were ready to go. It was a sad time for us, we hated desperately to see them go and leave us alone in Canada, but of course there was nothing for us to say or do.

[1915]

Zetta's folks had moved to Bashaw some distance north of Red Deer so we were all alone. We now occupied this large house all by ourselves, and we were desperately lonely. Winter had come in earnest by this time, there was no work to be had and our finances

Fire Destroys Home

Didsbury again suffered by the fire fiend on Thursday morning last when Frank Murdock's residence, which is on the extreme south of the town limits, was completely destroyed by fire.

The first alarm was rung in by Hartley Anderson at 6 a.m., but the fire had gained such big headway by this time that before the engines could be got to the conflagration on account of the long distance from town the whole house was completely enveloped in flames. However, the engines under Fire Chief Wood and Assistant Chief Sinclair did good work in saving the barns and outhouses as these were in jeopardy several times during the fire.

How the fire started is not known. Mr. Frank Murdock was out in the barns feeding his horses when he first noticed the fire through the kitchen windows. He quickly ran to the house and as he thought succeeded in putting it out but to make sure went to get more water and when he returned it had broken out again worse than ever.

Mrs. Frank Murdock and three children with Mrs. Oakes, mother of Mrs. Murdock, had a very narrow escape from being burned, as they were in bed at the time, but luckily everyone kept their heads and no physical injury resulted, but there was no time to save anything consequently clothing and household furniture was all destroyed.

The family who are very much respected in the district have the entire sympathy of the people in their loss and offers of help from all sides was tendered.

Only a little insurance was carried on the building.

Didsbury Pioneer Oct 28, 1914

were dwindling away. We were expecting our second child in a few weeks, and there was no one to turn to for help. It was the first and most desperate situation I had ever faced on my own, and I was beside myself with worry. I didn't know what to do, the weather was desperately cold, and the people around seemed just as cold.

I walked down to the old place, the barn was still standing, and going in so I closed the doors and there in the solitude of that empty barn, I poured out my heart to God. I asked God to in some way help us in this, the darkest hour of our life. I stayed there perhaps for an hour, maybe longer, and I had never prayed as I did that day. I finally left and walked the mile or so back to the place we were now living.

Two or three days later I decided to walk up to the post office and see if there was any word from the folks in Minnesota. I had only walked a short distance when I met a man who lived but a short distance from us, and who was operating the local flour mill. I had seen him go by on numerous occasions, but I had never spoken to the man before.

He smiled and greeted me in a friendly way, and I stopped for a moment's conversation. He asked me what we did to entertain ourselves during the long winter evenings. I told him we read stories played cards etc, and I invited him over for a game of cards that night. He laughed and informed me that he didn't play cards, that he was a Seventh Day Adventist. He asked if he might come over and give us a Bible reading that evening. I told him we would be glad to have him. We were so lonely for some one to visit with I think we would of welcomed the devil.

That evening this Walter Cornforth and a man by the name of Stauffer who was a blacksmith there came over, and proceeded to give us a Bible study. He had a large chart of the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream as recorded in the second chapter of Daniel 2. He went on to explain how this great image of a man represented the first four great world empires of the then known world, namely Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome. And lastly how the feet and toes represented the division of Rome into the present ten kingdoms of Europe. It was a very interesting study and though we had always had reverence for the good book, we knew next to nothing of its contents.

I had been baptized into the Mormon [Cutlerite] Church at the age of ten at my Mother's insistence, but the two hours that I was obliged to spend in church each Sunday was to me my greatest trial. My grand parents, uncles and aunts and my Mother, belonged to this church. In fact my grandfather Whiting was head of the church until his death. They used the book of Mormon in preference to the Bible, but they were both strange books to me. Zetta my wife had been baptized into the Presbyterian church some time before we met, but her attendance had been rather infrequent.

So it came as a surprise to us that the Bible contained such pertinent information about the rise and fall and ultimate destiny of the nations of the world. Needless to say we were interested and impressed, and we invited them to come again and continue the study of this very interesting subject, and they readily agreed.

Thus began a new and welcome acquaintance with some very fine people. We soon became acquainted with Mrs. Cornforth, and she soon became a daily caller at our house. Unbeknown and unrecognized, this was the first step in answer to my prayers. It wasn't until months later that I realized that in this unexpected manner had God seen fit to answer my plea for help.

As the studies continued and our interest increased, we were invited to start attending the small Adventist Church. This we readily accepted and soon we were invited to join. We became very enthusiastic about the message and were anxious to join the church.

Previous to this, though, our daughter Audrey was born on January 21st [1915], and a Mrs. Sick, wife of the town marshal came in to help Dr. Reed deliver the baby. She was a dear motherly old lady and Mr. Sick was very kind and accommodating man. Mrs. Cornforth came over to sit with and reassure me that everything would be OK.

The later part of January after Audrey's birth, Arnie Ness and I started hauling wood and poles from the bush. The same house where we lived the winter of 1913 was still vacant and we used that as a place to stay while we were getting out our loads each trip. It required three days for the round trip and we batched at that end of the road.

Arnie was a big heavy set man, but he drank so much coffee he had a big pot gut and puffed like a steam engine when he was laboring. He carried a big porcelain coffee pot along which he made full for each meal. I had always drank coffee, but upon joining the church I quit. The Adventists do not believe in drinking coffee or tea, or eating pork, and this we accepted along with the other doctorings of the church. I began to talk to Arnie about this new found belief, and a few months later he too joined the church. When he quit drinking coffee he lost so much girth he had to buy new trousers. By the same token he found that he could do his work much easier. He had better wind and stamina.

The spring of 1915, a Mr. Nixon who owned the jewelry store in Didsbury, and member of the Adventist Church, hired me to plow up and make a lawn around his house. This required considerable grading and leveling and planting of trees I was happy to get the job as we were badly in need of the money.

Mother was now living with Clara and Charlie in Minnesota, and Bill and Guy were both living in Bellingham Washington. Bill got acquainted with a Methodist minister in Bellingham a Rev Adam Fawcett, and eventually the minister through Bill, made a deal to trade ten acres near Bellingham, for Mother's place in Alberta. [The land was transferred 14 Nov 1914 per the Certificate of Title]

Adam Fawcett informed Bill that he was going to Alberta to look at the property, so Bill told him to look me up, and I would show him the place. When he arrived at Didsbury he inquired for me, and he hired me to take him out to see the place. It was a two day trip out and back, so we took some food and bedding along and spent the night out there.

Adam was highly impressed with the place, and on arrival back in town, he immediately sent for his wife to join him there. He made arrangements with me to move him out as soon as his wife arrived. In the meantime, he bought what articles of furniture as was necessary to set up housekeeping. In about a week Mrs. Fawcett, a tall angular woman about forty with a small baby, arrived in Didsbury. Adam immediately contacted me and arrangements were made to leave for the homestead the next morning.

We loaded up his furniture into the wagon, and a supply of groceries and headed for the bush. Adam acted more like a young boy than minister of the gospel, he hooped and hollered upon our arrival at the cabin which brought scowls of disapproval from his wife. She was not too happy to be isolated some 25 miles from town with no means of transportation only shanks [Cruckshank's ?] horses. It

was seven miles to Elkton, the closest store and post office and in the spring and rainy season it was not always possible to ford the river.

As I was leaving the next morning to return to town, Adam told me that he had a large box of books coming by freight, and that the railway agent had been instructed to notify me upon their arrival. I was to pick them up and take them out to him. When I delivered the books to him was the last time I ever saw him. I heard later that he did not remain on the place very long. A brush fire in that part of the country burned the cabin, and to this day, some 52 years later, there has never been any one living there.

The fall of 1915 Arnie Ness and I decided to go to southern Alberta to take in the threshing. It offered the best opportunity for work. So the small day house where we had lived the first fall we were married, being vacant, I once again rented it and moved my family there before leaving for southern Alberta. I took my team and Ness's and went down ahead. Ness came down by train, and met me at Carmengay where we planned to work.

Instead of bundle threshing as we expected, we got a job hauling grain for a farmer east of town. He was an elderly bachelor, by the name of Polson, and after we had been there a short time, he asked me to send for my family to come down and keep house for him and we could have a steady job there. This was most agreeable with me as I missed my family and was anxious to have them join me there. Ness stayed on until about the time Zetta and the children arrived, then he quit and went back to Didsbury.

I continued hauling grain to Carmengay for Polson, and he told me to pick up the check each time and bring them home to him. This continued for a few days, then one day, just after I had arrived in town and sold the load of wheat, I was putting my team in the feed barn at noon when the Sheriff walked in. He asked me if I was hauling wheat for Polson and I said yes. He said what are you doing with the checks? I said I am taking them home to Polson. He asked if I had a check on me and I said yes. Well he says I want it and I will give you a receipt for it. Then he told me that Polson's crop was mortgaged and that Polson didn't have any right to sell a bushel of it. I told him that this was news to me, and if that was the case I wouldn't haul any more. He then asked if he could deputize me to look after the wheat and see that no more of it was sold. I said no, I'm working for Polson, and I can't work for you at the same time. He said he appreciated my position, and thanked me for my cooperation.

When I arrived back at the farm and told Polson what had happened he all but blew his stack, but he didn't ask me to haul any more wheat to town. As long as he could use me to illegally dispose of his wheat he treated us very nice, but as soon as he found out his scheme had been discovered he became mean to Zetta, and would ball her out for the least little thing when I was not around. I soon became aware of the change in attitude, and I decided we would have to make a move.

[1916]

We had been wanting to return to the States anyway so I figured this was as good a time as any. I put my horses up for sale, and I told Polson we were leaving as soon as I could sell my team. He said he knew he was nothing but an old devil and he begged us to stay on. However our minds were made up to leave and I found sale for my horses in just a few days. We packed out first of January [1916]. We left and returned to N. Dakota.

[1917]

The spring of 1917, Frank and Laura and family decided to return to Alberta. Frank still had his property there, also his homestead. We were living in Fargo at the time and they stopped off there to visit us on their way north. Frank asked us to return to Alberta with them, he felt that Laura would be more content to remain up there if some others of the family were there. I was working for a wholesale grocery in Fargo and was making more money than I had ever had in my life before, so naturally I did not want to pull up stakes and return to the uncertainties of life in Alberta. I had no property there and though Zetta's folks were still there. It didn't make sense to me to leave a good job. World War One was still being fought and there was no prospects of an early end to the fighting in Europe.

With the exception of some fencing, the place remains practically the way it was when we homesteaded it in 1906. There are one or two families living about three miles west of there and a few east of there, but no one in that particular locality. All five quarters that we homesteaded in 1906 remain to this day without anyone on them. Frank's house and barn, and George's house were all destroyed by fire, also Bill's cabin.

On recent visits we have made back to these old home sites, we found little left to remind us of the hardship and toil it took to carve the homes from the wilderness so long ago. The passing years have taken their toll, and now I am the only adult left that comprised the original settlers. Guy, Bernice, and Kenneth were just infants at that time, also Donald. Guy had just turned three years old the fall we arrived there and Bernice was just over one year, Donald about one year and Kenneth about six weeks.

CANADA

Whereas the Lands hereinafter described are Dominion Lands within the meaning of the Dominion Lands Act

AND WHEREAS

Carmelia Cakes of Township Thirty-one, Range Five, West of the Fifth Meridian, in the Province of Alberta, in the Dominion of Canada, Widow.

hereinafter called the grantee. he applied for a grant of the said lands and after due investigation he has been found entitled to such grant in the terms herein embodied.

Now Know Ye, that by these presents We do grant unto the graces all that of Person, or Trade, of Land, estate, lying and being in the Thirty-first Township, in the
English Range, West of the English Meridian, in the Province of Alberta, — In Our Dominion of Canada, and being comprised of

The South-West quarter of Section Twenty of the said Township, as shown upon a map or plan of Survey of the said Township, approved and confirmed at Ottawa, on the 27th day of December, A.D. 1905, by Edward South, Surveyor General of Dominion Land and of record in the Department of the Interior,

containing by endorsement One hundred and fifty-nine sets of 1, more or less;

KNOWS AND RECEIVES, HERETOFOR SAID U.S. CHIEF JUSTICE and Judges, the free use, passage and enjoyment of, in, over and upon all navigable waters that now are or may be hereafter found on or under, or flowing through or upon any part of the United States, or first of the said United States or portions, which may be found to exist within, upon or under said lands, together with full power to work the same and for the purpose to use and to cause to be used the same and to erect and to cause to be erected on or under said lands as much thereof and to such extent as may be necessary for the efficient working and extracting of the said minerals; and also receiving thereunto and thereunto all rights of fishery and fishing and occupation in connection therewith, upon, around and adjacent to the said lands, and also the privilege of landing from and mooring boats and vessels upon any part of the said lands and using said lands in connection with the rights of fishery and fishing; hereby reserved, so far as may be reasonably necessary to the exercise of such rights.

To have and to hold the same unto the grantee—in fee simple.

Provided, and, in pursuance of the Irrigation Act it is hereby declared, that these presents shall not vest in the grantee any exclusive or other property or interest in or any exclusive right or privilege with respect to any lake, river, stream or other body of water, or in, or with respect to the water contained or flowing therein, or the land forming the bed or shore thereof.

James Douglas Beveridge Caprice Randolph Rolfe

Deputy of Our Most Dear and Faithful Beloved Uncle and Most Faithful Counsellor, Field Marshal His Royal Highness Prince Arthur William Patrick Alfred, Duke of Connaught and of Strathmore, Earl of Susssex (in the Peergage of the United Kingdom) Prince of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Duke of Saxony, Prince of Saxe-Gotha; Knight of Our Most Noble Order of the Garter; Knight of Our Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle; Knight of Our Most Illustrious Order of Saint James; Knight of Our Most Excellent Order of the Star of India; Knight of Our Most Excellent Order of the Star of the East; Knight Grand Cross of Our Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George; Knight Grand Commander of Our Most Excellent Order of the Indian Empire; Knight Grand Cross of Our Royal Victorian Order; Our Personal Aide-de-Camp, General Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Our Dominion of Canada.

At OTTAWA, this *Twenty-ninth* day of *September* in the year of Our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and *twelve* and in the *third* year of Our Reign

BY COMMAND,

W. H. H. H.
Under-Secretary of State

John C. ...
Deputy of the Minister of the Interior

Notes:

- Added text is denoted with [].
- The source has several n-1/2 pages (e.g. page 18-1/2). For the most part the exact insertion point for this additional text was able to be determined. One additional section, discussing a hunting trip, could not. The sequence could not be determined and it added nothing to the overall story so it was omitted.
- Punctuation, spelling, and some grammatical errors were corrected.
- Pictures and clippings were added to James' original text.

