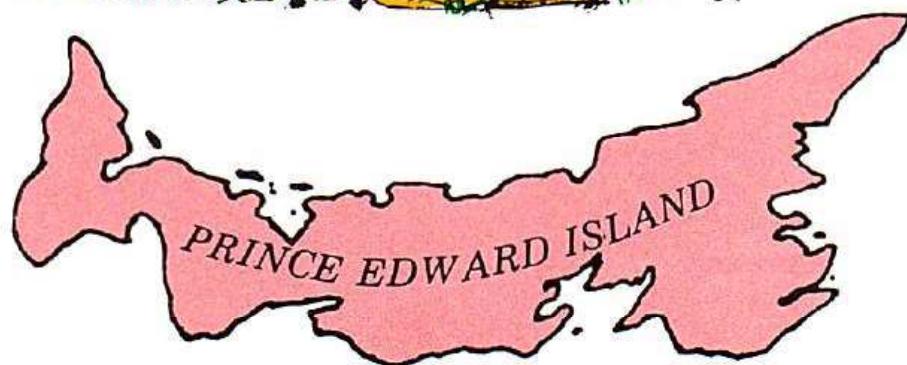
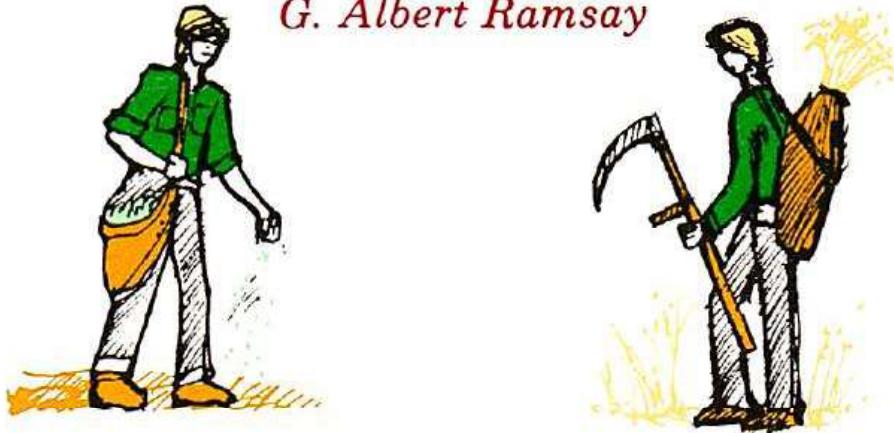


Sowing & Reaping in the Garden of the Gulf

G. Albert Ramsay



Prince Edward Island

The Mic Mac Indians, its first inhabitants, named it: "Abegweit" (cradled on the wave), their heathen legend being that their god, Glooscap, after painting the beauties of the world, dipped his brush in a mixture of colors and painted this, his favorite Island. The British in 1799 named it Prince Edward, in honour of the son of King George the 3rd. Its rich, red, fertile soil, located in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, gained for it two nicknames: "Million acre farm" and "Garden of the Gulf" - the title chosen for this book. To its people, it is known as "The Island" or "P.E.I." It has also been called the "Cradle of Confederation." In its capitol, the furniture remains intact in the room where the Fathers of Confederation held the first meeting in 1864, which later brought about the forming of ten provinces into the Dominion of Canada.

Farming, Fishing and Tourism are its main industries. Its seed potatoes, lobsters and famous Malpeque oysters are shipped to many parts of the world. A moderate climate, sandy beaches and uncrowded paved roads, make it a haven for tourists during the summer months.

Over the past two hundred years, men of God have preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ on this Island. Missionaries have gone forth from its shores to dark corners of the earth. The Gordons of New Hebrides fame, who suffered martyrdom by the natives, were born here.

However, this book has to do with assemblies of Christians who gather to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In 1887, John Knox McEwen of Ireland, working among the assemblies in Nova Scotia, sailed from Buctouche, New Brunswick to the Island; no record of the place but recorded a number led to Christ in Gospel meetings. David Scott, who laboured with the assemblies in New Brunswick, spent the winter in 1908 and saw souls saved in the district of Uigg. However, the first established work among the assemblies was in 1934, which is the subject of this book.



The Author —

Albert Ramsay was saved in the tent meetings at Gambles Corner in 1934, while the meeting was being closed by Herb Harris. The message was on Matthew 7 - The Two Roads, a story his grandmother had told him when he was around six years of age. That night, the Lord used that seed to bring forth fruit, 'after many days.'

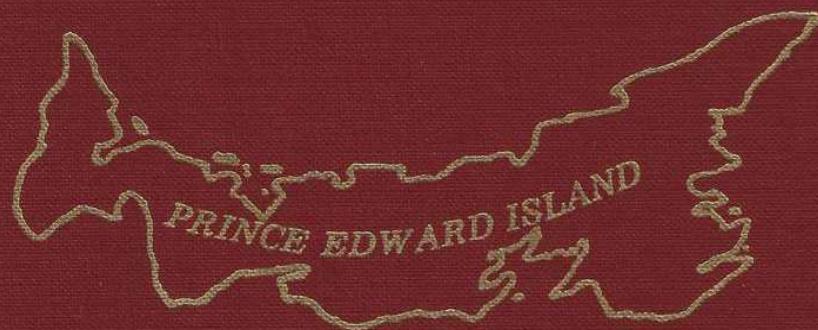
He has been in the Lord's work thirty-nine years, labouring mostly on P.E.I., also spending much time in Newfoundland in the beginning of the work. Upon the request of many Christians, young and old, he has compiled this account of the work, having had firsthand knowledge of events.

THE WORTHLESS PEBBLE

I was only a worthless pebble
Upon the beach of time,
Yet He stooped and declared to heaven
'I have made this pebble mine.'
And this is why I serve Him
As I think of that crowded beach
And shudder! that when He was
 passing
I might have been out of reach
And left like other pebbles
To never be touched by His hand
And tossed by the waves of life's ocean
And buried at last in the sand.

G.A.R.

Sowing & Reaping
in the
Garden of the Gulf



G. Albert Ramsay

ATLANTIC CANADA



Labrador

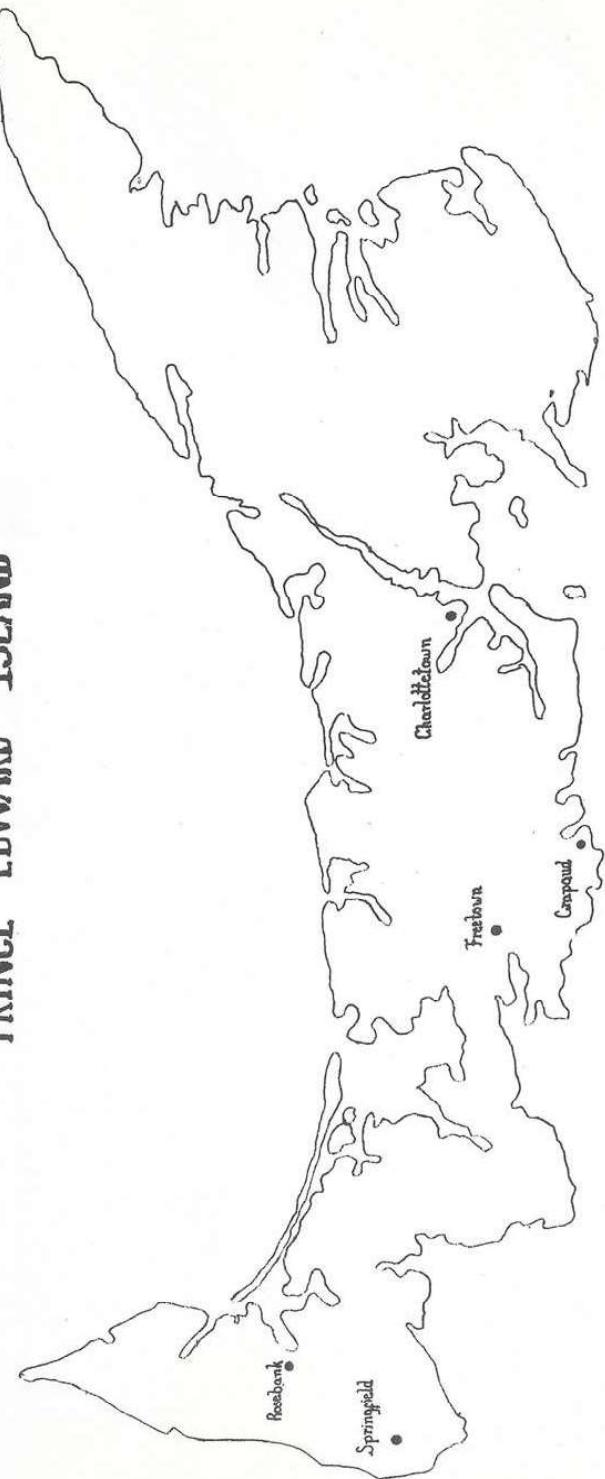
Newfoundland

New
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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



GOSPEL LITERATURE
*143 Upper Prince Street
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“Sowing and Reaping

in the

Garden of the Gulf”

G. Albert Ramsay

1983

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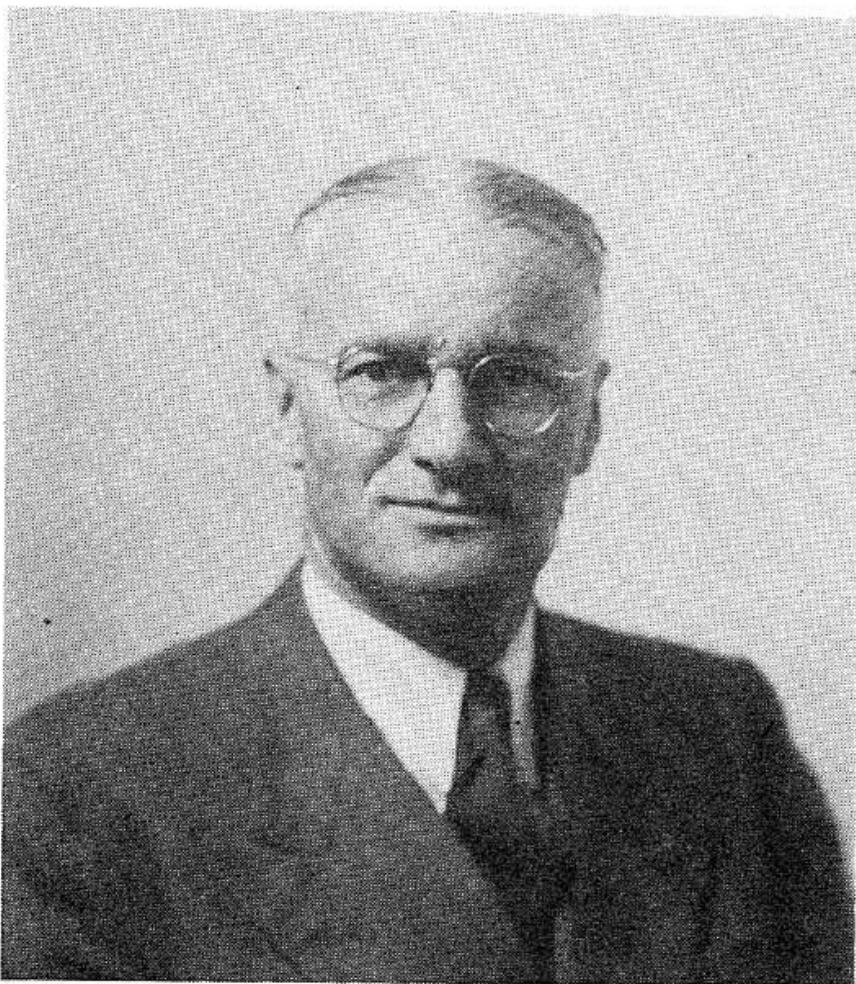
FOREWORD

I deem it an honor and a privilege to be asked by my brother-in-law, as well as brother in Christ, to write a few words of introduction.

Having moved to Prince Edward Island from Boston, Mass. with my parents in 1934, I have been acquainted with the work connected with assemblies gathered in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ here from the beginning. The author of this book has ably and interestingly described those labors in the following pages.

As I read about those early days and the limited means under which our brethren labored, it only brings out the truth of Proverbs 16:9 "Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right."

Donald G. Ramsay



MR. HERB HARRIS



MR. ALBERT JOYCE



MR. RUSSELL HARRIS

INTRODUCTION

This book has been written upon the request of younger Christians on Prince Edward Island who desire to know how the work started among the assemblies here and also some of our experiences in connection with this work from its beginning and over the nearly fifty subsequent years. For this reason I have undertaken the following account, which I trust will endear to them the heritage into which they have been brought and result in an exercise to dedicate themselves to the work and take on the responsibility of labours for the Lord. I would say to you who are younger, as we feel the greater part of our labours to be over, "To you from failing hands the torch we throw; be yours to hold it high." Sweat and tears have often been the lot of those who pioneered this work; if you would see it preserved, you too must know something of the same.

As to the style of writing, should this book come into the hands of those who are strangers to the work on this Island and Newfoundland, remember that it was written primarily for those who will be quite conversant with the names and places mentioned, as well as the pictures I have chosen to include. I feel this makes the book come alive to those for whom it is written. Those whose names are included will have to forgive me for not asking permission and, to those who are not mentioned, I ask your forgiveness for the omission. Personal experiences have been related upon request as well, with quotes from diaries and jottings from memory which are not always accurate with relation to dates and details. I trust that any experience mentioned of a personal nature will only magnify the grace of God and serve as an encouragement to others who may be contemplating similar work for the Lord. I can testify that He is the God of all supply (Phil. 4:19), the Manager of every circumstance, the Director of all service and the faithful fulfiller of every promise that He has made, when the conditions are met which precede each given promise.

Why reference is made to Newfoundland:

Others, no doubt, will write and give a more detailed account of that work of grace which is still going on; however, what has been included in this writing is more or less from first-hand knowledge of the work in its beginning, which may not be known by others and which I feel will be of deep interest to those who have not heard it before. It is by no means a full account, nor is it meant to be a summary of the work and workers, but only a sketch here and there from memory in order to record some things that might be forgotten. The same is true of the reference to the tent for the Pugwash Junction conference.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To My Dear Wife Marjorie:

This account has been written to preserve some of the background of the work here on P.E.I. in connection with the assemblies. I would like all to know that you shared with me fully the personal experiences selected; in fact, yours was the more difficult task, especially the long winter months spent alone in caring for the family while I helped with the work in Newfoundland in the early days.

To the family as well I would offer a word of appreciation for your understanding when I was seldom able to spend an evening at home with you as I pursued the work of the Lord while you were growing up.



THE RAMSAY FAMILY

I want to gratefully acknowledge the many hours of work that were put into this book in editing and arranging in order for printing; also I would thank those who helped by submitting pictures and material.

THE TENT AT GAMBLER'S CORNER

At a place called Gambler's Corner
In the balmy month of June,
When the grass and trees were budding
And all nature was in tune;
That a number of lost sinners
Heard the Gospel story told
How that Jesus died to save them
They believed, and were made whole.

Through a chain of circumstances
That only God could plan,
Link by link, in grace and mercy
Now they trace His loving hand;
Oft with wonder and amazement
Deep thanksgiving fills their heart
As they think upon His mercy
While they still were blind and dark.

Moved by God the Holy Spirit,
Men who heard the call of need
Turned their feet toward our Island
There to sow the Gospel seed;
But the sowing seemed so senseless
In a district so depressed
Would there ever be a harvest?
Would the effort e'er be blessed?

Youthful hearts the Spirit opened
To receive the word of truth,
And a number of poor sinners
Got salvation in their youth.
What a time of visitation!
By the Holy Spirit sent,
All the countryside affected
By the preaching in the tent.

Some criticised the preachers,
Others branded them as spies,
"Why listen to such ranting?
It is all a pack of lies!"
But others were more serious
And weighed the matter well,
As the way was set before them —
"Choose for heaven or for hell!"

Few understood the meaning
 Of all this hue and cry,
Twas a gracious visitation —
 Jesus Christ was passing by;
And a harvest He was reaping
 From the crowd that came and went
In the fourteen weeks of meetings
 Held that summer in the tent.

Forty-seven years have vanished
 Since those days by heaven sent;
Scattered far the congregation
 Who had listened in the tent;
And the men who brought the message
 Shall proclaim its sound no more —
They have gone to wait our coming
 On the bright, celestial shore.

Some who made their choice for heaven
 Have already gone that way;
Others still are in the body,
 Looking forward to that day
When together we shall praise Him
 Whom we believe the preachers sent
To that place called Gambles Corner
 For the meetings in the tent.

G.A.R. 1978

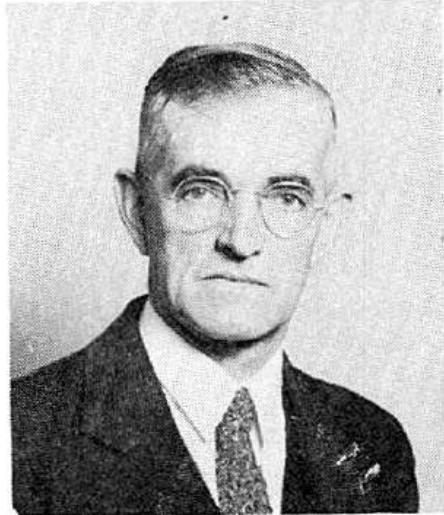
CHAPTER 1

A Great Door and Effectual

This story actually has its beginning far from Prince Edward Island, in Brandon, Manitoba, where a Presbyterian minister, Mr. Rae, left the ministry and gathered to the Lord's name with the assembly there. In 1890, this dear man was led by the Lord to hold Gospel meetings in a schoolhouse in North Dakota. Among those attending were Mr. and Mrs. Henry Keyes. For years, Mrs. Keyes had felt that a change would have to take place in her life before she could enter heaven, and when she heard the Gospel, she realized that she needed to be born again. There was not much interest in the meetings, but Mrs. Keyes, who was hoping that Mr. Rae would not go home until she was saved, asked the preacher to stay with her and her husband in their little two room cottage and continue the meetings. He agreed, and Mrs. Keyes was saved on January 6, 1890, through the words of John 5:24. Her husband was saved shortly thereafter at a Brandon conference.

Just before the First World War, in 1914, the Keyes moved to Edmonton, Alberta, where they were neighbors of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Ramsay. One day, Mrs. Ramsay said to Mrs. Keyes, "What have you got that I haven't got? I've been watching you since you came to live beside me, and I never saw anyone like you!"

Mrs. Keyes answered, "I have eternal life!" As Mrs. Ramsay listened to her relate God's way of salvation, she was convinced that this was right. She went home and told her husband, Gordon, that Mrs. Keyes had been telling her that she had eternal life and was sure of it. He, being an elder in the church, was annoyed and said, "Does she think she is any better than the rest of us?"



MR. & MRS. GORDON RAMSAY

Shortly after this, the Keyes moved farther from town, but kept up their friendship with the Ramsays. Each time they went into town, they visited the Ramsays and left some tracts with them. One day when Mrs. Keyes came, Gordon, who was by now very interested in salvation, made up his mind that if she left a tract he would read it and do whatever it said. After she had gone, he opened the tract and began to read: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." In despair, he said, "I have always believed, and I am not saved!" His wife, who was in the same troubled state, was in the room with him, and as they thought about their hopeless condition, the Lord revealed to them at about the same time what it meant to believe, and they were both born into the Kingdom of God. Later, three other couples that lived in the same block as the Ramsays were also saved through Mrs. Keyes' testimony. Truly: "The lips of the righteous feed many." (Prov. 10:21)

The Ramsays then realized that the Gospel was not preached at the church they were attending, and they began going from place to place trying to find where the Gospel was preached. Mrs. Keyes discovered this on another of her visits, and asked them if they had ever thought of "gathering out." They asked her what she meant by that, and as she explained it to them, they were immediately interested. After learning more about it, they found their place "outside the camp" gathered to His name in Edmonton, Alberta.

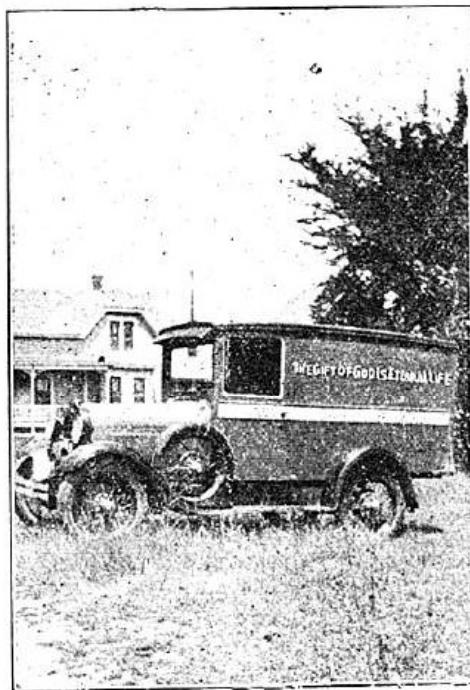
Gordon Ramsay was a native of Prince Edward Island, where his father was still living, and each summer Gordon returned to the Island with his family to help on the farm near Mill River. His son Donald was saved during one of those visits. Some time later, Gordon moved from Alberta to Boston, Massachusetts, where he was in the Cliff Street assembly, but continued to visit P.E.I. regularly. On one of his

visits, his interest in seeing a Gospel work established there was aroused, and in 1932 he and brother Joe Pearson of Massachusetts held two weeks of open air meetings in "the square" in Charlottetown.

Brother Pearson wrote to *American Pioneer*, an assembly magazine, of those meetings: "Brother Ramsay and I came here to Charlottetown, P.E.I., two weeks ago, and we have had a good time. If I were just starting out and knew what I do now, I would land on this Island where there is room for the gospel. The door is open for the gospel, and there is not an assembly on the entire Island — 150 miles long and 30 miles wide, sometimes called the "Million Acre Farm", and not a scriptural assembly on it! It has a population of 80,000. What a field for two young men who have the glory of God and the salvation of the lost at heart! But alas, alas! Where are the young men that will go for God? However God had His own here and He Who is over all has heard the cry of His dear people and will send help. The woman with whom we are staying is over 70 and got saved at a Pugwash Junction conference." (He refers to Mrs. Caswell, the mother of Murdoch McDonald's wife.)



MR. JOSEPH PEARSON

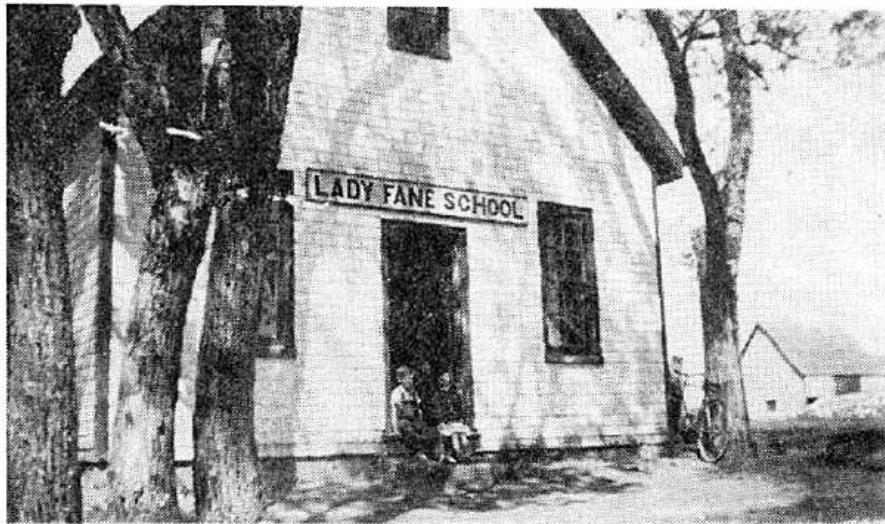


THE BIBLE CAR
OF EVANGELIST J. F. PEARSON

One of Gordon Ramsay's relatives whom he visited on the Island was Archie McCallum, who was married to one of the author's aunts. In 1928 Archie moved to County Line Road just across the road from his brother-in-law, (my father). One afternoon while I was visiting the McCallums, brethren Pearson and Ramsay came, in a van with this Gospel text on each side: "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of

God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." They offered me a booklet, and I refused, saying "I have to work for a living, and am not interested in religion." I walked away, feeling that I had "told them off." (In 1950, at the funeral of our dear brother Gordon Ramsay, I preached on the text that was on the side of their van. How God works! We should never be discouraged; God will do His own work!)

In the kind leading of God, after that visit to P.E.I., brother Pearson while in Ontario met Russell Harris, who had been doing some work with John Spreeman in Quebec. After brother Pearson related the story of Prince Edward Island to Russell Harris, he was interested in going to the Island. They contacted brother Gordon Ramsay in Boston, and made arrangements for him to introduce Mr. Harris to the McCallums and Mrs. Caswell. In November, 1933, the two men arrived on the Island. A number of us were doing some road work, filling mud holes, when we saw the car coming and stood aside to let them pass. Upon seeing this little man, Russell Harris, for the first time, the writer little realized what an influence he was to have on his own life, and that because of his coming the whole countryside would be affected.



LADY FANE SCHOOL HOUSE

Their first meeting was held on Sunday afternoon, in the Lady Fane schoolhouse, where brother Ramsay and brother Hugh Thorpe had previously held meetings. We all attended, and the Gospel was attentively listened to, so a meeting was held at night in the McCallum's house. This became a regular event during the winter. Each weekend Russell Harris would come by train to Emerald Jct. where Archie McCallum would meet him with the horse and sleigh, take him to his home, keep him over the weekend and drive him back to the train on Monday. Sometimes he would stay for the week and visit; he covered nearly every home and won the confidence of almost everyone.

in the district. Friday night was our dance night, but all of us would go to the school first for the meeting and then afterwards to the dance. Some made fun of the little preacher, but others thought he was the best. We had never heard preaching like that before — a man telling us that he was saved, and that we could be saved too and sure of it. He was sowing the good seed, and we did not know that the Lord was laying a groundwork for the coming summer when the tent would be pitched.

During the winter plans were made to pitch a tent in the spring. Brother Ramsay had bought the tent himself and shipped it from Boston. (He not only prayed for the place, he then helped the Lord to answer his prayers by doing something about it.) Archie McCallum began to build the benches in his workshop and in the month of May two brethren from Toronto, Herb Harris (Russell's brother) and Albert Joyce, arrived at the school just as the afternoon meeting was closing. As they stepped in and joined the singing, they made an impression on everyone. They announced a meeting in McCallum's house for that evening, and the place was packed. This writer can say that it was in that meeting that he was first arrested by the Spirit of God, and longed to be saved. On June 13, the tent was pitched across from the Lady Fane School, near Gambles Corner, and nightly meetings began. The crowd was not large at first, being mostly made up of those who had come to the meetings in the school; but God has His own way, and looking back we can see that what appeared to us a commonplace thing was ordered of the Lord.



FIRST GOSPEL TENT, GAMBLE'S CORNER, 1934

The two preachers lived in a summer cottage which they rented from Brent Wood on the beach at Victoria. One Sunday afternoon, a neighbor from across the field, Mrs. Ross Boulter, thought she should take something down to the preachers for their supper. She had never

met them, but knew they were doing their own cooking, so she brought them some doughnuts and jello. This led to a conversation and an invitation to come to the tent meetings; Mrs. Boulter accepted, and this led to the Lord working in her large family and saving a number of them. They were baptized church members, but not one of them was saved. Sam, her son, was studying hard that summer, and the preachers pressed him time and again to come, but he was always "too busy." Finally, one night he consented to go — he often told it: "I heard three men say they were saved and sure of heaven, and knew it from the Bible." This spoke to Sam, and he was soon saved through Romans 5:6. He became a good Christian, who left an excellent testimony when he was suddenly called into the presence of the Lord when his van overturned on an icy road in 1951. Other family members were also reached and saved: Marjorie, Mrs. Albert Ramsay; Pamela, who married Russell Cairns and went to be with the Lord in 1979; Ebbie, an elder in the Crapaud assembly; Johnny, living in Victoria, and Rita, who was saved many years later, and is in the East Boston assembly. All of this came about through the simple, kind act of Mrs. Ross Boulter.

Mr. Joyce was called back to Toronto during the middle of June due to a death in the family. On his return to the Island he brought his wife and three children. An empty house in the village of Victoria belonging to Mr. Miner McNevin was rented for the summer, which resulted in so many more contacts that soon the people wanting rides to the meetings were more than could be crowded into two cars. Willard Thomas had a large truck, and offered to pick up the crowd for a dollar a night. Before long the truck, as well as the cars, was filled.

The first break in the meetings came on June 22, just as the Gospel meeting was closing. The writer trusted Christ while Mr. Herb Harris was praying, and Lillian Oakes (now Mrs. Melvin Buchanan) was saved during the singing of the closing hymn. My sister Eva was saved the next night, and on it went from there. Russell Cairns, "the King of the Bootleggers", said, "If Albert Ramsay needed to be saved, I need it too." The first night that Russell came to the meeting he brought along a gallon of moonshine, thinking, "Where there's a crowd, there will be business." Some of his friends heard him talk, and warned him that "the go-preachers" would get him; he insisted that they would "never get me!" However, not long after I trusted Christ, he was saved while reading John 3:16 alone in his bedroom.

The experiences of many of those who were saved at that time could be related but I will just mention one more to bring before you what it means to come nigh to salvation, yet not grasp it. Two men were walking in front of the tent and I heard one say to the other, "Frank, they make it so plain! It's just like an apple on the tree, all you have to do is reach up and take it!"

"Well, Clayton, why don't you take it?" said Frank.

"Oh, not me, I'm not ready yet."

The preacher spoke with Clayton and set the gospel before him. He said, "I have a question: could I get saved and still fish lobsters out of season? I live on the line and have to fish both to make a living." They tried to point out to him that if he put salvation first the Lord would look after the rest; but, sad to say, he didn't, and turned bitterly against the Gospel. Twenty years later he suffered a sudden attack, and died before the doctor arrived, crying, "God have mercy on me!" It would seem he cried too late.

As the crowds at the meeting grew, so did the opposition. Herb Harris said things in his preaching that stirred the anger of the audience, and Mr. Joyce followed with a touching Gospel message while they were aroused. I can remember one sermon especially that created quite a stir; it was the one Mr. Harris preached on the course of the natural man. He spoke on the four phrases: "Vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wild ass's colt;" "He walketh in a vain show;" "Died Abner as a fool dieth?" and "The rich man in hell." His points were: "Born like a wild ass's colt — lives and walks in a vain show — dies like a fool — and goes to hell." Then he would say, regarding his first point, "Don't get angry; the reflection is on the ass." Second point: "If you want to see something less than nothing, when you go home, stand in front of a life-size mirror and take a look." Third point: "Man is physically sane, but morally insane; you should be ashamed to look a cow or horse in the face, for a cow gets on her knees at least twice a day; some of you have not been on your knees for twenty years!" Fourth point: "You will either bow now to God or you will bow on the hot pavements of hell. It must be, it is bound to be, and God Almighty has decreed that it most surely will be, either the BLOOD OF CHRIST or hell for all ETERNITY!" Such preaching stirred every fiber of the soul and got at the conscience.

Mr. Joyce might follow such a sermon with, "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" From that he would commence to set forth the way of salvation. Mr. Joyce could say straightforward things and get at the conscience as well as Mr. Harris, but somehow if he said anything that the people did not like, in a few days it would be reported that "Harris said it." However, brother Herb could be soft as well as harsh, and I saw him shed many a tear while he was preaching.

The whole countryside was stirred; they came from near and far. Without knowing it, the local Orangeman's Lodge was also responsible for an increase in attendance at the tent. Their annual Orange Tea was held on July 12, about a half mile from the tent. Many of the people who were at the tea, noticing the sign that was on the tent, returned later to attend the meeting and see what it was all about. I had been saved on June 22, still belonged to the Orangeman's Lodge, and, thinking that promoting this "Tea" was something worthwhile, I went to Charlottetown, engaged the Salvation Army band to play, and proudly carried the banner at the front of the parade that day. I was

thrilled at such a show of Christianity at our Tea! When the day was finished, still enthusiastic, I went over to the tent, and found Mr. Joyce sitting all alone, at 8:30. He quietly asked me, "Did you have a good picnic, Albert?"

I said, "A wonderful time! I tell you, if it had not been for King Billy, this tent would not be here!" Mr. Joyce said not a word in reply, but he told me later that he said to himself, "We will see what happens to King Billy when Albert reads his Bible and hears some ministry!" By the month of November, I found out, from my experience with those men who were in the same lodge, just how much King Billy had to do with the tent being there — nothing! No doubt William, Prince of Orange, did a wonderful work in his day, but he never organized the lodge, and I discovered that it was no place for those who are born from above.

One of the Lodge members, the man who drove the minister around, an especially upright man, was persuaded to come and hear the Gospel preaching one night. Afterward, I asked, "What did you think of it?" He said, "Well, Albert, it is the truth, but why didn't they go to the heathen with it?" Within a three-mile radius of the tent, there were five moonshine stills in operation, with every kind of wickedness going on, and when the "Bootleggers" were getting saved, people thought the Gospel preaching was a good thing. However, when some of the respectable, good-living church members began to be saved, it was time that the preachers were chased out of the country — ("They are going to break up our churches.")

The preachers commenced open-air meetings in "the square" in Charlottetown every Saturday night. We were encouraged to give our testimonies. I figured that would be easy for me, having done a bit of public speaking in local concerts and in the Lodge. I prepared quite a sermon in my mind, but when my turn came to step out I felt myself getting smaller and smaller. Looking at the crowd of about two hundred people, I gave a big bow, said about a dozen words, bowed again, and stepped back. That was my first attempt at preaching, and I was not too proud of it!

The Gospel meetings continued until the beginning of September. When they closed, brother Joe Pearson joined the brethren in the tent for two weeks of ministry meetings. Some of us who had been saved then asked to be baptized, and a date was set for the baptism — Lord's Day afternoon, September 23.

There was no small stir as the word got around. Eight hundred onlookers watched to see who the preachers had "gathered up" in the meetings! Mr. Joyce and the two Harris brothers, Herb and Russell, stood on an upturned fishing boat and preached the gospel, then about thirty of us were baptized by Mr. Pearson. Some turned out to be chaff, or maybe could not face the opposition. Heaven will reveal if they were real, but when all was said and done, this fact remained: God had done a mighty work, and there was more to follow.

CHAPTER 2

Fulfilling the Commission

The great commission was, “Go ye and make disciples — baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I AM with you alway, even unto the end of the age.” This is the duty of every God-sent evangelist; failing to carry out the last part of the commission makes him an unfaithful servant. In seeking to carry out this latter part, opposition is encountered, and this very often distinguishes between what is chaff and what is the true grain.

Unknown to those of us who had been baptized, there was deep exercise and prayer on the part of the Lord’s servants as to where they would find a place to gather. The Lord opened the way, and the Public Hall was rented in Crapaud. Another two weeks of ministry meetings were held in the tent, and, on October 7, 1934, we sat down to observe the Lord’s supper for the first time. Thus the first assembly was formed on Prince Edward Island.

During the second week of those ministry meetings, Mr. Joyce came to the field where I was working and the conversation went somewhat like this: “Well, Albert,” he began, “we are planning to gather together as the early Christians did — to remember the Lord.”

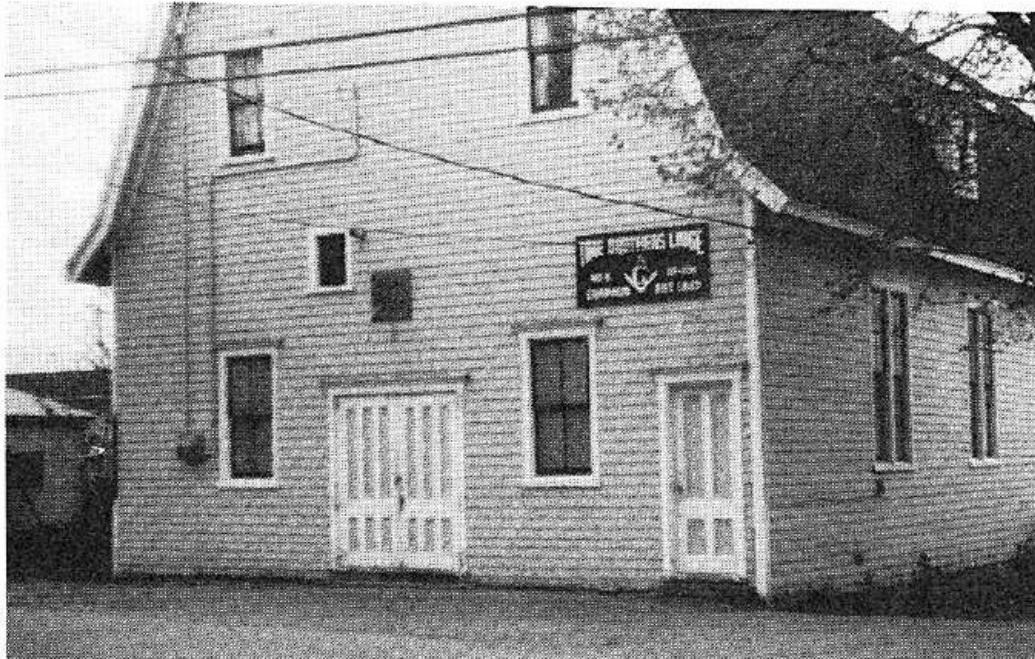
“Oh?”

“They came together on the first day of the week to break bread.”

“Oh, yes, to take the sacraments.” (I had seen that done before, when my sister Eva had joined the church.)

“Well, it is called in the Bible the Lord’s supper, or the breaking of bread.”

“Oh.”



CRAPAUD PUBLIC HALL
WHERE THE ASSEMBLY FIRST MET IN 1934

"We have rented the public hall in Crapaud and on this coming Lord's Day we will be gathering at 11 o'clock. Those who were baptized will sit together in a circle around the table, which will be in the center with a loaf of bread and a cup of wine on it; there will be no preachers there."

"Won't you and Mr. Harris be there?"

"Oh yes, but not as preachers; you see, this is to be a worship meeting, when we shall be giving God thanks for His Son. As the meeting goes on, maybe about halfway through, a brother will give thanks for the bread on the table, and it will be broken and passed around. Each one will take a portion from it. After the bread is back on the table some brother will give thanks for the cup, and then it will be passed."

"Only one cup?"

"Yes, that is what we read in the scriptures. After the cup is back on the table, there will be an offering taken, as this is part of our worship: the giving of our means. Hebrews 13 says '... To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.'"

"You mean a collection?"

"Well, it is not called that in the scriptures; it is called an offering."

For a moment I was taken aback; we often boasted to the unsaved that they took no collections at these meetings — we had never seen them take one. The talk was, "Just wait, they will get your money!"

Now this was it — a collection! Well, I thought, these men brought us the gospel, and I know I am saved, and it must be right, or they would not be doing it. Oh, how much confidence a young convert puts in the evangelist! And how necessary it is to carry out the commission: "Go YE!" Personal contact is the only way local churches can be gathered. It is not the only way that souls can be saved, but to be gathered according to the Scriptures, there must be a working of the Spirit, inspiring confidence in the convert that the things which they are being taught are true. That confidence is generally inspired by those who bring the gospel, or the "spiritual fathers." At least it was so in our case; there are always exceptions to the rule, but to those that observe God's workings, I think it will have to be agreed that where there is a scripturally gathered company operating in the New Testament order, there has been someone (or ones) who took the lead and laid the foundation, as Paul did. As this conversation went on, the Spirit indwelling me was saying, "This is the right thing." So I said, "I'll be there."

Oh, how little I understood or entered into all that was patiently explained to me that day! But there was an impression left by that conversation and an attitude begotten to go along with what was told me. I want to state here, that those of us who are older must always keep in mind that young converts must be nurtured in the simple truths of God's word. We must never weary of repetition, thinking we have gotten our point across, but we must ever keep before the young in Christ — and the older ones as well — these simple truths: the reasons why we gather as we do, and the privileges and responsibilities connected with being gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus. We take it for granted that all know, but brethren, they DON'T know! Even with the plain teaching which we were privileged to receive, ten years later when an issue came up and I heard one of the preachers telling a government official that we believed in "the Priesthood of all believers" I could not have given an intelligent explanation of what he meant.

That First Lord's Day

It was four miles from our home to the hall in Crapaud, so we were up early that first Sunday, and ready in good time. You have been reading of a brother and sister who, just a few months before, had been leaving for the dances together; now we were leaving for a completely new experience, one which we knew very little about, but were convinced was right. About to be fulfilled were the words of the Psalmist: "Gather my saints together unto me." Eva and I closed the door of the old homestead and set our faces toward that four mile walk to sit down to observe the Lord's supper for the first time. As we walked along we were joined by Mrs. Morris Waddell, then by Russell Cairns and Aunt Minnie McCallum. A couple of miles along the way we met Floyd and Janie Cairns, our sister and brother-in-law, and a number of members of the Oakes family, all heading together for the hall in Crapaud. I am sure all Heaven was looking on.

Our arrival at the hall still stands out vividly in my mind. As we opened the door, a sight met my eyes that will never be erased from my memory: Mr. Herb Harris met us and shook our hands, then on tiptoe he guided us to a seat in a circle where a number of Christians, some of whom I'd never met before, were already gathered. I found out afterward that among those there were Mr. & Mrs. Goodwin of Pugwash Junction, Mr. & Mrs. Norman MacNeil of Moncton; Mr. & Mrs. Darling of River Hebert, and Mrs. Caswell and Miss Ross of Charlottetown. Both of these sisters had been saved for many years, Miss Ross having been in an assembly in the States, and Mrs. Caswell being the woman Mr. Pearson mentioned in his letter who was saved at a Pugwash Jct. conference. There were thirty-five there to remember the Lord when "the hour was come." Never before had such an impression filled my soul: "This is a holy place!" As we sat there with heads bowed and eyes closed, the meeting started, and so did the tears shed by that little company that glorious morning. How real the Lord's Presence was to us that first Lord's Day morning! It seemed as though we were being brought into the Holy Place. The sweet incense of worship was sending up its fragrant cloud from off the golden altar as it was poured over the coals taken from the brazen altar, where the sacrifice had been burned to ashes. All this was taking place that morning, although we knew so little about it; but angels were looking on (or in I Pet. 1:12 N.B.M. "bending down") to behold this wondrous sight — sinners who were once alienated by wicked works and enemies in mind now adoring the One Who gave His life's blood to bring them to God! Oh, let not the poor darkened heart of man with his natural religion seek to compare what we were doing that morning with his dead forms and ostentatious ceremonial observances. THIS was HEAVENLY; those rites belong to the world of which they form a part.

A meal was served there in the hall at noon, after which Mr. Harris suggested that we have a Bible reading. We had never heard of such a meeting and he explained to us that we would take up an Epistle and go through it chapter by chapter. I enthusiastically said, "Oh, that would be great, we would never forget it if we did that!" I drew a smile by my simplicity.

In those early meetings, we were always encouraged to take part, even to give out a hymn. I well remember one Bible reading when I mustered up enough courage to give out a hymn, number 136 in the Believers Hymn Book. I got up and started to read it, but when I came to the second verse I realized I was in difficulty, for it was a marriage hymn, and I quickly sat down again! Someone suggested another, and I joined in the singing with somewhat embarrassed spirit; I should have read it over and been more exercised, but we learned by our mistakes.

“Outside the Camp”

Mr. Joyce gave ministry that first Lord's Day from Hebrews 13, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." We were soon to experience the truth of these words and to be made to feel the outside place. Once the testimony was planted, those who were merely "stony ground" hearers dropped off. How similar it was when our Lord Jesus was here, and He opened the scriptures to read. "They wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." But when He applied those same scriptures they tried to cast Him over the cliff. In two thousand years there has been no change. Men pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven" but when Christians earnestly seek to do His will, they are branded "fanatics." Some Christians who rejoice in the *saving* cross of Christ have no place for the *separating* cross of Christ but prefer to remain in Egypt. When Moses asked Pharoah to let Israel go, his demand was: "... three days' journey into the wilderness to hold a feast unto Jehovah." This principle has not changed in the New Testament. We must be out of Egypt, a full "three days' journey," speaking of death, burial and resurrection. That is what we professed in our baptism — that we had died with Christ, were being buried with Christ, and were raised to walk in newness of life. The world to which we belonged before God saved us now became a wilderness to us. We could enter into the meaning of the words of the Lord Jesus in John 17: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." We found that seeking to carry out II Corinthians 6:14-18, "... Come out from among them and be ye separate ..." and "... be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers ..." would cause us to pay a price. That price involved leaving close relatives and friends in the world's ecclesiastical system as well as those in its fraternal societies; but we had the command of the Lord, and learned from His Word: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (I Sam. 15:22.) A number dropped out as the going became more difficult; if saved, their names are recorded in the book of life, but they missed the blessing here on earth of being identified with their rejected Lord.

After the assembly was formed, Mr. Joyce, with his little family, returned to Toronto. Herb and Russell Harris stayed for the winter, boarding in the home of Addie Howatt, who operated the telephone exchange. That winter proved to be one of great benefit to the young in Christ, as brother Herb Harris took up various practical subjects in Bible readings, giving us the basic teaching that is so vital to establish young Christians. Over my forty-five years in Christ I have heard many able men open the Word of God, and I thank the Lord for every one of them; but never have I heard one who could rivet on my conscience and mind the truth relating to my Christian life both in the world and the assembly, as could our dear brother Herb. He was a Gospel preacher through and through, a real soul winner, but I look upon him as among the great when it came to teaching as well.

Mr. Harris used simple, homely illustrations to firmly implant profound truths in our hearts. How well I can remember his treatment of the "Two Natures" as set forth in Romans 6: "we are to reckon ourselves dead unto sin." He started by saying, "Now we know we are not; but we are to *reckon* because God says we *are*." Then came the story that made it stick — the old man who was very sick and then apparently died; the doctor came and pronounced him dead; and he was laid out on the bed to await the undertaker. When his wife went back into the room she found him struggling to sit up; she said: "Lie down, John, you're dead; the *doctor said* you were dead." Funny? Well, whether it actually happened or not, it made Mr. Harris' point.

Another illustration was that of the jack-in-the box: a man cleaning out his attic found a jack-in-the-box that had been there for over twenty years. Wondering if it still worked, he touched the latch — and up jumped Jack, as active as ever! "Now that is just like the old nature; you keep it in the place of death, but just lift the latch, and it pops up, as big as ever," he concluded. Such elementary illustrations may be too simple for some, but, brethren, when the great and masterly address has long been forgotten, "Jack-in-the-box" will still be in the young convert's mind, and he will relate it to the old nature and the need to keep it in the place of death.

Another story he used when on the subject of separation aptly illustrated his statement — "You will make no progress in the things of God unless you cut clear from the old habits and the old companions." Three men often crossed the lake in a boat on Saturday nights to go to the little town on the far side. One dark night they got into the boat, and started to row across to the other side. After a long while, wondering why they hadn't reached the other side after so much rowing they looked around and discovered that they had never untied the boat!

If he thought we were not letting our light shine, he would tell of the young man who professed to be saved and went to work in the lumber camps for the winter. His Christian friends feared for him, and in the spring when he returned, they asked him how he had gotten along with all those ungodly men. He replied, "Just great; they never suspected a thing!" Then he would look over his glasses at me and say pointedly, "Mr. Ramsay, do the ones you work with suspect anything?"

He would tell of the young man who professed to be saved, and soon after, someone asked his father if there were any changes in him. He replied, "Yes, before he got converted, every Sunday morning he would put his axe over his shoulder and go to the bush to work, not caring who saw him; now he puts it under his coat and goes." These stories, typical of Mr. Harris' emphasis on the practical daily Christian living, should suffice to let all see the type of ministry we sat under as young converts, and how it still lives with us after nearly half a century.

CHAPTER 3

The First Hall

In the summer of 1934 Gordon Ramsay bought a farm in North River, and in the fall he moved in with his family, from Cambridge, Massachusetts. Gordon and his wife and son, Donald, were three more for the assembly, and they were a great help to us, since they were experienced, and Mr. Ramsay was an able minister of the Word of God. They picked up Mrs. Caswell and Miss Ross in Charlottetown and brought them to Crapaud while the car roads were open, but when the first snow came the cars were put away for the winter. For the Ramsays, that meant a train trip from Milton on Saturday, and a sleigh drive from Emerald Junction to McCallums. They made the return trip on Monday so two days were spent traveling back and forth to the meeting. We all found it difficult getting to meetings. When the roads were open we took a horse and sleigh, but if the roads were too bad for the horse we walked. We all came from different parts — Victoria, Cape Traverse, and from the County Line Road — but we had one thing in common as we came together: A desire to remember the Lord and enjoy His word together. After the morning meeting we would have lunch in the hall, which gave us a chance to have a little fellowship together. This went a long way toward our preservation. We were a "little flock" surrounded by wolves, and we were made to feel that we were "outside the camp." We look back with much thanksgiving now as we see how the Lord preserved us. Most of us were in our teens and early twenties. Mr. Bartlett was fifty, and proved to be a steady factor; he was a good man with a good testimony. Mrs. McCallum, Mrs. Urban Waddell, Mrs. Morris Waddell, Mrs. Ern Thompson, Mrs. Bruce Gamble, Mrs. Kenny Holmes, and, for a few years, Mr. Guignion were among the number of older Christians. Some of the younger ones were the Oakes — Lillian, Amy, Jack and Robert; the Boulters — Marjorie, Pamela and Sam; my sister Eva and myself, and also Floyd and Janie Cairns.

During the early months of 1935 brother Harris began to talk of building a Gospel Hall. Different sites were considered, and finally the present site in Crapaud was settled upon. It was decided that we would cut the logs and get the lumber sawed during the winter, and be ready to build by spring. After Mr. Harris returned to Ontario, we managed to get a place to cut the logs from one of our neighbors. It was a time of happy fellowship as we worked in the bush together. The weather was cold, but our hearts were warm in the things of God. One day when an axe was lost, we just prayed together that we would find it, and, as I recall, we did. Things were simple, and all was new to us. All we talked about were the things of the Lord. We never gathered together for an evening without singing and having a prayer meeting, and that winter we had a prayer meeting almost every night.

The logs were landed at Stafford Leard's mill and when it was warm enough he sawed the lumber and had it ready to move to Crapaud



as soon as the roads were open. Mr. Harris returned in April, eager to get the building going, but the old mud roads were impassable and there was no pavement on the Island at that time. As soon as the frost

had gone we began to dig the hole for the basement foundation. Moses Guignion, who had a good team of horses, came from Cape Traverse early each morning, ready to start work at 8 a.m. The horses hauled the old scoop with two handles, and used the old single plow to loosen up the clay; the hard places were taken care of with pick and shovel. It took us days to get the hole dug because we ran into frost, and then when it was finished and the forms were put up, it was difficult to get the sand hauled for the cement. But at last the day arrived when we could begin pouring the foundation. The cement was all mixed by hand and carried in buckets. One day someone told us that there was a cement mixer in Crapaud that could be used with an engine. It was made from a barrel and the gears of an old Ford car, and driven by an old fashioned gas engine. Mr. Harris told me later that I thought it was so much better than the shovels and had asked him if they had anything like that in Ontario. I'm sure they didn't!

One experience I remember well might help some young Christian to realize the importance of being willing to do what he is told. Brother Harris told us to mix the cement by shoveling it over twice dry, then adding water turning it over again, gradually mixing more water in until it was the right consistency for the wall. Since I had mixed cement before and was used to first pouring in quite a lot of water and then mixing it, I figured I could gain the same end without all the extra work of mixing it dry, and did it my way. Whether it was as efficient or not is beside the point: I was not doing as I was told. Mr. Harris had the care and responsibility of the construction and was doing the work, while I was just there for a day now and then. He came around to where I was working with another man, saw the way we were mixing the cement, and said, "Albert, if you don't mix it the way I told you, you can go home." Well, those words hurt, and the next day while at home on the farm, all I could think of was, "Mix it the way I told you or go home." I said, "I'll never go back." However, after much prayer and turning it over again and again in my mind, getting down on my knees perhaps ten times in the field where I was working with the horses that forenoon, I finally decided to return. I look back now and wonder what would have happened had I not gone back. A real battle was going on. My future usefulness for God was at stake, although as a young Christian I was not thinking of that, but the Lord Who had saved me and Who long ago had said to Peter: "Satan hath desired to have thee," was near that morning, and looking back, it is with chastened spirit that I remember what He said to Peter: "But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

Although I did not yet know the truth of the work of the Lord Jesus as my Advocate at God's right hand, there on the old red dust of the potato field that very truth was proven. Maybe some young Christian is passing through a similar experience; your feelings have been hurt and you feel like giving up. I say to you: "Take it to the Lord in prayer." Remember, He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but

for them also who shall believe in me through their word." You have One at the right hand of the throne of God Who is praying for you.

I would like to point out that there are times when those of us who are servants of the Lord fail to enter into the problems of the young in Christ. We need to understand their circumstances or we may discourage them at the outset of the Christian life. I was only able to get an occasional day to work on the hall, as I was living at home with my father and it was cropping time on the farm. Mr. Harris could not understand why Sam Boulter could get there every day to work, and the rest of us so seldom. Well, Sam had other brothers to help with the farm work, and he was not obligated to the same degree that some of the rest of us were. I really became discouraged one morning when brother Harris gave some ministry, and mentioned that when he would see dear Sam coming to work on the hall in the morning, he would think, "Were there not ten cleansed, but WHERE ARE THE NINE?!" That hurt!

However, I will admit that we were not feeling the weight of responsibility that we should have been assuming. It never entered our minds to wonder where the money was coming from! We had none, but we all figured that the preachers had plenty. They always acted as if they had need of nothing, which may have been part of the cause of our belated awareness of the situation. It is good to teach young christians from the very beginning that they have a ministry to fulfill, and that is the ministry of giving. I was in the assembly for three years before I understood that the offering on the Lord's day was not a collection! Mr. Joyce ministered on stewardship, which enlightened me so that I finally realized that a portion of what the Lord gave to me was to be given to Him.

We were to learn after many years what dear brother Harris went through in the building of the first hall! At the time, the cost was only thirteen hundred dollars. The labor was free, except for the carpentry. However, \$1300 was a lot of money at a time when wages were one dollar a day, butter was twenty cents a pound, and the best cuts of beef were fourteen cents a pound. What we now pay for the meat for our conference would then have bought fourteen head of good beef cattle! That thirteen hundred dollars came from different assemblies and individuals who were interested in the new work. The Copp sisters, who owned a hospital in Massachusetts, sent fifty folding chairs, which are still in use in the Crapaud hall. Mr. Darling of River Hebert donated our stove, which is now heating the building where brother Lloyd Hechbert of Bedeque puts together Gospel texts.

One of the greatest puzzles to the unsaved was the question, "Where do they get their money?" They all knew that those of us who went to the meetings had none. I thought I had to have an answer to all of their arguments, and explained to one who asked me, "There are rich people who are saved, and have money but can't go out preaching,

so they give to work like this." I was partly right, but not wholly, for we have learned by experience that it is often the "widow's mite", not the rich man's wealth, which God uses to meet the need. Oh, the stories that went around!! Some even predicted that in a few years they would have the hall to use for a potato house!

Dear brother Harris, who carried the brunt of the burden, often fell on his knees and cried to God to meet the need. One day when he was praying alone in the basement, one of the Christians entered and heard him crying, saying, "*It shall be finished!!*" I am sure that was not the only time that he shed tears as he and others who labored with him sought to establish the work. There were many disappointments in those who professed, and many of us caused grief and worry. I often say that wherever a testimony to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ is in the process of being raised in this dark world, there is "blood, sweat and tears." The blood of Christ is the foundation; the sweat and tears go along with the work of the evangelist who would carry out the whole commission of Matthew 28: "Teaching them to observe ALL THINGS whatsoever I have commanded you."



CRAPAUD GOSPEL HALL, 1935

In due time, the hall was finished. Toward the end, I went to work there one morning, after not having been there for some time. The lovely sight of the new hall still stands out very clearly in my mind — the attractive texts, which had been painted by Margaret Kember of Sarnia, hung neatly on the clean walls; the new floor, just varnished, sparkled. I look back now and realize just how little I put into it. By June, 1935, we were holding meetings in the hall, and had an all day meeting the first Lord's day.

CHAPTER 4

Reaching Out

1935

In the month of July the tent was pitched in Charlottetown on what was then a large field, and is now the Tourist Bureau parking lot. Mr. Joyce and William Pinches of Niagara Falls preached the gospel. However, there was not much interest, and after a few weeks the tent was taken down and put up in Victoria in the field of Gordon McDonald whose mother professed to be save at that time. Mr. Pinches was a short, chubby man with a deep solemn voice. I remember him speaking one Lord's day on Lam. 3:8 — "When I cry and shout, He shutteth out my prayer;" and touching all of our hearts in relation to the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. One Lord's day morning Beatrice Miller, who was then in the assembly, invited her mother, Mrs. Frank Cobb, to the worship meeting. She was a very religious woman who had no ear for the Gospel, but she came along to the meeting with Beatrice that day and sat in the back. While the meeting was going on, the realization came to her: "I am just a poor dead sinner and here are all these folk with life!" Before the day was over she was saved, later came into the fellowship, and was a consistent Christian until her homecall over thirty years later. She often mentioned Mr. Pinches.

One incident still stands out in my mind: I had a fifty cent piece and wanted to give it to Mr. Pinches. I held it in my hand, but could not get up the courage to give it to him. I believe the Lord laid it on my heart, but I thought it was too small. I often think how it would have encouraged him, and perhaps he was actually in need of it. Never quench the Spirit when He prompts you to do something! These opportunities only last for a moment and are gone forever.

As the fall came on, Mr. Harris realized that we would have no place at the hall to put our horses in the winter. He saw the need of a

shed, bought the lumber, and started building. I did put in quite of lot of time on that building, half of which still stands behind the hall. It was put to good use for several years, as we all brought horses and sleighs in the winter. As time went on and cars came more into use, the shed was not needed, and in the Fifties we cut it down to the present size.

During the winter, Mr. Joyce and Mr. Herb Harris went back to Ontario, and Russell Harris stayed with the work, boarding with Mrs. Caswell in Charlottetown during the week and with George McDonald near the hall in Crapaud on weekends. He had a children's meeting each Friday night, and quite a number came from the village. One of the children, a little fellow of about seven years, later was the founder of Norton Jewelers in Charlottetown and often mentioned to his family and to the writer how he had come to the Sunday School in Crapaud. Eternity alone will reveal the results from the seed that was sown.

One Friday night, I had to speak to the children out of necessity. Mr. Harris had come out to Emerald Junction on the train, but the spring freshets were on and the roads were impassable even for horses. He managed to walk the four miles to our home, which was the first on the road. He had crawled over some of the places on his hands and knees because the ice was so thin over the ponds of water across the road. He reached our home nearly exhausted, and after being refreshed, he started on again. When he got to Floyd Cairns's home two miles further, he was totally exhausted, and had to go to bed, unable to continue. I walked the four miles to Crapaud for the meeting and spoke to the children. Many such experiences endeared brother Russell Harris to our hearts: he stayed with us when we were young in the faith and bore with us in our ignorance, teaching us many things.

1936

At the end of June, Mr. Joyce and Mr. Robert McCracken of Cleveland, Ohio, put up a tent in North River, where the Gordon Ramsays lived. There was excellent interest and some souls were saved: Ray and Stanley Gillespie and their mother, Homer Matheson and two of his brothers, and a number of others. It seemed that the Lord was blessing, so in the fall a hall was built and a baptism held, after which the assembly was formed at North River. Perhaps it was a bit premature however, because after the first few months those who had counted the cost continued, while others dropped off, leaving the assembly very weak. As we mentioned before, this was during the great Depression and times were extremely difficult. The Gordon Ramsays, who had thought they would operate a market garden, soon found that there was a lot of hard work involved but very little money coming in. There were no buildings on the farm they had bought, and after building a new house and barn, Mr. Ramsay found that most of his savings were gone, and it became quite a struggle to keep going. His health began to fail, and after his son, Donald, married my sister

Eva, they agreed to take over the farm, and Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Ramsay moved to Vancouver. This left a further burden on the few who were left in the small assembly in North River; the outlook seemed bleak, but the Lord gave grace to carry on and eventually the little testimony was moved to Charlottetown.

In July, Alex and Molly Bowman and Molly's sister Tillie, moved to the Island to be with their niece, Mary Cassidy, and bought a farm about a mile from Crapaud. The farm (now owned by Mrs. Hallett Rodgerson) was meant to produce an income, but as the owners soon discovered there was not even enough coming in to make a living. However, Mary was very enthused with the new venture and thought she would specialize in the dairy business. Walter Bartlett, who had been saved at the meetings, worked for them, and with his horse and wagon, Mary started a milk route in Victoria. She had a good number of customers and enjoyed the work, but there was little or no profit,



Miss Mary Cassidy beside her wee cottage in Crapaud

and soon the dairy business folded. The world would consider that the relocation of these people from the States to the Island was a total failure, but God had a purpose in bringing those dear souls to P.E.I. That little home became a haven for many of us in the first few years, and many times we received both physical and spiritual nourishment there. Mary, a nurse, taught the young sisters many practical skills and was free with good spiritual advice as well. We owe dear Mary a lot for all her help — explaining, correcting and reminding. Often I think of her quoting Acts 24:16: "Herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man", and return in mind to this Gilgal in self-judgment! Mary was truly a "mother in Israel", and it is with deep affection we remember her, Aunt Tillie, Aunt Molly and Uncle Alec.

1937

Early in June, Russell Harris and I took a trip to the O'Leary district at the west end of the Island, where my brother and some other relatives lived. When I had been there for a visit in the winter, they had all been quite interested in my being saved, and we had had a lot of hymn sings, so we thought maybe there would be an ear for the Gospel. However, when we tried to find a lot where we could put up a tent, we found that no one wanted to get involved. We finally got permission to have a meeting on Sunday afternoon in the Public Hall in Springfield West. Mr. Harris printed a sign for the door: "Gospel meeting in this hall, tomorrow afternoon at 2:30." We then drove out to West Cape and had a little prayer meeting. When the Gospel went to Philippi, the blessing began with a prayer meeting by the river, we now look back to our prayer meeting by the seashore as the beginning of similar blessing. On the way back we stopped to re-read our sign, and we both had a good laugh when we realized "tomorrow" could mean anything; we quickly replaced it with "tomorrow's" date. That evening we had an open air meeting in O'Leary in front of Pate's Store. The Sunday afternoon meeting was very encouraging, as a good number attended. One little fellow who came with his mother and father, Lewis MacKenzie, now is well known and highly respected in connection with the work there.

In July Mr. Joyce brought Robert Telfer to the Island, and they, along with Mr. Harris, were successful in obtaining a lot for the tent this time. It was about a half mile from where we had that little prayer meeting in the Green Hill district, and it was far from where we wanted to put up the tent. Years later we discovered why God had so arranged things: ("Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord, that His going forth is prepared as the morning." Hos. 6:3). A young woman, Ruth Easter, attended those tent meetings. She had never known what "Ye must be born again" meant before she went to the tent, and she got saved but did not tell the preachers. Some time after, she married a man from Ellerslie, Mr. Paugh. Years passed, and in 1967, when Mrs. Paugh attended the funeral of an old neighbor, Arthur McWilliams, who had been in the Springfield assembly, she heard us preach the Gospel. We announced meetings to begin that night in the schoolhouse in Enmore, and her whole family came to those meeting. David Hodgkins of Manchester, Connecticut, was helping me, having been with me during the previous summer as well. Soon after the meeting ended, Mrs. Paugh and her daughter Nancy, (now Mrs. Gordon Collicutt) came into fellowship in the Springfield assembly, and today Nancy and Gordon are in the Charlottetown assembly. Thus, thirty years later, the Lord revealed why that tent was pitched in Green Hill!

During those meetings in Green Hill others from the district were also reached and saved. When Mr. Joyce was called home because his

wife had to go into hospital, the crowd seemed to drop off. Before he left he had been in touch with Herb Harris, who was having meetings on the West Coast. Mr. Joyce told him of the wonderful interest and the large crowds that were coming, so Mr. Harris closed his meetings on the Coast and left for P.E.I. The train trip took six days, and by the time he arrived the attendance at the meetings had dwindled considerably. Needless to say, he was a bit let down, but not for long. He moved the tent to a lot in the village of O'Leary. At that time there were no paved roads on the Island, and the gravel ones were very bumpy and dusty, but twice a week we were expected to travel the 60 miles to the tent in O'Leary to help swell the numbers. We would gather up a load of people, and bump over that road in blinding dust. The five or six who were fortunate enough to get inside the one-seated coupe had only the inconvenience of having to sit on someone's knee or be sat on. By taking the trunk cover off and putting a seat in the back, open to the weather, we could fit four or five more, and the ones in the trunk were a sorry sight when we got there! No one seemed to mind, though, as the important thing was to get to the meetings. We also kept very active in the open air work that summer as well. One night was spent in Victoria, another at Tryon corner, two nights a week we went to the tent, Tuesday night was the prayer meeting in Crapaud, Saturday night we went to Summerside, returning to Crapaud for the Lord's day.

The meetings in the tent continued for a number of weeks, but it was a difficult summer. During the following winter Russell Harris, who had married Ruth Darling of River Hebert, Nova Scotia, rented a house in Springfield in order to spend the winter with the young Christians and carry on weekly meetings in the hall. Sam Boulter also spent some weeks with them and did some visiting. One night, he and I rented the hall in Glenwood for a meeting, the same building where I had attended school as a boy of seven! When the meeting began we had a full hall, and I remember the butterflies in my stomach as I faced that crowd, many of whom I had known from years gone by. Some of the memories were not too pleasant: two of those men had been older boys when I was in school and had delighted in teasing us younger ones. One day they had taken my clothes and put them up into a tall tree, so that I was late for school in trying to get them down. However, that night we were very happy to see them. The ringleader, Lyle Livingstone, got saved, along with his wife, and they were a part of the Springfield assembly from its beginning. Their son and daughter, Nelson and Carol, were saved later, in what was termed the "'59 Revival'", when there was a large in-gathering of souls. Dear Carol lived only a little over a year after she was saved, and was then called up Higher. Nelson is now married to Donna Cutcliffe, and they, their son Stephen and daughter Sandra are all in fellowship in the Charlottetown assembly today. One can only marvel at the wondrous grace of God!

We also had a meeting in the Public Hall in Milo, and afterward put up a tent there and saw souls saved. Milo was another of the thirteen places where I had attended school, having lived with different relatives after Mother died until Father was able to get us back together again when my oldest sister was able to keep house. In this place it was like coming to see old friends, and some came out to the meetings just to hear the little fellow who had gone to school there years before.

1938 - 1939

The tent was put in O'Leary again to follow up the work of the previous summer. Some others professed, but the work was difficult. Mrs. Steve Gotell, who later moved to St. John, New Brunswick, was saved that summer and was in the assembly in Springfield when it was formed. Things went on much the same during the next winter, with children's meetings and weekly meetings in the Public Hall in Springfield. The following summer the tent was pitched again in Glenwood, where Mr. Joyce and Herb Harris labored throughout the summer, helped by Russell as well. There was some blessing, and many heard the Word. The first Sunday the tent was up, a denominational preacher nearby closed his service by thanking his congregation for coming, adding, "I thought you might all have gone to THE TRAP." One good church member sitting there wondered what he meant by that. As she pondered those words, "the trap ... the trap ..." she decided to go out on Monday night and see what it was. When she heard the Gospel she became convicted, and, shortly after, Carrie Boulter was saved in her own field as she was bringing the cows in to be milked. She got caught in the 'Gospel Trap!' The devil outwitted himself. She has been a faithful sister, in the assembly from its beginning.

One day when Mr. Harris and Mr. Joyce were putting a foundation under the old hall they had rented in Springfield, the mail came, and Mr. Joyce got a letter from home. When he read it, he said, "Stop everything — listen to this: Alex got saved!" Alex, his only son, was the first member of his family to be saved, and we all rejoiced with him at the good news.

After the tent season that summer everything was in a state of uncertainty. Hitler's troops had marched into Poland, and on the 29th of August, Britain declared war on Germany. The following Lord's day a baptism was held at Mossy Point. Mr. Joyce spoke to about two hundred people, and said, "There are likely some young men listening to my voice today who will be called to lay down their lives on the battlefield." He warned them solemnly to prepare to meet God. As surely as he said it, there were several of them standing there at the baptism who died on the battlefield some months later; we trust they heeded the warning.

After the baptism the little assembly was formed in Springfield. After three years of hard labor, when the truth was presented, it was like the days when the Lord Jesus was here. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." (John 6:66) When the excitement of meetings was over and the teaching of the Apostles' doctrine began to be put into practice, it was beyond the reach of some, and they dropped out. A very difficult time lay ahead for the little assembly. Brother Russell Harris stayed to help out and sought to see them established, both by visiting and helping those who were in need. As no one had a car, he also had to drive them all to and from the meetings.

Many a discouraging day and night is experienced by the evangelist who goes into new places and sees a work done for God in the gospel, and then in faithfulness seeks to teach the new converts the right ways of the Lord in being separated from the world with all its ways. It's far easier for him to tell them to go and join the "church of their choice", and then proceed to another field of labor, having retained his popularity. When God does a work of saving souls in a district, it is His mind to have a testimony raised up to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, be it very small. The Lord has said, "Two or three", and if the assembly is the Lord's planting, it will grow and He will sustain it. When Paul arrived in Corinth, there was a Jewish Synagogue and a heathen temple, but when he left there was a "church of God." When the brethren arrived in the Springfield and O'Leary districts, there were Baptist, United, Catholic and Nazarene churches, but when they gathered the saints together in the old Public Hall, there was a "church of God." Only that which is gathered according to New Testament teaching can be called a "church of God." In all those groups mentioned, one could find Christians; but only when those who had trusted Christ were baptized and gathered together in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, outside of all man's organized places, was there a testimony to His Name. This ground is difficult to maintain in a world that is at enmity with God. One who obeys the Word of God, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13) will find it is a lonely place from man's standpoint, but a place of great liberty. We were able to do something there that first Lord's day morning that could not be done in any of the places mentioned. We could carry out the last request of our rejected Lord Jesus Christ: "This do in remembrance of me." The priesthood of all believers was at liberty to function without any man presiding. This has been going on for over forty years in that little assembly, which has grown over the years. To be able to carry out the word and the command of a rejected Sovereign in an enemy land constitutes power. The little company that was so weak from a human standpoint, was to God a work of His own divine hand.

CHAPTER 5

Downsitting and Uprising

From this point on the account of the work might be called an autobiography, for it will be written in relation to the writer's exercise and call to the work of the Lord on Prince Edward Island. I trust the record will only magnify the grace of God, bringing glory to Him alone, for it is my honest desire to help others who have an exercise to launch out into the Lord's work.

The closing months of 1939 were dark days, with the war in Europe worsening, and the Great Depression underway. Work was difficult to find. Russell Cairns and I operated a meat business at Gamble's Corner for the summer months. When he married Pamela Boulter that fall, I took to heart the saying, "Two's company, three's a crowd" and decided to get away for the winter and leave the living quarters to them. I made up my mind to go to Sydney, Cape Breton, and left by train, stopping in Moncton and planning to stay for just a few days. When I arrived, Mr. Brennan and John McCracken were just finishing meetings and they told me they would take me as far as New Glasgow on their way home, after a call at River Hebert for the weekend. I was happy with their offer and we were well received at River Hebert. Sunday night the gospel meeting was so encouraging I told Mr. Brennan and John McCracken that I'd like to stay for a few more nights meetings, and then go on by train. John said he'd also like to stay, so Mr. Brennan went home by train. We began Gospel meetings, on January 14, and as the interest picked up, the Lord began to work. A good number of souls professed, among them Mrs. Ripley, whose son Kenneth later was very active in the Gospel work in Amherst with Floyd Stewart, until his homecall. The meetings went on for seventeen

weeks, until the middle of May. We held a baptism in the brook on the way to Maccan; Mr. Brennan returned and baptized the new converts. He was overjoyed to see how the Lord had worked.

After the Lord gave us this blessing, I was urged by many to stay in the Lord's work "full time." While this was always on my heart and mind, I did not feel that this was the Lord's time. Looking back over the many years that I have been in the work of the Lord, I can see that He does have a definite time, and if we leave these things in His hand, He will work them out for His glory and our blessing. He knew I was not ready then; there was a time of intense training ahead in the school of God. He gave me five years of this training before calling me, and He made the call to "go forth" as clear to me as my conversion had been. I say this so that young men may see that before coming out in public service, there must be training by God in secret. Some of the lessons are most difficult, but we can say, "Who teacheth like Him?"

As I returned to Prince Edward Island late in May to resume selling meat, I must say my feet dragged heavily and it was difficult to get started again. All winter in the meetings I don't recall getting any fellowship except one dollar from a brother in Moncton who had a big position on the railroad. I had stayed with the William Darlings, who were very kind to me, and of course I hadn't had to pay board, but I returned to P.E.I. with no money. To get started in the meat business again I had to get a bank loan of \$100 (large by 1939 standards) which would enable me to buy three beef cattle. Things would have been fine if I could have sold all my meat for cash, but many times I had to be content with customers' promises to have it for me next week, and soon found that I could not make a living without other work to help out. Russell Cairns, my partner, did the actual butchering, while I did the selling on the road for two days a week. The other four days I worked as a carpenter for \$1.00 a day, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. You guessed it — I was too busy, and began to get tired, cold in heart, and discouraged.

Mr. Joyce and Herb Harris put up the tent that summer in Brookfield with the thought of helping both Crapaud and North River, because things had become pretty dull in both places during the three years of the work at the West end of the Island. I brought the tent down from Springfield in a borrowed truck, but didn't help put it up, and only got out now and again the first few weeks of the meetings. I did have good excuses: the old telephone truck I had bought had poor tires, and I was working from 7 to 5, also helping Russell with butchering and selling on the road, but those weren't the real reasons. I was discouraged and out of touch. I record this to show that you can be too busy, and also to note that if the Lord is going to use you, the devil will seek to knock you out of the running.

I also want to show what a real shepherd is and how a kind act can sometimes save a life for God. Mr. Joyce knew that it was not like me

to miss meetings, and he could see that something was wrong. One day he came to visit and said, "Albert, we have been missing you at the meetings." Of course I offered my excuses, the main one being the poor tires. We had had several flat tires travelling the twenty miles or more to the meeting. He talked for some time and encouraged me to get out to the meetings, but the breaking point came when he took out his wallet and gave me the money to buy two tires. His wife and family were living in Victoria for the summer, and I knew that many times they did not have very much on the table. I had noticed, too, that when driving, he would coast down all the hills to save gas. So I realized how much that act of kindness cost him, and it was the turning point in my Christian life. Never speak unkindly to a Christian who is cold in heart. When the Lord Jesus was going to speak to Peter, He first warmed him, then fed him at a fire of coals, and THEN said, "Lovest thou me more than these?" From then on I was at all the meetings. We would go through Inkerman and pick up a carload, arriving with ten or fifteen in the back of the open truck. There were no paved roads, so everyone was covered with red dust!

One family from Inkerman was interested; we called one night while they were milking, and offered to finish the milking while they got ready for the meeting. We hoped that they would get saved, but they eventually became enemies of the Gospel. The meetings went well, however, and a nice number of souls did profess to be saved, among them Mrs. Hector McQuarrie, who was in the Charlottetown assembly later until her homecall. Mr. Bartlett hired Park Canfield of Crapaud to drive a carload to meeting, so he would also hear the Gospel. The meetings came to a close when a big wind storm wrecked the tent.

After that, the preachers rented the Brookfield Hall, but when the Orangemen found out who they were, they closed the hall. I had been a staunch Orangeman before getting saved, and was well-known as such over most of the Island, having made unusual progress for such a young member. I had filled the chair of Deputy Master, and was slated to be made "Master of Boyne Lodge" the following year; but my salvation ended those plans. So, when word got around that these preachers were the people who had spoiled Ramsay as an Orangeman, the Lodge's stand for the "Open Bible" was forgotten, and we were closed out.

CHAPTER 6

A Heart and A Home For The Work

For a long time it had been on my heart to see a work started in Charlottetown, and I prayed much about it. As the fall of the year came on, the meat business was not going well, and I began to look for work in Charlottetown. Marjorie Boulter and I were planning to get married as soon as I could find a steady job, which was very difficult at the time. I finally secured temporary employment, working on the construction of the warehouse and office of the Eastern Hay and Feed Company. (This building is now incorporated into the Courthouse on Water Street, and the old rough lumber that I helped to erect can still be seen in the main lobby.) This was an open door, and the first indication that the Lord was leading me to the city. I was overjoyed as I went to work that first morning for \$18 a week. Lewis MacKenzie, who was going to Prince of Wales College and boarding in town, was willing to take me in as a roommate, and there I was in Charlottetown.

I began to look for a place in which to hold children's meetings, and made it a matter of prayer that I would find a place for \$1.00 a night. I inquired into a room in the I.O.O.F. Lodge building, for which they were asking \$1.50 nightly. However, after they had a meeting regarding the matter, they told me that I could have it for \$1.00. This answer to my prayer was like a light shining on my path. My diary entry for October 15 read: "Started work in Charlottetown; my 27th birthday." I later found out that the proprietor of the Lodge room, Finley McKinnon, who also operated the auto salvage, was a professing Christian, which no doubt was the secret of my obtaining the room at \$1.00 a night!

The meetings were held Friday nights at 6:00, and soon we had a good number of children attending. However, they were quite a rough lot! They broke two windows one night, and we had quite a time per-

suading the proprietor to give us one more chance with them! After we thought we had taught them some choruses fairly well, we asked them to raise their hands and tell us what they wanted to sing. The first request — "Roll Out the Barrel" — was a little discouraging!

My job was only temporary, and one day while passing DeBlois Wholesalers, I went in and put my name in for a full time job. On November 15, at 4:00, Mr. Fulton Pierce, from DeBlois Bros., came to see me at work, and told me that his boss wanted me to call him after 5:00 that evening. A few minutes before 5:00, my foreman came over to me, saying that as the construction was nearly completed, a number of men would be laid off, and I would be among that number. I wasn't at all upset as I was sure that the Lord was going to give me the full time job with DeBlois Bros. Sure enough, when I called there after work that day, Mr. George DeBlois told me that the people I had given as references when I applied for the job had all spoken highly of me, and he was willing to hire me as a shipper at \$12 a week, working 6-1/2 days, from 7 to 5. Although that would be \$6 less than I was currently earning, it didn't even enter my mind to question how I would get along on that, as I left that office with thanksgiving in my heart that the Lord was answering my prayer in giving me a permanent job.

I could hardly wait to go to Victoria that Friday night to tell Marjorie. I went to Carl Boulter's, where she had been keeping house for several weeks while they were on holidays, and said, "How soon can we get married?" After much discussion, we agreed on December 6, and I returned to Charlottetown to find a place where we could set up housekeeping. After a week of searching, I found a two-room apartment at 108 Prince Street, for \$15 a month. I bought a 3-burner oil stove with a wick burner, which would now be a collector's item. I proudly carried home three cups, saucers, spoons, dishes, silverware, and whatever utensils I thought were necessary to make a meal. Marjorie had had some items, but her home had been destroyed by fire and all had been burned.

On Friday, December 6th at 4:30, I mustered up enough courage to go and ask the boss if I could have Saturday off.

"No, Ramsay, it is a busy time and we can't let anyone have Saturday off. What did you want the time off for?"

"I plan on getting married tonight."

At 5:00 he came out and said, "You can have the day off tomorrow, Ramsay, and good luck to you."

I left work that night in high spirits, but I still had a children's meeting at 6:30. The wedding was to be at 8:00. Marjorie had come in on the train in the morning, but I did not see her until 7:30. We went to the Baptist parsonage with her sister Norma and Donald Ramsay, and at 8 o'clock the minister did the service of the Prince Edward Island Government there in his office in legally performing the marriage ceremony, after which the four of us went to Johnnie's Mayfair on

Prince Street for a sandwich and tea. We spent the Lord's day in North River, and came back to town for the open air meeting on the Square at 8:30 when the folks would be coming out of church. This stands out as a memorable meeting: we started on the corner by Hughes Drug Store, and the crowd grew until the police came and asked us to move. We lifted our hearts to the Lord, and the crowd followed us across the street to the Market Square and formed a circle around us, so the meeting went on for another three quarters of an hour.

I went back to work on Monday, and as the days went by, we got settled in our little apartment. We did not have much, but we purposed that we would put the Lord first in our home life and seek to honor Him with "our substance and the firstfruit of all our increase." Our first pay was \$12, we took out \$1.20 for the Lord first. I am not advocating that one must give a tenth, but I speak as one who has proven the Lord to be faithful: in time of need it gives one confidence in prayer to come before the Lord knowing you have given Him His portion first. The scripture says, "As a man purposeth in his heart, so let him give." In forty years of married life we have made it a rule to give the Lord His portion first, and have never been sorry.

Our next desire was to show hospitality to the Lord's people, and in just a few weeks we had our first opportunity: Dear brother Herb Harris came to visit us for a few days, and it was a real joy to be able to entertain him. While he was there Marjorie had to go out to the country for a few days to get things from home. Herb did not like our wick stove, as it often filled the room with smoke, so when I arrived home at noon one day, there was a nice new 3-burner Coleman stove, and a big steak, all ready for dinner!

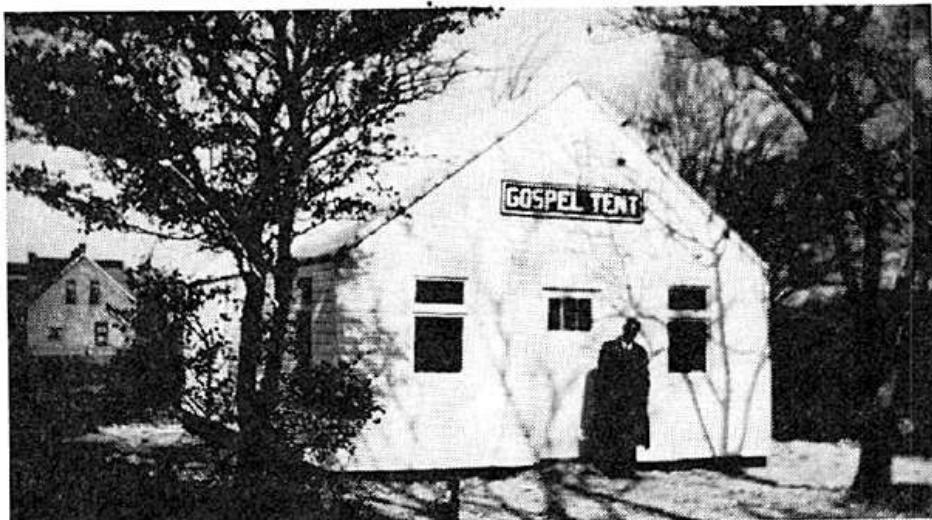
The room in which we were having the children's meetings was too small for Gospel meetings, and it was on the second floor, so Herb also began to look around for a better place. The old Strand Theater stood on the Market Square where the Confederation Centre now stands; it was not in use, so he undertook to get it for meetings. He had to take a train to St. John, New Brunswick, to see the owner; but he came back with permission to use it for \$15 per month. He had cards printed and asked Lewis MacKenzie to go with him to the schools to give them out, announcing a Children's Meeting on Friday night in the Strand Theater. We fixed up the stage, which would accommodate about a hundred people. When 7 o'clock Friday night arrived, there was a large crowd of children, maybe 200, and Bro. Harris moved the curtain back, making room for them in the main part of the theater. All went quite well until the meeting was finished and they began to leave. On the invitation a treat had been promised, but we did not have enough candy to go around! The children started to push and Bro. Harris tried to hold them back while Lewis went to get more candy, but it was a sorry experience! We learned that it is better to start small and work up, than to start big and have to come down.

Brother Harris had gone to the mainland after obtaining the theater. The City had to heat the theater, so they soon put a stop to our using it by putting a padlock on the door. We tried to do something about it, but found ourselves helpless. Having no place else for meetings, we went again to the street corner each Lord's Day evening, so that was the end of what we thought was going to be an opening for the Gospel.

1941

In June, Albert Joyce came to the Island, bringing with him Ernie Sprunt of Toronto, who had just been commended to the Lord's work. They found a place for the tent in Tryon and started meetings after Herb Harris joined them. It was not long until the opposition started as well. While the meeting was going on they would throw rocks on the roof and someone had to stand watch to keep them from cutting the ropes. One night after the meeting was out, they did cut the ropes. They were determined to chase the preachers out of Tryon, and finally the tent was taken down. That same day an old man who was the leading opposer, put up a flag in his yard and beat an old washtub for a drum to celebrate the event.

Things looked pretty bleak on P.E.I. for the work that fall. The little company in Springfield was struggling, and North River was about finished. Gordon Ramsay had moved to Vancouver; Donald and Eva decided to move there as well. This would be the end of the meeting in North River. Brother Herb Harris tried every way to see if the hall could be moved to town, but it was impossible. Something had to be done. As has been said by another, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." John McCracken had come over during the tent meetings and had been a help in cooling down the opposition, after chasing and catching one of the leading troublemakers one night. Herb Harris talked with John about the possibility of building a portable hall with a canvas roof similar to those they used in Ireland. He determined to try to obtain a piece of land in Charlottetown or nearby, put up a portable hall and try to recover the work in North River. Dear brother Herb probably financed the project on his own, for no one had any money. This is often the lot of the pioneer — he must go ahead with what the Lord has laid on his heart and as things develop, others will catch the vision. Bro. Harris decided to build the hall in the horse shed in Crapaud. The only plans were in Herb's head, but soon the portable hall became a reality and in a few weeks it was ready to erect. Herb had succeeded in purchasing a lot in Charlottetown for only \$400! The lot where our present hall stands is a bit larger now; but the corner lot was where the Lord arranged for the portable hall to be set up. Who will deny the leading of the Lord in obtaining the lot at such a price! When we built our present hall in 1978 we had to pay seven thousand dollars for a ten-foot strip of adjacent land to enable us to set the new hall on the present site. *Diary Excerpt:* "Lords day, Nov. 9,



Portable Hall, Upper Prince Street, Charlottetown, 1941

1941. Broke bread first time in the new portable hall on Upper Prince Street, the canvas roof fluttering in the wind and nice white shavings under our feet, we did enjoy the Lord's presence, Though only a small number, we had His promise: 'There AM I.' John McCracken, Herb Harris and Ernie Sprunt were with us. They worked for weeks to this end, now it is a reality. What the future holds only the Lord knows, but this step was taken in the fear of the Lord. This year ends with much thanksgiving to the Lord for His goodness."

1942

To our great surprise and joy, Donald and Eva Ramsay arrived back in Charlottetown on January 16th, a little over three months after going to the West Coast. Donald was not content in B.C. as he thought of the great need of the little assembly in Charlottetown, so he decided to return. He and Eva stayed with Marjorie and me for a month, gathering up a little furniture to start housekeeping again at North River. Donald got a job with L. H. Kennedy, who then operated The Canadian Tire store on a small scale. Donald still had the farm at North River, so he decided to keep the job in town and run the farm as best he could. It was a great encouragement to us to have him back for the sake of the assembly. I was happy to hand back to him the financial recordkeeping which had fallen to me after he left. I had difficulty keeping the books balanced; always being over or under by a few cents. Bookkeeping was not for me and I was happy to have Donald back.

In March, brother Herb Harris went into the hospital for surgery. He suffered a blood clot in his lung, which nearly proved fatal. This resulted in a lengthy confinement, which was a great trial for someone as active as Herb. Mr. Joyce came from Toronto to be with us in Charlottetown during Mr. Harris' illness, faithfully visiting him every day. Undoubtedly the Lord used this experience to prepare him for the work which lay ahead of him, his venture into Newfoundland.

The first of May, Ernie Sprunt arrived on P.E.I., bringing with him Douglas Howard, who had recently been commended to the Lord's work. Having come from the big city of Toronto, I guess he thought we were a strange lot. However, over the years he was to become very highly esteemed as a worker here in the Maritimes, and we all became very dear to his heart as well. They both stayed in our home. My wages had increased to \$13 a week. With two preachers staying with us, both new in the work and not yet familiar with the burdens of housekeeping for themselves, they little knew the difficulties we faced. However we never let them be known — and they did not let us in on theirs, either, until years later. They had ten or twelve weeks of Gospel meetings in Charlottetown and were there to remember the Lord each Lord's day; after about eight weeks putting in their offering each Lord's day, they each got \$5 from the assembly! Where had the money gone? To help swell the number (which never got above twenty) we hired a man from Milton for \$1 a night to drive the Gillespies in, which took most of the offering after the lights and other expenses were paid. So you see the preachers, as well as we, were in a bind. Dear Doug has told me in recent years that he weeps sometimes when he thinks of those days and how he did not realize what it was costing us to furnish a table. We all had lessons to learn.

Before leaving for Toronto, Mr. Joyce had a long talk with me about going out into the work of the Lord full time. He assured me that he was wholly in accord with it, as were others, and he felt that, since the Lord had given me a gift to preach the Gospel, I should be exercised about it. I assured him that I had it before me constantly and was looking to the Lord to make it clear as to the right time. I can

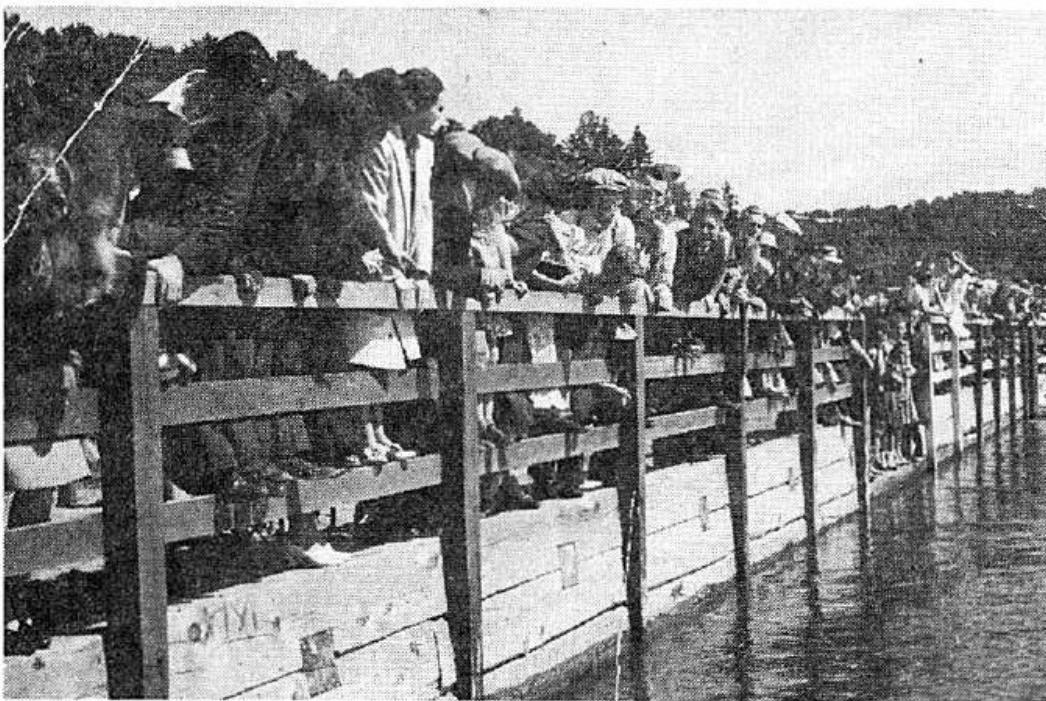


DOUGLAS HOWARD LEADING THE SINGING AT
VICTORIA PARK BAPTISM, CHARLOTTETOWN

say that his talk was an encouragement to me and I prayed earnestly about it. The Lord has His own way and His own time, and if we run ahead of Him we often miss important lessons. It was a constant burden as to the Lord's mind and I knew that soon I would be getting my call from the Military. I had decided that I could not sign up for military service, for in doing so I would be entering into an unequal yoke, and also would have to sign over my own will to obey regardless of how I felt about the service. This I could not do, seeing I was not my own, I was "bought with a price." I was the Lord's free man, but I was the Lord's bondservant. Knowing this, when my call came in late July,



W.N. BRENNAN BAPTIZING, WITH E. SPRUNT LOOKING ON



OBSERVING THE BAPTISM AT VICTORIA PARK

I applied for exemption as a "Conscientious Objector." As I came before the Board to state my case, they told me after due consideration that I was accepted and would be sent to an "Alternative service" camp in Chalk River, Ontario. My pay would be fifty cents per day, with no allowance for my wife.

We packed and I was ready to move Marjorie to Gambles Corner, where she had arranged to rent two rooms from Russell Cairns, her brother-in-law, and his wife. I was scheduled to leave the following Tuesday. On Friday I received word that I was deferred for a month at the request of my employer, so we unpacked and settled down for another month.

The next Sunday we held a very large baptism at Victoria Park, the first baptism in Charlottetown. Mr. Brennan from Nova Scotia, Herb and Russell Harris, Douglas Howard and Ernie Sprunt were there, and many people heard the gospel. Monday morning I went to work, and at 2 p.m. got word that I was to leave on Tuesday morning at 6, as originally scheduled — the Board had turned down my deferment. That meant I had to leave Marjorie to move on her own and do all the packing over again. These were dark hours for both of us, but the Lord gave grace. The war was very uncertain, and dear Marjorie said that when I left that morning she never expected to see me again; that is why she named our first son (who was born eight days after I left) George Albert — to name him for his father whom he would never see.

As we said goodbye that September morning we did not know what the future held for us, but looking back now we can say, we knew Who held the future and in Him was our trust. I had no money to leave her and none for myself, just a ticket to the camp in Chalk River and enough meal tickets to get my meals on the journey. We were truly shut up to the Lord. We can both testify to His faithfulness, for we lacked nothing all the time I was in camp. Our son was born in the little humble country home, and when the doctor made his last call, Marjorie had the money to pay him, so there was no debt over our heads.

I remember standing on the steps of the train at midnight and looking up at the stars as the clatter of steel wheels on the end of the rails seemed to set up a rhythm. I began to sing:

I am thine, Oh Lord, I have heard Thy voice,
And it told Thy love to me;
But I long to rise in the arms of faith,
And be closer drawn to Thee.

As I began the chorus: "Draw me nearer, nearer blessed Lord" — it seemed as if He said to me, "That is what I am doing." I was to prove that in the months and years ahead. Along with that He gave me sweet comfort from Isaiah 58:8-11. Verse 8 says, "The glory of the Lord shall

be the rereward" (or rearguard). Verse 11: "The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones." Some of this was literally fulfilled in a short time: upon leaving home I was much overworked and underweight, but the first two weeks in camp I gained thirteen pounds!



FIRST DAY AT CAMP

Arriving at camp and getting settled was quite an experience, as was my first meal in the bunkhouse with the men. I saw them eat their porridge out of a tin bowl, then the waiter would come and pour their tea into the same bowl! I thought I would never be able to do that. However, in a few days I was like the rest, taking things in my stride.

When I had been there about a week, the man from the office came to the camp with a telegram from Marge informing me of the birth of our first son, George Albert.

First pay day was also an experience; we stood in line to receive our \$15 monthly allotment. The weeks seemed to fly and soon the snow was on the ground and Christmas was near. Each man was given five days' leave. I had been invited to Toronto by Mr. Joyce, as there was neither time nor money to go home. I looked forward to getting away for the holiday. A few days before leave, the Camp superintendent came in and said, "Ramsay, you will have to stay in camp over the holiday and cook for the boys, as the cook is going out. You will get off at New Year." I accepted this as the Lord's will for me, for had He not said, "The Lord will guide thee continually?" There was plenty of excitement around camp; thirty of the forty men were getting ready to leave. Those of us who were to remain could not seem to enter into their excitement, but we tried to share their joy a little. Our "super"



DAY AFTER THE FIRE

was a military man who did not have much use for C.O.'s, and we were constantly being taunted because we would not go and fight for our country. However, at two o'clock Christmas morning the fire alarm sounded and we jumped out of our beds. The pumping station was on fire. In the dark night a spectacular sight met our eyes: the huge wooden water tank, forty feet above the pump house, standing on steel structure, loomed up as the blaze shot toward it, carried by the insulation on the pipes running to the tank. We were the firefighters for the Petawaw Military Camp, so the Chief was there as we gathered. He was very excited calling for all to stand back. He and his men would not go in to extinguish the blaze in order to save the wooden tank, so I took the extinguisher and climbed the steel ladder. The fire was smothered for a few minutes, but soon billowed out again, as I climbed about thirty feet and crawled out onto the steel cross bars. Holding on with my hands, I kicked the wooden casing where the fire was. It broke away from the tank above and slid down the pipe. The fire was out in a few minutes — and the "coward" had become a hero! When the officials came up from Ottawa to assess the damage a few days later, I was called into the office. They praised me for saving the tower, and told me that the camp superintendent had recommended that they appoint me camp foreman to replace the government man who had retired at Christmas. My pay was raised to \$1.00 a day, and when the boys came back from their leave, I was "boss" over the camp with my own office.

The first of the year found me in Montreal for the conference. Again, the good hand of God was seen in guidance, and I was sent to stay in the home of William Reid, where I was introduced to two men I had never met before — Mr. Fred Watson and a young man by the name of David Adams. Dave and I were put into the same room and soon became acquainted, forming a friendship which was the means of bringing him to P.E.I. the following summer. Truly, the joy of heaven filled our souls as we attended that conference. We especially enjoyed hearing Eddie Fairfield, (who was on furlough from Venezuela) as well as George Gould, Jr., Ben Miller, and Robert Bruce. I also met Andrew Hunter of Halifax for the first time, whom I greatly respected over the years that I knew him.

Conference over, I was back in camp again. In February my leave came up. I packed everything belonging to me, for I had a feeling that I would not be coming back. Upon arriving home, I saw our 5-month-old son, George Albert, for the first time. What a joyful family reunion! While I was home, a ruling came through that C.O.'s could be hired on farms. My brother, Keir, needed a hired man, so we went to live in O'Leary and work on his farm. Keir paid me wages, as well as furnishing us with a house, so we were happy to be together, and able to get to the meetings.

In July Dave Adams joined me in tent meetings. We pitched a tent in Springfield, near where the hall was later built, and went on for nine weeks. However, David left for Toronto to get married in October, leaving his car with us so that we could pick up any who wanted to come to the meetings. After he left, we were into the busy potato-digging time of year. Some who had professed at the meetings in Springfield dropped out, and things did not look too bright. We had to move before winter, as my brother could not afford a hired man during the winter, so we contacted the Selective Service. They sent a man to interview me regarding the kind of work I could do. I informed him that my former employer, Mr. DeBlois had written and asked me to return to work for him. I was scheduled to appear before the Board for a hearing, and it was decided I would return to my former employment.

Diary Excerpts:

October 21, 1943. Went to Wilkinson's store for groceries; it was noon and the store was closed. Called at Russell Harris' across the road, while there read an article in "Assembly Annals" about Mr. Brennan and Isaac McMullen having been in Newfoundland. I am exercised about this place, trust the Lord will show me His mind in this matter.

October 24, 1943. Saturday morning; Dave Adams and wife, Agnes, are coming, we are to meet them at Borden this evening. We have only enough gas to get there. Although I have wages coming to me, we have decided to trust the Lord to meet our need rather than ask for them, so we emptied all the pennies out of the "piggy bank" and were able to

get enough gas for the trip. We would have liked to take Dave and Agnes out for supper, but could not afford this luxury, so we just gave them a hearty welcome when they got off the boat. Dave wanted to go to Charlottetown to visit Donald and Eva Ramsay and introduce his bride to them, so we all had supper there. There were no paved roads, it was pouring rain. The low gear was gone on the car, forcing us to turn and back up the hills. This was quite an experience for Agnes, who had come to the Island for the first time. Donald pressed us to stay for the Lord's day, and when I was leaving he gave me fellowship from the assembly. Never was a gift more appreciated, for it enabled us to get back to O'Leary. God is real — He loves to be trusted completely, although it is hard on the flesh.

November 13, 1943. Mr. Harris and wife and baby left for River Hebert; Dave and Agnes are moving into their apartment for the winter, to care for the work in the Springfield assembly, which is very weak. We are packing today, getting ready to move; our future is very uncertain.

Return to Charlottetown

Back in Charlottetown after 14 months' absence; a job, a wife and young son, but no place to live. Can the Lord arrange, does He know our deep need? We wanted to get a place near the hall, with plenty of room to entertain the Lord's people. We had little money, no furniture except a few items we had taken with us. Places were hard to find, it was war time and no building was going on. The available apartments were nearly all only two rooms, and after searching for a week, we had found nothing suitable. We just asked the Lord to find somewhere for us to live. It was Saturday, my half day off. The little portable hall on Upper Prince Street was badly in need of paint, so Marge and I decided that we would paint the front of it that afternoon instead of house-hunting. (These are very personal experiences, but I am recording them for the encouragement of the Lord's dear people.) While we do not have a "sacred building" as men think of their churches, I am convinced that there should be a distinct care for the upkeep and maintenance of the place where the saints meet. If it is only a room, it should be clean and commendable; if it is a building, it should be kept in good repair, never allowed to become shabby. This bespeaks a lack of interest in God's things. If we are careless in that which relates to Him He will deny us the better things that He has for us. We put His work first that Saturday afternoon, and were richly rewarded! As we were painting, we saw a man approaching with a horse-drawn wagon, carrying a load of household furniture. Just as he arrived in front of the hall, a wicker basket rolled off the wagon. He stopped the horse, very annoyed because the people he was moving the furniture for had given him the wrong directions, and now he was trying to make up the time he had lost. We asked him where he was moving the furniture from, and he informed us that it was just a block away from where we

were — 32 Gerald Street. We hurried over to see the house, the people gave us the name of the landlady, and we soon phoned her. She told us that another woman had been to see it already, but added that if she did not take it, we could have it, promising to let us know on Monday. We again committed our need to the Lord. The house had everything in it that we would need, even dishes. The rent was affordable; it was also payable in advance. However, just that week we had received a letter from brother John McCracken, who was then in western Canada, with fellowship enclosed, and these words: "Dear Albert, I don't know where you are, or what you are doing; but the Lord has laid it on my heart to send you this money. Trust you will be able to use it." Did the Lord know how much the rent would be, and that we would have to pay it in advance? Indeed He did! Take courage, dear Christian. He has said, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." What father does not have a care for his sons? Sometimes young Christians tend to think they must have everything in starting their home, and involve themselves in debt which will blight their future and possibly hinder their usefulness for God. We should make it a rule to be satisfied with what the Lord gives us at the time, and we will find that He always exceeds our expectations. On Monday afternoon, we received a call from the landlady, who told us we could have the house. We were able to pay the rent in advance and move into our new home, just a block from the Gospel Hall! So the Lord supplied our need for a home, and gave us — as we had desired — a place near the hall with enough room to entertain the Lord's people. 32 Gerald Street was to be our home for the next thirty-three years.



32 GERALD ST., OUR HOME 1943-1976

CHAPTER 7

Launch Out Into The Deep

Dave and Agnes Adams were with us for Christmas, 1943. Later in the new year they moved to Charlottetown, living with us at 32 Gerald Street where their first son, Stephen, was born. I was still working at DeBlois Bros., but Dave and I carried on a children's work in town, also in New Dominion, driving across the ice. There were no roads plowed in those days, so many used the river to travel on. Sometimes there were disasters — cars would break through the ice. However, the Lord preserved us.

When summer arrived, we rented the New Dominion Hall and held one meeting a week. This led to an interest there which was later followed up. In June Doug Howard arrived, on his way to join brother Herb Harris in tent work in Newfoundland, which was their first venture there. Doug and Dave had Gospel meetings in Charlottetown while Doug was awaiting word from Herb as to when he should join him. The year ended with the Adams' ready to leave us, as their exercise was to go to Cuba.

In February of 1945, Robert McCracken of Moncton joined me for Gospel meetings in Charlottetown. The Lord came in and worked, and at those meetings Mrs. Gordon Good was saved. From the time the little hall was built, she had an interest. She came and brought others with her. All her children came to Sunday School in the years that followed, but her husband, Gordon, was not favorable. However, as he saw the reality in his wife, he became convinced that he needed salvation. It wasn't until ten years later that he, too, trusted Christ, and is now an elder in the Charlottetown assembly. Upper Prince Street proved to be the place that the Lord had chosen as a site for the start of the work in Charlottetown, and looking back, we can see how the Lord guided dear brother Herb Harris in the choice of that lot.

During the winter it looked as if the war would soon be over, and I would be freed from the Selective Service. Marge and I had talked it over, deciding to go out into the work of the Lord full time as soon as my clearance came through. We anxiously awaited word. Finally, on June 17, 1945, I had a meeting with the Board, and they told me I was free to leave. The following day I told my employer that I would be leaving in a month's time. He pleaded with me to stay — I had just been promoted to head shipper in the wholesale department — but I informed him that I felt the Lord had called me to preach the Gospel. He replied, "Well, work here in the daytime and preach at night."

"No, I have a place in mind across the river in New Dominion."

"We will buy you a boat and you can go over in the evening — we will make this a Christian business."

"No, Mr. DeBlois, I *will* be finished in a month's time," I told him for the last time.

Meanwhile, Frank Pearcey, who had just been commended to the work of the Lord from Toronto, arrived with Doug Howard, intending to go to Newfoundland later in the summer. He offered to stay with us for a time, as I had purposed having meetings in New Dominion. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Ramsay — Donald's mother and dad — had returned from Vancouver for a visit, so Mr. Ramsay joined Doug for meetings in Crapaud.

On July 21, I finished work. Frank and I went over to New Dominion and rented an old house near the Afton Community Hall for a few dollars a month. Frank named it "Afton Villa." We stayed there throughout the week, coming home on weekends. The ferry was in operation from Charlottetown to Rocky Point, so we rented two bicycles in order to travel the seven miles from the ferry to the hall. I had the advantage over Frank here: he had come from the city, but I was used to being on my feet and traveling around.

The surroundings and circumstances were not very encouraging for two preachers just starting out. Neither of us had any "reserve" money, but thank God we had no debts, either, and we were cast upon the Lord from that day forward. In thirty-five years, no one has known our need except the Lord, and we can truly testify that, although we have been tested at times, we have never been embarrassed. After three weeks, Mr. Joyce joined me for meetings and also shared in the fare of "Afton Villa." It was a far cry from city life, but he fully understood the hardships of pioneering, and willingly fit into the circumstances. When working together, we set up a fund to share expenses. We never told each other what we had. He made me keep the book, giving me his share, which was all we had in the "fund" for some days; but before it was gone, I was able to put in my share. We were stranded without a car, so Donald Ramsay loaned us his for a while. When Mr. Joyce arrived, Ray Gillespie came to us and said: "You can't get on without a car." He had bought Dave Adams' car, and

although Ray lived on a farm and had no other means of transportation, he was willing to loan us his car. Hannah only had one son for whom she prayed; but she loaned him to the Lord, and He gave her three more sons and two daughters. Our God is just the same yesterday, today and forever. The first few days we had the car, we were driving along when we saw a young boy by the side of the road hitchhiking. We picked him up, for he had a boyish smile which was hard to resist. We told him about the meetings, and told him we would pick him up and bring him to the hall if he would come. The first night he showed an interest, saying he could get his mother and sisters to come as well, which he did. Before long he was convicted, and one night at home in his bedroom, young Floyd Stewart trusted Christ. Today many of us know of Floyd's labors in the gospel, and the many souls he has won for Christ. Had Ray Gillespie not loaned us his car we would not have picked up these souls. "Little is much if God is in it." Life is made up of such things as this, and in a coming day all will be brought to light.

Deeds of merit as we thought them
He will count they were but sin;
Little acts by us forgotten
He will say were done for Him.

I remember one night in the Afton hall, there was only one sinner out, and she trusted Christ that night. Her husband was bitterly opposed, and forbade us to visit her at home. Although she never came into the assembly, she has proven over the years that she was born again that night. A number of others were saved at those meetings, among whom was a very religious widow woman, a leader in the local denomination and also in the Lodge. God awakened and saved her. However, here we would show the danger of compromise. This woman had a son and daughter, as well as her aged father, living with her. When it came time for her baptism, she was warned by her father not to get baptized. She came down to the river, ready to take this step of obedience, but at the last minute decided she would wait. We suppose she thought if she put it off until her father passed away, there would be no difficulty then. However, her father lived to nearly a hundred, and by then she forgot her desire to be baptized, and never did take that step of obedience. He has said, "He that loveth father or mother, more than me, is not worthy of me." That same day we baptized a dear woman, 73 years old. Her husband was also opposed, but she went ahead and obeyed the Lord. It was at the West River bridge, on a sunny Lord's day afternoon, a large crowd gathered there, many were neighbors and friends and family of this woman. As she came up out of the water, her unsaved son walked out into the water to meet her with words of encouragement for her step. She came into the assembly and was a real testimony for the Lord. When she passed away a number of years later, her two sons asked me to speak at her funeral. The place was packed with all the neighbors and relatives, and many

heard the Gospel that day. Even to this day, that family has the highest respect for the Christians.

After nine weeks we ended the meetings in the hall. Mr. Joyce had left, so I had a few meetings, but the community told us we could not have the building any longer. Looking back now I understand why: I was new at preaching, and when Mr. Joyce left, it seemed that age, maturity and experience had gone. No matter how I thought I could handle it (for we are always quite confident of our own ability at that stage in life) we realize later on how much we lack. God's way was to send a Paul and a Timothy, and we believe this principle still holds true today.

Mr. Joyce, whose interest was always centered in the work on Prince Edward Island, wrote me after his return, saying that he had been in Sarnia, Ontario, and had spoken with a younger brother there, Walter Kember, who was engaged in farming. This brother was exercised to finance the building of a portable hall to be used for the work on the Island, and he immediately sent money to start building, also sending along his younger brother, Timothy, to help with the construction. We looked for a place where we could build the wooden tent indoors, finally securing a warehouse which belonged to Bunton & Bell, on the waterfront. There we worked for many weeks. Although neither of us was good at carpentry, through trial and error we managed to finish it. Built in eight-by-eight sections, and bolted together with a set of rafters at each section to carry a canvas roof, this portable building has a long useful history on P.E.I. and is now part of Arnold Raynor's son's house in Enmore.

1946

While working on the tent, Timothy Kember and I rented an Army building at Maple Hills (which is now the airport). It was a large Air Force base during the war. We fixed it up and held meetings, but there was no interest. We then started Gospel meetings in the portable hall in Charlottetown. Just at that time Frank Pearcey and his family came along on their way to Newfoundland. Herb had Frank and I "booked" for Gospel meetings in Carbonear. We were supposed to start in February, but Frank was not feeling well, so they stayed in Charlottetown for a few weeks. Frank joined Timothy in the meetings, and I left for Newfoundland. It was my first time there. I had to get a permit to enter Newfoundland, as it was then a Colony, not coming into Confederation until 1949. It seemed like a foreign land to me when I arrived in St. John's. Riding the train to Carbonear on the narrow gage railroad, I arrived about 8 p.m. Mr. Harris met me at the station. He was not very pleased when he found that Frank was not with me. I tried to tell him of the interest, which was too vital to leave; but he felt that we should have come together. Herb and I fixed up a house for Frank and the family, who arrived in April. This was Beth's first time in Newfoundland. It was quite a change for a city girl, but she fitted in

well. She had never baked bread, but you couldn't buy a loaf then, so I taught her to make it. I had been used to that for some time, my father and I having lived alone before I was married.

The meetings proved fruitful, but there was no assembly yet, just a Gospel Hall. We had a children's meeting at 11 a.m., sometimes preaching to as many as 100. A number professed to be saved who were later in the assembly. I left for home on May 9th. It had been two long, hard months for Marge, with a family of two.

The summer of 1946 marked my first attempts with a portable tent. There was much work to be done on it before it would be ready, and I waited for the canvas roof to come from brother Alonzo Bagnall of Truro, Nova Scotia. One day, while painting the portable hall in my backyard, a neighbor who had watched me working came over. He had a slip of paper in his hand and said, "I copied this out of a book and thought it would suit you." He little knew how much I needed a lift that day. These were the lines:

"Who does God's work will get God's pay,
However long may seem the day.
Though earthly powers thunder 'nay'
No human hand God's hand can stay;
Who does God's work will get God's pay —
Some certain hour, some certain day.
Who does God's work will get God's pay!
He does not pay as others pay.
In gold, or land, or raiment gay,
In goods that perish and decay;
But God's wisdom knows a way,
And this is sure, let come what may:
Who does God's work will get God's pay."

Another needed lift was the news from Mr. Joyce that he was coming for the summer and bringing Mr. Arnold Gratton and his family. Arnold had just gone out in the work, and Mr. Joyce wanted to encourage him. Next we had to get a place for the tent in order to follow up the previous summer's work. We hoped to get a place at Long Creek, near the Stewarts, and finally found a lot that could be bought for \$50. Hearing of our exercise for the furtherance of the Gospel, brother Earl Warren willingly gave the \$50 to buy it. In due time Mr. Joyce arrived with Mr. Gratton and his lovely wife and two dear little boys, Donald and Tim. Tim was very fair and small, around 3; Don was more chubby and older, around 7. When he stood still long enough for us to get a look at him, Arnold seemed very frail, but in years to come he would prove to be a man of boundless energy with an abundance of "know-how" that always came in handy when putting up a tent.

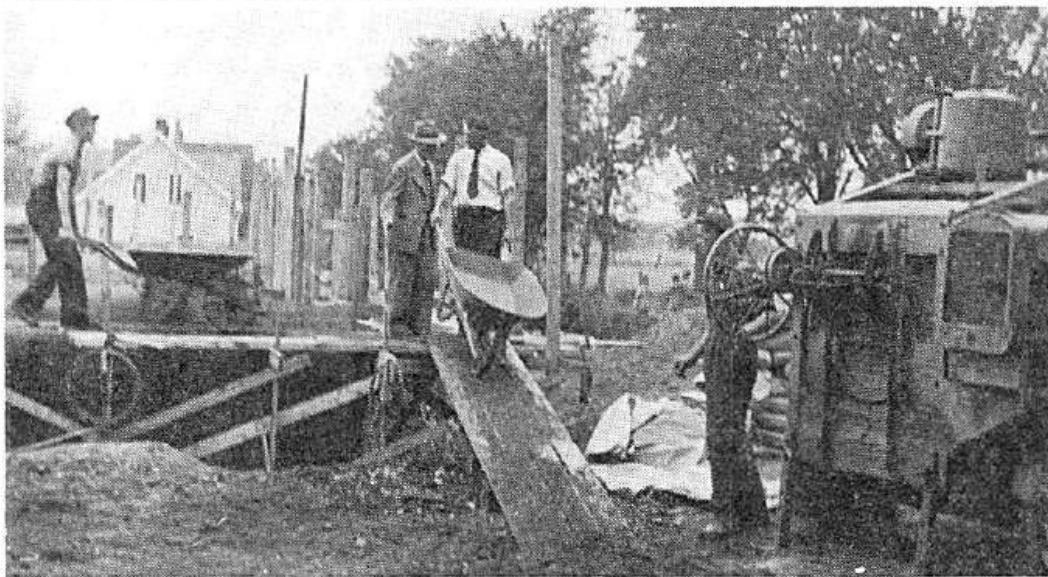
We pitched the tent on July 7, 1946, and started meetings in Long Creek. The Grattons and Mr. Joyce stayed in a cottage at York Point.

The meetings went well, with good interest. We had an open air meeting on the Square in Charlottetown each Saturday night. A young man stopped to listen as he came out of the theater. He attended the meetings in the tent, and after a short time, Wally Thompson was saved. Considering the souls that have been saved as a result of open air meetings, it should be an encouragement to any with an exercise to carry on this work in the summer months.

Having two children and no way to travel to meetings, we had been asking the Lord to open the way for us to obtain a car. In the kindness of God a car with a P.A. system on the hood was loaned to us by brother Josh Allen of Pugwash. Thus we were supplied until the late Fall with a means of transporation.

During the summer we began talk about the need of a new hall in Charlottetown; after much discussion Josh Allen offered to lend us the money, free of interest, and to ship a carload of lumber to Charlottetown for us. Earl Warren, who was a carpenter, volunteered to take on the job of building. The meetings finished in Long Creek September 4. Mr. Joyce returned home to Toronto. Mr. Gratton and family stayed on for a few weeks. Shortly after Floyd Stewart, his two sisters, Wally Thompson and a few others were baptized in the West River.

Before we could dig the basement for the new hall the portable hall had to be moved. Since the field was outside the city limits at that time, we did not have to bother with a permit. The shipment of lumber arrived; and what a job we had unloading it! The boards were only 3 to 4 inches wide and it seemed an endless job. Building the forms for the foundation was even more difficult with such narrow boards, but soon that task was finished. Cement was in short supply and I had a time getting Mr. DeBlois to give me the hundred bags which we figured would be required to do the job. Because I had worked for him,



POURING CEMENT FOR NEW HALL IN CHARLOTTETOWN

he sold it to us. However, we only used 80 bags. I thought it would be good news for him that we had 20 left over. I had told him that we would try to get by with less. He was an excitable man, and had said, "Oh, no! If the wall should break you would blame me!" So he gave me the hundred. When I returned the twenty, he slapped his hand on his forehead and said, "Well, well, I just lost a good customer for life; if I had had that twenty bags I could have satisfied him." Then he added, "Oh, well, we have to do our good deeds." I assured him that we were grateful to get the cement, but there was no merit in it to help him to heaven. I quoted to him: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." I can hear him yet as he followed me to the door and said, "Do you think so?" He seemed concerned, for he was full of good works. I trust I shall meet my old boss in heaven, for the hymn he requested at his funeral was "Just as I am without one plea, but that Thy blood was shed for me."



CHARLOTTETOWN GOSPEL HALL, 1946-1978

When the hall was finished we had an opening. Many attended, and the hall was well filled. We had no restroom facilities, so had to improvise temporary ones at the back of the hall. Our neighbors were alarmed, but we assured them that it was only for the weekend. We set up tables in the portable hall for the meals and all were quite happy with the day's events. The hall was finished, having cost us around thirty five hundred dollars.

The Springfield assembly had been meeting in the Public Hall, which they rented for a number of years. They purchased a lot at the end of the Ramsay Road, where the present hall now stands, and the week after our hall's opening we took the portable apart and moved it by truck to the lot they had purchased. Erecting it was quite an undertaking. However, it served them well for fourteen years, until it was replaced by the present hall in 1960. The old portable hall was sold and is now at Cape Wolfe, being used by the Women's Institute.

Douglas Howard came over from Newfoundland for the hall opening and was with us most of the following winter. He was not married then. Our first journey to Boston was for the New Year conference which was then held by the Cliff Street assembly. Sam Boulter took Marjorie and I and our oldest boy, George, who was five, Robert Oakes and Doug Howard. It was at that conference that Doug met Muriel Wainwright, who would later become his wife.

1947

Returning to P.E.I., brother Doug Howard and I started a series of Gospel meetings in the new hall in Charlottetown in January, 1947. It was in these meetings that Mrs. Hazel Watts, Gordon Good's sister, professed. Arthur Small was reached then as well. Grace Lamont professed in the Sunday afternoon meetings in the schoolhouse at St. Catherines.

On March 8th, brother Howard and I started a series in Moncton, New Brunswick, where a nice number of souls were saved. There was a real move in the Morton family. Back on the Island in May after being away so long from the work around St. Catherines, I left home on the bus at 6:45 a.m. for New Haven; started visiting at 8, walked 13 miles and made 13 calls; stayed for the night and made 10 calls the next day, then went back to Town for meeting. I find as I get older this is a ministry that I have neglected. It is very exacting, but very rewarding. I sometimes wonder, if an assembly had been formed in St. Catherines, would some, who have since drifted away, have continued in the right ways of the Lord. As I have more experience now, my thought is this: If God does a work in a community and there is sufficient material for an assembly to be planted we should count on the Lord and "go forward." It may be weak, but He Who said, "two or three" will care for it and make it to grow if its planting is of God. Maybe a few pages from our diary would enlighten some as to the path and calling of those to whom the Lord has given a commission to carry the Gospel. Just in case some might think that the preacher and his wife have all clear sailing and no testings, it might help any with an eye to serving the Lord full time to count the cost before launching forth. I would give my advice as I have done so often to young men who are thinking of going out into the work: If there is any other work that you can do and be happy, never go out into full-time work; but if the Lord calls you and your heart is in it, never settle for a mere earthly calling, be it Prime Minister or President; nor for a salary of a million dollars a year. Never once in over 35 years in the service of God have we ever had a thought that we would rather be at some other work. I would also like to make clear that the Lord does not always keep His servants under pressure, but only as much as is good for them. The Psalmist could say, "Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress" (or under pressure; J.N.D.). Ps. 4:1. We found that the work of God *in* us was more important to God than our work *for* Him.

Never once did I hear my dear wife complain about our circumstances — we faced them together and the Lord has taught us some wonderful lessons. The following are some jottings from my diary.

May 20th. Over to St. Catherines. Got a lot for the tent, had Donald Ramsay's car. Have been asking the Lord for a car; it is so needful for working in the country. Lord, give me grace to wait Thy time and will.

May 22. Went to Mt. Albion on bicycle this afternoon. Twenty-four miles round trip; quite a job not being used to it; had nice visit with the Myers, am looking forward to putting the tent there later in the summer.

May 26th. Ray Gillespie and I hauled the tent sections on the back of his car from where we had it stored to the site in St. Catherines, about a half mile; got the four walls erected. Finished it the next day.

May 28th. Left town this morning with Marjorie and the two boys, five and three, for West River where we have rented an old house partly furnished about a mile and a half from the tent. We have the loan of Donald's car for the day and two and a half dollars in our pockets and very little to eat. Spent a dollar and five cents for gas; tonight we just have \$.97. It will cost us \$.75 to get back to town on the bus; but God is faithful.

May 29th. Thursday. Borrowed a dory and rowed up the river to David Inman's — Marjorie, the boys and I. David drove us home.

May 30th. Friday. A wet day; working on the tent. Marjorie and the boys got a ride back to town with Ray Gillespie, who just happened to call. Well, that will save some of our \$.97. I will go on the bus. While waiting for it to come, someone stopped and picked me up, so we all got back to town and still had our \$.97. I have a lot of things to get to start meetings on Sunday.

May 31st. Saturday. Rent day - no money. Sam Boulter just called; he bought a new Kaiser car, twenty five hundred dollars; what a price for a car! I borrowed Don's car and went over to the tent and put up the stove. Don drove me home; may the Lord reward him; he doeth faithfully whatsoever he doeth for the brethren. Tomorrow is the Lord's day; how small will be our offering! We have to use the money from the children's banks to get bread, butter and milk.

June 1st. Lord's day. Went to Donald's for dinner; he drove us over to St. Catherines; meeting in afternoon, (first one), back to Town for meeting tonight. What doth the morrow hold for us? Donald gave me \$5 from the assembly.

June 2nd. Monday. No mail today and no money for rent. Left on the 4 o'clock bus for St. Catherines; walked from the bus to the house and carried the baby two miles. Walked three miles to the school to get the lamps for the tent. Nice number in to meeting. We have a little wagon that we haul the baby in and George Albert walks with us the two and a half miles.

June 3rd. Tuesday. Very wet and cold; hard to keep warm in the old house; went down at low tide and picked some oysters to help out with the food shortage; just \$2.00 to do for the week. Walked to the tent in the rain, put on a fire; but no one showed up. Had a little season of prayer and walked home.

June 4th. Fine day. How good to see the sun! Mail came; no money. James says: "Let patience have her perfect work." Did some visiting this afternoon; got 20¢ worth of fish for dinner tomorrow. A sister gave me a bottle of cream and a dozen eggs which were much appreciated. Got a pound of butter and two loaves of bread (60¢). Good meeting tonight.

June 5th. Thursday. Fine day; did some odd jobs. Reading in Joshua. No mail, no money today — we wait on. Dug some clams for supper; how rich a provider is our God when we can dig our supper from the sand; the children like them; had oyster stew for lunch. Very good meeting tonight.

June 6th. Friday. A wet day; mail came, and — praise the Name of our faithful God, the long looked-for relief came. Two letters — one with \$5.00 and \$2.00 enclosed; the other with \$30, enough to pay the rent which was \$35, and two dollars over. Needless to say we wept for joy, and thanked our dear Heavenly Father. A brother came out from town for the meeting and gave us a ride back, so we had our two dollars to get the groceries for the weekend.

June 7th. Saturday. At home in town; paid the rent, \$2.00 and a few cents; no meat for dinner; a brother had too much fish so he brought us some. We had enough for dinner and supper; then he brought us some steak for lunch and there was enough left over for dinner tomorrow.

June 8th. Sunday. Sunday School at 10. Remembered the Lord. Brother Cecil Copp and wife were with us. Meeting in town; brother Copp and I spoke. Had some folk in from Pownal — the Moores. The aunt was from the States and was a Christian. She asked us to visit her sister in Pownal. Earl Warren gave me \$5.00; Donald gave me \$10 from the assembly. Thus our need was met.

June 9th. Monday. Mr. Copp and I went down to Pownal to visit Mrs. Moore; we found in her great distress of mind, but the dear soul didn't get saved. I asked her sons if they were saved, they assured me they were. I gave them a "God's Way of Salvation." After we left, Bruce said to himself: "Why did I tell that man I was saved; I'm not saved," I understand he was saved shortly after, reading the little book. He later became a Baptist minister; his aunt got him to go to Bible School.

June 12th. Thursday. Putting a fence around the tent. Mac Lamont told us he got saved last night after he went home from meeting; trust he will go on for the Lord.



MR. & MRS. CECIL COPP

June 13th. Friday. Had Cecil Copp and the wife for supper at Clyde River house; pretty humble surroundings, but they fit in. They told us that they wanted to get us a car for the work. (It was almost impossible to get a used car at that time), but they had been looking at the one that Sam Boulter traded in on his new one; it was a Nash with about 100,000 miles on it. There didn't seem to be anything else available. This proves what a faithful God we have! When His beloved people see the need and are willing to share, we thank God and take courage. So now we have a means of transportation.

[End of Diary Excerpts]

These are some of the experiences that we put on paper; but much more comes to memory of which we cannot now take time to write. However there is one that I would like to mention to show that the Lord not only hears prayer for a big item — such as a car — but for little things as well. We were leaving in the morning for Pugwash Conference, and Marjorie had some sewing to do for the children. The only needle she had was mislaid and it was so important that she have one to finish the work that she got on her knees and asked the Lord to help her find it. When she rose from her knees she looked and saw a old pin cushion hanging on the wall. It had been there when we moved in, but there was no needle in it. She turned it over and there she found

fourteen needles which had gone out of sight over the years; so God had the needles ready as well as the car. Our God is faithful! These experiences could not be bought with money, and these lessons cannot be learned in the schools of men.

Douglas Howard came along and joined me in the last part of the meetings, and we had a baptism at the West River Bridge, where about four hundred gathered as we baptized nine.

Our plans were to start in Mt. Albion as soon as we could get the tent moved; however, the Lord had other plans and we were to pass through more trying experiences. The roof of the tent leaked so we planned to waterproof it before putting it up again. The old fashioned way, the cheapest — and maybe the best — was to heat naptha gas and melt paraffin wax and brush it on hot. Doug Howard was not well that day and was at the Crocketts; Marjorie was up in Crapaud, so I decided to treat the canvas. While heating the gas it caught on fire and I just escaped with my life. My arms were badly burned and the kitchen of the house was a shambles. It was a number of weeks before we could get going in Mt. Albion, but eventually we started the meetings and found a good interest, with several professing. We had a good Sunday School there and many of the children were taught the way of salvation. Eternity alone will reveal the fruit.

Mr. James McCullough and Mr. Sam Rea had some ministry meetings in Charlottetown and in the month of November we had a conference with over one hundred breaking bread. The Lord provided for all the expenses. We ate in the basement of the hall. There was just a sand floor, but everyone seemed happy with the two days of meetings.

As the year was drawing to a close and winter was upon us we accepted an invitation from Josh Allen to take the old car over to have some work done on it in his garage. We took the two boys, George and David, and spent two weeks with Mrs. Goodwin in Pugwash Junction while the work was being done on the car. The Lord met the need to pay for the work. William Darling of River Hebert, N.S., heard that I had the car in Allen's Garage and he sent along \$100 to help me pay for it. That was a lot of money in those days. A short word here concerning William Darling might not be out of place. He was a coal miner by trade, but after moving to River Hebert from Cape Breton (where he first landed when he came from Scotland) he bought a farm and also started a little grocery business. But his main interest was the Gospel. An illiterate man, he was nonetheless wise and had his priorities in good order. He was gathered to the Lord's Name in Scotland and when he came to this land he did not forget the things of God. Some others who came at the same time and had a good education settled for a life of business. William Darling started a Sunday School in River Hebert and was also the means of gathering a little company in his home. An assembly was formed at River Hebert, grew and flourished and at one time had over fifty in fellowship. A

conference was held for a number of years in the old hall which was sold in the early sixties. The present one, which was the old River Hebert School, was bought and remodeled. In the past years many have been called Home and it has left the assembly quite small. Mr. Darling and his wife gave liberally to the spread of the Gospel and practiced hospitality in their home. Their daughter, Ruth, was married to Russell Harris, Bessie, another daughter, was married to Walter Bartlett, who was in the first assembly in Crapaud, P.E.I.

On October 22 we left home at 3:30 p.m. for O'Leary to spend the weekend, stopping for supper in Crapaud with Russell Cairns. I received word that our house was burning and we rushed back to find most of our clothes burned and everything ruined by smoke. The inside had been gutted, and this being the second fire in six months, the Fire Marshal was quite suspicious. When we assured him that we had no insurance on our household goods his attitude changed completely. In the two months during which our house was being repaired we lived with the Donald Ramsays at North River. The Lord was good to us through it all and we proved again that He never brings one into a circumstances without meeting the need.

1948

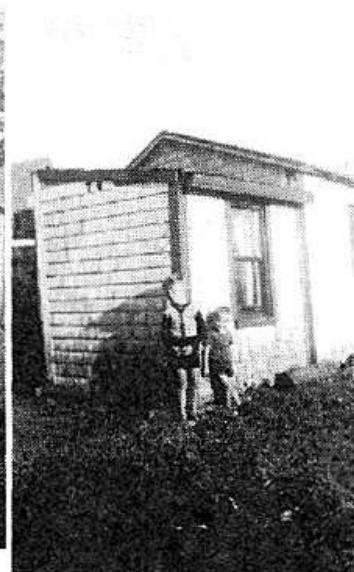
After much exercise as to the summer's work, we secured a lot for the tent in the same field in which it had been in 1934 (Gamble's Corner). As yet I had no helper. Different visitors came along and gave help for a night. One who stands out in my memory was George Brescia, of Hartford, Connecticut, who was visiting the Bowmans in Victoria. He, with his wife and daughters, Frances, Dorothy and Doris, and son, Matthew, used to sing for us in Italian. They sang well



MARY'S COTTAGE



ARNOLD GRATTON
VIEWING NEW
RESIDENCE



COTTAGE EXTENSION

together. Brother Brescia shared the meeting with me one night, telling how he was saved. Mrs. Albert Martin trusted Christ, and that was the first break in the meetings. Others of the Martin family professed at this time, including Helen, who was crippled. Still, I could not seem to find someone who could help with the preaching for the entire series. I sent a telegram to Arnold Gratton in Grand Bend. He had only been home a few days from western Canada where he had been in meetings for several months. He terminated his short stay at home and came by train to join me in the tent work. We were living in Mary Cassidy's cottage at Victoria for the summer. We fixed a place for brother Gratton in a little shed at the back of the cottage. The meetings went on for a number of weeks and finished with an excellent interest. Due to car trouble in the early summer and a delay in getting the tent, the meetings had not started until late in July, which forced us to close because of cold weather. A baptism was held at Victoria Beach, Mrs. Martin and Helen and some other being baptized. Helen was carried to the water from her wheelchair by two brethren. During those meetings brother Cecil Copp wrote me, enclosing a check to be used for a car that had been giving us so much trouble during the early part of the summer. However, when we finally got it going it served us well, apart from sometimes jumping out of gear. When this happened it was about a ten minute job to take the gear shift off and maneuver the gears back into place, wipe off the grease and get going again. With the money brother Copp sent, plus a little that brother Gratton supplied, we were able to purchase a better used car and were back in business with a "fleet of vehicles" — number 1 and 2 — going each way to bring folks in to the meetings.

Diary Excerpts

1948

October 24th. Baptized the Martins today. Frank Elliot has come to join me in Gospel meetings in Mt. Albion; we have the portable hall set up there in a new location. Started meetings tonight.

October 30th. Waited until 8 p.m. to get gas for the weekend; just \$5.00 that someone gave us to get something for ourselves; took it for gas. Just left the house when Floyd Stewart called and left \$10. How good is our God!

November 1st. Rent day; trust we will be able to pay it on time. Received \$32 from two unlikely sources, was able to pay the rent.

November 3rd. No money this morning, but we have our health and strength. Managed to get milk with pennies out of George's bank, two quarts cost 30¢. Had some oysters that we fried for dinner; Mr. and Mrs. Elliot are staying with us.

November 4th. No butter or tea for breakfast; we have managed to get through the day. Left for meeting with the gas gauge reading empty. Two unsaved and four Christians were with us. Coasted down

hills and managed to get quarter of mile from tent. Got a gallon of gas that we had for the lamps and took a chance that there would be enough to get us through meeting. All went well, arrived back home with no one but the Lord and ourselves knowing how slender was the thread on which we were operating.

November 5th. A new day, no money. The flesh would rise up in anger, but the Spirit overrules. God no doubt has a special purpose in all this. Oh, that I might learn the lesson that the Lord has to teach me! "Search me, oh God" would be my cry. "I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified, for He that judgeth me is the Lord." Good meeting tonight, the Lord enabled us to get by without shame.

November 6th. What a burden this morning, no money; coppers all used up; Oh Lord, open Thy hand and meet the need. Two brethren dropped in for a visit and each left us \$10. As far as they could know we were well provided for in every way; but the Lord used them to meet our need. What revelations there will be in a coming day at the Judgment seat of Christ! God is faithful; but I chafe under these experiences. It is hard on the flesh and very humbling, but this is what the flesh most needs.

[End of Diary Excerpts]

Now these jottings are not without purpose. Some might hesitate to reveal these personal things; but my object is to show that God is faithful and that the path of faith, in looking to the Lord alone without making our need known to any but Him, will bring the flesh to the very brink of despair. God will always test us on the ground that we take. He will not have us to be mere theoreticians. He will give us these tests and, if we pass them, will advance the student and make him realize that he is making progress in the school of God. The Apostle Paul looked upon them as trials which approved him as a minister of God. (2 Cor. 6:4) Someone has penned the following:

Who answers Christ's insistent call
Must give himself, his life, his all
 Without one backward look.
Who sets his hand upon the plow
And glances back with anxious brow,
 His calling hath mistook.

We could go on relating experiences, but feel we have mentioned enough to let all realize that those who serve the Lord full time in the Gospel and in ministry to His beloved people must have a time of training. I am sure my beloved brethren that are in the work and have stuck to a field of labor, seeing souls saved and assemblies planted, have passed through similar experiences which will all be revealed at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

The meetings finished in Mt. Albion. We had a fine children's work and trust there will be fruit in years to come. Several professed, but

because of opposition did not continue, but we are sure they will be in heaven. The year ended with a very pressing invitation from Bro. Harris to again spend the winter with him in Newfoundland. I had thoughts of giving up the house and moving over there, as it was so difficult for the family in the winter; but, after much prayer, we decided not to do that. Looking back, we thank the Lord for His guidance and for giving us grace to stay with the work on Prince Edward Island.

CHAPTER 8

Early Days in Newfoundland

Due to our involvement in the work which God has so greatly blessed in Newfoundland and our first-hand knowledge of its early beginnings, we feel it will be of interest to relate some things that others, who may write later in more detail, may not know.

Back in the 1920's, William Brennan of New Glasgow, Nova Scotia and Isaac McMullen of Moncton, New Brunswick, spent a number of weeks each summer working around Carbonear, Fresh Water and Harbour Grace. Their only means of travel was by foot and they walked many weary, uphill miles. Souls professed to be saved, but as there was no assembly testimony the most of them remained in the denominations. However, there was one exception: "Aunt Jessie Snow," as she was called by all who knew her. Mr. Brennan and brother McMullen kept in touch with her over the years. She prayed that the Lord would send them back and that the work would go on. She and her husband worked very hard to eke out a living. He did not get saved. Aunt Jessie scrubbed floors and did housework for some of the wealthy folk around Carbonear and Harbour Grace. There were two classes in those days: the very rich and the very poor. Many a time after getting her small wages and knowing of someone in need she would go to the store, buy some food and take it to them, and tell them about Jesus. When the calendar leaf with the Gospel text on it was torn off it was pasted on the kitchen wall. The four walls were a standing witness to all who entered her home that Aunt Jessie wanted them to know where she stood and that they needed to be saved. She was very outspoken and fearless when she encountered those who, failing to preach the clear Gospel, still took the place of spiritual advisers. She was gathered out on her own, but had no place to carry out the word as she saw it in the Bible. However, Aunt Jessie's



AUNT JESSIE SNOW

prayers were heard in Heaven and God was going to answer. We have need of patience, that after we have done the will of God we receive the promise.

For a number of years Herb Harris talked about Newfoundland, and its need for the Gospel. During a very serious illness in 1942, while lying in the hospital in Charlottetown, P.E.I., we feel that he promised the Lord if he would raise him up, he would go to Newfoundland. After many months of convalescing and regaining his strength, this was



GOSPEL HALL, CARBONEAR

his absorbing thought, and for this he made preparation. It was war time and materials were hard to get. However, he secured a tent and had it shipped to North Sydney. He came to P.E.I. to see Doug Howard, who was having meetings in Charlottetown, and pressed him to join him later in the tent, which brother Howard promised to do.

On June 26th, brother Harris left P.E.I. for Newfoundland. Arriving in North Sydney he was held up for several weeks looking for a boat that would take him to St. John's with the car and tent. The only boat connecting the mainland with Newfoundland sailed to Port au Basque which was on the other side of the island. While waiting he had some meetings in Sydney and one dear soul who had been troubled for years was saved. Finally he found a schooner that would take his car and in due time he arrived in St. John's. He searched in vain for a place to pitch the tent in the city of St. John's. Newfoundland was then a colony and we were looked upon as foreigners. Anything to do with religion was also viewed with suspicion. Someone suggested to Mr. Harris that he might have better success if he went out to Carbonear which, they told him, was just around the bay. He drove out, the distance proving to be over 60 miles. However, he was well rewarded, for he found an open door and a site for the tent. It could not be otherwise. Was not "Aunt Jessie's" God answering her prayer? The tent was pitched three miles from her home, and brother Howard joined in the work. A large number of souls professed to be saved and the whole place was stirred. This aroused opposition, and when it got too cold for the tent, they looked for a building. Nothing was available, not even the Orange Lodge hall where they stood for the open Bible. However, God can open doors, and this He did. A man by the name of Frampton who professed to be saved in the Methodist movement, but never joined them, was a well known contractor in the town and worked for all the wealthy people who were leaders in the opposition. Mr. Harris was boarding with Frampton's son and wife, who both professed to be saved. When all doors seemed closed he said: "We will pull down this old hen house behind our house and there will be plenty of room to build the hall: we can build an entrance facing the street." This was decided upon and they went to work on it eagerly, and had it ready before the winter. However, the opposition grew stronger, many that professed drew back. Some of the merchants, when they saw the hall going up, said to Mr. Frampton, "Frampton, we didn't think you would do it, letting these men in here." "Well," he said, "when you kicked God out of the church He had to have some place to get in." Although he never came into fellowship, he was a friend to the last and would do anything for the brethren. After the hall was built and a good Sunday School going with some interest in the Gospel, the enemies got busy and got up a petition to send the brethren out of the country. This they succeeded in, and for a time the work was carried on by some Christians who were in the Navy in St. John's and were in fellowship on the mainland. They drove out for the Sunday meetings. We had to get a

visa to enter, and as I recall, the brethren had to go to Ottawa before obtaining permission to return. It being a British colony, they could not be kept out. This delayed the planting of the assembly until 1947. By that time the first love of some had waned and the opposition was such that some were afraid of losing their job if they kept coming. Poverty faced many in those days and some of the men could only get work by going to Buchans to work in the mines, which meant they would be away from their wives and families for six months out of the year. A number of Gospel series was held and there was a real good Sunday School work. But because of religious opposition the assembly remained small. Now it is not my purpose to write further on this great work which started in this small way. I trust others will do that. But mostly from memory I have submitted this account as I feel it is important to remember how the first workers entered Newfoundland and how God answered dear Aunt Jessie's prayer. She was in the assembly when it was planted in 1947 and would walk the three miles sometimes twice a day. She went home to heaven in her late seventies.

Excerpts from Diary (1948):

January 9th. At six-thirty this morning I said goodbye to the family. Oh, how hard it is to leave them, but what a small thing when I think of all that was given up for me by the Lord Jesus, in Whose cause I am going forth. Flew to Sydney; stayed with the MacDonalds for the day; left at 7:30, and arrived in St. John's at 11:30 p.m. Stayed with Mr. Harris all night.

January 10th. Storming hard, left by train for Carbonear; arrived at 3:30. Wallace Cudmore has been here for several weeks. We are going to have meetings. The assembly has been planted since I was here last year.

January 11th. Lord's day. Remembered the Lord, just eight of us. This is the only assembly in Newfoundland.

February 29th. Lord's day. Remembered the Lord, just nine of us. Aunt Jessie Snow walked three miles, twice, today. She is 70. If we had more like her the work would go ahead. The Gospel meetings are still going on.

March 5th. Last meeting in Carbonear; eight weeks, a number of souls professed to be saved. Trust they will go on for the Lord. Leaving for St. John's in the morning to start meetings there. Bro. Harris is living there and has a Gospel work, but there is no assembly yet, which means that we will have to drive back the 70 miles each weekend. Will have a meeting on Saturday for the Christians, remember the Lord, and get back to St. John's for the Gospel on Lord's day evening.

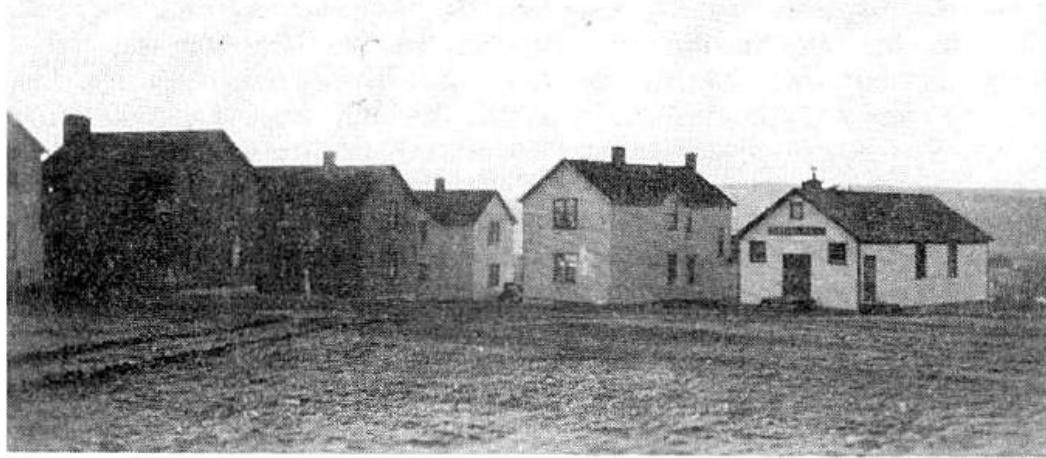
April 21st. Meetings over in St. John's. Mr. Spracknell got saved; his wife a few weeks ago. Mrs. Stone professed too. Nine weeks, ready for home after a little visit to Carbonear.

April 28th. Left St. John's; over Sydney couldn't land, so we were carried back to Newfoundland. Left again in the morning and again we could not land, so they carried us on to Halifax, gave me a refund on my ticket to Sydney for overcarriage, and I got a flight to Charlottetown and was at home tonight. Nice to see the family after four hard months. A very trying time for Marjorie with the family and the responsibility of keeping things going at home. Had word from Gordon Ramsay in Vancouver; he is shipping a tent to P.E.I. for my use. Now I am deeply exercised as to where we should pitch it for the summer: near Crapaud seems to come before us as the most likely place.

1949

The year 1949 witnessed further letters coming from Mr. Harris for meetings in St. John's. The assembly had been started and they really needed a "shunt", as he would have said. During the first part of the month of January this had caused me deep exercise as the winters are so cold and my wife, with two small children, had to operate the old coal furnace and the coal-burning kitchen stove as well. Since we only purchased as much coal as we could afford, there were times the hatch had to be opened to put in a half ton, which cost around \$6. This meant a lot of shoveling snow. However, she was willing to let me go, trusting the Lord to look after the rest. I see from my diary that it was on the 26th of January that I left with \$15 in my purse. Marjorie had \$6 in the house. It would cost me \$60 to get to St. John's, Newfoundland. Brother Harris sent my ticket to Sydney to fly from there. Brother Walter Bartlett, of River Hebert, was very ill, and I visited him on the way. While there I was given a gift of fellowship. I called overnight with brother Doug Howard and family, who were now living in Halifax, to discuss the work in Newfoundland. After a short visit in Sydney I boarded my flight for Newfoundland. I arrived much to the joy of the dear aging pioneer, who was faithfully seeking to establish a work in St. John's. The first Lord's day dear Mr. Harris wakened early and went to light the fire in the hall in preparation for the morning meeting at 10:30. He returned to the boarding house where he had a room and the privilege, on Lord's day, of getting his own breakfast. The kettle was boiling for the tea and into it went two eggs — one for each of us. After that the tea was made. It wasn't the way we did it at home; but then he was older and in good shape physically, so I thought I would not complain. After breakfast he was off to gather up the Christians and bring them to the meeting. Only a couple could come on their own; Albert Barbour's children were all young and they lived quite a distance from the hall, so it was 10:20 before brother Harris was in his seat. Around him were about ten believers. I can see him yet, with his legs crossed, cleaning his glasses, giving a final glance around to be sure everything was in order. A hymn was given and the meeting began. Oh, for a return of the sim-

plicity and sweetness that marked that morning meeting. Brother Harris rose to give thanks and poured out his soul in thanksgiving. As he led us into the Lord's presence the tears flowed as some of the young converts caught the current of the meeting. Brother Ephraim Freake was there. He had married a girl from the assemblies in Scotland and had been gathered out, although having been saved in Fog Island before going into the armed services. I can well remember his thanksgiving that morning. The only other brother present was Albert Barbour. He too touched our hearts with his worship. Where else in St. John's that morning was there such praise ascending to the Throne of God? Where else was there liberty for brethren to rise as these brethren did and offer the sacrifice of praise? In that city there were large congregations employing great musical instruments. Sermons were being delivered by men who had acquired great learning and were being paid large salaries, yet they were hindering the very thing that we were enjoying that morning: praise to God from the hearts of redeemed believers. By God's grace, I was in the company of a man of God who had learned the truth of God and was seeking to put it into practice. Only from that vantage point is it possible to get a true perspective of the deep-rooted evil that has grown up around the simple truths of the New Testament order of Church doctrine. This man, after preaching the Gospel and seeing souls saved, would baptize them and, in seeking to "teach them to observe all things", was compelled to find his own place of shelter in which to gather them to practice New Testament truths. Nowhere in St. John's, with all its places of boasted religious liberty, was the whole Bible welcomed or accepted. Let us beware lest, drifting away from the liberty we have, we become ensnared in the yoke of religious "systems." Those who came along later and are now in fellowship in St. Johns will be interested to learn that the present hall, though often renovated, dates back to the time when it was used as a canteen in the U.S. Armed Forces base. It was sold to the brethren and, as I understand, was supposed to be moved, along with several other dwellings. At that time there were no streets



1944 — ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL HALL — CONVERTED CANTEEN

on this large open field of about thirty acres, only these several buildings. When the brethren bought the canteen the land was included in the deed as well. Later when the city planners came along to lay out the streets, they found that the hall was situated on the right-of-way for the street. I recall there was talk of having to move it until they found that the believers had a deed to the land. The planners agreed to leave it and this explains the dead-end street behind the present hall. Thus the Lord had guided the brethren in their purchase of this building when the area looked desolate. He knew that this



1960 — ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL HALL, WINTER SCENE



GOSPEL TENT, ST. JOHN'S, 1948

would become part of the city of St. John's and would later be laid out in building lots with a street passing by this building, as it does today. One experience could be mentioned here to show the kind of man that was behind this work and some of his trials and testings. When the American base was closed the hydro was disconnected, which meant that there was no way of lighting the building. The power line was there, but was owned by War Surplus. To get lights to the building the City would have to run a new line which at that time was out of the question. Mr. Harris shopped around and finally was able to buy the line from War Surplus. Evidently the City had not considered this possibility. He went to the authorities and told them that he wanted the lights, and again they insisted they could not run a line. He said, "I will sell you the line that is there and you can just hook on. I own it." He had bought it for \$50.00, sold it to them for the same amount and got the lights. He said, "I only had around the price of it in my pocket when I bought it." This may help some to better appreciate the beginning of the work in St. John's. How we should respect the dear Christians who passed through these experiences in those early days.

ODE TO LABRADOR

Thou rugged coast of Labrador
With windswept hills and rocky shore,
Your coves and bays doth secrets hold
Of fishing fleets in the days of old;
Of hardships suffered on the seas
Men braved to feed their families,
Of sorrows, tragedies and tears —
The common lot in ancient years,
Suffered by those who dared your clime
For summer months, plus winter time;
With dog and sled they braved your cold,
Those hardy settlers of old;
When winter blast in fury blew
Of outside world they little knew;
They nursed their sick on humble bed
While lone gray hill received their dead.
From time to time on mercy bent
A messenger of God was sent;
No doubt your hillside holds in trust
Til resurrection morn the dust
Of those who trusted in the Lord,
Through faithful preaching of the Word;
Yet from your rocky rugged shore
Some will be lost forevermore.

Dr. Grenville

A brave young man with zeal and skill
Sailed to your shore to treat the ill;
Through snow, or ice, and wind-tossed wave
He laboured life and limb to save.
Where e'er he went he brought good will
Founding the Cottage Hospital.
Along your coast on rugged reef
Many a mariner came to grief;
More tales of hardship might be told
By those who lived in days of old;
But we forbear for lack of time
As we now turn to things divine
And trace with wonder, love and praise
God's workings in these latter days.

Herb Harris

A man of God with vision bold
Oft to his fellow-workers told
Of rocky harbours so remote
Which only could be reached by boat.
He pressed them with himself to pray
That God would open up the way
To preach the Gospel of His grace
To folk in coastal fishing place;
But those to whom he talked the most
Had little vision for your coast;
They all the problems could plead
But no solution for the need.
However, as the time passed by
And he unto God did cry,
The God who did Elijah feed
Did undertake to meet his need;
Jehovah-Jireh — Yes my friend
Supplied the boat — the M.G.M.
In Nineteen Fifty-Six and Seven
A crew of men all born of heaven
Cruised your coast from place to place
Preaching the Gospel of God's grace.
But as it was in days of old,
Some did not believe the story told,
Some did oppose, while some did yearn
To see the messengers return.

George Campbell

Then on a bleak November day
A young man guided on the way
Took passage on a coastal ship
Making the season's final trip.
Forteau Village was the place
God first displayed His saving grace.
At English Point and Lance au Loup
Men and women were born anew;
Baptized and gathered to His Name
They seek to spread the Saviour's fame.

Bert Joyce & George Campbell

Carried on wings marked "L.U.J."

Two men of vision reached Red Bay,
The message of His love to tell

And sinners warn to flee from hell;
God there displayed His saving grace,
A church is planted in that place.
Your rockbound, foggy, windswept coast
Could not of city comfort boast;
Yet for the Gospel's sake alone
A family calls that place their home.

I write not now of other parts

Where God has opened human hearts —
Where M.G.M. and L.U.J.

Carried the messengers on their way;
Around the shores of Newfoundland,
The work of this devoted band
Is there for all who wish to trace
The work of God in saving grace.

My ode to thee, yon rugged coast

Is not of labours thus to boast;
But to declare what men despise —
The greatest work beneath the skies.

The mightiest schemes put forth by men

Though hailed in every cove and glen
Must end with time, and be no more,

Though costing billions to procure.
But when to vapour these are turned
And all man's mighty works are burned,
The work of grace wrought on your shore

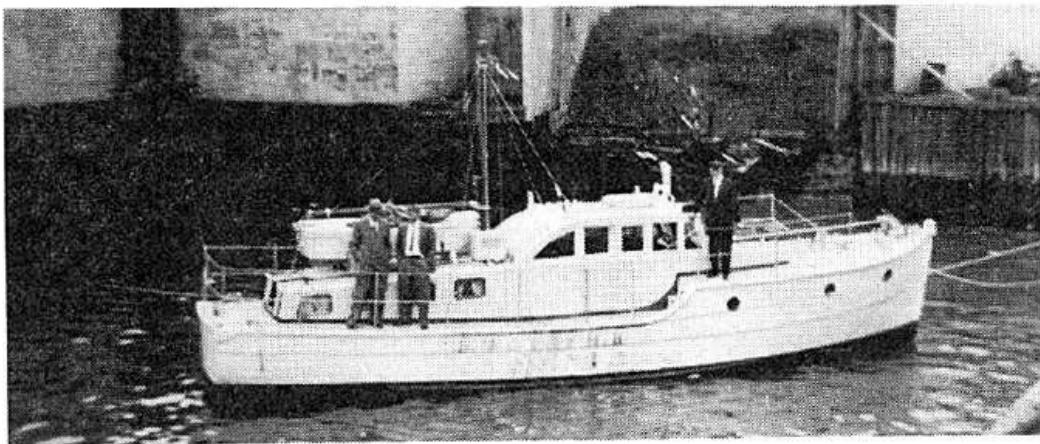
Shall merit praise forevermore.

And those with vision to perceive

Their homes and comforts thus to leave,
In glory shall outshine the sun

And hear the Savior's word: "WELL DONE."

G. A. R.

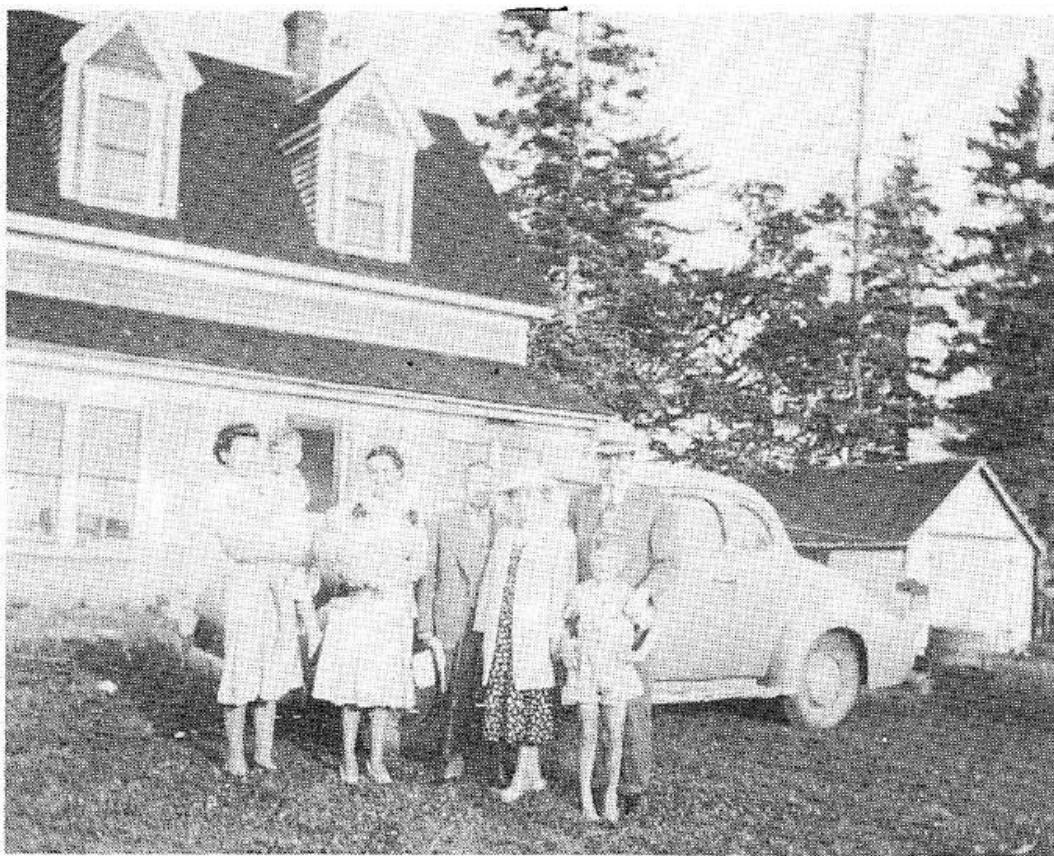


CHAPTER 9

Tent Work On P.E.I.

1949

After returning home from Newfoundland in the middle of April I was exercised as to where the tent should be pitched for the summer. We had finished with a good interest the previous summer at Gambles Corner, so I gave it some thought for the present season. Brother Frank Elliot of Pugwash joined me for several weeks and we had meetings in Springfield West and visited around the Milo district where I had gone to school as a boy of ten. Brother Doug Howard promised to join me during the summer and we decided to get a lot in the Milo district, which we did. We rented an old vacant farmhouse belonging to Russell Rogers, gathered up a few bits of furniture, and brother Howard, his wife and baby Stephen, along with the Ramsays and their two children, moved in. That was our base of operation for the next six weeks. We battled flies in the bedrooms, rats in the pantry and lizards in the basement, where we kept things cool. We conducted children's meetings in the morning, and some of these children were saved later. It was in these meetings that Jeanette Milligan (Mrs. Lewis MacKenzie) was saved. Her grandmother, Mrs. Roderick MacLean, was an outstanding convert as well. As a young woman she had made my mother's wedding dress; so although a very religious woman, then in her seventies, she felt she must come to hear Minerva Ramsay's boy preach. We were surprised to see her back night after night, knowing she was the outstanding religious woman of the community. She asked us to visit her, which we did. We found her weeping. She said, "With all my good living and church membership, I have never been 'born again'." We talked with her and left her weeping, having given her some Gospel verses to read. That night she



MILO SUMMER RESIDENCE
(MRS. A. RAMSAY, MR. & MRS. DOUG HOWARD AND PARENTS)



GOSPEL TENT IN MILO

came to the meeting all smiles; she had been saved in her room, on her knees, reading (as I recall) Romans 5:6. This caused quite a stir. The relatives said, "Grandma, you were always a good woman. You led the young people's meetings. You never danced in your life or played cards. You were baptized and we all looked up to you as the best Christian in the community." She said, "All this is true, but I always knew there was something I didn't have; I have never been born again." Later on we had a baptism and she, with others, was baptized and came into fellowship, remaining faithful to God's Word until her homecall many years later.

In October of that year, I joined brother Albert Joyce for a series of Gospel meetings in Highfield Road. The series lasted eight weeks. A number of souls professed faith in Christ. That was my first time in Toronto.

At 11:45 P.M. on December 31st of that year, I noted in my diary: "Another year is about to close. As I look back over 1949 there is much for which we can praise the Lord; but, oh, how little has been accomplished for Him! Some souls have been saved in Newfoundland, Toronto, and here on P.E.I. But what are these amongst so many? Oh Lord, my prayer would be for 1950, if the Lord tarries, 'give us an awakening here on P.E.I. May many souls be led to the Lord Jesus Christ.' Wrote a piece of poetry tonight: 'TO THE CROSS'. All opportunities in 1949 are gone; may I grasp every opportunity in 1950."

1950

The winter was spent in visiting and having meetings for the Christians. I was exercised again as to where to put the tent for the summer. Because of the interest when we finished in 1948 at Gambles Corner, and other contacts we had made, the Lord seemed to lay Tryon upon our hearts. We had unpleasant memories of the previous effort there, when the brethren had to take the tent down because of opposition, but the Lord seemed to overrule our misgivings. On June 11, brother Russell Harris and I started meetings with the tent pitched just one field from where it had been before. At first the numbers were quite small, but as we visited and got out around the district of Cape Traverse and Augustine Cove, we found many that had been listening to the Gospel in one of the denominational places for several years. Some had been saved, but the preacher had moved to Vancouver and they seemed hungry for the Gospel. Among them were the Cutcliffe family, Fred Leard, and a number of others. Mrs. Cutcliffe and her daughter Beatrice were saved and this gave us a footing with the rest. They were so happy to hear the Gospel again. We hired Peter Peters for \$1.00 a night to bring people to the meeting and soon his open truck was packed. He pressed his brother, Wilfred, to come; but Wilf said: "Do you think I would ride on the back of that truck to hear Albert Ramsay preach?" However, when we moved

beside him with the portable hall that same fall, he and his wife both professed to be saved. God moved in a very special way, saving a number of the Cutcliffe family, Fred Leard and Mary Howatt (who later married Sydell Jenkins). Mrs. Clayton Thomas lived across from the tent and would listen to the preaching. God saved her one night while she was sitting on her veranda. She was a great church worker, and I understand that she was with the deaconess of her denomination when they prayed the winter before, that God would send a revival to Tryon. God sent the revival, but not in the way that most desired. Mrs. Thomas came into the fellowship in Crapaud, twenty years later, after trying to work with many that knew nothing of salvation. She saw the outside place. Maybe some of the leading that brought us to the Tryon district was the result of the after-effects of the 1948 meetings when Margaret Howatt, who was visiting her brother in the old home, attended our tent meetings. She was a Christian and was a nurse in the Boston area. A member of an Evangelical church, she had often watched as the numbers of those who had been converted with very little Gospel preaching, were chalked up. After attending eight weeks of Gospel meetings she saw through the great movements and the large numbers professing. She realized there was something missing. She had gone to the minister of that place before leaving and had had a talk with him about taking money from the unsaved by passing the collection plate. Returning to Boston, she looked up the assembly in Cliff St. and applied for fellowship. She later moved to P.E.I. and is a sincere and consistent Christian who loves the assembly, having paid dearly for the truth she learned. She had many unsaved relatives for whom she was burdened and she became a real support in the meetings that summer. We bought a good used car that became available, which we so greatly needed, and she gave us a substantial amount to cover the price. That car traveled many miles in the work that summer and in the winter to follow. The roads were mud as there was no pavement on the Island at that time. The meetings continued for ten weeks. A storm wrecked the tent, but we secured an unused building belonging to the Baptists and were going again the next night, with a new preacher in the person of David Scott of Vancouver. He stayed with me for two weeks. Brother Harris had left several weeks before on a journey that took him to the West Coast. We were given notice that we could not have the building after the two weeks were up, although they had no use for it. The fact that we were packing it out each night was too much for some, so we had to find another place. Mr. Roberts and Mr. Blackwood, both from Ontario, were just finishing up meetings in Amherst, N.S., and had been using our portable hall. As soon as we could get it over and erected, meetings were going again. This time we were in Augustine Cove, across the road from Fred Leard's house. Some new preachers freshened things a bit: Doug Howard joined me for a week, along with Reg Jorden of Ireland. The crowds kept up and God was working. At the end of eighteen weeks I had told all I knew many times over; but the Lord gave help and I

managed to get brother John McCracken to join me. We carried on with an excellent interest until the end of November. The close of the meetings on the last night of November was marked by a large number, some coming for the first time. Gordon Ramsay, having returned from Vancouver earlier in the fall due to a heart condition, came along to the meeting that night and we pressed him to tell how he had been saved. He loved to do this and always held us spellbound. He would conclude by saying: "It was good that night; but it is better tonight." He took his seat and brother McCracken was reading some scriptures before speaking when we heard a heavy thud. Looking around, I saw dear Mr. Ramsay lying in the aisle on the shavings. We hurriedly carried him outside; but he had gone to be with the Lord. Everyone was in tears and said: "Do you remember what he said? 'It is better tonight!'" No doubt this left a lasting impression on many a soul. Three days later I preached the Gospel from Romans 6:23 at his funeral service. That was the text that he had on the van that day in 1932 when I refused to take the Gospel tract he offered me.

As the year ended we realized that we had a big task before us to care for and teach those that had professed faith in Christ. The commission given by the Lord to His disciples was: "Go and make disciples (N.B.M.) of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*" No man fulfills the office of a true evangelist if he fails to do this or fails to leave the converts in the hands of those who will do this work. How often the writer has thanked the Lord for the men who carried the Gospel to our Island. They were faithful men and taught us the right ways of the Lord. My soul could have been saved, yet my life lost. I am convinced that there are many today working for the Lord; but not doing the work of the Lord. We could say: "They have a zeal for God; but not according to knowledge." As we open the word of God and read carefully, we find there is only one way of salvation for sinners. The same word makes it clear that there is only one way to walk as a Christian if we are going to worship in Spirit and in truth. I am convinced we were taught the right way from the pattern laid down in Acts 2:41-47. These men were not seeking to gather us around themselves. They were unselfish, with only the glory of God at heart. They put all they had into the work to see it established on scriptural ground and then moved on to open up other fields for God. They taught us the truth of the priesthood of all believers and gathered us on the only ground where it can function: gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. That truth is now to be passed on to young converts.

1951

During the winter months there were Bible readings held in different homes around Augustine Cove and the Cape Traverse district where we had been working all summer. Souls had been saved. This

meant many weekends away from home, as we held a children's meeting Friday afternoon in the tent, a Gospel meeting at night, a Bible reading on Saturday night in the home, and many long discussions as we visited. It was a repetition of Acts 20:21, "Publicly and from house to house." These were happy gatherings, as souls were in their first love and anxious to learn. Many time-honored and unscriptual doctrines were shown to be contrary to the plain teaching of the word of God, such as the baptizing of infants, the mingling of saved and unsaved sitting down to "remember the Lord" and being in church fellowship together, the evil of having a paid clergyman to do all the preaching and praying. All those simple truths lying on the surface of the scriptures were pointed out and most were willing to follow the plain scriptural doctrines. This stirred up opposition by those who would lose if these truths were practiced. One man started a series of radio broadcasts to support infant sprinkling. One scripture he used was found in James 1:17, "Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down *from above*." Another wrote letters and told one family that "the 'brethren' were as fanatical on some of their doctrines as the J. W.'s." However, as the light of Scripture was brought to bear on these things it only gave the young converts confidence in what we were teaching and manifested the fallacy of those whose teachings were contrary to the Scriptures. By the time it was warm enough for a baptism quite a number were ready to obey the Lord. May 27, 1951 was an unforgettable day, as about a dozen of those young believers obeyed the Lord by being baptised. A large number gathered to observe and the Gospel was preached as we stood by the edge of the water in Augustine Cove. The coming day will declare the results, for we believe many were impressed as they saw their respected neighbors obeying the Lord in this ordinance. The following Lord's day the new converts were received into fellowship in Crapaud. This was a great cheer to all, and it was decided that we should have a conference on June 2, which was a holiday. There was much work to be done around the hall to prepare for the conference. We borrowed a tank truck from Donald MacLeod in Victoria which they used to haul water for spraying potatoes. It was backed up to the hall and a hose with a tap on it gave us running water. Three inches of clean shavings over the sand floor in the basement gave it a clean look. We little realized what it was going to mean when we began to count the silverware that was borrowed from the Moncton assembly. With spoons and forks and knives missing, we had to sift through the shavings on hands and knees for the missing pieces. This was our first conference in Crapaud. One hundred and seventy-five broke bread as visitors came from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. We were all new at the work and it was quite a primitive arrangement, as all the water had to be heated on wood stoves, which meant the fires had to be started at 5 A.M. to be ready for breakfast at 7. When the visitors arrived they were welcomed by a nice warm basement filled with smoke from the wood stoves. However, that first conference was the beginning of what would become an annual event.

Improvements were being made from time to time, until a new high school was built in Crapaud in 1960. We secured it in 1962 for the conference meetings and for the first time served the meals upstairs and down in the hall. The Lord knew what was needed, for that was the first year that the crowd numbered five hundred. There was much talk about the "Go Preachers" getting the nice new school for their conference. Not everyone shared this feeling, for many around the village had the highest respect for the Christians, and were only too happy to give us the school at a very low cost.

Toward the end of July we moved the tent from Augustine Cove to a field owned by Stanton MacNeil in Cape Traverse. I had no helper so started off with children's meetings. After a couple of weeks, Brother Murdoch MacKenzie of Nassau, W.I., joined me for a week or ten days. The crowd picked up and the meetings were going well. After he left, brother Frank Knox of Ireland joined me for two weeks. This made the meetings very interesting. The people had never heard preaching like this before. As Bro. Knox warmed to his message one night, he walked down off the platform and put his hands on the back of the front seat and in a solemn tone and with a look in his eye that only an Irishman can produce, said: "You will remember Ramsay's old hut in HELL if you don't get saved." Again he told them: "You would all go to hell if it wasn't for a man like Ramsay coming and telling you the Gospel." The folk felt the power of his messages. I was made to feel that I was in the presence of a man who knew God in a special way. We lived together for two weeks and would be on our knees many times through the day. He was a man of prayer. Just before his departure, after a ministry meeting in the Gospel Hall on Saturday night in Charlottetown, we took him to the open air on the street corner. This is where he shone in a special way. After we sang a few hymns, I stepped out to have a word. He had told us that he would stand with us, but he wasn't going to preach. I spoke, mentioning that I was saved and sure of heaven and that my audience could be sure as well. As I stepped back, he walked out and said: "We'll sing a hymn." After the hymn was finished he was ready. As he shouted out, "What does this man mean, telling you nice, respectable men and women that he is sure of heaven? Does he think that he is any better than the rest of us? How is he so sure? Can he prove it?" By this time a crowd had gathered, for they were sure there was to be a real showdown with the first speaker. Then he said: "He didn't take time to prove it, but I will prove to you that you can be sure." He began to quote Scriptures, citing the chapters and verses. After quoting about a dozen Scriptures he said: "I am not giving you some rotten old humbug, you will get plenty of that tomorrow morning; I'm giving you God's good truth." He held the crowd for about twenty minutes. We said goodbye to him at the train station on Monday, and as we stood amongst the crowd that was boarding the train, he took off his hat and said, "We'll pray." For about five minutes he stood there praying. As he finished, he said,

"They must not be used to that here, they are all looking at us." So our experience with this unique man of God ended.

The second week in August Mrs. Ebbie Boulter professed; this was the first break in the meetings. At this time we contacted a dear woman who lived in Cape Traverse. Her granddaughter, who lived with her, had come to some of the meetings and had told her how much she liked the meetings and that we would pick them up with the car if she wanted to come. She consented. The only way we could reach the house was by driving along the waterfront on the sand. When the tide was in we would have to drive through water up to the bottom of the car doors. The first night she came God spoke to her. She told us she hadn't been in church since her marriage. After a number of meetings, one night on the way to meeting she said: "I was saved last night. When I would go home from the tent, all I would see as I tried to sleep was you up there preaching and saying: 'Ye must be born again.' Last night when you were preaching, you said, 'Christ died for sinners.' I knew I was a sinner and I believed He died for me." She passed away the following February before we were able to carry out her request to be baptized. Thus God seeks out the lost, while so many that have every opportunity to be saved never get in on the blessing. During these meetings a woman who had been saved the summer before asked me if I would try and visit her widowed mother who lived about four miles from the tent. She was the mother-in-law to the man on whose land we had the tent. There were four or five sons in the family and they lived a very wild life, causing their mother deep concern. As I called on her and asked her out to the meeting, she asked me if I was any relation to Nathan Ramsay. I said, "He was my father." "Well, well, then you are Albert." I said, "Yes." "Well, little Albert! I can remember your father coming to our home and you, as a little fellow with long curly hair, sitting on his knee. So you are little Albert! Your father and mother often came to our home when we lived in Wellington." (This was near where my parents lived before my mother died when I was five.) She continued, "I will sure come to hear you preach, but I have no way of traveling as my son's car is not working."

"Well, we will come and get you," I replied.

The first night she thought it was great, but as we kept going back each night it became "too much of a good thing," and one night as I was pressing her to be ready the next night, she said: "You know I have to work very hard and I just can't go every night."

"I will come for you, and if you are not ready I will be disappointed."

I learned afterwards that when I drove in that night to get her, she was washing her feet in a basin of water, having been out in the field all day. She said to her daughter-in-law, who lived with her, "I just feel like taking this water and throwing it in his face." However, she came along. I noticed that she seemed to have a cold, for she used her

handkerchief a lot going along the road. But I found out later that she used it to cover her face when we would meet a car or one of the neighbors on the road. She didn't want them to see her with "those preachers." After some time her son got the car going and he used to bring her. This continued for a while until one night she asked me if we could send the car up for her, as her son would not be able to come. Even if we could only come part way she said she would start walking. God had opened her eyes to see that she was a sinner. Not long after that dear Mrs. Stewart was saved and went on well for the Lord until called home to heaven. She was in the Freetown assembly.

In the middle of September, Robert McCracken of Moncton joined me in meetings and we went on until October 15th. In fourteen weeks, a number of souls had professed. Some fell out by the way; others stopped short of the assembly, but we will meet them in heaven. There was some chaff as always, but God did a work. When we took the tent down, I remember saying: "I wonder who will be around when we are putting it up next year, if there is another year." My brother-in-law, Sam Boulter, was there. Two months later he was taken home to heaven when his panel truck overturned on an icy road at Hunter River. With the passing of Sam, P.E.I. lost one of its choicest saints. He would often pray in the prayer meeting for his five brothers and say, "Lord, take away their wealth, take away their health, take away anything, but save their souls." God took dear Sam before any of his brothers were saved. At the time of writing there are at least two that are not saved. After the tent was taken down we got the use of the Public Hall in Cape Traverse. Quite a number of strangers that we had not seen in the tent came along, among them Mr. and Mrs. Davis Jewell. Bible readings were held at different homes, which helped to strengthen the Christians.

CHAPTER 10

Sowing Beside All Waters

1952

This year started off with a series of Gospel meetings in Charlottetown as well as keeping in touch with the new converts around Cape Traverse and Augustine Cove. After the meeting closed, my wife and I, along with another brother, went to the Toronto conference. We spent some time in Ontario, arriving home in time for our conference in Crapaud on May 24th. Tent season was approaching again. Borden, where the ferry docks coming from New Brunswick, seemed to be a likely place for the tent. Usually we did not start our summer's work until after the Pugwash Jct. conference on the first of July. This year it was the middle of July before we got started, as we had ordered a new canvas roof and it was late in coming. We started children's meetings each morning and had up to 70 attending. The seed was sown in young hearts and later a number of these children were saved and came into assembly fellowship. Meetings finished at the end of nine weeks. The Lord gave us some souls, among them Mr. and Mrs. Horace Sobey and Mr. & Mrs. Eric Taylor. Memory fails to recall others who may have been saved. The tent was taken down and stored away for another season. Not much to boast of from the world's estimation of nine weeks of labor, but the results are eternal.

That summer Lewis MacKenzie of O'Leary and Jeannette Milligan (who was saved in the Milo tent meeting in 1949) were engaged. They asked me to perform their marriage ceremony, which I was happy to do. On November 6 they were united in marriage in a nice, quiet, simple Christian ceremony in Jeannette's father's home. On November 7 they came with us to the Clementsvale conference. Six of us were in the car. When we arrived we were sent to the same home to stay for the



CHILDREN'S WORK IN BORDEN

two nights of conference. On returning home, Lewis and Jeannette went to live in a nicely furnished home in O'Leary. On November 16, Douglas Howard and I arrived to stay with them while we were having Gospel meetings in Springfield. For three weeks this new bride had two preachers for practically every meal. I mention this to show how some started out in their married life. They were happy with the bare necessities and used what they had for the Lord. However, I would not suggest that every young couple should take the preacher on their honeymoon and then have him live with them for the first three weeks! Believe me, the preacher didn't get off without difficulty. The weather was very wet, and it was hard to get clothes dry. The blankets were washed in the morning and, to have them ready for the beds that night, I decided to give a helping hand by taking the dining room chairs and putting the blankets over the backs around the furnace grate to dry. You guessed it! I ended up refinishing all the chairs — the varnish had lifted.

As the meetings ended, we had the feeling that little was accomplished; however, the small company of nine was encouraged. The believers were happy to know that the Gospel had been preached. They had been able to invite their loved ones another time and felt assured that God could use His word even when the meetings were over. Thus, taking the "shield of faith", they looked forward to better days to come, if the Lord tarried. And those "better" days did come in 1959. Had those nine given up in discouragement, there would be no assembly in Springfield today. But, far from being discouraged, they carried on, realizing the sweetness of the Lord's promise: "There Am I." "They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers." This was the charter of the church in the time of the apostles, so they were following the example outlined in the second chapter of Acts and were waiting for the *Lord* to add to the church the saved ones.

"The worldly wise look on, they wonder, 'Why'
A thing so feeble in appearance does not die.
The sinner's soul, fast sealed in nature's night,
Can never understand, nor judge aright.
And those professing light, without the single eye,
Will compromise with truth and pass them by;
Expend their energies in congregations of the dead;
And brand as bigotry the words the Lord has said.
But all the time the saints with single eye,
Who, having claimed His promise: "THERE AM I" —
Will seek to function in this world — with Satan as its god —
Upon the only ground to which their Lord lays claim
In this the day of His rejection and His shame,
They know is in the midst of those who gather to His Name.
For sure 'tis not the only place the Lord is found,
For He, as Sovereign, covers all the ground:
But, like the Cave Adullam long ago,
It is the secret place of shelter from the foe;
Where He, the Anointed, while banished from the throne
Can train and teach and claim allegiance from His own."

Since the day of Pentecost this has been going on. Little companies of His own have gathered, outside man's organized systems, and have carried on a testimony for their rejected Lord. It is just as true that many of God's choicest saints have been found in the systems of men, and still are. But let us be careful never to lose the scriptural liberty and simplicity lest in a coming day we lose the reward for not having shared with our heavenly David the hardships of His rejection, and the sweetness of His presence in the "Adullams" here on earth.

On December 20, 1952, I performed the marriage ceremony of Floyd Stewart and Edith Kelly in our home, with the immediate families present. Edith had been saved in 1950 while reading "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment." It had been passed on to her by Louise Gillis, who herself had been saved while reading it. Edith heard the Gospel for the first time at one of our open air meetings on the City Square in Charlottetown on Saturday night. She had passed up going to the horse races in order to accompany Louise to that meeting. Strangely enough, over a year before an uncle of mine had been in the hospital and I had left him this same little book along with "God's Way of Salvation" by Alex Marshall. Edith, when cleaning out the drawer in his room after he had gone home, found these booklets and took them to her room, but never read them. However, the "personal contact", which has always been the chief means of reaching sinners, prompted her to read the ones received from her friend. She read "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment" first. It didn't seem to make sense, so she read "God's Way of Salvation." By the time she finished it she knew she was not on the way to heaven. She read "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment" again and saw the simplicity of God's way of

salvation through John 1:29: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." What an encouragement to all of us to continue distributing these Gospel booklets that have been so much used by God. Christian, let us sow the seed: God can use it. Let us remember as well the word of the Lord Jesus: "Go ye." God is sovereign and can save through any means and in any place, but I think all will agree that personal contact is the most successful means of winning sinners. An item of interest to the writer is that in the last meeting in the tent in 1934 at Gambles Corner, a young woman attended for the first time, and heard the hymn: "Have you any room for Jesus, He Who bore your load of sin? As He knocks and asks admission, sinner, will you let Him in?" She could not get it out of her mind and, as she would sit rocking her baby Beatrice, this kept going over and over in her mind. She would sing it: "Room for pleasure, room for business, but for Christ the crucified, not a place that He can enter in the heart for which He died." Some time later, listening to the Gospel, she was saved. This young woman was Mrs. Harold Cutcliffe, who first brought the Gospel to Louise Gillis. Louise was later saved reading the tract "Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment", which was handed to her by Mrs. Dockendorff (of the Charlottetown assembly), a patient in the hospital where Louise was training. I mention this to show how the work ties together.

1953

This year opened with a series of meetings in River Hebert, N.S. Doug Howard and I were thankful that the Lord worked in a marked way. Many souls were saved who are now located in different parts; some are home in heaven.

Returning to P.E.I., we were led to the Wheatley River district through contacts made in the open air work on the square in Charlottetown. We visited the community, hoping to get direction from the Lord. During more than thirty years of tent work my practice has been to visit a district which the Lord had laid on my heart. If I got an impression that the Lord was in it, there seemed to be something which drew me to the place. I can look back to see that when this rule was applied, the Lord always manifested His hand. This was true of Wheatley River and, on July 12 brother Russell Harris and I started Gospel meetings in the portable hall set up on a lot in front of the War Memorial. God worked and many heard the Gospel in the twelve weeks we were there. Quite a number professed; some were gathered in folds other than the Lord's gathering center and others that may have been saved could not stand against the opposition. However, the bright spot of encouragement, after so many years, is Mr. & Mrs. Ben Ford, who were contacted at that time. Mrs. Ford was saved in the meeting and her husband was reached the following summer.

Looking back on the work in Wheatley River, I feel we were too hasty in closing the meetings and moving to where we thought there

was more interest. The move to Brackley Point Road caused the interest to wane and, as the busy season of potato harvest was on, we had to take the tent down after two weeks in the new location. The year ended with a series of Gospel meetings in Pugwash, N.S., in an unused Baptist church building. Burton McMullen, who had an exercise for the work, helped me. It meant a drive of seventy miles for him each night. The interest grew and when we were getting the building well filled the people decided it was time to move us out. We received a notice that they were having a guest speaker on Sunday night. This meant that we would only have Friday night to finish up. Sunday would have been our largest crowd. They planned to cash in on this, we supposed, but as it turned out, the man who was most favorable to our meetings was the janitor. He was called away on Saturday for some reason and happened to have the key to the building with him. When they arrived the building was locked and no fire on, so they had no service. We had ours in the Port Howe Gospel Hall and it became apparent that this move was of the Lord because a dear lady who had cancer was able to get to the meetings and was saved. So the Lord works even though man opposes. Twenty years later we heard from the lips of a Christian in the Pugwash Jct. assembly that she was saved in the meetings in the church building. Most of her family are now saved and living on the west Coast. "After many days," the Lord gives us to see the fruit.

1954

Another eventful year in which we proved the goodness of the Lord and His blessing in spite of many trials. In February our daughter, Esther, was born. When she was two weeks old I received a call from Doug Howard in St. John's, Newfoundland, to join him in meetings that had been going on for seven weeks. As the work there was much in my mind and exercise I felt pressed to go. This was a real burden for my dear wife, with a new baby and three boys to care for, plus the coal furnace and kitchen stove to keep going. These are things unknown in these days when you just press a button and the heat is on. The Lord gave some blessing in the meetings before they finished in St. John's. We had a couple of baptisms in the city in the Navy building swimming pool. Brother Howard returned to the mainland and I joined brother Ernie Dellandrea in Bishops Cove, where bro. Herb Harris had erected a portable hall the year before. He had seen good interest develop until the opposition got busy. In one week they brought the number of children down from over a hundred to about a dozen. They warned the parents against the meetings, saying that under no consideration were they to let their children go to that hall. However, the Lord can do His own work and, although we could not get the people to come to the meetings, God worked in Toronto and saved folk from Bishops Cove. They returned and brought the Gospel to loved ones and well over a dozen souls found their way to the assembly from Bishops Cove.

I returned from Newfoundland in time for the Moncton conference, April 15. Marjorie met me there with the children. Our exercise after our conference in May was to put the tent in Rose Valley. Russell Harris joined me and we started meetings on June 5, which continued until our portable hall was wrecked by Hurricane Edna on September 10th. These meetings proved very fruitful and quite a few souls were saved. A number found their way to the assembly. One elderly lady of 95 professed as well as a man of 90. Several others, up in years, were saved, and soon were called home to heaven. Other younger ones are in the assembly and going on for God — Ben Ford, Sam Cairns, Joyce (Mrs. Terry) McKearney, and George Matheson (whose wife was saved a few months before) are just a few who come to mind. There were no paved roads at that time and I can recall one car — a little Austin — coming from Charlottetown every night (over 25 miles). This was Gordon Good, who was saved a couple of years later.

The hurricane that wrecked our portable hall flattened many buildings, among them Floyd Cairns' barn. We undertook to help him build, which meant going into the bush and cutting the logs. To be close to the work, Marjorie and I moved to a near-by house and lived there for nearly two months, until the work was finished. In the month of September, Bert Joyce came over with an exercise to have some Gospel meetings near Charlottetown. We brought Robert McCracken's portable hall over from Moncton and erected it in Parkdale. We contacted Robert McIlwaine in Nova Scotia to join Bert in the meetings, which we felt would be a change for him and a help to us here. Robert arrived with the intention of staying for several weeks. However, he got interested in the work, and has remained here for over thirty years! Bert brought his wife over, and after purchasing a home in Victoria, he remained on the Island until he moved his family to Labrador in the Fall of 1956. Brother Harris had purchased a boat for the work in Newfoundland and Bert was needed to man the boat. It proved to be the means of opening the whole coast of Labrador to the Gospel. Robert McIlwaine brought his family over to the Island and rented a home in Tryon, where he lived for a number of years.

1955

Brother Cecil Copp of Vancouver invited me to have meetings with Mr. Oliver G. Smith of Iowa in the new year. After much exercise, I consented to accept the invitation. God had used this man mightily in the work of the Lord in Iowa, but he gave all the credit to God alone. Just to be with this outstanding man of God, to have the benefit of his experience, to work with him in the Gospel and observe his zeal and humble attitude toward the work of the Lord proved to be one of the greatest blessings in my preaching experience. One typical experience will help to give a true picture of this dear man of God: He was asked one night, while we were gathered in a Christian's home for a sing, to give an account of his labors in Iowa. It had been told around that Mr.

Smith was going to tell how he saw new assemblies started in that mid-western state. A large number had gathered and after lunch the head of the house announced to the crowd that Mr. Smith would tell how God had used him in Iowa. As he sat there, all eyes were turned on this humble servant of the Lord, well into his 70's, sitting with his legs crossed and a toothpick (seldom missing only when preaching or eating) in the corner of his mouth. Looking through very thick glasses, he had the appearance of "an old dirt farmer from Iowa," as he loved to describe himself. Everyone waited for him to begin. These were his words:

"I don't know if I ever saw any assemblies started in Iowa. I remember after six months of meetings in Hitesville I went back one time and they were trying to revive the old church. I told them, 'That's not the way you do it! They said, 'Well, how then do you do it?' I told them how they did it in the early church, and I don't know if I was there the first morning they broke bread or not." That was all we got



O. G. SMITH AND G. A. RAMSAY, TOGETHER IN 1955

out of that dear man about his work in Iowa, but all knew that he had seen hundreds of souls saved and a number of assemblies started. As for him, he felt he was just an "unprofitable servant." Such men are rare, and I feel it was the highlight of my Christian life to have spent time with him. God worked in the meetings and the influence reached to souls many miles away. After those meetings, the assembly was started in Woodland Drive, where a Gospel work had been carried on for over 20 years.

During the winter, Robert McIlwaine had Gospel meetings in Springfield and saw a move for the first time there in years. There was much snow and he had to travel by horse and sleigh through severe storms, but the Lord worked and there will be a number in heaven who were saved at those meetings. Arthur McWilliams professed at that time and went on well in the assembly until his homecall. Mrs. Smith was gathered out at that time, having been saved in the States years before, and her daughter Ethel was saved at that time as well.

Our exercise was to put the tent up in Kingston during the summer. Our portable hall had been wrecked in the storm the fall before, so we used a canvas tent. As far as I can remember I was alone most of the seven weeks. The meetings were very difficult, with no one professing and a total "freeze-out" from the community. So chilling was the response that when the tent was taken down, I literally, took out my handkerchief and wiped the dust from the sole of my shoes! However, years later I asked Gordon Good, who had attended all those meetings, as well as the ones previously mentioned in Rose Valley, how it was that he came to so many meetings and didn't get saved. He said, "It took them all. I never went to a meeting in which I didn't learn something." So the Lord would have us preach the Word and leave the results with Him.

After the tent season we undertook to rebuild the portable hall. Robert McIlwaine and Bert Joyce helped me. We secured a lot in Searletown and erected it early in the fall. There was not much interest, but it was then that we contacted the Preston MacDonalds. He and his boys came to all the meetings. Mr. & Mrs. Horace Sobey were encouraged at that time, as they had been saved some years before, and we were only a half mile from their home. During that fall Robert McIlwaine had meetings in the old Public Hall in Bloomfield, where Gordon Ramsay and Isaac McMullen had held meetings in the twenties. The windows were all broken, but Robert, along with Lewis MacKenzie, replaced dozens of panes of glass and had Gospel meetings. Many heard the Word and will answer in that day.

1956

The year began with Bert Joyce and I holding meetings in Halifax. Robert McIlwaine had started meetings in Charlottetown; there was a good interest, and a number of souls professed to be saved. Some

proved to be a disappointment, but during the last week Gordon Good was saved, which greatly cheered our hearts, as we had often preached to him in meetings over many years. He has been in the oversight for over twenty years in Charlottetown, and has proven to be a brother beloved. Thus God gathers in one here and another there. Some listen to much preaching and others only hear the message once and yet believe it.

North Bedeque was the area to which the Lord directed us with the tent. There had been a stir in surrounding districts and North Bedeque seemed to be the center of all this interest. The Ern Taylors lived in Freetown, the Victor McKennas were in Clearmount, five miles from Kensington, while Mrs. Frank Cobb lived right in Kensington. A field was obtained from a man named Roland Hill. We started the meetings on July 8 and continued until September 20, when we were ordered to move the tent. Robert McIlwaine was with me. Bert Joyce was on the "M.G.M." during the summer months with Bro. Harris, sailing around the coast of Labrador. Robert was not "full-time" in the work. He had a gravel truck and, unknown to me at the time, he would come to meeting and preach, after which he would change his clothes in the truck and drive to the gravel pit 60 miles away, and sleep in the truck all night to be in line in the morning. This went on for weeks. When we received word to move from the field there was still a good interest and souls had been saved. To carry on, we had to find some place that would be suitable for the winter. The old Lower Freetown schoolhouse had been bought by a farmer and fixed up for a dance hall. It had later been turned into a grainery. We arranged with the farmer to use it, with the option of buying. There was a quantity of grain that had to be



FIRST HALL IN FREETOWN — 1956

moved and with the help of the new converts we soon had the place ready for meetings. The interest continued during the winter, but the meetings were only held on Lord's day, and once through the week. We had a good Sunday School work. Many who came to those meetings were saved and are now in the assembly.

1957

After our conference in Crapaud, Jim Smith of Quebec and I went over to the Magdalene Islands. We spent four days on Entry Island giving out tracts and selling Bibles. We had three meetings in the school and around 60 attended, all unsaved. After coming home we shipped enough "Kember texts" for every home on that Island. Eternity only will reveal the results. We were sorry that we were never able to return there.

In the month of July, Jim Smith and I put the tent in another location in North Bedeque. It was a time of strengthening for many of the young Christians who had been baptized the previous fall and were looking forward to seeing an assembly in the Freetown district. The Gospel meetings ended without too much blessing in salvation, but the Christians were stirred and wanted to see an assembly started. We decided to buy the school and fix it up for a hall. It had to be painted inside and out, and insulated. Ben Ford hauled wood shavings and mixed them with lime to keep out the mice, stuffing the walls and putting a layer over the ceiling. He looked like a ghost as he finished, all covered with lime and almost asphyxiated from the dust! But this insulation proved to be better than the more modern, expensive kind.

On November 3rd, seventeen of us sat down for the first time in Freetown to break bread. Those present were: Mr. & Mrs. Eric Taylor, Mr. & Mrs. Davis Jewell, Sidney Baglole, Mrs. Stewart, Homer and Jenny Matheson, Margaret Howatt, Mr. & Mrs. Lennon McIlwaine and Sadie, Joan McIlwaine, Donald & Eva Ramsay, Marge and myself. Others would be added later, but this was the start. Some of those present were visitors. Robert McIlwaine and his father were having Gospel meetings in Pinette in a portable hall, which meant that Robert worked until four o'clock and then drove sixty miles to the meeting. These were hard days and we were much cast upon the Lord, but as we went step by step the Lord opened the way.

At this time we were exercised to rent our house in Charlottetown and move to Kensington; we did so and were there for several years, giving help to the new assembly and giving us a change as well as enabling us to make new contacts.

1958

We had brother Herb Harris with us for a while and enjoyed his practical words in the Bible readings in Freetown. Bert Joyce obtained an aircraft for the work in Newfoundland and was to take Herb back

with him. It was at the Bible reading that the Walls from Grenville, were contacted. Ulric McKenna was reached through the exercise of the Walls after a message that Bro Harris gave one night. It was just a simple message on the word "WATCH," but it led to Helen Wall's speaking to Ulric, who was saved shortly after. We baptized him in the ocean on March 30th at Victoria.

When it was decided to put the tent in North Granville for the summer, we obtained a lot in what used to be called "the devil's half acre." "Brimstone Hollow" was the name given to it by a God-fearing people of a bygone day because of horse races held there on the Lord's day. We went on for thirteen weeks. There was not too much accomplished, as far as we could see, but later the Walls came into the Free-town assembly and have proven a blessing to the testimony.

With the meetings in the tent concluded, I looked to the Lord for guidance as to the pathway. A call came from Albert Grainger, who was then laboring in Quebec, asking me to join him in meetings in Arnstein, Ontario. I had never been there and had no exercise that way, so assured him that I would not be going. I tell this to show that the Lord has ways of guiding of which we are not aware. That evening I was relating this to one of the sisters and she said: "Poor brother Grainger, I wish I were a man and I would join him; Albert, you should have gone." The same evening Donald Ramsay spoke to me as if I should have joined him. I reconsidered, and decided if he did not have a partner I would take it as the mind of the Lord to go. When I phoned a few days later he told me he had not found anyone to join him. So, "assuredly gathering", I told him I would go. These meetings proved to be the most fruitful in all my preaching experience before or since. I learned the valuable lesson that we cannot set a rule for guidance, but must look to the Lord in each circumstance. Sister Mary Cassidy's saying to me, "If I were a man I would go to help poor Bert," was what the Lord used to turn my thoughts. She was unaware that she was the Lord's instrument at that very time to speak the right word. How important it is for each Christian to keep in fellowship with the Lord! The greatest work any Christian has to do is to keep his own soul right with the Lord. If we do, then we shall be in the right place at the right time doing the right thing and saying the right words.

CHAPTER 11

A Fruitful Season

1959

On January 7, Robert McIlwaine and I started Gospel meetings in Springfield West Gospel Hall, which was then the portable which had been moved from Charlottetown. God had been working in the MacKenzie family before we started. Jack MacKenzie and one of his brothers had professed, which was a great cheer to their brother Lewis who had prayed for them for so long. Lousie Gillis, who was then Public Health Nurse in the Alberton district, lived there, and had a number of different contacts in different parts. Each night she would transport as many as a dozen in her car, sometimes from a distance of 25 miles, regardless of the weather or road conditions. This sometimes meant plowing through snow drifts and traveling in spite of forecasts of severe storms (which never seemed to materialize). It always cleared enough for us to have a meeting. We drove fifty miles each night from Kensington and in nine weeks there was only one night that we had to cancel the meeting. It was at that time we exhorted the Christians not to get into a pessimistic spirit because of the storms that were forecast but to wait upon the Lord, Who could clear the weather. Quoting the word from Eccl. 11:4, "He that observeth the wind shall not sow," I added, "And he that observeth the radio will not go." This became sort of a saying since then and often proved to be a fact. As the interest grew we were bringing people in our cars from different parts. The district of Inverness, about 18 miles from the hall, was especially stirred, with over thirty wanting to come some nights. We had an old van that Brother Stultz of Westbrook, Maine, had given us for the work. We had used it in the summer and decided to use it now to transport these people. There was no heat in it and some nights it was below zero. However, a Coleman stove propped near the wind-

shield kept it clear for the driver. One night while following Robert with a load in my car, I saw him swerving back and forth on the road and wondered if there were something wrong with the steering on the van. He assured me that everything was fine mechanically. The gas tank was showing empty, and swerving a bit helped to move the remaining fuel to the outlet, enabling him to get to the hall. I don't recall how he got back but he no doubt got fuel before starting. Funds were low, but this only gave us the opportunity to prove the Lord. One night the folks attending prevailed upon a man by the name of Roy Milligan to come. After much persuasion he consented. The first night the Lord opened his ear to the message; either that night or the next he was saved in his own home after meeting. Of all the folk we brought from that district, he was the only one who proved real. After being baptized he was received into the Rosebank assembly when it was planted, and proved to be a "brother beloved," with a genuine exercise for the work of the Lord. He was truly a giver of his means to help with the work. He never married, but could put on a fine meal in his little home, in which we often stopped to be refreshed. He went home to heaven several years later. We learn the truth of that word: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that." The dear brother was willing to learn and I well remember one night speaking from Acts 19 on the "young Christian's fire." The next night he came to the meeting and told me that he had had that 'fire' after going home, and the only books he had left in the house were the Bible and Dodd's Almanac!

The meetings in Springfield West finished in the second week of March. The Lord had reaped a harvest and some were saved after the meetings ended. A few come to mind who were saved then — Nelson Livingstone and his sister Carol, Charlie MacKenzie and his wife, Robert and Ethel Smith, Elwin Cain, Verna Buchanan, Mrs. Lewis MacKenzie, Sr., Olga Betts, Olive Lewis, and Ernie Curry. No doubt there were a number of others that do not come to mind. Others professed but did not go on. Just before these meetings there was a saved man who had Gospel meetings in one of the denominations for two weeks. A number were saved. Some of them later came into the assembly. The most outstanding of these was Foster Herlihy, who later became an elder in the Springfield assembly until his homecall in 1980. Foster was a spiritual man, with good judgment, who put God's things first and deeply loved the assembly.

CHAPTER 12

A Visit With A Veteran

In the month of May I decided to visit brother Oliver G. Smith and spend some time with him. It was an unforgettable experience. After a short visit in Boston, I went by train to Chicago and from there to Waterloo, Iowa. Brother Smith met me at the station and we spent the night in his new home, into which he had just moved with his son-in-law. The next morning we were up bright and early for a tour of the town and the old home and a call at the city dump. When we came back his daughter said to me, "He will have you at the dump before you leave." I said, "We were there on our way home." He was a regular caller there to see if he could find any old water hoses. He would bring them home and, with a small band saw, would cut them into chunks about four inches long, and make rubber bands out of the inner tubes of bicycles tires. Wrapping Gospel tracts around the hose with the rubber band with his name imprinted on them, he would carry them in a bag in the trunk of his car. Hanging on a knob on the dash of his car was an old discarded handbag which he replenished from the bag in the trunk. As he drove around the country roads, whenever he saw a few men he would sound the horn and out would go a handful of those tracts. As we drove along the dirt roads it amused me to see how, at a speed of over 60, he could hurl one of those and have it land right on the driveway to be picked up later. This was a habit of his life and, like David with his sling and stone, he was right on target. To ride with him over the country roads was an experience in itself: His one hand on the wheel, with the speedometer reading near 70, (remember this was 1959!) he would be looking from one side of the road to the other, relating stories and showing me places where he had had meetings. When I arrived, he had just traded his tractor and manure spreader to a dentist for a set of dentures, so he was on the lookout for another tractor. As we would drive along the road to a meeting with one of the



O. G. SMITH, WATERLOO, IOWA

little assemblies, he would be looking for a used tractor. This meant that his eyes were not always on the road! It was a relief to me when we finally arrived at some Christian's home and he would drive the car up to the door and sound the horn. Out would run the people and then the proverbial salute: "Hi, Oliver!"

We attended the Garnavillo conference together and I said good-bye to him about 4:30 in the morning as I was leaving with some folks for Sarnia, Ontario. I was not to see him again this side of heaven, for he went to be with the Lord just a year later. On the return journey I took in the Earlton and Charlton conferences after a call in Arnstein, Ontario, where we had a baptism. Twenty seven obeyed the Lord, mostly all of them the fruit of the Gospel meetings the fall before with brother Grainger.

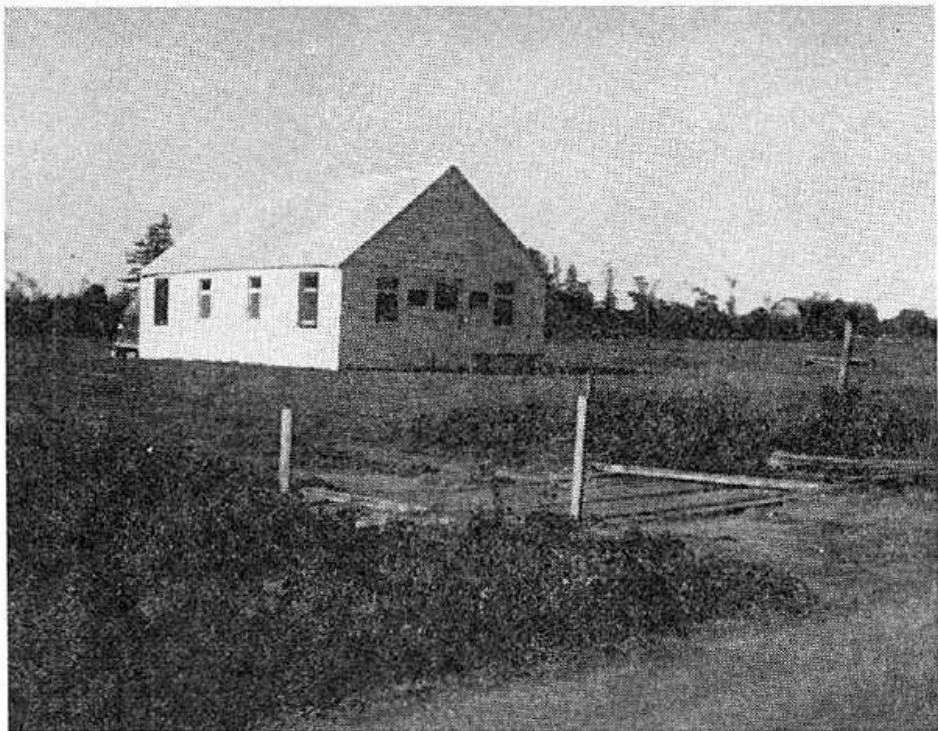
When I came home, I told the believers I had seen a lot of things in Iowa: The big Rath meat-packing plant, and the headquarters of the great John Deere Company. But the "biggest" sight I saw was in Hitesville: an old gray-haired man, sitting in the front seat of the Gospel Hall, while men and women filed in whom he had seen led to Christ.

CHAPTER 13

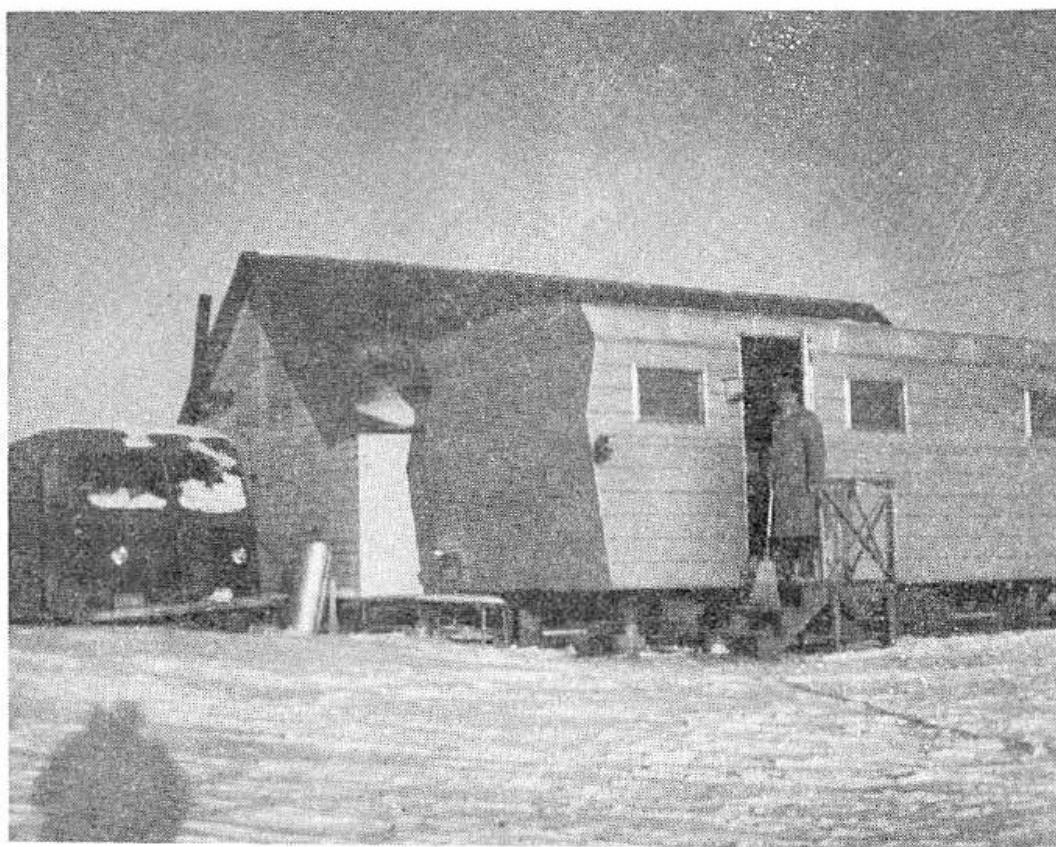
Fragrant Blossoms In Rosebank

1959

It was decided that we would erect the portable hall in Inverness, where we had seen a nice interest during the winter. Around the 19th of July we hauled the tent from Granville and erected it in Gordon Milligan's yard. After about four weeks we closed the meetings, as there was very little interest. At that time Louise Gillis was living in Alberton and she suggested that it would be a good thing to try some meetings in Rosebank, as she knew of some who were interested in that area. Robert McIlwaine, who was with me in the meetings, agreed to look for a lot in that district. A field in Rosebank was available and on that field the Gospel Hall now stands. The land was owned by Carlisle Ramsay. Later we purchased the lot for the hall. We put up the portable hall and started meetings on August 26. Robert and I parked the old van behind the tent and that became our living quarters. Robert never could get used to sleeping in the top bunk and being disturbed early in the morning by the steam of the kettle, the noise of the cook preparing breakfast and the heat ascending to the roof from the old gas stove. He would voice his displeasure in no uncertain terms; but always seemed to enjoy the breakfast even if he didn't appreciate the cook's singing and whistling! He claimed he heard 'noises' from the lower bunk during the night, but I never heard anything! The interest grew and the tent was well-filled with interested people each evening. As the weather became cool we decided we would have to get heat. We had a stove, but not enough pipe, and no money to buy more. We counted the links and measured the distance from the front of the tent to where we would have to set the stove. It would have to be near the platform and would be very uncomfortable, but we could do nothing about it. However, the Lord knew our need and just as we



PORABLE HALL, ROSEBANK



LIVING QUARTERS

were deciding on the location of the stove Arnold Gratton arrived from Grand Bend, Ontario. After a little chat I retired to the old van to change my clothes, as I had to go for the stove pipe to the village of Alberton. Robert stayed to talk with Arnold and I was almost ready to leave when Robert came running to the door of the van and said, "We can set the stove at the back — we have enough money to buy all the pipe we need." Arnold's father had sent along money to be given to us, and thus the Lord had met our need again. The stove was set up and the tent was very comfortable when the people arrived. No one but God and the two of us knew the story behind all this comfort. Meetings went on from week to week until ten weeks were finishing and we were wondering what to do. Sinners were coming but there had been no "break." As we came to the end of the 10th week, with a packed tent, we wondered what to do. We were spending the night at Jack MacKenzie's, and a phone call told us a man had been saved after the meeting. With this encouragement we decided to go on. The Spring-



CUTTING LOGS FOR NEW HALL

field brethren provided plywood to replace the canvas roof and we planned to settle in for the winter. After the first break the Lord gave us some other souls. Robert went to Clementsvale to help on the extension of the hall and Arnold Gratton joined me in the meetings. The Lord continued to bless and a number of others professed.

When Robert finished in Clementsvale he brought over John McCracken's trailer hall and parked it beside the tent in Rosebank. He and brother Norman Crawford had a few meetings. The interest was still good and Robert decided to carry on for a while as I had gone to Sarnia with Arnold Gratton. I attended the East Boston conference on the way home.

On returning around the first of December, I found Robert was still having nightly meetings and some had professed while I was away, so I joined him. We kept going until December 20th, with good interest, and began to feel that the Lord was raising up a testimony in Rosebank and that we would have to erect a hall. We began children's meetings on Friday night and an afternoon meeting on Lord's day during the winter. We were convinced that we should build a hall. Brother Cecil Copp of Vancouver encouraged us by saying that if we decided to build, there would be help from the "Foundation fund" that his brother had left for Gospel work. Springfield assembly was still in the portable hall which had been moved from Charlottetown. They were in great need of a new building, and had talked about it for some time. With all this before us, we began looking around for a good stand of lumber that we could get and cut into logs ourselves. Brother Robert Smith and his mother offered the trees from their property to be cut "on the halves." About a dozen of the Christians went to work and we soon had sufficient logs for the hall in Rosebank, and some for one in Springfield (which was to be built at the same time). Brother Lyle Livingstone had a saw mill and had offered to saw the lumber, so we planned to build in the summer of 1960.

These were happy times as we worked together in the "bush" and ate our lunch sitting on the brush. All were enthused and looking forward eagerly to the completion of these two Gospel halls.

CHAPTER 14

By Dogsled, Snowmobile and Airplane

After our conference in 1959, we knew we would have to enlarge the Crapaud Hall before the next conference to accommodate the growing crowd. It was decided that we would put a gallery in the hall. Brother Clarence Kennedy had written me some time before saying that there was some money left over from the Ainsley Goodwin Estate; it was several hundred dollars and they wanted it used for the work of God so were happy to put it toward the expansion of the hall. After a short visit to Halifax in January, I returned and rounded up the lumber for the job, then left for Newfoundland for Gospel meetings in St. John's. The brethren in Crapaud did the work during the winter and had it ready for the conference, enabling us to seat an additional seventy.

My stay in Newfoundland was fourteen weeks. Bert Joyce was to join me in St. John's for meetings, but was unable to, so I had nine weeks alone. While there Bert pressed me to come to Labrador for their conference in Lanse au Loup before going home. I had never been there and he offered to meet me in Gander and fly me up with his plane. I agreed to go and left St. John's in the evening by train. I met Bert in the Gander Hotel, where we spent the night before leaving for Red Bay in the morning. Before I left St. John's the Labrador brethren had asked me if I would bring some wine with me for the Lord's supper. They had no way of getting it on the coast, and it was easy to get in St. John's at the wholesale grocers. I bought a half gallon bottle, but afterwards I wondered how I would carry it. I decided to wrap it in paper and put it in my Bible bag, packing my Bible in another case. I felt that would protect the wine bottle from being broken. So there I was, a preacher, getting on the train carrying a Bible bag with a text on the side and a bottle of wine within. Nothing happened, but I often

think of how easily an embarrassing situation could have developed. When in the Gander Hotel I set my case down to use the phone, the woman in charge saw the text: "Ye Must Be Born Again." She picked up my case and made a comment on it, setting it down again. Being born again herself, she was so pleased to see someone with enough courage to carry a text on their case. Fortunately I had packed plenty of paper in with the bottle, so that the shock of setting it down did no harm, but I often wonder how I would have explained to her if the wine had begun leaking out of my Bible bag in that hotel lobby. We left the next morning for Red Bay, my first visit to that place. Needless to say, I received a warm welcome from the Joyce family, not having seen them since they had left Victoria, P.E.I. in 1956. The weather was nice, it was cold but the sun was shining brightly. After a visit with the Christians, and dinner with the Joyce's, we got ready to leave for Lanse au Loup. Bert was to fly Emily, myself and three of the children while other Christians were to come with Andy Bergsma in a snowmobile, which Bro. Buchan of Toronto had sent up for the work. It could carry a dozen people. The flight to Lanse au Loup was unevent-

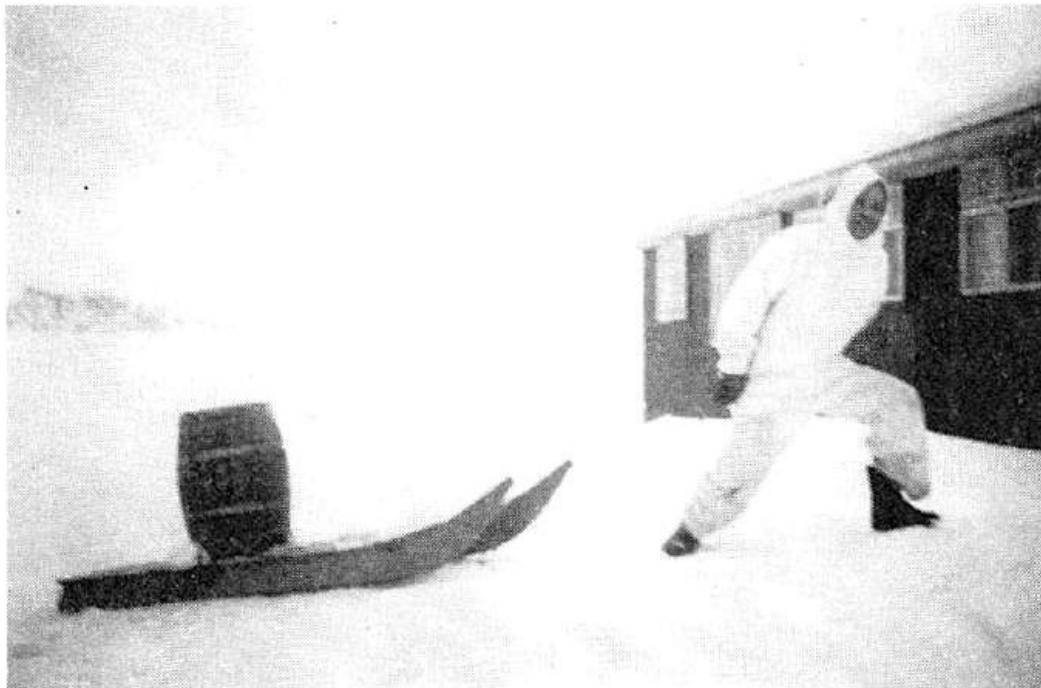


TAXI SERVICE IN LABRADOR

ful, except for being a bit bumpy, but it was the landing that required nerve. After circling over the little village, Bert decided he could land on a clear spot on the side of the hill above the village, and this he did. It was cold and the wind was blowing the drifting snow. We had no sooner landed than we saw several men coming with dog teams to meet us. As Emily and I got on the sleigh, she with two of the children and I with the baby, Bert left for another plane load. The dogs began to fight and became tangled in one another's harnesses. The ones that were pulling our sled took off down the hill over rocks and bumps. Emily rolled off and got a bad bruise on her knee. I managed to stay on my feet with the baby in my arms. This was my first experience with this very common means of transportation in Labrador.

The conference was a time of rich spiritual blessing. A number of brethren, newly saved, gave their testimony with many tears, and five obeyed the Lord in baptism. The simplicity and hospitality of the believers was beyond description. It was their custom then, as it has been ever since, to prepare meals in their own homes. Unlike other conferences, no meals are served in the hall. The Christians invite visitors to their houses, even though the attendance is now well over 500. Dear brother Pearce Linstead used to say, when making the announcements, "If you are not asked for dinner, just get your eye on someone and chase them!" He meant, "Go anyway," for you were always welcome wherever you went.

The journey back to Red Bay was another experience. Bert Joyce decided he would drive the snowmobile, as brother Bergsma found it



HAULING WATER

quite difficult coming over. He would take a load over and then return with the plane. It was thirty miles and there was no road, so they had to have one of the village men, who knew the trails and landmarks, to guide them. Several times we had "narrow" escapes from upsetting as Bert, driving like Jehu, would round some snowdrift and swerve to miss a rock or bush in the way. There were thirteen of us caged in this old covered vehicle and I had visions of one of those sitting across from me landing her two hundred pounds on me and the children on my knees. However, we reached Red Bay around noon without mishap, and Bert left to get another load which brother Bergsma would bring, while he would fly the plane. At dusk it began to storm and all that night the wind blew and howled. The next day there was a genuine blizzard. Emily had wished that it would "blow" while I was there so I could see what it was like, and she got her wish. Unfortunately, it was a little more than she had wished for, as it wrecked the Selkirk chimney and the insulation was blowing all over the place! I managed to make temporary repairs; we had to bring the water about a quarter of a mile from the community well, hauling it in a barrel on a sled. It was an experience never to be forgotten! There were no telephones and we wondered what had happened to Bert and the others. The storm raged all that night. The following day we heard the drone of the plane and were very relieved. They had started out with the second load on the snowmobile and the vehicle had broken down within walking distance of shelter, so Bert brought the others by plane.

Bert and I had promised to have some meetings in Carbonear before I would leave for home, so we flew to St. John's and drove to Carbonear for a few weeks' meetings. Some of the local brethren continued after we left. I arrived back on P.E.I. on April 14, after an absence of two and a half months.

After the Crapaud conference in May we decided that we should move back to our home in Charlottetown. The move to Kensington had been for the help of the Freetown assembly; this had now been functioning for three years, so it seemed time to return to Charlottetown. During the summer months we carried on meetings in Rosebank and had the lumber hauled to the mill, helping brother Livingstone with the sawing. It was a very dry summer and a forest fire broke out about the time we wanted to get the basement started. All the machines were under government control, standing by to keep the fire from spreading to some of the villages. The Army had also been called in to help fight the blaze and it seemed we would not be able to get the hall started. However, there was a lull in one place about twenty miles away and the contractor said he would bring the bulldozer and dig the hole. He did the one in Rosebank and then went to Springfield, twelve miles away and did theirs the same afternoon. This left us free to start the construction of both halls.

In September, Arnold Gratton arrived to help us. He parked his trailer beside the work and we fed the men (sometimes numbering five)



ROSEBANK HALL COMPLETED

in his trailer. Needless to say it soon smelled like a frying pan. He had to spend the night in it, and his clothes were becoming saturated with the smell of onions. One night he couldn't get to sleep, as he had no use for onions. The next day I couldn't find an onion in the trailer, and was informed that the neighbors' cows had had a treat! There may have been a bit of competition as to which hall would get up first. This resulted in a lack of sufficient bracing as we put the rafters up, causing the walls to spread. We had quite a job with chain blocks to draw them back into line, so we found it was better to work more slowly than to cause wasted time. Finishing the basement and closing in before winter enabled us to move from the portable to the basement for meetings. It required most of the winter to finish the upstairs.

1960 — Rosebank

It was about this time that Robert McIlwaine heard of a Super Cub plane for sale, along with a mail service to Pictou Island, which was owned by a man known as "The Flying Farmer." Robert arranged to buy it and that was the beginning of his flying career. I well remem-

ber our first flight to Rosebank to work on the hall when the roads were all blocked with snow. It was with a sigh of relief that I touched my feet on the ground in a field across the road from the hall! Going by car would have been preferable one afternoon when Robert flew from Tryon to Rosebank following the road only a few hundred feet above the trees. However, it was quite a novelty to work till noon at the hall, then fly to Jack MacKenzie's in the Brae near Coleman, 10 miles away, have dinner and fly back. Much more could be written about Robert and his plane, but some other pen will have to give that history. However, I should mention that he was the first to bring in seals from the ice in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and in so doing he contacted Lester Lewis, who was an expert at skinning seals (not alive, as some erroneously reported), but as a lawful work under the supervision of the Department of Fishery officers. This led to the eventual conversion of Lester, his wife and some of their family. They are now in the Rosebank assembly.

I always feared something would happen in this daring venture. Although there were some near-misses, and the loss of at least one plane, God used this work to reach the Lewis family and also to bring us to that part of the Island with the tent, the details of which will be given later.

1961

This year opened with brother Douglas Howard joining me for Gospel meetings in Charlottetown. The meetings continued for seven weeks with some professing, among them Brendon and June Good.

Snow blocked the roads for days, but there was still work to be done on the upstairs of the Rosebank hall. After the series in Charlottetown, Robert and I spent some time at that task, putting on finish and painting. I was waiting for Bert Joyce to come from Halifax so I could join him for the conference in Lanse au Loup, Labrador, which was then held at the Easter season. Bert was in Halifax having his plane repaired. He and his wife had gone to Charlottetown, Labrador, for a visit with the little assembly and when taxiing for take-off, the plane went through the ice on the harbour. It sank until the wings caught on the ice. They managed to get out before it sank but were several days in salvaging it, with the help of the entire community. The overhaul in Halifax was to have taken three months. They kept promising to have it ready at a certain time but the repair work dragged on. All this time Bert was away from home, which was a great trial to his family. However, about the middle of April, he and I left Charlottetown, P.E.I. for Labrador, with a stop-over to visit brother Herb Harris in Cornerbrook. We had quite a load on the plane and a wing was damaged in the landing at Cornerbrook. Before we could go further this had to be repaired, which, happily, we were able to have done in a few hours. There had been no way for Bert to let his wife know just when he would be coming, so she had been expecting him every day for

a long time. As we neared the Labrador coast, he tried to call Red Bay. I tried to imagine the family's feelings when they realized that at last Dad was really coming home. In their home was the radio telephone which carried the hospital messages and monitored any planes coming in to pick up patients. If I remember correctly, the set was always on at 9, 12 and 5, to give reports from the different hospitals along the coast and to send out messages if help was needed. Emily told us afterwards that just after lunch she was lying down with her eyes closed, not taking in much of the chatter on the machine, when suddenly she heard her husband's voice giving the call-letters of his plane. She realized he was within a few minutes of home. When preaching on the text, "Incline your ear" I have often used this as an illustration of what it means to have your ear truly "inclined." The other voices were heard in a general sense, but this one was different! She was on her feet in a moment, trying not to miss a word of the message. How like sinners when God awakens them and they hear HIS voice! It was certainly a happy reunion in the Joyce home that afternoon.



THE CAMPBELL'S LEAVING ON HONEYMOON.

Now let me take you back a year in this account: A young Scottish nurse named Mona Leard attended meetings we had in St. John's. She had been saved in Scotland a short time before coming to work in a Cottage hospital in St. Johns. Having been in this country for several years, she was looking forward to going back home, but expressed her liking for Newfoundland and had thoughts of returning.

At that time the work was just new in Labrador and Christian nurses were needed to help with the work in Forteau where Miss Taylor, who had recently been gathered out, was in charge of the hospital. While passing through Gander with Bert Joyce, we met Dr. Thomas, who was in charge of the Grenfell Mission Hospital at St. Anthony. We gave him Mona Leard's name, telling him of her interest in Labrador. A number of months later, I received a letter from Mona stating that she had been in touch with Dr. Thomas and, for the present, had changed her plans about going home to Scotland. She was needed in Forteau to relieve another nurse and had consented to go for a time. In answering her letter I stated, "God may be opening up the greatest chapter of your life!" A few months later another letter arrived with the question, "Did you mean Genesis Chapter 24?" Along with this letter was the announcement that she and George Campbell were to be married at the time of the Lanse au Loup conference and a pressing invitation for me to be present. It was a very happy occasion for us all. None of her family could be there, so brother Herb Harris did the father's part of giving her away. Bert Joyce performed the ceremony and later flew the happy couple to Cornerbrook. He flew Herb and me down the next day and, to my knowledge, brother Harris was never able to get back to the Labrador coast.



SPRINGFIELD HALL

CHAPTER 15

Tents For Saints and Sinners

During the first part of the summer of 1961 we worked on the Rosebank hall and carried on Gospel meetings. However, we had an exercise about Campbellton for some time, so in the month of August, the tent was pitched in Merritt Ramsay's field. At the end of the third week someone set fire to it and we were without a place to carry on the meetings. But God was working and someone even suggested having an open air service. However, we loaded the wooden tent at Rosebank onto a truck, ready to erect it where the other had been burned, but we were warned against this in case it would suffer the same fate. So we had no place to go. It was then that Fred Ramsay came to us and offered his front lawn, which was gladly accepted and all was ready for a meeting that night. The interest grew. God worked in the Fred Ramsay family. Some were saved that summer and others several years afterward. Calvin Ramsay and his wife were reached at that time as well. The old van was being used to bring a load from Miminegash, a distance of twelve miles. At that time it was a very rough journey. One dear lady, who was saved during those meetings, came every night although she was very ill. Before the summer was over she had gone home to heaven. It was at this time also that Ian Costain's granddaughter, Stella, was saved; she is now the wife of Larry Buote, who works among the French people in Quebec.

In the month of August one of our promising young men, Melvin Thompson, was called to heaven after being severely burned in a house fire. He left a good testimony and sang a hymn on the way to the hospital, although ninety percent of his body was burned.

On October 15th we sat down for the first time to remember the Lord in Rosebank with eleven from the district who had been saved. The same day we baptized Mr. and Mrs. Kentford Horne, who have

been a strength to the work there. The meetings finished with the wife of Fred Ramsay being saved, as well as her daughter Sybil, now Mrs. Brian MacDonald.

1962

On our return from Vancouver, where I had been having meetings for three months with brother Sydney Maxwell in the Woodland Drive assembly, we looked forward to the conference in Crapaud on May 24. It was felt that the crowd had outgrown the accommodations at the Gospel Hall, and just that spring the new high school had become available. There was quite a lot of talk about those "despised people" having the first public function in the new school, but the trustees were quite willing to rent it at a reasonable rate. This enabled us to use the Gospel Hall for all the meals. By putting tables upstairs and down we could accommodate double the number of people.

In July we secured a lot for the tent in Montrose and decided to move the portable hall from Campbelltown without taking it apart, seeing it had a plywood roof. It was loaded on low wagons hauled by tractors. Brother Roy Milligan sat on the roof to lift the electrical wires where they were too low. This almost ended in disaster — he touched one with his head, was knocked unconscious and rolled off the roof. However, through the goodness of the Lord, he was not seriously burned and after a few days in the hospital was home again. The meetings were not too encouraging and at the end of five weeks we closed. Eternity will reveal the results.

1963

It will be of interest to many, so I relate the following in relation to the Pugwash Junction conference and the history of the large tent which has been used there for many years.

Brother Cecil Copp of Vancouver had been at the Pugwash conference several times and observed the overcrowded conditions — there would be as many sitting outside in their cars as were in the Hall. For several years a portable tent was erected and a P.A. system used to reach those outside the hall, but this was not satisfactory because many of those who would like to have been in the meetings listening to the ministry had to sit in cars or in the tent. Mr. Copp, who was born in Bay Verte, New Brunswick, and had a special interest in the work in the Maritimes, offered to help out financially to secure a large tent. Many thought the tent would be too cool and not practical as there would be so much work involved. However, the brethren consented to try it for a conference if a tent large enough to seat five hundred could be obtained.

While having meetings in East Boston with Albert Joyce during the winter, I was able to locate a used tent 42' x 90'. It was push-pole and made of twill, which was not very substantial, but the price was



PUGWASH CONFERENCE TENT

less than a thousand dollars. Used chairs from Harvard College were advertised for \$1.00 each in sets of three. After getting the consent of the Pugwash brethren and a line to Mr. Copp, all were happy to give it a try for the first of July. A truck from P.E.I. was engaged to pick it up in Boston and bring it back as a return load for the price of \$100.00. The driver loaded the canvas first and picked up the 300 chairs at another location. The Customs officials made him unload all the chairs in order to inspect the canvas for duty. It was the owner of the truck, Norris Kitson, who happened to be driving that day and had to do the work; I am sure he was not too pleased! However, the tent was erected for the conference. The night of the prayer meeting was very cool and many thought it would never do. But before the conference was over, it was given the "go-ahead" for the future.

In 1965 a strong wind wrecked a thirty-foot section of the roof while the morning meeting was in progress. The whole tent had to be taken down and the section removed. Another section was purchased and used until 1968, when we were able to get the present tent for \$500.00 from a man in Charlottetown. He had bought it used, to hold car auctions, and no longer needed it. This one was made of canvas and much more durable, with a seating capacity of six hundred. Putting the tent up is looked upon as a big picnic for the young believers, and getting ready for the conference at Pugwash, though a lot of work, has been a happy time of fellowship over the years.

Early in June of 1963 Robert McIlwaine and I put up a canvas tent in Alberton South and interest was good from the beginning. It might be profitable to mention an interesting experience to show how the Lord works: The first week three women sat at the back of the tent and seemed to listen well. People living nearby who knew them told us they had walked three miles to get there. The next day we visited them to say that we would take them in the car. Hearing this, they told of us of a family a half mile further on who might come, so for the next few nights we had a car load, including twin girls, fourteen years of age, from that next house. When we called on the third night with the car pretty well filled, the twins had their mother and another sister! Of course we managed to pack them in and they all attended for two more nights. The second night I began wondering why the mother was coming as she was very deaf, unable to hear a word. After a few more nights, the three women stopped coming; in a week or so the twins dropped out, and all we had was the deaf woman and the girl of twelve. They continued coming for a number of weeks. Our tent was wrecked in a severe wind storm and one of the fishermen gave us the use of his boathouse in which to continue, so we piled the traps and rope in one end and were able to seat seventy-five, the "Two Roads" chart was hanging on the lobster traps. The deaf lady never heard a word we said, but she wrote down all the verses on the chart. She discovered she was on the broad road, and was soon saved. Later she was baptized and was in happy fellowship until her homecall a number of years later. As far as I know, she was the only one of that carload who got the blessing.



MOBILE HALL

Those meetings went on for eleven weeks, during which time Mrs. Lester Lewis was saved. Others professed but did not go on. John Kember joined us near the end of that series.

1964

As the summer arrived, so did the question as in other years, "Where will we pitch the tent?" Our lead was an invitation given to Robert during that winter, by Lester Lewis, to put it near his place so he could obtain the same thing his wife had. We pitched the tent in Lester's field at Cascumpec, about a hundred yards from his house and eight miles from the Rosebank assembly. Lester was saved in the fifth week of the meetings. Brendon Good brought a friend, Arnold Raynor, just one night, and two years later we found out that he had been saved after that meeting. He is now in the Springfield assembly.

During those meetings we undertook to build a mobile hall, doing the work at Robert McIlwaine's home in Tryon. That meant driving back and forth about a thousand miles a week.

In September there was a baptism at Bell's shore. Lester Lewis was baptized, as well as a number who had been saved the previous year.

1965

With the Pugwash conference over the summer's work with the tent was before us. Robert McIlwaine was flying out of Halifax, so I was without a helper for the summer. There was an exercise on the part of the Christians in Freetown to try meetings in Sea View and we purposed using the mobile hall, which was just completed. David Hodgkins and his wife were at the Pugwash conference and consented to come over for a few weeks, so that David could help in the meetings. The hall was moved to a lot in Sea View in the middle of July, and David and his wife took up residence near Kensington. There was not too much interest in those meetings, although a lot of strangers heard the Word. David returned home around the middle of August, planning to return the next fall to work with us here for a time, which he did.

1966

I pitched a tent in Murray's corner, N.B., in July with Frank Pearcey joining in meetings for five weeks. A woman of ninety professed but otherwise there was not too much interest.

Having moved the mobile hall to Albany where there was some interest we found a lot of opposition. One night we received a call about 11:00 p.m. that the mobile hall was on fire. We rushed over, but some of the neighbors had carried water and put it out. Old bags saturated with oil had been piled around the wheels. Two tires were ruined, but only a small hole was burned in the bottom of one of the trailers. So the Lord had graciously overruled.

1967

During the months of January and February, brother Dave Hodgkins, who had come to labor with me for a time on the Island, joined me in Gospel meetings in a schoolhouse in the district of Enmore. It was in those meetings that we contacted Mrs. Paugh, mentioned earlier, who had been saved in tent meetings at Green Hill in 1937. The weather was very cold and we did not see too much accomplished that could be called "blessing." However, we feel some made their choice for eternity at that time. One young couple was troubled, came to the point of being "almost persuaded," but drew back. We trust that they will yet be reached. The mobile hall was moved to Enmore where we carried on a Sunday School during the winter months.

1968

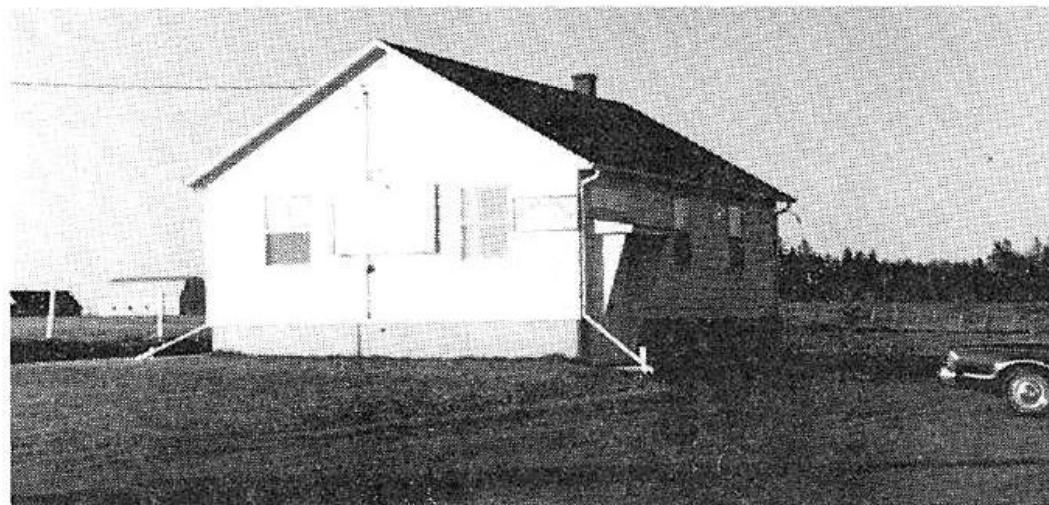
In the month of May, Noel Burden came to P.E.I., having been commended by several assemblies, including Woodland Drive in Vancouver. We were happy to have him to help with the work and he and his wife settled at the west end of the Island. After the conference in Crapaud, Noel and I had Gospel meetings in the mobile hall at Enmore. While there, we realized that something would have to be done to provide a place to continue the Sunday School work after we



ERECTING OLD PORTABLE HALL

moved the mobile hall. We decided to erect the old portable hall in Arnold Raynor's field and make it a permanent building. This was used until the Sunday School was closed several years later. A number of the children who heard the Gospel in that building died in their youth by way of accidents. We trust that in a coming day some will be in the glory because of the work that was so faithfully pursued for a number of years.

After the old portable was ready for use, we moved the mobile hall to Murray's Corner, New Brunswick, for another effort with the children. Brother Arnold Raynor came over with the bus which he had used for the work in Enmore and gathered up children. Gary Sharp of Midland, Ontario, and David Oliver of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, were in this work with us for several seasons, and were a great help.



PRESENT FREETOWN HALL

For several years the brethren in Freetown had been planning to build a new hall as the old school had outlived its usefulness. During the summer they managed to start on the hall in which they now are, having traded the old school for the lot on which they built.

This may only be a thought in the mind of the writer, but I feel it is worth mentioning: Where the present hall now stands at Freetown, there was once a public hall in which Gospel meetings were held by a saved preacher from the denominations. Now, in that place, there is a testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet none of the Christians who are in fellowship live in that district. Also on the spot of ground where the Rosebank Hall is built, a saved man used to pitch a tent every summer and have weeks of Gospel meetings. Now a testimony to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ is in that place. It may be only a coincidence, but knowing the great emphasis the Lord puts on "the Place" in His Word, I cannot help but feel that it had been God's mind for assemblies to be planted in these communities. Maybe in "that day" we shall understand this more clearly.

CHAPTER 16

“Not Many Fathers”

In November of 1968 brother Doug Howard joined me in Gospel meetings in the mobile hall at Murray's Corner, New Brunswick. While there, on December 6th, we were notified that dear brother Herb Harris had gone home to heaven after an operation in Toronto. We managed to get a flight out of Moncton after the meeting, and arrived in Toronto for the funeral service.



(L TO R: F. PEARCEY, B. JOYCE, D. HOWARD, G. CAMPBELL,
E. DELANDRIA, A. RAMSAY, G. GOFF, A. JOYCE)

As we stood with bowed heads around the little gravesite in Orillia, Ontario, just across the field from the old homestead where brother Harris had been brought up — seven of us whose lives as young men had been touched by this humble servant of the Lord, surrounding the casket which would soon be lowered into mother earth — at least one, if not all, had thoughts that made the teardrops start: "In that house he played. He grew up on that spot of ground. God saved him and called him to His work. He travelled many miles, preaching the Gospel from Vancouver on Canada's west coast to the rocky shores of Newfoundland and Labrador on the east. From its commencement in that old farmhouse to this little plot nearby, his course in life had been nobly run. His was an ever-widening circle of influence that brought salvation to hundreds and motivated a countless number of lives for God. How I thank God I was included in that circle!"

A small brass plaque marks the grave of this man who lived for others.

CHAPTER 17

Sowing and Serving In The Seventies

1970

In February of this year, Frank Pearcey started meetings in Charlottetown. I joined him in the second week, and after he left for Toronto, carried on for a couple of weeks. Some souls professed.

After our May conference, which was very large, we had children's meetings at Murray's Corner in New Brunswick. Gary Sharp helped again. A large number of children attended for two weeks. When Gary returned to Ontario at the end of his holidays, David Oliver joined me for two weeks in the Legion Hall at Cape Tormentine, with an excellent interest. We then had some Gospel meetings in the mobile hall, which was still at Murray's Corner, and had a good interest when we closed the meetings. As I look back to that series I feel it was a mistake to have ended the effort. Seventy-five attended the last meeting, and some of them were troubled. We were never able to recover this interest and can only trust that, by God's grace, someone will reap the benefit of the seed that was sown at that time.

1971

The year opened with a trip to Newfoundland to join Bert Joyce for a Gospel series in Red Bay. The Lord gave blessing in the four weeks of meetings, with both June and Evelyn Joyce professing, as well as a number of others. We felt that the meetings should finish, as my time was limited. Bert Joyce suggested we spend the weekend in Lanse au Loup and journey on to Cornerbrook on Monday, en route home. However, the Lord had other plans and kept us in Lanse au Loup for five weeks due to storms. Schools were closed for a month and only the Gospel Hall was open. There was a great in-gathering of

souls; many of them are now in the assembly. It was truly a time of visitation and we did rejoice that the Lord had overruled and kept us there.

I returned to P.E.I. in time for our conference, which had now reached the five hundred mark. Our facilities were taxed to such an extent that everyone knew something had to be done. We had tried many times to buy more land from the owner next door who had sold us the lot in 1934. When he died another party was willing to sell us as much land as we needed. It was at this time that the present field, which contains the cemetery, was purchased. It was decided at the same time to build an addition to the hall and put washrooms in the basement. Thus we were able to provide an ample parking lot around the hall.

In July Arnold Gratton arrived on the Island. He had purchased a used tent which we decided to pitch in Cornwall. Meetings went on for six weeks; many heard the Gospel, but we know of only one who professed. This is often the lot of those who carry the Gospel. There is not always a harvest, but the Lord will look after His Word and "that day" will make it plain.

1972

While attending the Newfoundland and Labrador conferences in 1971, several of the brethren suggested that we call to see Brian Funston on Fogo Island on the way to St. John's conference. The work there was new and they had just completed a portable hall. Carl Payne had joined in the work. Fogo is about 18 miles off the Coast from Carminville. We were warmly welcomed, and sought to encourage these two lonely workers. I had an exercise to return at the first of the year for Gospel meetings with Brian. We started early in January. The weather was very cold and windy, but the Lord worked and gave us some nice fruit which today forms part of the assembly which was started a year later. As I watched Brian laboring on that lonely island, sticking with the work there despite much opposition, my admiration for him grew. His only living quarters was a trailer. Water had to be brought from the village pump, over a mile away, and there were no modern facilities. Such demanding conditions make good basic training for those whom God calls to His service. I recall how he had a deep interest in Gander Bay and remarked, when driving through, "God has a work to be done here." Several years later a real work of God was done in Gander Bay. One of the larger assemblies was planted and continues to carry on for the Lord. Those who were saved at that time, helped by the other workers, built their own saw mill, cut the logs and built not only their own hall and a large portable hall but supplied lumber for several halls that were built later. Thus God carries on His work. These scattered remarks about the work in that part of Newfoundland will serve to remind those who come along later, if the Lord tarries, what the beginning of the work was like.

During the summer, Gary Sharp joined me in tent meetings in Cape Tormentine, N.B., after we had two weeks of children's meetings at Murray's Corner. There was not too much interest and, as far as we know, only one young woman was saved.

1973

In July Arnold Gratton and I pitched the tent in Kensington. The interest was quite good and a number of souls professed to be saved. The meetings went on for six weeks. In September we had a baptism at Goff's Bridge, when six obeyed the Lord. They were the fruit of meetings several years before.

1974

This spring opened with a search for a building in which to hold the conference. The school board had taken part of the area in the Crapaud school for classrooms, which meant we would not be able to accommodate the crowd. This led us to Kensington, where the conference was held for the first time, each assembly having their own remembrance meeting on the Lord's day. Looking back over the past seven years now, this has proven to be a much better arrangement, as it is more central for those at the West end of the Island.

In July Arnold Gratton and I put up a tent in Bonshaw, holding meetings for five and a half weeks. There was not much to report in the way of blessing. The latter part of the year was spent in Vancouver with brother Harold Paisley in the Fairview assembly.

1975

In June we had some Gospel meetings in Pugwash Jct. before their conference. Afterward, brother Oswald MacLeod and I tried Gospel meetings in the old church building at Northport, N.S. We found no interest and closed the meetings at the end of the second week. Arnold Gratton and Noel Burden pitched the tent in Conway, P.E.I. and had good meetings. Some professed, and the meetings went on for ten weeks.

It was decided that a new hall would be built in Charlottetown. We arranged to get standing lumber and a number of the believers gathered to cut logs. A dozen brethren using seven chain saws soon had sufficient for the frame and rough floors. As there was a hold-up regarding the land, the building had to be postponed for a time. In the month of October I joined Albert Hull for Gospel meetings in Ireland. I stopped over for a week in Scotland and spent a Lord's day with the Harley Street assembly. The brethren asked me to give a report of the work on P.E.I. As I was telling how the Gospel first came, there was an elderly gentleman of 80 sitting near the front who seemed to be enjoying every word and saying many "Amens." When I spoke with him after the meeting, he said: "I enjoyed that. Many a time I put my

finger on that little spot on the map and said, 'That's a God-forsaken place,' and so I prayed for it." So the Lord allowed the old saint to know how marvelously his prayers had been answered.

1976

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples: "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country and in his own house." However, being pressed to have some meetings on the "Egypt to Canaan" chart, in the Charlottetown assembly, I consented with fear and trembling. It was encouraging to hear from the different ones how they enjoyed this ministry and it was a help to the speaker as well. I had received a very pressing invitation to have a series of Gospel meetings in the new hall in Ladner, B.C., and I felt led to go, seeing I had been there and helped with the work in its Sunday School stage in brother Webber's home. They had a nice new hall, but no assembly. However, there were folks living there who were saved in meetings we had in Richmond in 1973. Before I left the Island, Mrs. Gary Guindon gave me the address of her brother-in-law, Wayne Guindon, who had just moved there with his new wife. Calling him on the phone upon my arrival, I found that he had expected my call. He promised to come out on Sunday night even though he had to travel thirty miles. I had never met him but after the meeting he and his wife introduced themselves to me. Several nights after, he professed to be saved and his wife was reached a few nights later. This was a real cheer and seemed to put the stamp of approval on our going for the meetings. They are both in the assembly in Ladner now which was planted shortly after those meetings. This influence reached to the home of Wayne Guindon's wife in Inverness, N.S., and since then God has worked in her family, saving a brother, who is in fellowship in the Sydney assembly.

After our conference in May we put our house up for sale, intending to move out to a new subdivision that was opening up. My nephew was in the building business and offered to build for us. We had often thought we should move from Gerald Street, the house was becoming quite a burden to maintain. We decided to put it up for sale. I had always thought I would go to heaven from "32 Gerald Street", having been there for over thirty years. But it seemed the Lord was leading otherwise, for the real estate agent soon had it sold and we realized enough from it to build free of debt in the new subdivision. Inflation had done its work in our favor; we had bought for a very small sum thirty years before.

Arnold Gratton and I pitched the tent in Hampshire in the month of July and the Lord gave us some real encouragement. The mother of Wayne and Gary Guindon was saved, also Gene McLelland, the singer, and his wife professed, as well as a friend of his. Others were reached at this time as well.

After the tent season brother Gratton returned to Ontario. Noel Burden, who was with us in the tent work for the summer, returned to

the West end of the Island to continue with visitation. He has pursued this work with a consistent zeal over the years, having covered much of that part with tracts and Kember texts.

This year ended with the usual Labrador conference which we looked forward to each year with joy, then a series with Doug Howard in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. This was the first series he engaged in after his sickness and it was fruitful. It cheered us both to be linked together in Gospel work once more. (December 28th excerpt: Peter Orasuk came to the house for a talk tonight; he professed to be saved.)

1977

In January Robert McIlwaine was joined by Albert Hull in Gospel meetings in Charlottetown, with some blessing in salvation. During the summer of 1976, Bert Joyce and Brian Funston saw some interest in a new part of Newfoundland, a place called Sandringham, near Eastport. Brian rented an empty summer cottage in Sandy Cove, about eight miles from where the tent had been. Looking back it can be seen how the Lord guides in a definite way to something great that He has in mind. Little did Brian and his dear wife Elizabeth realize how the Lord was going to repay them for leaving their home in Gander Bay to spend the winter in this new place. Their cottage was next to a couple for whom the Lord had designs of grace. The kindness of Brian's wife to these neighbors — Jim and Angela Matchem — spoke to them in a time of sickness. Meetings started in February in the portable hall which they had moved from Gander Bay to a lot near where the tent had been. The first night of the meetings there was a raging blizzard so that no one could move. This was disappointing, as Brian had looked forward to these meetings very eagerly, and I had just arrived on Saturday to join him. However, God's weather never interferes with God's work. We were invited to the neighbors' for supper, and some others came in because of the storm. All evening we sat and answered questions from the scriptures. This impressed the Matchems, and we feel the Lord started to work there that night. It was only a short time until they were saved. This reached out to other relatives. Although we never had over twenty at the meetings in the portable, God saved a number of souls and there is a healthy assembly there at the time of this writing. The Lord is still working — relatives in St. John's were also saved and are in fellowship. Others in Calgary, Alberta, as well as other parts of Newfoundland, were saved and are now in fellowship. This proves that there is still land to be possessed for God, and there is no better training for a young man than to get into new places like this and see God opening doors. Men who never have had such experience seeing a work started and watching it grow, facing the difficulties that present themselves from a hostile world and guiding the young converts as they seek to get their lives adjusted after salvation will always lack a certain touch that can only be gained in such circumstances. This should be an

encouragement to any young man with an exercise to serve the Lord. There must be basic training. A young man may have the right motive, plenty of knowledge and a gift to speak, but he must not forget that "God trains the heart of his servant." This can only come through experience. No other form of study, however helpful it may be, can put into the heart of the man of God what the Lord teaches by experience. The Lord's people will always assess the speaker by the "feel" he has, not the facts he knows. I write this kindly, for the sake of younger men who, if the Lord tarry, must come to the forefront. We thank the Lord for the number of young men who have launched out into the Lord's work among the assemblies today. Most of them could have "made it to the top" in the business world. But in the things of God we must remember that the way to the top is down. "He that will be great amongst you, let him be your servant." This was the lesson the Lord taught His disciples and the disciple in the 1980's who has learned this lesson will be truly useful for God. Never speak beyond your experience; the Lord's people will sense it. These lines once came to mind:

It is good to know and to know you know,
But you must keep low with your 'know', you know.
For unless you've grown with your 'know', you know,
The crowd will lay you low, you know.
It is not enough to show you know,
But you must carry weight with your 'know', you know;
This weight is experience added to your 'know'
Which commands attention to your vocal flow.
So with all your 'know' you must keep low
For the way to the top is down, you know;
The humble soul will be very slow
And sometimes embarrassed to show they know.
But nothing can hinder the upward flow
Of praise to the one that has the 'know'
Providing it is not on display for show —
For the crowd will be quick to lay you low
If they detect in your speech, you know,
That you're proud of the fact that you know, you know.

If these lines provoke any who are in the Lord's service to examine their "know" and adjust themselves accordingly, they will have accomplished the purpose for which they were written.

In the month of May we decided to go ahead with the building of the new hall in Charlottetown. Much planning had gone into it, but we had been held up because of the requirement for additional ten feet of land to allow for the building of the new hall without first demolishing the old. The ten foot addition cost seven thousand dollars, while the original lot on which the old hall stood was purchased for three hundred and fifty dollars in 1940! Most of the work was done by the brethren in the assembly. The plan was to have everything paid for when the

building was finished. This the Lord enabled us to fulfill through the exercise of His dear saints and the willing efforts of many of the brethren. We moved into the new hall on June 11, 1978, free from debt.

This summer a lot was secured for the tent in Bonshaw, and brother Harold Paisley joined me for Gospel meetings. Good numbers attended; however, it seemed difficult to see a stir. One dear man from Hardwick, Vermont, who was touring the Island, professed. Perhaps we closed too soon. We have found in Gospel work on P.E.I. that a break usually comes after about five weeks. Seldom have we seen a move before that.

The year ended with our journey to the Newfoundland/Labrador conferences. An unusual experience occurred in the Lanse au Loup conference when nine young men professed to be saved during the three days of meetings.

In November I joined brother Bert Joyce and Brian Funston for the planting of the new assembly in Eastport, Newfoundland, and the opening of the hall. The building was renovated by the brethren. It had formerly been a club room, and was owned by Jim Matchem. The brethren bought the building. Not only had the Lord saved the man who once ran the club, but He saw to it that the club room was turned into a Gospel Hall. God's ways are past finding out!

1978

In the month of January brother Noel Burden joined me for Gospel meetings in the Rosebank assembly. The Lord came in graciously and saved a number of souls. Ralph and Robert Ramsay had come to meetings sixteen years before when the tent was in their father's yard. Now they were both married to Roman Catholic girls and were raising families. God in His rich mercy reached and saved these two couples and they are now in the Rosebank assembly. God's ways are not our ways — we wanted to see them saved before and labored hard to that end, but God had other plans. This should be an encouragement to those with unsaved children. We should do all in our power to see them saved, but let us not despair. There are no impossible cases with God. Looking back over the past forty years I have seen this oft repeated in the lives of others. It gives us courage to preach the Gospel and leave the results with the Lord — He will do His own work in His own time. A young man, Adair Shaw, who attended school with Rhonda Thomas, was brought out to the meetings at this time as well. He was saved, and later married Rhonda. Both are in fellowship in Rosebank. The Lord greatly encouraged the saints in the assembly there and increased their number. The meetings finished after nine weeks.

After the meetings closed we attended the Easter conference in Nineveh, N.S. It was the first time they had had a conference. On our return, Noel Burden and I had some ministry meetings in Rosebank

for the young Christians. What a surprise for these young converts brought up in the Roman Catholic system, when brother Burden spoke one night on the priesthood of all believers, and showed clearly from I Peter 2 that brethren and sisters alike were priests. We are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by our Lord Jesus Christ. Maybe this would be as much a surprise to some other young Christians when ministered on; but this is the grace into which we have been called. In the Old Testament this office was coveted by kings, but was denied them. It belonged to God's chosen ones, born into the tribe of Levi and belonging to the family of Aaron in the tribe. Their very birth gave them a title to priesthood; but there were certain things that could disqualify them from functioning as priests. Is it not so with this Spiritual Priesthood? Our new birth gives us the right to offer up sacrifices to God, but certain things can hinder our functioning as priests. Let us beware lest we rob ourselves of this privilege.

1978

In June it was arranged that we have a baptism in Campbellton. This is where our tent was burned 17 years before. As we gathered by the old lobster factory, a few hundred yards from where we had found the ashes of our tent, I saw the mother of two young men who had been teenagers then. Her two sons couldn't have cared less when their mother told them she was saved. Now she, along with them and their wives, was going to obey the Lord in baptism. (This was the family of the man who let us put the tent on his front lawn after the other one was burned. At time of this writing he is still unsaved, but comes to Gospel meetings and wants to be saved.) Two other daughters have been saved; one in 1961, the other a few years ago. Many witnessed the scriptural ordinance of baptism being carried out that day. Another joy on that occasion was to see this daughter who had been saved in 1961 standing beside one who had been brought to the Lord through her testimony. This dear one was about to obey the Lord, having seen from the Word of God that although she had been baptized a few years before her conversion, she should now be baptized as a believer. It had all started when these two became neighbors in a trailer court. This daughter was in the assembly and the other lady had professed to be saved in an Evangelical place. She was very active in missionary work, visiting and knocking on doors trying to "get people converted." She would say to this sister: "So you don't wear slacks, and you always go to meetings with a hat on; I don't understand you — that is too far out for me." However, they remained good friends. One day she seemed a bit down and this sister suggested that she come to the house for a visit while I was there. Having never met her before but hearing that she professed, I asked: "Where are your sins?" She hesitated and then said, "On the cross." We talked for a while and then left. Three months later when I returned from Newfoundland she asked me to visit her

and meet her husband. This I did, and the first thing she had to tell me was that when I had asked her about her sins and she gave the answer, "On the cross", at that moment she got saved. She had never seen that before. Then she asked, "Why would I be so zealous to see people converted while not even saved myself?" As I read to her in Romans 10, how the Apostle said of his brethren the Jews: "They have a zeal of God; but not according to knowledge ... and were about to establish their own righteousness," her husband spoke up: "I don't have a thing, either ... I'm not saved." After a while, I turned to him asking, "Would you like to be saved?" "Most certainly I would," he replied firmly. While reading the story of the ass and the lamb in Exodus 13:13, with John 1:29, the dear man passed from death unto life. They are both in the assembly now and happy that the Lord opened their eyes. This I record to let Christians see that much activity around us is unreal and to show that we can be a testimony to our neighbors despite their mockery of scriptural practices.

An Extended Visit to the West Coast

I was invited to have Gospel meetings in the Ladner assembly for which I had a care and concern, having been in on the work there from its beginning. I consented to go and took my wife and daughter Eunice, who would finish Grade 11 there. In August we had plans to leave and attend the conference at Sault Ste. Marie on the way. The night before we were to leave, Joyce McKearney called to see if we could drop over to the house. When we arrived there were about fifty of the Christians gathered for a farewell. They had parked all the cars out of sight, so we suspected nothing until we entered the house. We were overcome by this act of kindness, as well as by the practical gift they handed us as a token of their love. Such things as these are never forgotten. We truly felt that our work on the Island was appreciated and it displayed that bond of love which exists among the Lord's people that can never be equaled in the world.

The journey across Canada by car was a pleasant experience. Much could be written about the eight months spent in Gospel meetings in and around Vancouver. But the highlight of it all for us was to see our daughter Eunice saved in meetings with brother Jim Allan of Ireland in the Woodland Dr. Gospel Hall. I had preached in that hall with brother Oliver Smith before the assembly was formed and before our daughter was born! We can only say, "Thanks be unto our faithful God!!"

On our return from B.C. we found brethren Albert Hull and Murray McCandless having good Gospel meetings in Freetown. God blessed His word and a woman was saved, the wife of Tony Gallant, who had been saved a year earlier. They are now in the Freetown assembly, and his sister, her husband, and two girls and two boys were saved later. These are French Canadians and come from a district which is almost one hundred percent French Roman Catholic. These



NEW HALL — CHARLOTTETOWN

converts have encountered much opposition, but it has served to make them appreciate their salvation and to put much more into the things of the Lord than many who have never had to endure persecution.

Removing the Old Hall at Charlottetown

We believe strongly in the scripture that says, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." But here was a landmark that must be removed: the old hall at Charlottetown, P.E.I. It had stood on that corner for over thirty years. The brethren offered to give it to someone if they would move it. To take it down and try to salvage the lumber would have been too costly, as well as extremely time-consuming. It had to be moved quickly to make way for the parking lot and entrance into the new hall. This was accomplished in one day with the basement filled in and leveled off as well. A passer-by would never have known that a building stood there. Many of the young believers will not remember that on the present parking lot there once stood a little hall with a canvas roof, and later a nice wooden building that served its day of usefulness. As for the landmark which we do count important — the sign "GOSPEL HALL" — it was only moved about sixty feet to the present building, where there is also a sign: "Christians gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ", with the order of meetings. I emphasize this for a purpose. Some feel we should not have the sign "Gospel Hall" on our building, lest people think it is the name of our "church." To such I say, "How can you invite people to meetings or announce a service in a building unless that building is designated by a name?" Others remove "Gospel Hall" and substitute

"Gospel Chapel." The writer feels that this comes under the Lord's prohibition, which forbids removing "the ancient landmark." True, no scripture tells us to name our building "Gospel Hall", but those who, over a century ago, paid a price to forsake Christendom with its forms and ritual, to gather unto Him "outside the camp" raised up this landmark as a designation of the building where they met. They bore stinging reproach from friends and relatives, and it cost many of them their jobs and livelihood. The reproach was : "What is your name? Who is your Minister? Is he ordained? You have no musical instruments, how do you sing? You are too narrow-minded. Only those who 'belong' can take communion." We could add more, but we add only that these dear Christians bore much reproach because of their exercise to remain with the simplicity of the New Testament pattern. Let us keep the sign up, "Gospel Hall". The reproach is our protection from the world, and our separation from the world is our strength for God.

1979

During this summer, Arnold Gratton and Noel Burden pitched the tent in O'Leary. Finding no interest there they moved it to Inverness, twenty miles east. Five or six were baptized during the summer and added to the Freetown and Charlottetown assemblies. During this year two of our dear sisters in Christ were called home: Mrs. Russell (Pamela) Cairns and Mrs. Gladys Dockendorff. Mrs. Cairns was saved in the tent meetings in 1934 at Gambles Corner. Mrs. Dockendorff came to Charlottetown when the assembly was first planted, having been saved some time earlier. In July of 1978 brother Floyd Cairns had been called home; he also was one of the number saved in 1934. For many years we had talked about having a burying ground of our own near the Crapaud Hall. It had only become possible after more land was acquired. Prior to that, plots were secured in different cemeteries nearby. Bro. Urban Waddell, who had died the year before, had strongly urged us to have the cemetery on the grounds of the Crapaud Hall. Thus, brother Floyd Cairns was the first one to be buried in the Gospel Hall cemetery.

Tent Work in Hatboro, Pennsylvania

In July I accepted an invitation to join our young brother David Oliver, for tent meetings. Since the tent was being used on P.E.I. by brethren Gratton and Burden, I felt free to join David, having had an interest in him and feeling I could be an encouragement to him, as well as gain some experience for myself by being with a younger man and seeing him work. This was the first time I had tent meetings out of Canada and it proved to be a very fruitful series. I came away thanking the Lord for raising up young men to carry the Gospel in that needy field along the Atlantic Seaboard of the United States.

CHAPTER 18

Unto This Day

1980

In the assembly at Charlottetown there was an exercise for Gospel meetings, as there were some coming on Sunday night who seemed interested. Early in January Noel Burden joined me in meetings and the Lord worked from the first night. In the eight weeks a number of people professed to be saved. All did not go on, but it was a cheer to see some who had been brought up in the Sunday School, and had gone out into the world, reached and saved, as well as brought into the assembly. Sterling and Donny Boulter, sons of Ebbie Boulter, professed. Donny had married a girl from New Brunswick who was brought up as a Roman Catholic. She was saved as well and is now in the fellowship. It should encourage us all to know that the Lord is still moving and guiding, even though we sometimes give up hope. "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days."

The Home Call of Brother Russell Harris

On February 13, 1980, about 9:15 a.m., the life of our dear brother Russell Harris came to a close here on earth, in his own home in River Hebert, N.S. With him at the time of his homecall were two sisters he had led to Christ in 1934: Mrs. Donald (Eva) Ramsay, and Mrs. Floyd (Janie) Cairns. His dear wife, Ruth, who had cared for him so faithfully over a number of years of extreme weakness, had left to fulfill an appointment with her doctor just a half hour before. A service was held in the Gospel Hall at River Hebert; the remains were then transferred to Crapaud, P.E.I., where burial took place in the Gospel Hall Cemetery after a service in the hall. The following lines were read at the service:

Dear Russell:

YOU CAME TO US when we were in our sins:
No invitation pressing you to come our way;
Our souls were dark, we did not know our need
And to the message that you brought, paid little heed.

YOU PREACHED TO US the word of God so clear,
With verse and chapter ringing in our ear;
Ephesians Two, verse Eight and Nine,
You quoted these so many, many times.
With hand upraised, you seemed to quote this scripture most;
“Salvation’s not of works, lest any man should boast.”
The good seed of the Word of God was sown in our hearts,
You made it plain — you took your time,
Each Friday night in the old school called “Lady Fane”
And in McCallum’s house on County Line.

YOU STAYED WITH US and sought to water with your prayers
The good seed of the Word of God that you had sown;
You visited from door to door, most every home,
Your feet were often weary as you walked through snow and mud;
You labored hard and brought good will where ere you went,
You laid the groundwork for the meetings in the tent,
Where many of us gathered here today were brought to Christ
And saved.

NOW YOU HAVE LEFT US for a little while — it can’t be long
Until we meet together in the air — and as you mount those
heights to Heaven’s throne — You will be there indeed
But not alone; for gathered with you, saved by Grace divine
Will be your sheaves of ripened harvest; thought sublime!
Which you and others gathered from the seed that you had sown,
While preaching in the schoolhouse back the County Line.

In April on the way to Iowa for the first joint conference of the Waterloo and Cedar Falls assemblies, I stopped to visit Mr. and Mrs. Albert Joyce in Toronto. At that time I had jotted down about forty pages in relation to the work here in P.E.I., with the thought that it might be an encouragement to dear brother Joyce. I had not decided to put it into book form at that point. But as he and his dear wife Naomi read it over, they encouraged me to keep at it and have it published. They also gave me a substantial gift toward it, which put me under obligation to finish the work. That accounts for the publication of this present work. Others volunteered to help and many encouraged me to keep at this for the sake of preserving the record for those who would be coming along, if the Lord tarries.

Summer Tent Work

A lot was secured for the tent in Sherbrook district near Summerside. Arnold Gratton and I joined in meetings there for seven and a

half weeks. The Lord came in and saved a good number of souls. Many strangers heard the Gospel. A big wind storm in the fourth week made it necessary to lower the tent to avert a disaster. About a dozen brethren gathered in the middle of the night, coming from as far as thirty miles to help in the work. The rain and wind combined made it extremely difficult. Everyone was soaked through, but no one complained. I had seen three other tents wrecked in similar storms in August and have learned, when putting up a tent to secure it well with two rows of stakes and good guy ropes to the long poles.

The first of July, Noel Burden had the mobile hall moved to Sturgeon, near Montague, where he and some local brethren carried on Gospel meetings and saw a number of souls saved. They followed up the work well into the winter and still have exercise in that area.

On August 19th our dear brother Foster Herlihy was suddenly taken from us when his tractor overturned, pinning him beneath it. Foster was saved when an evangelist had meetings in the denomination in which he was an elder. He was awakened in those meetings and while driving his tractor the next day he saw the truth that Christ had died for him. He realized the finished work of Christ on the cross was enough to put his sins away. Later as he read his Bible he could see that the Lord not only had one way of salvation for sinners, but that He also had only one way for saints to worship. If they would be obedient to His word they must forsake all organized systems of men and gather alone to the Name of the One Who died for them. Matt. 18:20 is very clear: "Where two or three are gathered together *in My Name*, there AM I in the midst of them." Accordingly, he came into fellowship in the little assembly at Springfield and soon gained the confidence of the brethren. They recognized in him a spirituality of rare quality, and wisdom that commended him not only to the Christians, but to unsaved friends and neighbors as well. He was the means of seeing his neighbor, Mr. Douglas Morrison, led to Christ. We feel that, in the homecall of dear Foster, the Island assemblies lost one of their most outstanding brethren.

In the month of September another of the first work of grace at Gambles Corner was called from us, Mrs. Donald Ramsay, nee Eva Ramsay, sister of the writer. Her homecall was a great loss to the Charlottetown assembly. She was an outstanding example of godly hospitality. Through the years strangers from many parts of the world were entertained by Eva and her husband, Donald. They bore the burden in the hard days of small numbers and smaller income. Their reward is sure.

A Baptism in Egmont Bay

This being a totally French Roman Catholic district, a baptism was a very outstanding event. A father, mother and two daughters

wanted to be baptized in their own home district. There was no opposition as some stood to witness an event that was so unusual for that area. I trust others will be reached in that place.

This work of grace started when a man by the name of Tony Gallant with whom the Lord had been dealing for some time, was saved in his own home while listening to a Gospel broadcast. He said to his wife, "I am a new man and have something that no one else on this Island has." She thought something had snapped in his mind as he kept talking about it and she did see a change in him. He spoke to different ones and when speaking with his brother, who had been to a Gospel meeting a few years before and knew a believer in Summerside who talked the same language, he said to Tony: "You should go and see Harold Croken; he talks just like you." Tony got the address and looked him up. Sure enough, he had the same thing. Now he knew there were two of them on the Island. Brother Croken took him to Freetown and there, to his amazement, he met about thirty more. He couldn't get over it. That year brother Albert Hull and Murray McCandless had Gospel meetings in Freetown, and Tony's wife was saved. The day they were baptized his sister and her husband came to see them obey the Lord and heard the Gospel for the first time. Later the brother Archie Arsenault, would be saved while at his work and his wife and two daughters would be reached in the tent meetings in Sherbrook. Two sons, teenagers, have also professed.

This year, as it ended, we recount the many mercies of our God in saving souls; but we look with sorrow to three empty seats. Those who filled them are sorely missed: Dear Russell Harris, Foster Herlihy, and Eva Ramsay.

1981

After returning in February where we had been in Gospel meetings with brother Jim Smith in Hartford, Connecticut, I joined Floyd Stewart for meetings in Amherst, N.S. It was the first time we had been together in a Gospel series. This work in Amherst was in need of help, as they had purchased a new building and much work had been done around the town but there was no testimony. These Gospel meetings were held with a view to starting the assembly there, and the Lord came in and worked in salvation, even before the meetings began. This was a great encouragement to all those who had spent much time and effort over the years with children's meetings and visiting and Gospel meetings in and around the town. Now it would seem the time had arrived to plant the assembly, and on the 5th of April the Christians sat down to remember the Lord for the first time in Amherst. Some of the young converts were sitting in the back. They would later be baptized and brought into the fellowship.

Tent Work in Bunbury

In July, brother Jim Smith of Connecticut joined me for Gospel meetings in the tent at Bunbury, near Charlottetown. This was to prove a time of joy and blessing in the salvation of precious souls. Robert McIlwaine's daughter, Anne, and her husband, Gerald Cutcliffe, were reached and saved at this time. Some who had been troubled in the meetings in Dartmouth, N.S., came over and were saved here. "One sows and another reaps." One outstanding case should be mentioned. A girl of 17 years came from Hinds Creek, Alberta, to take a course at the University of P.E.I. Some time before she had asked the Lord to guide her life. A choice was given to her to go to Australia or to Prince Edward Island. She chose the latter. Two sisters from Nova Scotia, Lee Hanson and Mary Potter, were also taking a course at the University and had posted a notice of the tent meetings on the bulletin board. This girl, whose name was Rhonda, read the notice and asked if she could go with them. She had never heard the Gospel before but in her second night at the meetings she was saved. Many times she had written since going back to Alberta, telling of her progress in the things of the Lord. So God can bring them from the far-off places to hear the story of salvation while others who have listened to it all their lives never receive it. Our own granddaughter, as well as my sister Janie's granddaughter, professed. A young woman from the States was saved. She came from a broken home and had lived for a year in our home and later with the Melvin Buchanan family until she was adopted by a family in the States. She came to a few meetings while here for a visit during the summer, and God saved her. Later in the fall we were to see Anne (McIlwaine) Cutcliffe and her husband, Gerald, baptized and received into fellowship in Charlottetown. There are others of the Christians' children who were saved at different times, whose names have not been mentioned. They are just as important to the Lord but this record does not lend itself to mention when and where each was saved. How thankful to God we should be for the salvation of so many young men and women who seem exercised to please God.

I spent several weeks in Newfoundland attending the Labrador conference, as well as the one at Parsons Pond, and I had the pleasure of having my wife, Marjorie, along with me for her first visit to Labrador. We spent a few days with Bert Joyce and his family in Red Bay, driving our own car to the end of the road which terminates there in Red Bay.

On our return, I joined brother Paul Kember in Gospel meetings in the Stark Road, Detroit, assembly where brother Alex Joyce and his family live and are in fellowship. Having an interest in Alex's family, I had hoped that his unsaved son would be home for the meetings, but the Lord did not order it that way. After the meetings ended, I rode with Alex and his wife to Toronto, where we visited with his father,

a visit which would be my last with him. His condition was such that I was hopeful the Lord would soon call him home. His mind was quite clear, but he could not communicate with us. I talked about the days when he was with us on P.E.I. He would follow along and try to mention some details that I had left out, but he was unable to speak. We said goodbye, never to see each other again until we meet in His presence in our new bodies.

1982

Now I have come to the current year of this writing, and thus must draw it to a close. I have tried to record things that I trust will be appreciated by those who are conversant with the work here on Prince Edward Island. If the Lord should tarry, maybe some will rise up and read this report long after I have gone home to heaven, and will be thankful for the mention of names and places that, though unimportant to the present generation, will enable them to trace the workings of the Lord in grace from seed that was sown in those beginning years.

One of the dearest links with those early days was severed this year by the homecall of our dear brother Albert Joyce, who was called into the Lord's presence on January 16th. It was his personal request for me to share his funeral service with brother Arnold Gratton. The service was held on January 20th, 1982, in the Eglinton Gospel Hall, Toronto. Brother Harold Paisley opened with a hymn and prayer, followed by a few remarks, and brother Oswald MacLeod closed with a tribute to the memory of a fellow-laborer and faithful servant. Brother Norman Crawford and Mr. MacLeod shared in the short service at the graveside, while a number of the Lord's servants acted as pallbearers. Thus we laid to rest the body of our dear brother and father in the faith.

As I stood at the graveside of this man of God, my mind raced back over the years that had so quickly sped by. I thought of the days before the Gospel had come to P.E.I.: — of three men whose deep exercise for the Gospel and concern for the perishing had brought them to our shores with the blessed Gospel light; of that unforgettable day when the message reached my heart. God, in His sovereign grace, had used a three-fold cord to draw us to His blessed Son: Mr. Herb Harris, Mr. Russell Harris and Mr. Albert Joyce. Now, each of them was gone, called home by the Lord they loved so ardently and served so faithfully. I found myself looking forward to that day when the redeemed are gathered home and we are reunited around the throne. How many voices will be raised to fill heaven with the praises of the Lamb! Some of those redeemed ones will be from a little island in the Atlantic called P.E.I. How thankful I was that I would be among that vast assemblage above! How grateful I was to God that the lives of these three dear men had crossed my path! My sense of loss at their homecall blended with a deep heart-wish to finish my course with joy

and a longing that God would raise up other men, like these three, to carry the Gospel to the lost and plant assemblies for the sake of the Name. The bright future described in Daniel 12:3 is promised for all who will, as these men did, pour out their lives in loving service to the "best of Masters."

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

