



**The House Belongs  
To The Government**

First Edition-RC3

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Thank you H.Y. and G.G.

Gooderham and Worts Genealogy web site: <http://gooderham-worts.ca/>

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# **A Family's Story**

G. Kent Gooderham

March 1927 – October 2003

For Helen Rae  
October 1929–April 2013

## **Abundance**

At seventy  
constant tears  
of joy  
are  
an embarrassment



## FORWARD

---

Gooderham and Worts—whiskey, banking and real-estate, it's a story known to many Canadians and celebrated at Toronto's Historic Distillery District. Nearly three decades ago my father Kent embarked on improving his own family's account with a poet's heart and an anthropologist's exacting dedication. Kent's focus centers on our Ezekiel Gooderham roots, the less famous of the two Gooderham brothers who departed from England and arrived at York, Upper Canada in the summer of 1832.

Our Ezekiel story is that of the unassuming country mouse who visits the proud city cousins with fantastic stories and experiences from a life on the frontier west. Cowboys and Indians on the one hand and high society, finance, industry and urban development on the other.

Kent's great<sup>3</sup> grandfather Ezekiel was William Gooderham's younger brother and overseer of the original farms that fed the great windmills at York their grist. Ezekiel and his country sons would keep contact with the downtown Gooderhams for several generations but as time wore on, connections were lost. Kent rekindled many of these links writing this book.

The Ezekiel's contributed to Canadian history with three generations of life long service to our First Nations peoples. Kent passed away suddenly in the fall of 2003, leaving this epic historical family saga unfinished. The surviving drafts of 'This House Belongs to the Government' were largely complete as far as the research and story segments were concerned. However, Kent was still sorting through all the information looking for a cohesive and poetic voice to carry across the work.

Kent started writing the book with pen and paper shortly after he retired

from Indian Affairs in 1980. He graduated to a second hand PC, with a black screen and glowing yellow text, that he received from colleague David Kogawa, as a gift of encouragement. A few years later he was goaded into upgrading to a Macintosh by his wife Helen, who could no longer stand his screams of frustration. Living a busy life in Ottawa-Kingston during the summers and Vancouver during the winters meant that he had to learn to carry the book around digitally. This entailed bringing the Mac with him and lots of tech support from family and friends. He was heading back to Vancouver for the winter when he died.

A powerful dream poem opens the book, setting the stage for a dramatic recollection of his grandfather John's passing. Events are retold from different perspectives across at least four generations and that Kent originally presented in a very eclectic order.

A family story, filled with generations of men named George, personal anecdotes, cultural references, backwards and forwards through time and all mixed together with quotes and poems– things can get confusing.

I personally struggled with how to complete this work for many years. The original manuscript is massive in its details and rambles through time like old friends getting together for a long weekend at the lake. Visitors would enjoy the camaraderie, laughter and tears but have no understanding what was being said in the fullest sense.

The version in your hands juggles his original dreamy, non-linear story line of events and impressions in a way that hopefully helps the reader access the valuable genealogy while striving to reveal some of the rhythm, love and passion still buried in the artistry of Kent's prose.

The story has been presented sequentially after setting the stage with the passing of John Gooderham at his home, a house that belonged to the

Government.

In subsequent chapters the reader is introduced to the family roots in England and earlier, to Kent's grandparents, John and Maggie and his parents George Hamilton and Mary Anna whose story this truly is. Kent reveals encounters, voices and memories of other individuals and details with bursts of poetry. These poetic echos of his familiar stories offer dreamlike experiences to reveal new perspectives and ideas. All poetry is Kent's with the exception of pages 184 and 223 which were written by Duncan Campbell Scott and page 137 which is attributed to Chief Crowfoot.

Finally, George H. and his son, Kent, struggle with the plight of Canada's indigenous peoples and ask what it all really meant. Was all that was accomplished enough? Could we have done better with our challenges? Would Ezekiel have been proud of his progeny?

The rich stories about Mary's Kentner family have been moved to a new work to be titled 'The Innocent'. Helen Rae, Kent's wife was also hard at work on her Crawford-Kilpatrick Family and that will hopefully come to light as well.

I have strived to bring my father's work to a wider audience as he had hoped for. I accompanied him on numerous visits, interviews and library searches and read endless edits. If the changes and choices I have made fail to do reach Kent's goal, that is my fault, not his, as are any errors and omissions you might find. The reader is welcome to carry this story forward with their own additions and family tales.

-George Creasor Kentner Gooderham, 17 January 2015.

## Blackfoot New Year

Music

Blackfoot music

Drumming on my childhood

Burning in

My bones

Pulsing

Pulsing

Far-Away-Cutter

Riding gravel-road-home in Spring night

Gal - up Gal - up Gal - up

Singing

Away ghosts

Outside my window

Faint awakening

Hi Hi Hi    Hi Hi    Hi Hi    Hi

                    Into my dreams

O Hi              O Hi Hi              Yi Yi    Yi

Safe Safe

Safe Safe

Safe    Safe    Safe

Fading

Gal    Gal

up    up

O    O

hi    hi

Leaving my emptiness awake

With no

Guardian

In the dark

Of the summer night tent  
 By The River  
 Blackfoot men  
 Haycamp-gambling  
 Prairie miles away  
 Hi Hi Hi      Yi Hi Yi Hi      Yi  
 Thum Thum thum Thum thum Thum thum  
 Safe sleep  
 Safe dream  
 By  
 New Years  
 Everyone  
 To dance  
 And all night listen  
 As men drum the year  
 Into  
 Blackfoot rhythm  
 Blackfoot dreaming  
 Black foot Black foot  
 Black foot  
 Black foot  
 Unprotected  
 Now  
 Blackfoot music  
 In my body  
 Sings  
 Lone ly lone ly  
 lone ly.



**Mountain Chief of Piegan Blackfeet making phonographic record at Smithsonian.**

February 9, 1916, The interviewer is ethnologist Frances Densmore.

# THE HOUSE BELONGS TO THE GOVERNMENT

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Note: the following typographic conventions—**Section**, CHAPTER, Poem, Location/Event

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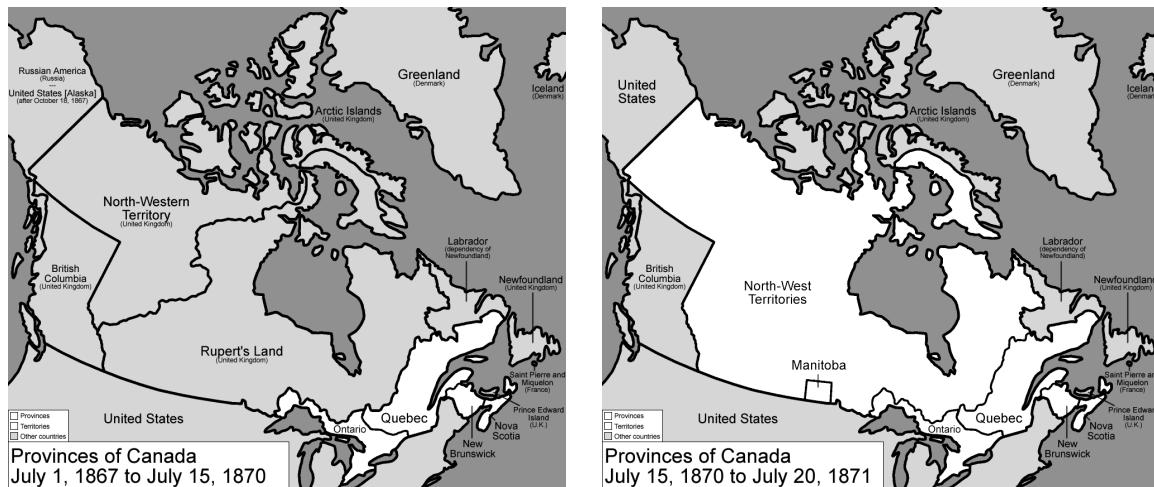
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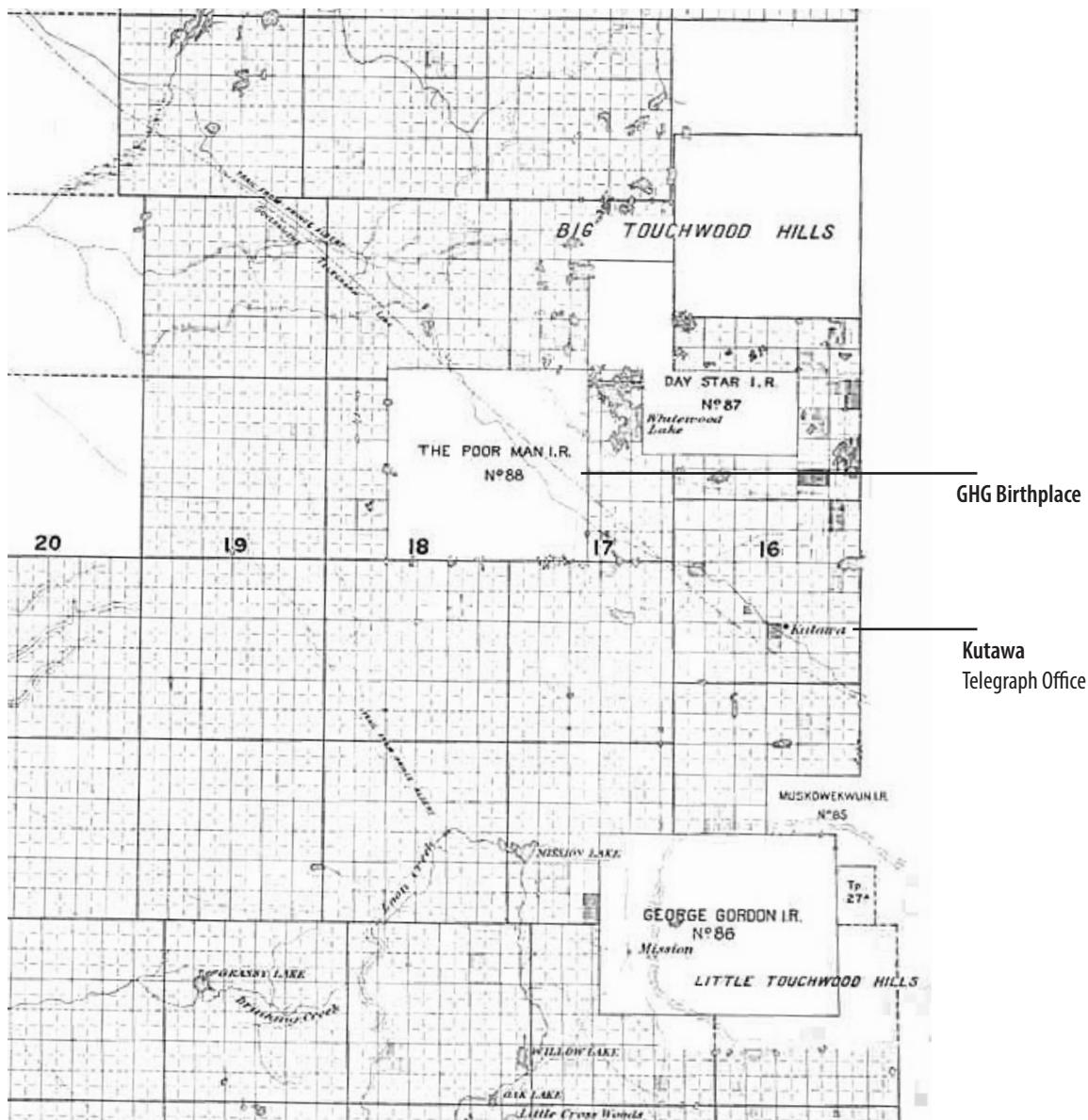


**1**-Portage La Prairie, end of the railway for John Gooderham's journey west. He had to travel by Red River Cart the remaining 355 miles (\* marks Muddy York and the start of the journey.)

**2**-Touchwood Hills Reserves

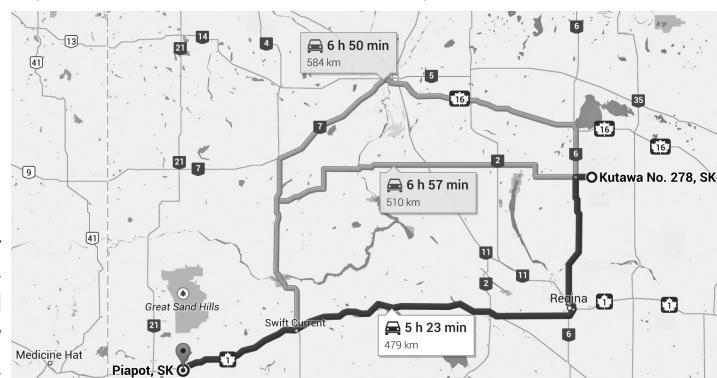
**3**-Little Bighorn battleground (Montana)

**4**-Blackfoot Reserve, Gleichen



#### Touchwood Hills Survey, West of Second Meridian—14 March 1896

John Gooderham arrived in the area in 1879 as a Rationeer fulfilling Treaty obligations after primary food resource Buffalo are driven to near extinction. Roaming Sioux hiding from U.S. soldiers after the route at Little Big Horn River to the south and tensions with Riel and the Metis kept settlers on edge. Surveyed squared lots would become the source of many conflicts. By 1905 the grids in top left would be surveyed far to the west and the coast to coast railway finished.

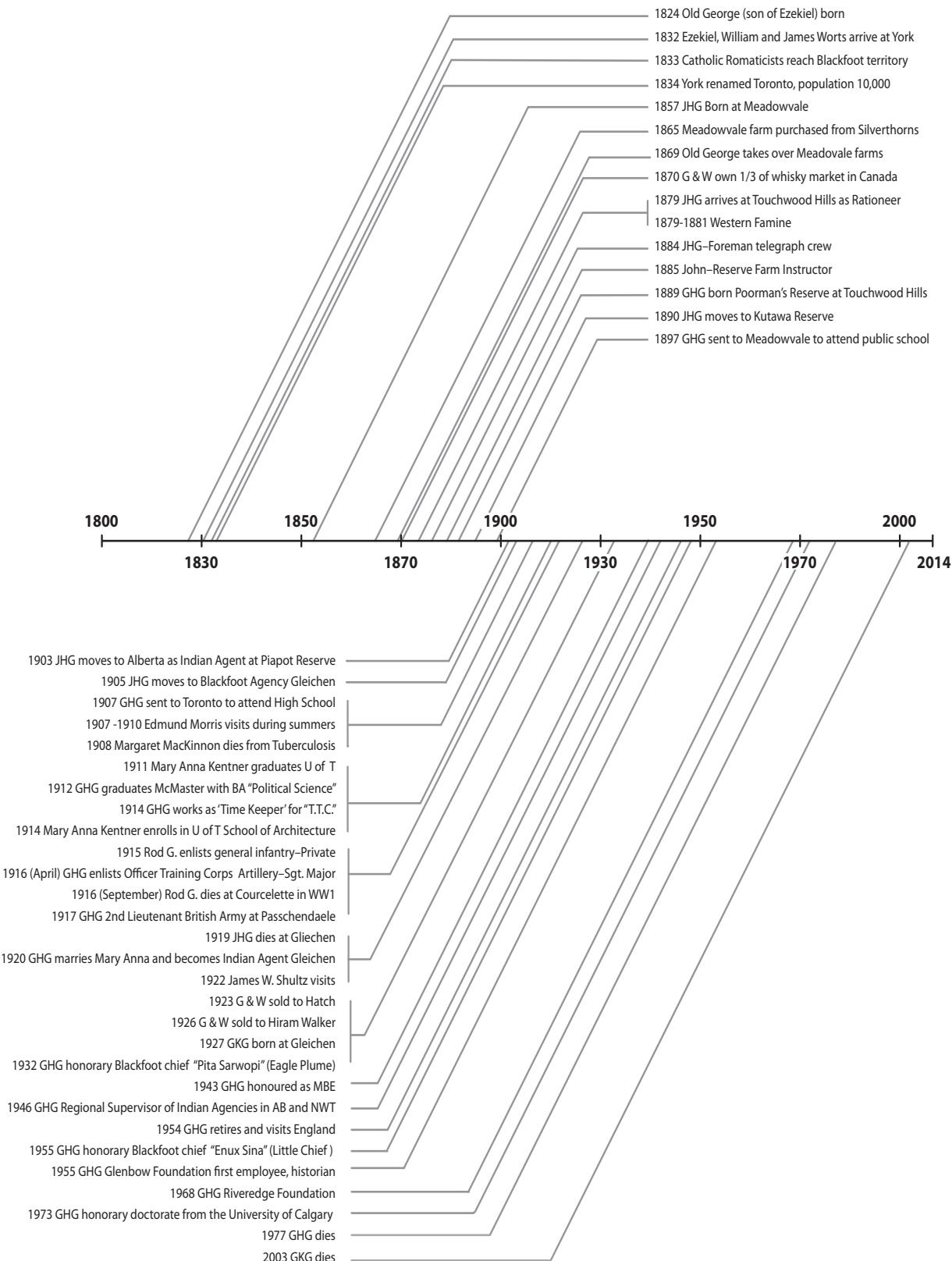


#### Google map directions Kutawa-Piapot, 2014

A major journey for John's family in 1892, who travelled by buckboard over a pretty rough trail for days and forded the Qu'Appelle River, is today, only a few hours with multiple scenic route options.

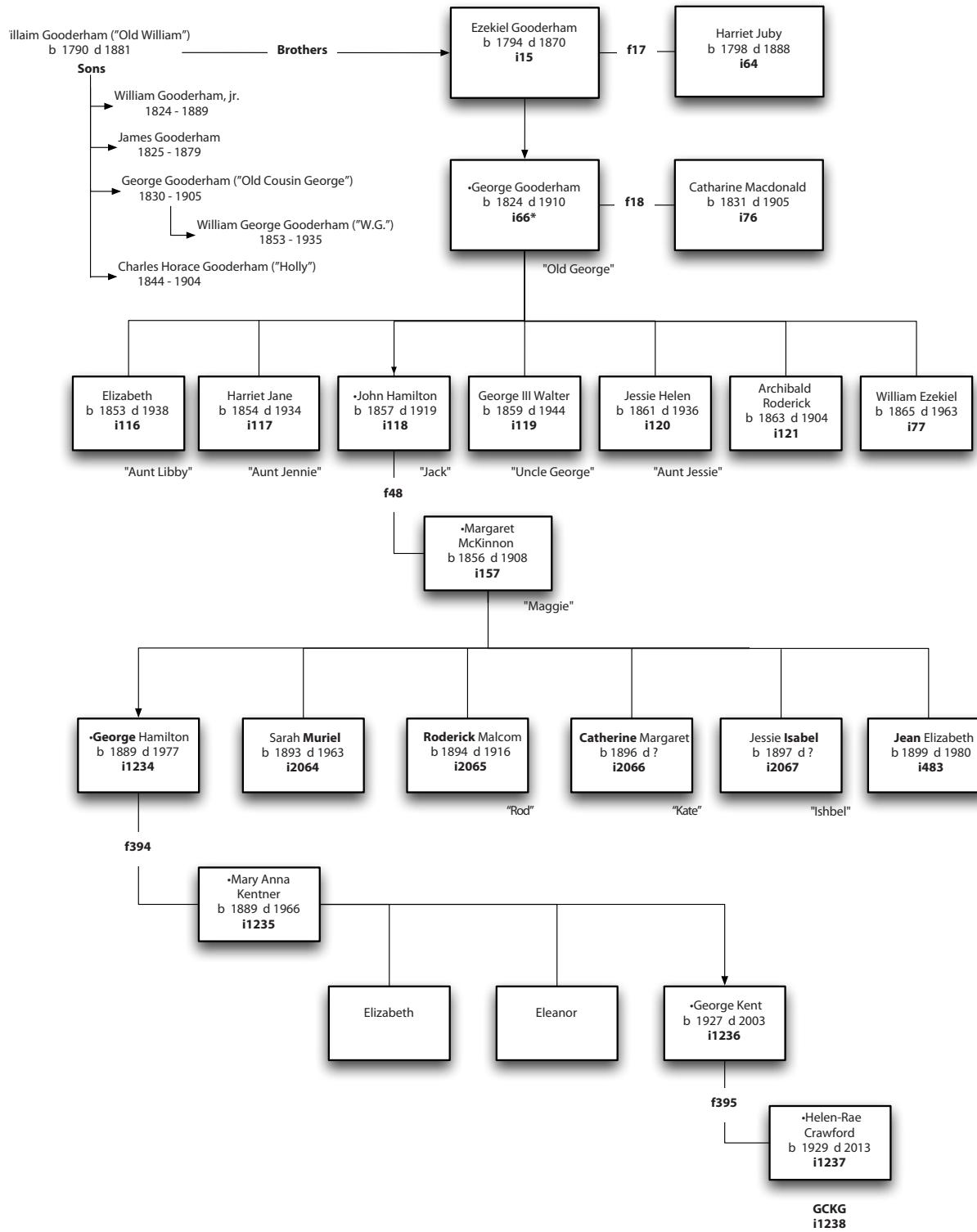
## Timeline

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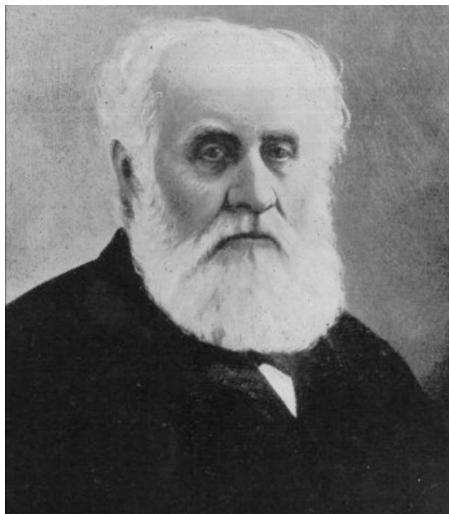


# Genealogy

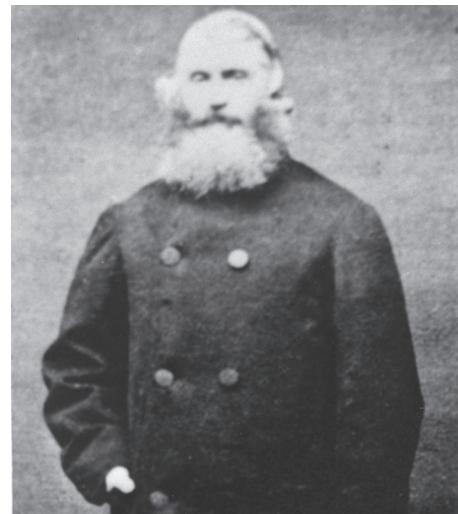
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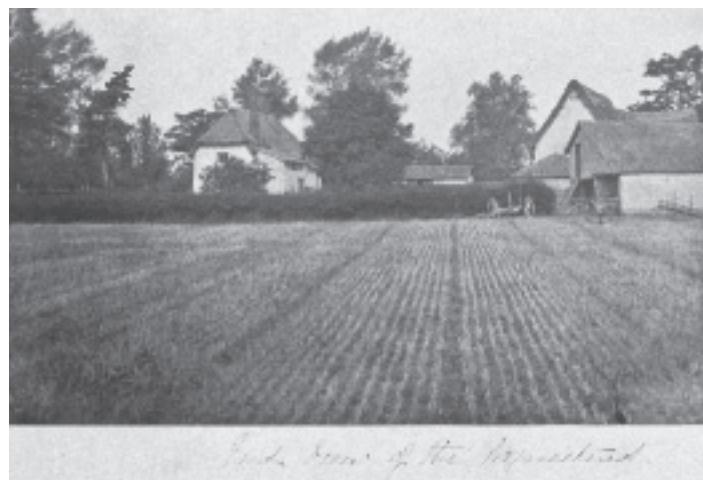
Gooderham and Worts Genealogy Web site: <http://www.gooderham-worts.ca/>  
 \* i### = individual record number, f### = family record number



**William Goodeham—1790-1881**  
“Old William”



**Reverend Ezekiel Goodeham—1794-1870**



**Gooderham Homestead**  
Scole, Norfolk, England 1790



**Gooderham & Worts**  
York, Upper Canada 1832

**York Mills Baptist Church—ca 1950**  
Hoggs Hollow-York Mills west of Yonge St. Toronto



*Rev. Ezekiel Gooderham  
York Mills Baptist Church.*

**Reverend Ezekiel Gooderham**  
(Father of Old George)

**George Gooderham (Old George) and Catherine MacDonald**

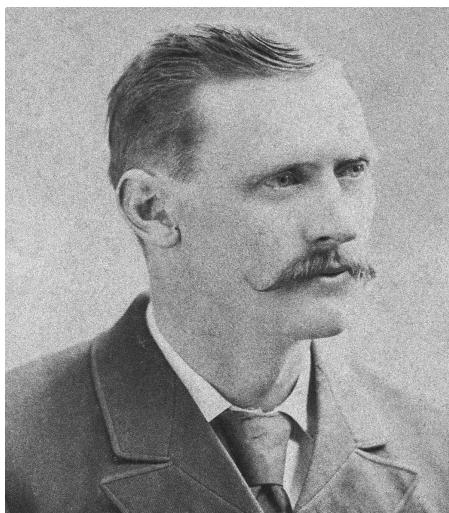




**George Gooderham 1824-1910**  
Old George (son of Ezekiel)



**Catherine Macdonald 1831-1905**  
(wife of Old George)



**John Hamilton Gooderham 1857-1919**  
Jack (son of Old George)



**Margaret Mackinnon 1856-1905**  
Maggie (wife of John)



Preparing for the Sun Dance Ceremony circa 1889



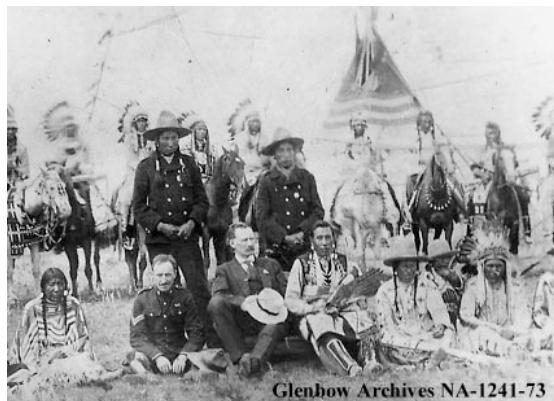
J. H. Gooderham



Repairing a thresher



J. H. Gooderham and Cree at Touchwood Hills circa 1880.  
Farm instructor John Gooderham teaching modern harvesting techniques.



Glenbow Archives NA-1241-73

J. H. Gooderham and Blackfoot. 1912

Blackfoot reserve during the inspection of a contingent of Blackfoot who were to attend the Winnipeg exhibition.

In centre front, left to right are: Sergeant McLeod, in charge of the Gleichen detachment; John H. Gooderham, Indian Agent; Yellow Horse, head chief; Mrs. Quick Chief, The Sugar; and Spring Chief in headress.



**George Hamilton Goodeham 1898**  
At school in Meadowvale, north of the town of York.



**Mary Anna Kentner 1898**  
Living in town of Norval, near Meadowvale



**Goodeham Mill at Meadowvale**



**The Goodeham Windmill**  
York, Upper Canada

**GOODERHAM & WORTS**  
HAVE FOR SALE,  
By the Car Load or in Quantities to Suit Purchasers,  
**ALCOHOL FOR DOMESTIC LIQUORS** - - - - - 85 O.P.  
**BRINE SPIRITS** - - - - - 20 O.P.  
**OLD RYE, TODDY AND MALT, DOMESTIC,** 32 & 38 O.P.  
Also, Indian Corn, Whole or Cracked, Oats and Winter-made Malt.  
**WANTED,**  
Rye, Oats and Barley delivered at the Steam Mills Distillery, for  
which the Highest Market Price will be Paid.  
**GOODERHAM & WORTS.**

Toronto, November 18



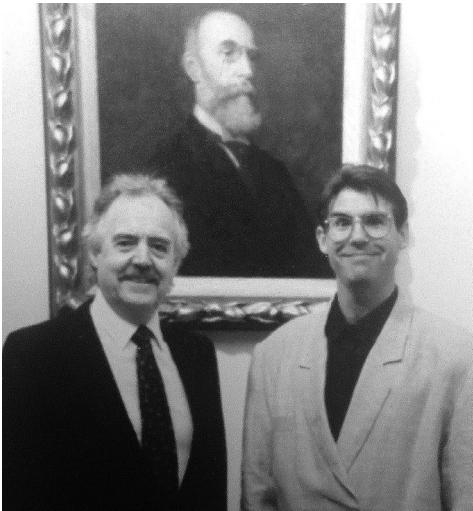
**Meadowvale train station**



**Lt. George Hamilton Goodeham 1917**  
Kingston Military School—Artillery



**Mary Anna Kentner 1918**  
University of Toronto - School of Architecture



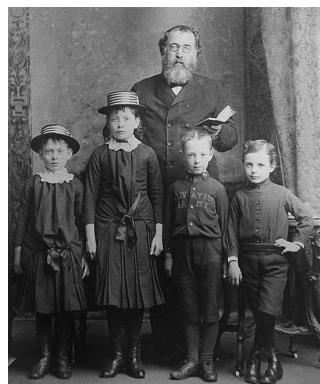
**Book plate of G.H.G.**  
The Snake Tipi design is a Goodeham tradition.

**Portrait of George Goodeham Sr. (at R.C.Y.C.)**  
Third son of Old William  
G. Kent Goodeham and son George—1994



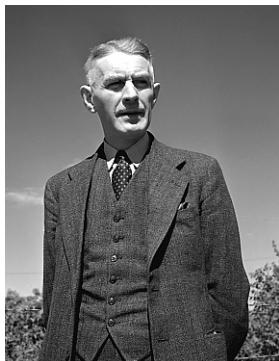
**James Goodeham**  
Second son of Old William

**William Goodeham Jr.** Eldest son of Old William with  
children working in support of the Salvation Army.





**Mary Anna Gooderham (Kentner)**  
On horseback in front of the Agency House.



**George Hamilton Gooderham**  
Known as Enux Sina (Little Chief)  
to the Blackfoot, a title he  
inherited from his father John.



**The Government owned house on the Blackfoot Reserve**  
Affectionately known as "Idlewild" since John and Margaret.



**George Hamilton Gooderham and family 1928**  
Mary and George holding Kent, Elizabeth and Elenore.



**Kent, Elizabeth and Elenore**  
Posing for a picture on the Agency front porch.



**George H. Gooderham, Indian Agent and Duck Chief, chief of the Blackfoot, Alberta.**  
Ceremony in Sun Dance lodge to make the agent a member of the All Brave Dogs Society.



**Duck Chief, head chief of the Blackfoot from 1920 to 1948.**  
Proudly posing with portrait of the King of England

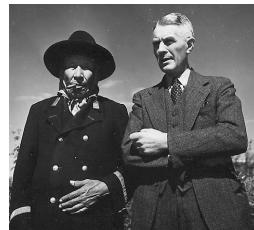


Glenbow Archives NA-4002-4

**Royal Visit to Calgary**  
May 1939



**The Royal Couple at Calgary Exhibiton Grounds**  
October 1951



**Duck Chief with G.H.G.**



**Photographer getting the shot of the Royal Couple with G. H. Gooderham**  
October 1951

**Crowfoot—Edmund Morris, 1909**

Painter Edmund Morris also arranged financing of the party that did the excavations and collections of dinosaur bones at Drumheller.

**Calfchild was indicative of Blackfoot culture**

With a proud warrior history they commanded respect and always dressed to impress.

**Wolf Collar, Blackfoot and Reverend F. M. Ross Gibney.**

On the Blackfoot reserve, Gleichen, Alberta., 1926

**Chief Calfchild—Blackfoot**

Photograph by Edward Sheriff Curtis, 1926

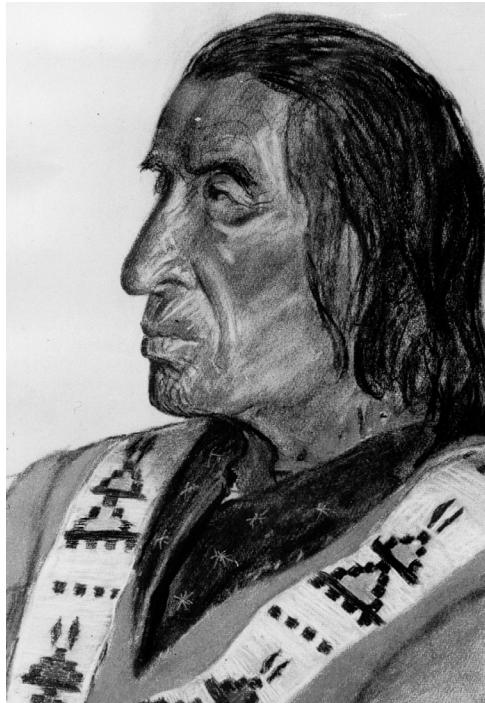
**Blackfoot Coal Miners 1931-46**

At its peak the mine employed 250.



**Pillor Fox by Edward Curtis—Photographer**

The photographer was undoubtedly intrigued by the cutbanks of the Bow River, which passes through the Reserve. Such a picture might be duplicated in Hollywood, but I doubt if it would be correct to the last detail, as this is.

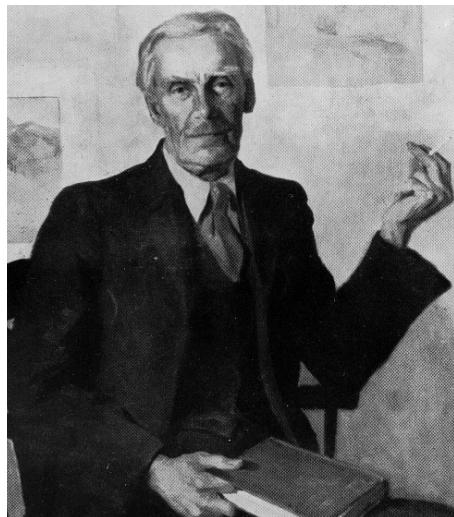


**Raw Eater by Kathleen Shackletons—Painter**

When the subject of this painting came to the Agency office where Kathleen did all her work, arrangements were made for him to sit—at a price. He also consulted early Blackfoot history to Edward Curtis for a fee of a dollar an hour. Curtis always referred to him as "Eat 'em Alive". When stripped to a breech cloth, as he did in the summer and went about to eat his mid-day meal of meat, bannock and tea, he looked the part of "Eat 'em Alive". On this occasion he was wearing an ordinary shirt, and Kathleen didn't think it was the proper garb for the painting, and asked if he might put on a beautiful coloured Indian coat from the Gooderham's collection.



**James Willard Shultz with General Hugh Lenore Scott, U.S. Army,**



**Charles W. Jefferys—Illustrator**

Charles W. Jefferys  
May '45  
Ga-re-wa-ga-yon  
Turtle Clan, of the Mohawks.



**The Sun Dance**  
For Strength and Visions -1908  
Edward Curtis—Photographer



**Tom Turned-Up-Nose— N. de Grandmaison Painter**  
During WWII de Grandmaison had a bad accident on the Trans Canada highway near Crowfoot. A Russian passenger was killed, but Grandmaison escaped with no physical injury, although hospitalized in Bassano for some time. In the interim the R.C.M.P. recovered paintings and what-not from the car, and held them at the detachment at the Blackfoot Agency until his recovery.

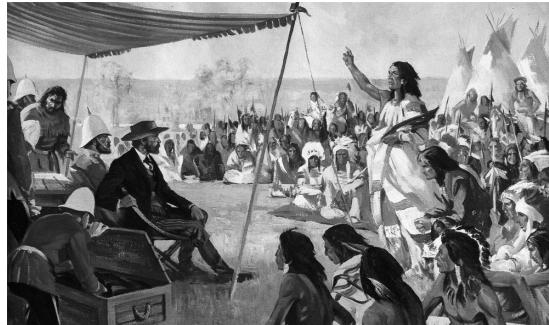


**Dr. Duncan Campbell Scott with George Hamilton Gooderham—1927**  
Historical Sites Monument erected that year marks the signing of Treaty 7 in 1877. It stands about 100 yards from the site of Crowfoot's last Lodge on the east bank of the Bow River. The Treaty was signed at the Blackfoot Crossing in the flats on the west side of the river.

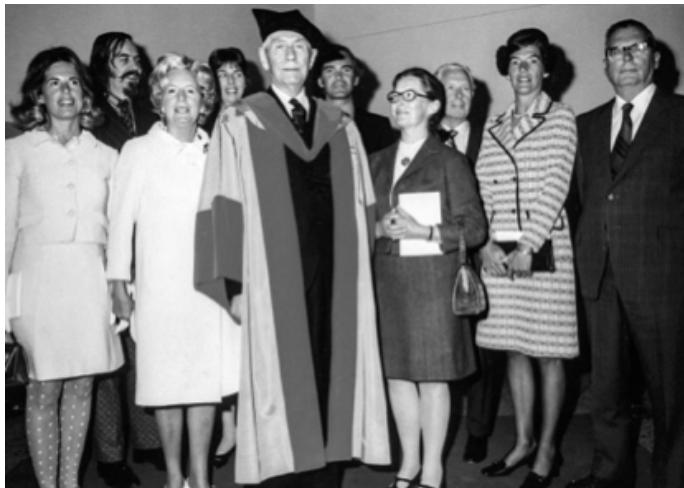


**Historian Frederick Niven looking at the Indian Calendar which Many Guns, a Blackfoot elder, is explaining.**

**Crowfoot Speaks to Laird and Macleod—  
A.B. Stapleton  
Blackfoot Chief**  
Crowfoot Signed Treaty # 7 allowing the CPR passage through Alberta to British Columbia and led to Canada's Confederation.



The Indian next to Niven is Paul Fox, the best Police Scout and guide after Jerry Potts. He started to work for the Mounted Police in 1900 at Pincher Creek, and was a scout on and off for 45 years. He died in 1960 at the age of 84.



**George Hamilton Goodeham Honorary Dr. University of Calgary 1972**

L-R Patty Morgenstern, Kent, Ev Goodeham, Helen, Norbert Morgenstern,  
Elizabeth, Ron Goodeham, Elenore and Jack Crawford.



**G.H.G. Honorary Chief Eagle Plume**  
23 April 1962.



**George Hamilton Goodeham 1931**  
Chief Eagle Plume



**Honorary chieftainship ceremony for George H. Goodeham, Blackfoot reserve 1931**

L-R: Pilar Fox, Chief Paul [Cree from Hobbema], Paul Little Walker, George Goodeham, Duck Chief [head chief of Blackfoot], Tom Turned Up Nose, Lyndon Many Bears, Heavy Shield, White Headed Chief.



**George and Mary Goodeham May 1954**  
In London England celebrating retirement.



**First staff conference Glenbow Foundation, Banff AB 29 April 1958**

W. J. Allan, W. G. Campbell, D. R. King, J. L. West, M. M. Merrill, Dr. L. H. Thomas, Bruce Peel, J. G. McGregor, P. H. Godsell, Dr. John Laurie, P. S. Drummond, Hugh A. Dempsey, R. N. Harvey, George L. Crawford, **George H. Gooderham**, Mrs. E. Valters, C. P. Wilson, Dr. E. L. Harvie, Dr. J. D. Leechman, W. L. Jacobson, Eric D. McGreer, T. R. McCloy, J. G. Cathcart, Doug W. Light, T. R. Petty, W. E. Baker, H. W. Meech, Mrs. G. L. Crawford, Mrs. H. W. Meech, Mrs. D. R. B. McArthur, D. R. B. McArthur, Dr. O. S. Longman, J. D. Herbert, Mrs. E. L. Harvie, D. S. Harvie, Mrs. C. P. Wilson, Una Maclean, Eleanor Luxton, A. Russell, Mrs. W. G. Campbell, Mrs. E. P. Ediger, Sheilaugh S. Jameson, Mrs. W. G. H. Robinson, W. G. H. Robinson, Mrs. M. H. Chown.

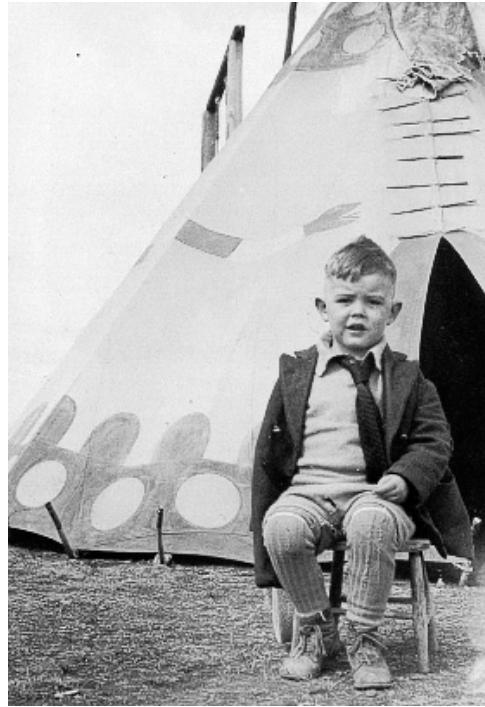


**Dr. George Hamilton Gooderham MBE,**  
**Enux Sina—Honourary Chief Eagle Plume of the Blackfoot,**  
Artillery Captain. — 1917-1918  
Indian Agent on the Blackfoot (Siksika) reserve. — 1920-1945  
Member, Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. — 1943  
Regional Supervisor of Indian Agencies. — 1946- 1954  
Assistant to president Glenbow Foundation. — 1955-1968  
Historian Riveredge Foundation. — 1968-1976





Kent Gooderham with family Tipi—1928



**Kent Gooderham with family Tipi—1931**  
The Snake design and geometric base band would appear in his own family signs and markings all through his life.



**Kent Gooderham.**  
Signing the last adhesion to Treaty 6,  
Rocky Mountain House, Alberta— May 13, 1950.



Blackfoot Indians are extraordinary horsemen



**Kent Gooderham 1927–2003**

# **The End Of The Beginning**

December 13th, 1919



## THE FUNERAL

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**Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1919**

It was a big, elegant, five bedroom house on the Blackfoot Reserve at Gleichen, Alberta. There were dark back stairs and mysterious passageways. There was also a sacred room—the den. In Grandfather John's day it was the Agency office, his sanctuary—off limits to children and maids. It was the house where he raised his children: Muriel, Rod, Kate, Ishbel and Jean and also my father George Hamilton, the eldest, who spent most of his youth in Ontario. It was the house where John's wife Margaret died of tuberculosis. And it was a house filled with visitors: sometimes relatives, but also artists, scientists, authors or historians. John's brother 'George' Walter came and stayed for years.

John's sister Jessie, who visited for a year or two, said he had a nervous temperament (as did many Gooderhams in her opinion) and needed more quiet. Coming from a more tranquil life in Meadowvale, Ontario where the family ran the Gooderham and Worts farm, Jessie was shocked by the number of people who came in and out of the house on the Blackfoot reserve and the demands made upon John at any time of the day or night. She thought it was too much for him.

*"But he has that big family to worry about."*

The night none of them would ever forget—Ishbel, my father George his uncle George, and John were entertaining in the living room, celebrating the end of World War I. My father had come back safely and was visiting the family in Gleichen before 'settling down' in Toronto. Dinner was finished and the family had moved from the dining room to the living room. They were joined by two of Ishbel's suitors.

Jessie loved to play the piano and one of the young men, who had been in Scotland during the war, was doing the Highland fling. They watched the dancer and sang along. They were having a great time, realizing how good it was to be back together and how lucky they all were, particularly when they thought of Rod who had died at the Somme in the battle of Courcelette.

John, who had a great baritone, arrived periodically from the den across the hall to put the group back in tune. Uncle George (Walter), owner of a marvelous bass, sang his part with gusto. So much so that the young visitors sometimes lost the tenor tune, especially when George who had more enthusiasm than talent, made his one note contribution.

It was when John had left the room that Ishbel and her visitors heard a frightening thump in the hall. John had come down the steps from the den to the front hall and collapsed. George rushed to catch him and carried his father back to a couch in the den. John wasn't breathing. He had no pulse. George was beside himself. Ishbel called the doctor on the telephone. But all he could do when he arrived from town, half a mile away, was to confirm that John was dead. It was December 10, 1919. He was 60 years old.

Following the custom of the day, funerals were held in the home where the body lay in the 'parlor' looking exactly as it had at the moment of death.

*"They didn't doctor people up in those days*

said Ishbel later.

*"It was a pretty grizzly affair.*

The Gleichen Call had quite a bit to say about this untimely death:

The announcement of the death of John Hamilton Gooderham at his home at the Blackfoot Agency about 8 o'clock last Wednesday evening...

could hardly be realized as the word was communicated about town.

That afternoon he had been walking about town laughing and talking in his usual cheerful manner with his friends - and he could count all he met as his friend.

The funeral took place at 2 o'clock Saturday afternoon, Dec. 13, under the auspices of the local Masonic order. After the remains had been removed to the hearse the lid was lifted while a large number of Indians formed a procession to pay their last respects.

The procession, led by an escort of RCM Police, was the largest ever witnessed in Gleichen.

The Call described John's contribution to western history. No better biography of the late Mr. Gooderham could be supplied than that appearing in *The History of Alberta* written by Archibald Oswald MacRae PhD, Principal of Western Canada College:

The career of John Hamilton Gooderham of Gleichen has been associated with the Northwest Provinces for more than thirty years and in service to the general interests of this country few men have been more useful.

The Call gave John credit for bridging the gap that sometimes existed between the government and the Indian tribes in Saskatchewan and Alberta and

for advancing the domain of civilization over the region. Few citizens of Alberta have lived a more varied life.

John Hamilton Gooderham was just 20 years old in May of 1879 when he arrived in Winnipeg, the Canadian outpost of Western Settlement. His journey from Scarborough, Ontario started with a train ride to Owen Sound, a transfer to a whip that took him across the Great Lakes to Duluth, Minnesota. There, another train went as far north as the Red River where a stern-wheeler took passengers north the rest of the trip to Winnipeg

where John stayed for a month or two selling goods for Kilgour Bros. of Toronto. But his journey was far from over.

He was appointed assistant farm instructor to Indian tribes in the Touchwood Hills, 350 miles farther into the wilderness west of Winnipeg. Headquarters were on the old North Trail which ran from Winnipeg to Battleford and on to Edmonton. Five years later, in 1884, the Canadian government, concerned about a possible insurrection, appointed John foreman of a construction crew that was building a telegraph line from Humbolt to Prince Albert. It was completed in 1885, only one year later. When the rebellion broke out, John was entrusted to visit neighboring tribes to persuade them to remain loyal to the Queen. John was 26.

The Call outlined John's long career from Touchwood to the Piapot reserve, back to Touchwood as Indian Agency clerk, until 1903 when he became Indian Agent to the Peigans near MacLeod, Alberta and finally, in 1907, as Agent for the Blackfoot tribe at Gleichen at the age of 48.

On the night her father died Ishbel had to organize everything. He had to be 'laid out' in the living room where people could come to see him. And his sisters and brother in Ontario had to be contacted. And then it occurred to her and everyone else in the family that their comfortable house belonged to the government and went with the job of Indian Agent. Now that John was gone the house they had always thought of as theirs was theirs no more. What would they do? How soon would they have to leave?

John's family weren't the only ones asking such questions. After the funeral the Blackfoot Band Council and neighbours all reached the same conclusion: John's son George should take over the job as Agent for the Blackfoot reserve in southern Alberta, fifty-seven miles east of Calgary. Many letters and telegrams were sent, including one from the Blackfoot Band Council, to Duncan Campbell Scott, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, asking him to appoint the son of their old friend John Gooderham

to the position of Agent.

Despite being his father's son, George was not an obvious candidate for the job. He had been raised in Ontario with his grandparents, lived in Toronto at the time of his father's death and was merely visiting the family in Gleichen. But in many ways the timing was right. It was 1919. He had a commission in the army, a university degree and though he was selling real estate at the time, it wasn't his true calling.

The appointment process was very unorthodox and many local people objected. There were employees who thought they should have the job. There were influential neighbors who thought they had the right to decide who got the job.

But an early decision was needed and George was appointed acting Agent, an appointment confirmed early in 1920. The family would not have to move from their home for the time being and George had a job. He did not expect to stay long in Gleichen, but it was a start and he could now consider getting married. He was 30 years old and anxious to tell his fiancée, Mary Kentner, in Toronto, that they could now afford to get married even though it would be in 'the wild west,' rather than in Toronto as planned.

So John's den, his sanctuary, became that of his son. And it stayed his room even after Mary Kentner, George's bride, arrived and changed almost everything else in the house.

George admits it didn't start out all that easy for him.

*"I had no experience with such work. Nevertheless I journeyed to Regina for my interview with the Commissioner. This was the second week of January and while I was there the Commissioner received a wire to say that one of the stockmen on the reserve had lost his life while gathering cattle on the range. This was a serious loss because*

*winter conditions had set in early in October before the cattle had been brought together for winter protection and feeding. There was not enough feed stored for stock. The appointment of an agent was urgent. Someone must get things organized.*

George couldn't help but wonder how an inexperienced young man could get the job that many better qualified people would love to land. George mused that his army background had helped. He had just come back from Europe where he had fought in the Imperial (British) Army. The government was grateful to veterans and gave them preference. The Blackfoot loved and honoured warriors, particularly victorious ones, and they admired George's father. George also realized that although Superintendent Duncan Campbell Scott was 'the boss' of Indian Affairs he was also a very good friend of the Gooderhams. George thanked his lucky stars.

He later wrote,

*"1920 was an extremely busy year. The Blackfoot had 8,000 acres under cultivation and an additional 8,000 acres in crop on a new experiment in large-scale farming called the Greater Production Farms.*

The winter of 1919/20 was one of the worst and longest in western Canadian history but George and his staff not only got feed for the Blackfoot cattle herds but for the Blood and Stony reserves as well.

## Ishbel Remembers The Funeral

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It was the worst day of my life.  
Just the night before  
right here  
in this room  
I was playing the piano there.

We all were singing.  
Papa too.

And Andrew showing us the  
Highland Fling  
he'd learned while fighting for his country  
in Scotland.

All the fun came crashing down  
when Papa crumpled in the hall  
with no warning.

George caught him  
And knew.

Papa had this funny purple mark on his temple.  
George just fell to pieces.

I had to phone  
Doctor Rose in town.  
'Too late'  
He said when he came

What were we to do?

Back then the funeral was always at home.

We had to move the table in  
to lay Papa  
here

And phone Jean and Kay and Muriel and everyone And  
the funeral

Where would all the people sit?

What if there was only standing room?

Hundreds came  
And Kay fainted twice  
She wasn't even here  
when it happened.

Muriel couldn't come  
Her baby named for Papa  
had pneumonia

It was cold with snow  
above your boots.

the house the porch and yard were filled.

People standing.  
everywhere.

Whites and Indians  
all mixed up.

The Whitespuritan in  
Black

The Blackfoot peacock in  
White buckskin  
The Mounties all in Red  
I thought every Blackfoot man  
was there  
And women too  
with their hair  
all unbraided and wild  
Some chiefs wore the real Blackfoot head dress  
feathers standing up  
not flopping all around  
like the Sioux.

People even came from Peigan and Macleod  
No Cree George said  
They hated Blackfoot  
long  
before they learned to love Papa.

George took control of things and saved us all.

He said

we didn't have to go  
to the interment.

All the others did.

We could hear the Blackfoot women wailing  
even after the procession  
had gone round the last corner of the road  
where the railway tracks

end the reserve

going      north    to

the cemetery

I still don't know

what caused

that purple

mark

on

Papa's temple.

## **Distilling Gooderhams**

866 East Anglia to 1860 Upper Canada



## COMING TO CANADA

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### York, Upper Canada 1832

When the Gooderham and Worts distillery story began the business was called “Worts and Gooderham” and was concerned only with milling grain. The change in name and purpose came later.

Three families emigrated together. William Gooderham (Old William), his brother Ezekiel, their sister Elizabeth, her husband James Worts and their families. James Worts and his son departed first with instructions to send the ‘*all clear*’ for the others to make the journey as well.

It was particularly William’s story. A born adventurer he was the inspiration, energy and imagination behind the uprooting of all three families and moving to a new and uncertain world. There was considerable motivation for a man of ambition - and William certainly had that!

William had paid off the mortgage on the family farm and was living there as a country gentleman, but he was no farmer. The depression at the end of the Napoleonic wars saw the value of his holdings shrink almost to disappearance. Something must be done. He wasn’t afraid to tackle something new. He’d been away from home before and travel did not frighten him. He was able to persuade his favourite brother, Ezekiel and his brother-in-law, James Worts, there were other opportunities elsewhere.

The second son of Sarah and James Gooderham, William was born on the 29th of August 1790, on the farm his family had owned and operated since 1697 near the village of Scole in Norfolk County, England. The family had lived in the same Norfolk neighborhood for over 1,000 years. But William’s death came in Toronto, Ontario, Canada just before his ninety-first birthday.

**East Anglia 866**

In an earlier time when an infamous Gooderham planned on emigrating, he had in mind a move to England rather than from it. He was called Guthrum and his destination was East Anglia. One of the dreaded Danish Viking chieftains, his ships raided, plundered, burned and eventually captured all, or most of the Kingdom of East Anglia in 866. It was Viking ferocity which made it possible to conquer East Anglia. Killing was accepted and so was torture. Originally interested only in raiding, they noticed the richness of the land, and decided to stay. The conquered land was divided among his followers with Guthrum assuming the Kingship. According to Augustine Page's History of the County of Suffolk he died and was buried at the town of Hadleigh (Hidlega).

Guthrum (Guthrin or Gormo) and his followers were quarrelsome raiders, not governors, and a general lack of discipline among his men threatened his control of the Kingdom. To retain his position as 'King', Guthrum made a deal with the English barons and consented to become a Christian. He was granted East Anglia and Hadleigh became his capital. He apparently lived there another eleven years and was, they say, a sincere convert to Christianity. He was buried within the grounds of the present Church of Hadleigh which is just down the road from Scole, the 19th century home of the Gooderhams. By this time they called themselves Goodrum and spelled the name in the English manner - Gooderham. They farmed century after century, their warlike history fading even in memory.

**Scole, Norfolk, England 1831**

William and Guthrum had much in common. They were leaders. Neither of them appear to have been tall. Certainly William was well under six feet. He had a very sturdy build, a magnificent beard, piercing eyes and a prominent nose but his internal strength led everyone to see him as

bigger than life. Perhaps both of these men shared that attribute. Both men were in search of something new. Both founded a new kingdom in a new country- one by force and military skill, the other through cooperation and economic acumen.

It was clear that William would not be a farmer. He was only twelve when the family sent him off to London to join his uncle Rodwell's mercantile house which was engaged particularly in shipping boots and shoes to the East Indies. That career was short lived, however, as his uncle soon gave up the business and William was out of work at the age of twelve.

It was 1802 and England and France were engaged in the long and bloody Napoleonic war. William decided to try the army. He enlisted in the Royal York Rangers and was sent out to the West Indies to join the regiment that captured both Martinique and Guadeloupe. After that victory, he was retained in the Caribbean where he carried dispatches between the islands. He found the climate difficult and yellow fever was to put him into the marine hospital, close to death, in the Barbados for months.

Having survived many battles as well as the fever he embarked on the steam ship "Majestic of Whitby", only to have the ship catch fire and burn down to the water line. William escaped with his life and tried again, this time with a number of invalided soldiers. Eighty-four of his fellow passengers died during the voyage and were buried at sea. Not yet twenty one, William had escaped death once more.

He was considered fit for active duty in about six months and was sent to the Isle of Wight. A few months later it was suggested he return to the West Indies but William had enough and decided to make other plans. He got a job recruiting for the army. This was an entrepreneurial position and William made some money - quite a bit we are told. He returned to the family farm with a modest income and enough cash to pay off the

£800 sterling mortgage on the family farm. His father died soon after but William continued to run the farm. But not for long. It was time to move on.

He and his brother-in-law, James Worts, had earlier agreed that they would see what the colonies had to offer. Emigration from England was becoming very popular. In 1831 a book was published in London, England by William Catermole on the advantages of emigration to Canada. Catermole even made a speech in Ipswich, Suffolk.

*“Canada is considered, even by many otherwise well-informed persons, as a country covered with eternal snows, and scarcely fit for the habitation of a civilized being. Such is not the fact, and that in point of climate, soil, and capability for an advantageous settlement it is not exceeded, if equaled, by any country in the world.*

He went on to say that he expects many hundreds of people from Suffolk and Norfolk to settle in or around the town of York (Toronto) within the next two years. He also emphasized the fact millwrights are very much wanted. It just so happened that the Worts family had been involved in milling in Norfolk and Suffolk for many years and James was the proprietor of the Kirtley Mill in Bungay, Suffolk, just fifteen miles from the Gooderham farm.

James and his son James Jr. (James Gooderham Worts–J.G. Worts) were sent on ahead to see whether the prospects were as good as Catermole had claimed.

*‘Yes! Come!*

was the answer and William prepared to set sail with fifty-four people belonging to the Gooderham and Worts families. He also had £3,000 sterling to invest in the business. It was the largest sum ever placed in the

Bank of Upper Canada to the credit of any single emigrant.

James Worts and his thirteen year old son, J. G. Worts left England in 1831 for York, Upper Canada looking for a suitable site for the proposed windmill which would provide flour for all the settlers. James found an ideal spot where the Don river runs into Lake Ontario. It was to be the first windmill in York. The main shaft, millstones and castings were brought from England and taken to York from Montreal by James' son who had accompanied him to Montreal.

The two had sailed on a brig named "Sylvan" at the end of May 1831. and after 45 days reached Quebec City and then on to Montreal. Young J. G. Worts was to attend school while his father went to Upper Canada (Toronto) to scout the location. In October J. G. Worts received a letter from his father stating that a location had been found and that he was to hire a bateau and bring all their goods, personal effects and the necessary machinery for the construction of the mill.

Young James left Montreal with about ten tons of cargo. He had with him six voyageurs who, with the exception of being towed across Lakes St. Louis and St. Francis by a small steamer, made the whole journey by polling the bateau along the shore of the St. Lawrence. When rapids were reached, horses and oxen were hired to tow the bateau upstream. The group reached Prescott 14 days later. The goods were transferred to a steamer for the trip along Lake Ontario to York. Two days later father and son were able to embrace in 'muddy' York, a town of 2,000 people.

The times were dangerous. In 1832 when the Gooderham families set sail there was a new threat, cholera, on the horizon. The village of York received a report that Ezekiel, who appears to have been an advanced party of one, was on his way up to York from Quebec on May 30th. The prediction about the numbers of emigrants was right. There were thousands of people

leaving Britain for Canada. The transportation capabilities of this new country were strained to the utmost and the threat of cholera made matters worse.

On June 3rd 1832 a ship called “The Carrick” arrived from Ireland at Grosse Isle with only 103 of its original 145 passengers still alive. The rest had perished from cholera. There was no news from Old William and the remaining Gooderham/Worts family members who were also on the ocean somewhere. There was great concern. Cholera was spreading fast. Originating in India it was following the lines of travel, just as fast as the travellers. A further 56 of the Carrick passengers were to succumb after landing and within two weeks 1,000 people in Quebec suffered the same fate. The disease was in Kingston by June 20th, and in York four days later. Ezekiel did not reach York until July 5th by the steamer, “Great Britain”, from Prescott.

His arrival was a great relief to James Worts. First, Ezekiel was safe and second he had arrived with funds. Work on the mill had been progressing and receipts piling up. Perhaps a harbinger of things to come was an item which James had placed in his journal during construction of the mill.

*“Men consume a great deal of whiskey. Even good workmen seem to suffer from a fundamental failing with various degrees of seriousness. First a man might come to work partly drunk. A more serious case would be drunk half a day, worse yet sleepy drunk, or dead drunk. Drunk as David’s sow was the most serious state of inebriation.”*

There was no remedy suggested.

James was overjoyed to receive word two days later that ship “The Anne” had arrived in Quebec and that both Gooderham and Worts families were well. Old William had escaped another threat of death and this time his

associates were saved with him.

James' concern about the cholera scare led him, on June 30th, to add a recipe for the treatment of cholera. It was a mixture of charcoal, lard and maple sugar followed (should the patient survive) with spruce beer. One might also apply the lye of wood ashes to alleviate spasms. Fortunately for the inhabitants of York, whose habits we now understand, this procedure could be replaced by the ingestion of hot brandy. Later bean soup with very fat pork should be eaten and as for a drink - water in which live maple coals had been quenched was a very Canadian solution to this international problem.

This recipe may have had doubtful results but could not have been worse than a Montreal 'cure'. The people there, thinking prevention better than cure, attempted to scare the disease away by burning tar barrels and firing a cannon on one of the corners of Notre Dame St. Records indicate that this 'remedy' was not deemed successful until after 2,000 deaths had occurred.

But James had been busy preparing for the arrival in other ways as well. Housing was urgent. He was able to persuade one Rev. Dr. O'Grady to sell a parcel of land together with a residence on the north side of Kingston Road near the Don Bridge. At the time the main street in York was King Street which ran east and west, more or less in line with the bay, until it reached the eastern limits of the town - Berkeley St. Once you reached that point you were said to be on the road to Quebec or the Kingston Road. The mill site was just to the south along a path that was soon to become known as Windmill Lane. It was cleared and graded by the two partners so that farmers arriving in town on the Kingston Road would be able to deliver their load of grain to the mill by way of this new road.

Old William arrived at York that summer with his wife, their nine children and 21 other members of the two families, including Ezekiel's wife Harriet

(Juby) and family. They were all well. There were 13 servants or friends and an additional 11 small strangers in the party. They were the children of one family orphaned by the death of both parents on board the ship, probably of cholera. The Gooderhams had adopted them on board and added them to their party. The accommodation provided by James Worts was clearly in need of expansion. A second home was built which William later gifted to government trustees.

It was 1832, and there was also considerable political unrest in the land. William Lyon MacKenzie, a member of parliament, believed that the ruling party, the Family Compact, was corrupt and he was anxious to rid the country of ‘such as they.’ Mr. Mackenzie did, in fact, raise a rebellion five years later. But in 1832 the community was split between the two opposing sides and the sale of land to Worts and Gooderham by the parish priest, Father O’Grady, may have been facilitated by this political polarization and by the fact that the priest had a disagreement with his Bishop who had objected to O’Grady’s introduction of politics into his religious practices. The Bishop was very supportive of the Family Compact and the priest of Mackenzie and the Reformers.

Mackenzie used to meet friends and supporters in McIntosh’s Sun Tavern on the north west corner of Yonge and Queen just up the road from the mill where he would state in fiery terms just what should be done to right the wrongs of the current government. When he carried this style as well as the content into Parliament, he was accused of libel and later expelled by a vote of 24 to 15. At about the same time, and perhaps for similar reasons, Father O’Grady was ejected from the church and summoned to appear before the Pope to answer for his indiscretions. This was the lively little town of 3,969 people that the Gooderhams and the Worts were soon to call home.

Their new home now had a majestic windmill sitting on the eastern skyline. The harbour was busy. There were steamers running hourly from Toronto (as it was called after 1834) to and from Niagara, Oakville and Port Credit. By 1834 there were 10,000 people in the town. There were still stocks in the market square which might hold a townsman who used seditious language. There were public hangings. By 1842, at the corner of Kingston Road and Windmill Lane, a United Church of England and Ireland was built. Contributors included Old William Gooderham, Enoch Turner and William Cawthra, leading citizens of the day. The church still stands beside the Enoch Turner School House and is known as 'Little Trinity'.

With their success, the stage was set for industrial expansion and created an urgent need to assure supplies of grain, building materials, and the means to transport them easily to the mills. Old William and his sons and extended family prospered and began looking to expand their roles in the emerging economy. Old William provided the business acumen, James Worts, the engineering innovations and Ezekiel, the spiritual energy and cultivation of the land.

#### **Old William's son William Jr.—Meadowvale 1842**

Old William's eldest son William Jr. announced at the age of 18 that he would not join the distillery firm. There was ample opportunity for Old William's sons William Jr. and James to work for the company outside the distillery business. The perfect town was Meadowvale. There the Methodist Church held undisputed sway. The number of Anglicans, Baptists, Presbyterians or Catholics was never large enough for anyone of them to build a church.

G&W was expanding. Railways, which would change life in Canada forever, would soon replace the crude wagon trails and muddy roads. They would encourage the expansion of cities and diminish the prominence of small

towns. To own or control what was soon to become vital transportation links was very much in the Company's best interest.

G&W decided to add to their properties in Meadowvale with a mill, cooperage and large general store. Why not a state-of-the-art-farm? It might appeal to William Jr. and James had already agreed to manage the Gooderham store. William Jr. accepted responsibility for the farm with the full support of the company.

The Methodists chose Meadowvale early and held their first meeting in the early 1840s. It was still very much a pioneer frontier. Some young men and women came to the camp meeting only serious about having a good time. Many returned home untouched by any religious feeling, but some became Methodists for the rest of their lives. Other people came for commerce and set up booths, tents or stands to sell refreshments—often whiskey in spite of the admonition

*'woe to him who puteth the bottle to his neighbor's lips.'*

Most people stored liquor in their homes to be drunk by members of the family and their friends whenever they wished and was always prominent at any gathering. One farmer of the time proposed to raise his barn without providing any liquor to his neighbors. They accepted his invitation but, on the day of the raising, no one appeared and he was forced to raise it by himself with only the help of his oxen. Intemperance became so widespread and such a scourge that thoughtful men and women of the day were convinced they must do something to stop the further increase of the evil.

In 1844, a meeting was held in Meadowvale with nearly everyone signing the pledge. By 1849, a division of the Sons of Temperance had been organized and grew steadily until 1854 when there were 150 members. The steady advance of temperance was a genuine threat to the Company and a

conflict for William Jr. and James. Both sons were dedicated temperance advocates but equally strong family members. The family was able to carry on together perhaps because they all understood and sympathized with James and William Jr.. It was an amazing feat for the time. The elder Gooderhams were evangelical rather than high church Anglicans and this helped.

In Meadowvale, Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists used the same church on alternate weeks to expound, with great enthusiasm, their version of the Gospel. Both groups were apt to shout 'Amen' or 'Hallelujah' at any time. They stamped their feet and clapped their hands during sermons. An outsider might wonder just what was happening. It was not an ideal spot for G&W, the distillers, but it might be a good compromise for James and William Jr. The Company could carry on the distillery business elsewhere.

#### **Ezekiel and the York Mills Baptist Church, 1849**

A few years after arriving at York, Ezekiel and his wife Harriet settled north of the recently incorporated Toronto, and joined the York Mills Baptist Church. Ezekiel served as Deacon until 1849, when the Pastor, Reverend James Mitchell, passed away. The congregation urgently appealed to Ezekiel to become Pastor and he agreed to be ordained. Reverend Ezekiel Gooderham served as Pastor for 15 years, resigning only due to ill health. He passed away at home on Mill Street, Toronto on the 28th of December 1870 and was interred at the York Mills Baptist Church on the 31st. A son, Walter, and Ezekiel's wife Harriet are also buried there. At the 100th anniversary of the Church, in 1929, descendants of Harriet and Ezekiel were still attending the church. Ezekiel's great grandson, our George Hamilton and his cousin Ronald, visited the church in the early 1950's. They discovered that the Attorney General of Ontario had agreed that the

*"Church could be removed and the property disposed to advantage."*

Even the cemetery could be taken over and the bodies moved if seen to be obstructing development. Ron and George were shocked and appealed to the Secretary of the Baptist Church of Canada, who claimed it was not a true "Baptist Church". Apparently the ordinances that were prepared prior to construction included an unrecognised stipulation that there should be

*"two gallons of whisky at the raising.*

They couldn't save the church, however, the cemetery was deemed of historic pioneer value. Well hidden on the north side of York Mills Road, just east of Yonge Street, the cemetery continues to be maintained by the Baptist Union of Churches.

#### **Old William's son James combines church and commerce—1849**

James, Old William's second son, was born in Norfolk, England on December 29, 1820, and came to Canada with his parents at the age of twelve. James had a family trait that William Jr. lacked. He was a gifted businessman, but hoped to dedicate his life to the Methodist Church, not his father's distillery businesses. It was a worry for Old William who agreed religion was important but also believed success in business was a good Christian credential. Even as a child, the spiritual life was important to James, and he became totally dedicated to the Methodist Church. At fourteen, influenced by his sister and brother, James joined a Methodist class meeting.

By the time he was eighteen and employed as a clerk in a store in the village of Thornhill, his life had become more and more influenced by the Methodist Church. Some said it was 'the providence of God which took him to that town' and it was there he experienced the 'greatest event of his life' described for us by one of his teachers.

*"He was in the quiet of his own room entirely alone with God on a*

*Sabbath afternoon. All that morning overwhelmed with the terrible burden of sin, he had opened his grief to his teacher, telling him how utterly miserable he was...*

His teacher replied that it was a sign, a sign that he was blessed by God. His distress was evidence that the Lord, by revealing to him his real character as a ruined and lost sinner, was leading him to salvation.

*"And the result was the shining into James' heart of a light clearer than the noonday sun, filling his soul with ineffable joy. James was converted and passed from death unto life. Old things had passed away and all things had from that hour, become new.*

All this had an overwhelming effect on James. He knew he must become a minister of the Methodist church and he entered Victoria College to prepare himself. The Wesleyan Methodist Church ordained him in 1848 and he was appointed Junior preacher. In 1849, he met his future wife, Sarah Gibbs, whom he married on July 23 the following year. It was a double wedding—Sarah's sister, Mary, married the Reverend W. S. Blackstock. Both couples were fervent Wesleyan Methodists. Over the years the Blackstocks and the Gibbs were to become very closely intertwined with the Gooderhams.

It was not an easy life James was inviting Sarah to join. He must not only preach the gospel but visit from house to house, care for the poor, minister to the sick and dying, catechize the children and follow all the church's precise and practical rules: to be diligent, never unemployed, to be serious, to converse sparingly, to conduct himself prudently with women, to take no step toward marriage without first consulting the brethren, to believe evil of no one, to avoid all affectation, to sing no hymns of his own composing and to remember that he had nothing to do other than to save souls!

James conducted services throughout the Whitby and Markham circuits, going from community to community when asked. Methodist preachers covered immense distances on horseback and faced real dangers as they travelled from one remote community to another. His horse was James' friend and most precious possession. He rode through the country with a saddle bag containing his Bible, hymn book and a change of clothing. A long heavy scarf served as an overcoat during the day and a blanket at night. He was often offered only a shed in the community in which to sleep—no comforts or refinements. He might also have one more item, a surveyor's chain. As the country opened up, preachers were often asked to act as agents in the mapping and measuring of the land.

Early evangelical preachers such as James had remarkable powers of persuasion. James was said to have led 200 to 300 souls to express their faith in Christ and convert to the Methodist way. James was welcomed in all the remote communities where there were few diversions. The shouts, hymns, emotions and enthusiasm he was able to engender broke the monotony of pioneer life. He also brought with him news from the outside world. It did not matter to James or to William Jr. that the shouts of joy and jubilation so central to the Methodist way were looked down upon by most established and 'proper' families in cities and towns. It did offend some, including members of the Gooderham family.

But Sarah supported James totally in all his dedication, assuming he would be a preacher all his life and never be tempted by the growing riches of his family. It was not to be. James' successful career as a Methodist preacher was cut short through a throat infection. The one organ essential to a preacher was his voice. Today we might wonder if psychology played a role here, but it was no doubt interpreted as an Act of God at the time.

**Meadowvale—James joins with William Jr. 1850**

James left the ministry in 1850, and went into business with his father's company, first in partnership with William Jr. in the village of Norval. Later, in 1859, he moved to Meadowvale and in 1863 to Streetsville, becoming more and more involved in business.

James' store was touted as the largest general store in Ontario, far surpassing in variety and grandeur, the tiny venture on Yonge street to be opened in 1869 by a certain Mr. Timothy Eaton and known across Canada for over 100 years as the T. Eaton Company—Eaton's.

James' store had five clerks, nine tailors (four men and five women), as well as three dressmakers and three milliners. The place was a fashion centre for all of Peel County, which swarmed in on a Saturday by horse and buggy, and even on foot. They could buy almost anything from biscuits and cheese to lanterns and lamps, dress goods, dishes, cutlery and tobacco and matches. These last two items were absolutely taboo in the store owned by Timothy Eaton, another very strict Methodist. It is interesting that Eaton's store prospered and expanded well into the twentieth century without changing its no-tobacco policy.

But James still dedicated much of his time to hard work as a layman in a church which moved its ministers frequently and consequently relied on the congregation to look after most administrative tasks: recording steward, local preacher, Sunday School superintendent and in building several churches along the Credit river and in keeping them operating in the black.

By 1860 the Toronto Gooderhams were becoming more and more fashionable and James and Sarah shared this new recognition. In that year Old William replaced his original house and Sarah described the new house to her Oshawa relatives:

*“It is the most splendid I have ever seen with great spreading verandas, large gardens and a many-mirrored ballroom pale green and gold and so convenient, hot and cold water to be had any time day or night just by turning a tap and a fireplace in every room.*

During the 1860s and 1870s James became a major economic as well as religious force in the area. In 1863 he moved from Meadowvale to Streetsville where he managed the growing commercial businesses of G&W which included merchandising and milling as well as the linen mill. He lived there until 1877 and was reeve for eight years. He eventually retired to Toronto although he did retain his very large interests in Streetsville, was a director of the London and Ontario Loan Society and also vice president of the Dominion Telegraph Company. In Toronto he bought a big expensive house at Carlton and Sherbourne, just across the street from his brother William Jr.. James and Sarah decorated the house with great care expecting to spend their last years enjoying city life and the fruits of their labour.

James was also one of the first to advocate and promote the Credit Valley Railway which he believed would be of great benefit to that part of the country. It was this last venture which was to lead to his death!

On May 10, 1879, James and other prominent Toronto businessmen who supported the Credit Valley Railway travelled by special railway car to inspect the new railway at Streetsville. They left the Union Depot in Toronto, pulled by a Grand Trunk engine to the junction of the two railways, between Parkdale and Carlton, where a Credit Valley engine took over. James made a short speech pointing with pride to the rapid completion not only of the Streetsville branch but of the whole line. He was warmly congratulated on this success, not only by supporters but by those who had strongly opposed him at the outset.

The Toronto businessmen spent the afternoon in Streetsville making

speeches and promoting the railway. They returned to their railway car to wait for the Grand Trunk engine to take them back to the city. The engine came up the track at fifteen miles an hour or more. Suddenly the switchman opened the Credit Valley switch causing the speeding engine to smash into the sitting car. They all saw the train coming and jumped. Unfortunately, James fell against a pile of railway ties, breaking both legs and suffering fatal internal injuries. He was rushed to his home in Toronto which

*"he had left only hours earlier in the prime of his life and health.*

*"He bore up wonderfully under his pain and complained little.*

Drs. Wright, Aikins, Richardson and Ross consulted together and decided if he survived the shock till morning both legs would have to be amputated - the right at the knee and the left above the knee. He was given stimulants both orally and by injection, but unfortunately continued to sink. He was conscious almost until the last few moments and uttered prayers for his family particularly for his father.

*"This will be the death of my poor father.*

He rejoiced in the hope of a glorious inheritance beyond the tomb. He shook hands with the physicians and bid them farewell saying,

*"My sufferings will soon be over and it is glorious to know that I am on the Rock and that the Everlasting Arms are around me and beneath me, to bear me triumphantly into the Kingdom.*

Kissing his wife and mother goodbye he calmly breathed his last. Thus passed James Gooderham aged 53.

A Toronto newspaper of the day had this to say

Seldom has such a tribute of respect been paid to a private citizen as

that which was accorded to the memory of James Gooderham. It is doubted whether anyone in private life ever had in Toronto so large a procession to follow him to his last resting place. So many were there that the Metropolitan Church, the largest in the city, was not only filled but hundreds were unable to gain admission.

The local Streetsville paper thought it fitting to place the following admonition next to the obituary of this famous supporter of temperance.

#### RESPECTABLE DRINKING

As long as you make drinking respectable, drinking customs will prevail and the plough-share of death, drawn by terrible disaster, will go on turning up this whole continent, from end to end, with the long, deep, and awful furrow of drunkards' graves.

Oh how this rum fiend would like to go and hang up a skeleton in your beautiful home, so that when you opened the front door to go in, you would see it in the hall; and, when you sat at your table, you would see it hanging from the wall; and as you opened your bedroom door, you would find it upon your pillow; and waking at night, you would see its cold hand passing over your face and pinching at your heart.

There is no home so beautiful but it may be devastated by the awful curse.  
It throws its jargon into the sweetest harmony...

When Old William died, his daughter-in-law, Sarah, did not receive James' portion of the estate. It was argued that James had left her with more money than she could spend and that any additional funds would go directly to the Methodists. She was a strong supporter of many Methodist organizations and for many years was on the boards of the Girls' Home, Boys' Home, the Haven and the Young Women's Christian Association. She was deeply involved in the work of the Women's Missionary Society and was the first president. She travelled, at her own expense to Japan and western Canada

to find out how best to further the work of the Women's Missionary Society. She spent her last years at the 66 Glen Road, home of her daughter, Mrs. P. W. Ellis.

#### **Uncle William Jr. and the Salvation Army–1883**

William Jr. was a staunch supporter of the newly arrived Salvation Army at a time when it was notorious for its noisy parades and blaring bands. This disturbed and distressed many of the good city folk with whom the Gooderhams were struggling for recognition. Family members saw him, with some unease, marching up Yonge Street to the sound of brass bands bent on temperance and/or conversion. He regularly visited condemned men in their cells to comfort them on the last night before their execution. Family members, however, recognized his lifelong involvement with helping people. They knew he was much loved by rich and poor.

In 1883, when the town of Lindsay jailed the Salvation Army band because fights had broken out between the army and some Roman Catholics, William Jr. immediately commandeered a locomotive and drove it himself at top speed to Lindsay where he roused the magistrate at four in the morning, paid the band's bail and secured the band members' release.

In spite of his eccentric behaviour, which included importuning strangers in public places to proclaim the Word of God and embrace temperance, his generosity to religious organizations was greatly admired. He supported missionaries in India, the Canadian northwest and the South Sea Islands. In 1888, he gave \$25,000 to erect a Mission in China.

When Old William died in 1881, William Jr. received \$300,000 from the estate. The family claimed that this munificence was such a surprise, William Jr. fainted. At the time, he and his wife were living quietly and frugally on \$8,000 a year. Now they had an income of over \$30,000. They

gave the difference, as it came in, to the charities that were now occupying their time. Despite his poor head for business, he invested the \$300,000 well and even with his extensive philanthropy, left an estate of almost \$500,000.

On Sept. 12, 1889, William Jr. was due to speak at a haven for destitute men on Seaton Street as he did every Thursday. As he rose to speak his eyes suddenly closed and he slumped to the floor. When the doctor arrived he found him dead beside the pulpit.

When William Jr. died it was said more people came to his funeral than any other person in the history of Toronto, including his famous father Old William. There were so many carriages that the first arrived at the Gooderham family plot in the St. James Anglican cemetery before the last had left the Sherbourne St. Methodist church at Carlton Street. He was buried next to his father under the Gooderham monument guarded by its stone angel and next door to the other distiller, James Worts.

More than 150 carriages drove into the cemetery between lines of 2,000 men and women of the Salvation Army who came to honour their Number One benefactor. In 1886, four years after the Salvation Army had arrived in Canada and was struggling to survive, William Jr. had given the money to build their national headquarters in Toronto. His largesse was so generous that some, mistakenly, assumed he had started the Salvation Army himself. He never left the Methodist Church but his gifts were endless and in the Gooderham tradition most often given in secret.

The week following the funeral brought sensational news. He had left the bulk of his estate (worth millions in today's terms) to Victoria College in Cobourg, the ardently temperance-minded Methodist University. For years there had been controversy about whether Victoria College should move to Toronto and be part of the University of Toronto. William Jr.'s bequest ended the controversy and in 1891 Victoria College arrived in Toronto in

the great college building which still stands today at the northeast corner of Queen's Park.

In addition to the basic bequest he gave an additional \$75,000 as a permanent endowment. William Jr. also gave another \$150,000 to charities such as the Upper Canada Bible Society, the Young Men's and Women's Christian Associations, The Boys Home and Homes for Infants as well as the Toronto Home for Incurables.

So while his death was sudden, William Jr.'s legacy of service to others endured. He himself would have said

*"What a glorious death to die in harness."*



## MEADOWVALE FARM

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### Meadowvale, Upper Canada 1851-1867

It was 1851 and Gooderham and Worts (G&W) was expanding and establishing mills all along the Credit River valley from Hillsburgh in the north to Streetsville in the south. The mill was central to each location, but G&W were great entrepreneurs and chose sites with other businesses nearby—a farm, a cooperage, a general store. Ezekiel had by this time established his own farm at Wexford (now Scarborough) north-east of York.

The Company began by leasing a mill and store already operating in the village of Norval. At the same time Old William and James G. Worts purchased two large properties in Hillsburgh. In 1852, the Company built a mill and a cooperage in Hillsburgh.

The wood for the cooperage was supplied by an oak forest near the town of Ballinafad. This land was owned and being cleared for farming by former Americans, the Kentners, who had been in Upper Canada since 1803 and had moved from one part of Upper Canada to another, always improving their economic position. At that time, the Gooderhams and Kentners were unrelated but were to meet and have close business ties, and much later, even closer ties with the marriage of Mary Kentner and George Hamilton Gooderham at the turn of the century.

G&W continued their expansion and in 1861 purchased the C. W. Silverthorn mill in Meadowvale and two more mills in Streetsville. The Silverthorn mill had come upon hard times in 1848 when it burned to the ground. Not insured, Silverthorn borrowed money from the Bank of Upper Canada, owned primarily by the Gooderhams, and returned to prosperity. During the Crimean war prices doubled and business was booming. But

after the war the bubble burst and prices tumbled and Mr. Silverthorn found himself in financial trouble once again.

Concerned about the safety of their loan, the Bank of Upper Canada which still backed Silverthorn, sent partner and millwright James G. Worts to see what could be rescued. Worts was greatly impressed with the Meadowvale location and persuaded his cousin Charles Horace Gooderham (known best as Holly) to take over management the Silverthorn mill.

The earlier failure of the Silverthorn mill was not the only problem for the Bank of Upper Canada. Other failures had put the Bank in a precarious situation. Old William and other Toronto businessmen responded in 1855 by founding a bank that was to last far into the future—the Bank of Toronto, today operating as Toronto-Dominion Bank. The head office was located on the northwest corner of Church and Wellington in Toronto.

Much later when Old William's third son, Old Cousin George, was running G&W as well as the bank, he built the famous Gooderham Flatiron building just across the street from the bank. Old Cousin George was rumoured to have added an underground passageway from one building to the other so that he could go from one office to the other with ease and (perhaps) secrecy.

When Old William's son Holly took over the Silverthorn mill, he was already living in the neighborhood. G&W had recently sent him to Streetsville to operate a linen mill which the company had just acquired. In Streetsville the 18-year-old Holly met, fell in love with, and married a local girl, Eliza Folwell. The Streetsville job was good but this new opportunity in Meadowvale was too good to miss—and just down the road from his wife's home. The couple agreed to move. They expected it to be a lifelong commitment and built a very substantial house and garden on a portion of the G&W farm. It was the first and last mansion built in the village

and is the most prominent relic of ‘the good old days’ still standing today. (In 1998, Holly’s house became the centre piece for a new residential development on the outskirts of the village of Meadowvale—now an historic site).

Under the leadership of the young Holly, the large flour mill, and huge barrel and cooper factory flourished. In 1861, they converted the original flour mill into a flax mill and another, purchased in 1865, was kept as a grist mill. They made all their own barrels and supplied many thousands to other mills, as well as apple barrels, to the farmers and fruit buyers. All this was good business for the local farmers who sold their elm, oak and basswood to G&W. On a winter’s day the road was a constant jingle of sleigh bells and everyone heard the jingle of coins in their pocket. The company built houses for employees, Ezekiel’s son, Old George operated a model industrial farm and Old William’s son James built up a large general store. It was the beginning of the golden era for Meadowvale.

#### **Meadowvale, State-of-the-art-farming, 1865**

Locals assumed the oak barrels, produced by William Jr. at the cooperage, were taken back to Norval and then to the G&W distillery. But William Jr., who would rather go broke than be involved in the liquor business, devised a less direct route. The barrels were shipped either to the G&W mill in York or to the opposition, an Erin distiller. Perhaps farming would be more suitable.

In 1865, the firm purchased a large (500 acre) farm and William Jr., was given the responsibility of operating it. For three years he ran it as a sheep farm with between 400 and 500 sheep.

The farm was famous by 1865 when ‘The Canadian Farmer’ published this interested neighbour’s description:

Having just returned from a visit to the farm owned and occupied by Mr. Wm. Gooderham Jr. of the firm of Gooderham and Worts, I send you a brief account of his excellent system of sheep management and general farming.

The flock consists mainly of Cotswolds with a sprinkling of South Downs and numbers between four and five hundred. They are all of superior quality and in excellent condition - none of them with torn fleeces nor sickly or diseased. The yard and buildings are arranged to provide them with perfect shelter from storms. There are separate apartments for breeding ewes and for last year's lambs so as to prevent overcrowding. All the hay is cut with a machine worked by horsepower and capable of cutting ten tons a day. The barn is built on the side of a gentle hill with a roof which extends out both at the front and back, and which provides a covered shed along the entire length of both sides and with a cellar underneath for the storing of roots and the stabling of cattle.

Buildings which are twenty four feet wide and covered front, back and roof with rough planking, fill almost the entire yard and make it possible for sheep to feed under cover. A manger at the front into which feed can be placed extends their entire length. There are shutters front and back which are raised in fair weather giving ventilation but closed during a storm. The sheep have free movement without mixing divisions and easy access to water. All in all a most successful operation. Of the 160 lambs last Spring only three were lost.

For Spring pasturage Mr. Gooderham sows, in the previous Fall, a few acres of rye on which the sheep are allowed to feed, there being a movable fence made of tarred twine netting which is moved from day to day to prevent waste.

There is also stall feeding of livestock for market. His formula is to feed hay and roots for six weeks and oak cake (about 4 lbs. each day). He produces very fine beef.

All operations are conducted with thoroughness and good management.

It may be said that Mr. Gooderham is able to farm in this superior manner because he has superior means at his command but nevertheless the farm does show an example which could be emulated.

No expense had been spared in setting it up, but William was not cut out to be a farmer either and alternate employment was needed and found.

#### **Old George takes over the Meadowvale farm, 1869**

Despite William Jr.'s departure G&W wished to keep the farm as a showplace. Old William asked his favourite nephew, Old George, if he would like to manage the farm and he accepted. Old George, Ezekiel's son, farmed with his father in Wexford. Ezekiel had decided against joining the family milling business to pursue his two passions – farming and the Baptist religion.

Old George did not have his father's passion for religion and preferred his uncle, Old William's, lifestyle to that of his father. He happily joined his cousins in the thriving village of Meadowvale and the farm was saved. He did an excellent job until the farm was sold in 1880. Old George took half the farm which he was still operating when his grandson, George, arrived from the west in 1897. Eventually, all three of Old William's sons William Jr., James and Holly moved to Toronto and left Meadowvale to Old George.

#### **Holly and Eliza, Meadowvale, 1880**

Holly and Eliza were 'respectable' Methodists, supported the church, donated the organ, and acted in a charitable way, but they did not have the reputation for religious fervor of Holly's two older brothers William Jr. and James.

Holly enjoyed managing the Meadowvale mill for many years. The 'good life' included hunting and shooting. One of Holly's constant hunting

companions was his cousin Ezekiel's son, Old George, who came out to Meadowvale from his Wexford (now Scarborough) farm in 1869 to manage the G&W farm when William Jr. returned to the city. Old George could get very excited about the sport. On one occasion when he was somewhat isolated from the rest of the hunters the hounds scared up a rabbit which ran right across his path. He took aim, fired, and missed. The rabbit, confused by the dogs, ran straight toward his human enemy. Old George, forgetting for a moment it was a gun he was holding, swung the muzzle at the fleeing rabbit. He failed again. The hunting party never let him forget the incident. But Old George enjoyed the joke as much as anyone and would, on occasion speculate, out loud, whether this or that rabbit owed its existence to the great hunter who had spared its ancestor.

In Meadowvale and the surrounding area G&W was king of the hill until the 1880s when businesses started drifting into the cities. G&W moved almost everything to Toronto spelling the end to an era. Old George would miss his hunting partner Holly when, in 1880, the young Gooderham family closed up the big house and moved to Toronto leaving Old George and his family as the only Gooderhams in town.

## CONFEDERATION, THE RAILWAY AND BUFFALO HUNTERS

### Ottawa and Confederation 1867-1879

Sir John A Macdonald's conservative government was defeated in 1864 (about the time the Gooderham Meadowvale farms were beginning to prosper) and George Brown offered him the opportunity to form a coalition government under the leadership of Sir Etienne Tache. Within three years Canada's confederation would emerge.

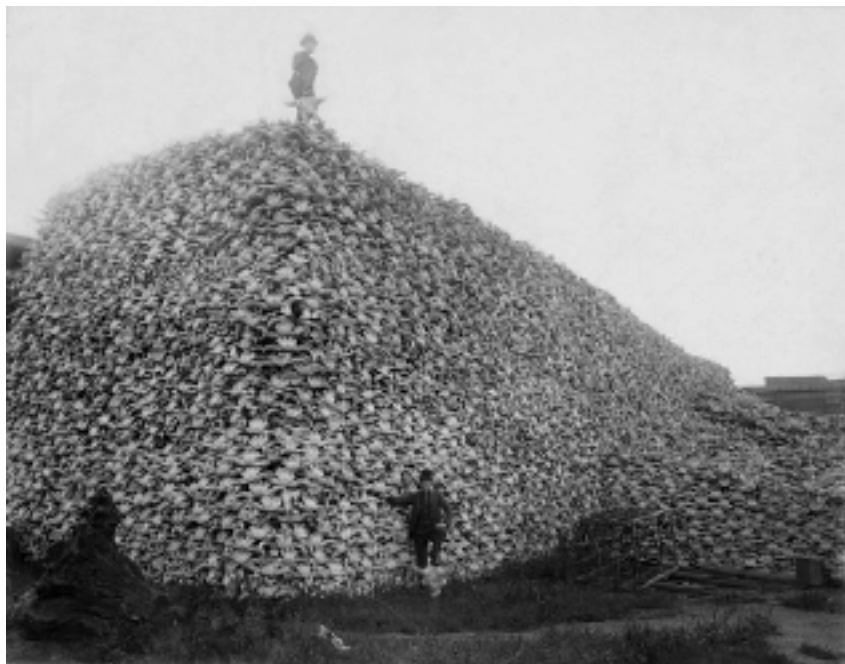
Meanwhile south of the border the American Civil War raged and American federalism was becoming well established. The British Colonies in North America saw a huge army preparing to roll into Canada and the Maritimes. Fear of a 'Manifest Destiny' that the United States would take over all of North America created a sense of urgency to strengthen the nascent confederation signed in 1867.

### Trans-Canada Railway–1880

Canadian Pacific Rail was awarded the right to connect British Columbia to the east via rail and were given 10 years to complete it. By November 1885 the last spike of the railway was driven at Cragellachie.

The proposed route crossed Blackfoot First Nation lands. Missionary priest, Albert Lacombe, persuaded the Blackfoot chief Crowfoot that construction of the railway was inevitable and Crowfoot was awarded a lifetime pass to ride the C.P.R. in appreciation of his cooperation.

The trouble this situation caused with the Cree, Metis and Blackfoot would set the stage for John Gooderham's adult life.



Heap of Buffalo Sculls

#### The Buffalo Hunt -1860-1890

American railroads had been advertising excursions for “hunting by rail”. Hundreds of men aboard the trains, climbed to the roofs, and took aim, or fired from their windows, leaving countless 1,500-pound animals where they died. One hunter, Orlando Brown, proudly claimed nearly 6,000 kills. U.S. General Sheridan stated :

*“These men have done more in the last two years, and will do more in the next year, to settle the vexed Indian question, than the entire regular army has done in the last forty years. Send them powder and lead, if you will; but for a lasting peace, let them kill, skin and sell until the buffaloes are exterminated. Then your prairies can be covered with speckled cattle.*

*“The only good Indians I ever saw were dead.*

By the end of the 19th century, only 300 buffalo were left in the wild and in 1878, Sheridan reported on the plight of the Native Americans:

*“We took away their country and their means of support, broke up their mode of living, their habits of life, introduced disease and decay among them, and it was for this and against this they made war. Could any one expect less? Then, why wonder at Indian difficulties?”*

Peter Erasmus was one of these buffalo hunters and would become a controversial, colorful friend and neighbour to both John and later his son George.

#### **Little Bighorn River– Montana June 25–26, 1876**

Custer’s Last Stand was a severe defeat for the U.S. 7th Cavalry. The Lakota, Northern Cheyenne, and Arapaho, led by Crazy Horse and inspired by the dream visions of Sitting Bull, were deeply frustrated by the deliberate destruction of the buffalo herds they depended on. Starving and forced from their homes by encroaching settlers and broken treaties, this precarious situation finally erupted into the Sioux Wars of 1876. After that bloody battle a number of the warriors escaped into Canada’s Qu’Appelle valley and likely crossed paths with John Gooderham numerous times.



# **From The Beginning**

1860 Upper Canada–1920 Gleichen



## HISTORY ON THE WALL–John Goes West

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Meadowvale, ON, 1869

John Hamilton Gooderham was raised on his grandfather Ezekiel's farm in Wexford now known as Scarborough. His father, Old George, a favourite nephew of Old William, famous owner of the Gooderham and Worts Distillery in Toronto, was asked to move to Meadowvale in 1869 to manage the Gooderham and Worts farms at Meadowvale and his son, young John, now 12, would go along with him.

Old George had no difficulty making the decision to work for the company or in putting himself in his uncle's camp. He was impressed by the lifestyle the 'Whiskey Gooderhams' had built for themselves. Farming was always a risky business and although Old George was good at it there were definite advantages to being a company man.

Old George assumed the Gooderham and Worts farms would always have company support. He would manage the farming business including the hiring of suitable staff as well as determining their duties. It had another appeal. Old George had grown up on the Gooderham homestead in Norfolk, England where he and his two cousins, William Jr. and James had lived next door to one another. The three were of an age and were friends as well as relatives.

The move to Meadowvale would allow Old George to stay in touch with two of his favourite cousins, William Jr. and James, as well as with his favourite uncle, Old William. Without intending a rift with his immediate family he found himself in the camp with the whiskey-makers and under suspicion from teetotaling Baptists, Methodists, friends and relatives. He enjoyed Meadowvale and stayed on after the farms were sold in 1880, keeping a part of the Meadowvale farm for himself and never losing touch

with his Toronto relatives, a fact that was to influence his grandson, George Hamilton, many years later.

Old George's son, John was about to see his farming skills pay off in an adventurous job. John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister of the country at the time, was looking for farmers to help with Indian people who were having a difficult time adjusting to the myriad changes (famine, war, treaties...) in their homeland—now called the North West Territories. Macdonald was afraid they could be encouraged by unhappy Metis to join in an uprising against the government and interfere with the construction of the railroad west. The Metis had staged one insurrection and he believed they were encouraging their former leader, Louis Riel, to come back to Canada and lead another.

To ensure the success of his plan, Macdonald took on the portfolio of Superintendent of Indian Affairs himself in addition to being Prime Minister. In fact, the Territories, including the railway which was being built across it, were his major concerns.

Under treaties signed between Indian bands and the Canadian government, Macdonald was obliged to provide food rations to all who signed the treaty. Immediately after the signing, rations were issued, but distribution was a problem. There were no roads, few towns and no infrastructure other than that supplied by the North West Mounted Police. In Alberta, the food might only be available at Fort Macleod. In Saskatchewan, it was Regina.

Macdonald devised a plan for hiring young men knowledgeable about farming, who would look after the immediate needs of providing food to the people but who could also teach them how to farm and make a living. The job seemed a perfect match for John. He took off for Winnipeg as soon as he had put together the appropriate wardrobe.

### Touchwood Hills SK, 1879

It was a journey of some consequence. To reach Winnipeg, he first travelled to Owen Sound, a port on the eastern side of the Great Lakes where he had an aunt and uncle. In John's mind, he was already on the edge of civilization and he looked forward to their advice. They encouraged him in his plan and saw him off in one of the steamers that travelled across the lakes to American ports on the western side.

Landing in the United States, he had to make his way north to Winnipeg by stage where his Toronto connections helped him secure an interim job with the pioneer firm of Kilgour Brothers where he worked while he waited for the promised government position to materialize.

Hired as a 'Rationeer' in 1879, John set out on the last 355 miles to his destination of Fort Qu'Appelle and the Touchwood Hills, a spot on the map just north and east of the town of Regina and surrounded by Indian bands—the logical place for him to start work. There were no roads and few men knew where the place was or how to get there.

He went by dog team and Red River cart with his boss, James Scott, knowing only that they were to perform various duties to do with Indians in the area. No one knew what those duties might be but John A. Macdonald knew the making of Canada meant keeping the Indians loyal. There had already been one Metis rebellion. There was every indication there would be another in which the Indians might take part.

The Metis thought their claim to land and their traditional manner of apportioning it had never been addressed by the government. Worse still, surveyors had already mapped the western part of the prairies into sections (squares) which would make the Metis claims (long narrow trapezoids) impossible to ratify. The Metis believed they would have to fight to maintain their claim to land. The government could not, or would not,

negotiate this difference and was fully aware that a fight was imminent. The Metis hoped to persuade their Indian cousins to join them, and although they received a sympathetic hearing, most Indians were anxious to protect their own interests which did not always coincide with those of their cousins, the Metis.

This was the world the two government employees faced. They 'took up residence' on the old telegraph trail about six miles from the present town of Punnichy. They were the first white men, not just to visit but to stay, in the area. Residence meant a tent first and log hut later. Provisions could only be purchased in Qu'Appelle, miles away and delivered by Red River cart. Comfort was not part of the plan and nor was safety. The two must fend for themselves.

An immediate need was to make sure the Indian people saw the intruders as friends and helpers. It was agreed John would visit the camps and find out how best to help. For the government a major responsibility was to report any sickness. Because the Indians had little immunity to European diseases, something as common as measles could spread from one person to another killing almost all it infected.

At first John was received with hostility and suspicion. If he wished to be trusted he must learn the Cree language and the related Saulteux, and even Sioux, for there were migrant groups of Sioux (expatriots from the U.S. and the infamous battle at Little Bighorn River) in the region—representing possible trouble.

John learned quickly. He gained the trust of each band. He learned that (after rations) their first concern was for their horses. It was horses more than any other modern improvement that had created the Indian life of the day. It was agreed the white men, not yet called Indian Agents, would organize the collection and storing of hay for the horses during the winter.

The most modern mowers and rakes were ordered and shipped in. The Indians were astounded. They had never seen anything like it and were amazed at how fast haying was accomplished.

They were quick to learn the new ways and haying soon became a major source of income for many of them. John got quite a bit of credit for this innovation. He was on an adventure that might change or end at any time and he never once guessed he would live out west for the next 24 years of his life, moving from reserve to reserve, Poor Man's in the north, the settlement of Kutawa in the middle, and Piapot in the south.



## TOUCHWOOD HILLS—The Rebellion

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### Touchwood Hills SK, 1879

When John finally creaked into ‘town’ on the Red River cart that brought him the 355 miles from Winnipeg, the Touchwood Hills he saw in 1879 were different than the Saskatchewan of today with its droughts and golden wheat fields. He saw rolling hills, groves of trees, huge patches of slough grass as high as your armpits, and only very rarely, buffalo. There was water everywhere, sloughs round every corner and in every gully. A quarter of the land surface was covered with sloughs, most of them shallow but some as deep as ten or fifteen feet. Every settler had a private lake in the backyard. The sloughs were teeming with water fowl of all kinds and the bluffs and prairie with partridges, prairie chicken and rabbits. In the summer there was lots of food both for man and beast—wild strawberries, saskatoons and masses of grass, vetch and peavine for the stock. All one had to do was mow, rake and stack.

The country was not only wet, it supported many groves of trees. There was plenty of timber (primarily poplar and birch) for building and for fuel. There were acres and acres of luscious grazing and masses of water both above and below the surface. Settlers started arriving in 1880 and it was clear that many more would arrive as soon as it was open to them. Surveyors were at work. A settler arriving in 1883 was delighted:

*The first summer we spent in the shack of some bachelors—there were only single men in the area for several years—until we were able to build a house made with logs from a ‘forest’ on what we called The Mountain. The country was like a huge multi-coloured garden with prairie flowers everywhere. Flowers we never see today. Those first years seemed wonderful to me.*

Getting there was not easy. Even as late as 1881 it was only possible to go by rail to Portage La Prairie, the end of the CPR line. After that travel was by ‘Prairie Schooner’ west to Fort Qu’Appelle, then north along the trail some eighty miles to what was later called Round Plain. The surveyors were there ahead of the settlers - often leaving equipment behind which the settlers found very useful.

All newcomers, including John Gooderham, had expected to raise grain but that was not to happen until the early 1900s. Marquis wheat had not been discovered. Frost came early and the wheat grown was mostly Red Fife which ripened too late to avoid freezing. Some oats and barley were grown but the cash crop that everyone had to rely upon was cattle.

The whole country was one big range with cattle roaming within a ten or fifteen mile radius. In the fall, everyone had to round up cattle and agree on who owned which cow and which calf. But the busiest time of the year was haying season (late June and early July) when hundreds of tons of hay were stacked for the large herds of cattle that wandered the range in summer but had to be fed during the winter.

Livestock were greatly pestered by sand flies and mosquitoes. Sand flies could eat tiny holes in strips over an inch wide across the breast of a horse, under the jaws, inside the ears and any other thin-skinned part. It was almost as bad for the cattle. The large bodies of still water meant mosquitoes were everywhere.

The grass was both thick and long—so long that later, when slough hay became scarce, people cut the grass, called prairie wool, for hay. It was so nourishing horses turned out in the fall would be fat in the spring because they had been able to paw through the snow to the wool below.

Particularly as the country became dryer, raging prairie fires were a

constant terror. A settler might set fire to an old slough bottom to ensure a nice clean cut in the summer. All that was needed was a sudden gust of wind and the fire was out of control. It could travel for miles, whipped by the wind and, worse, create its own wind as it moved. Once started, it had unlimited sweep. It could move as fast as a team could run.

Buildings, haystacks and anything vulnerable had to be protected with a fire guard. This was a circle or preferably two circles with a space of burned grass around the whole area to be protected. There were no telephones but the first smell of smoke was the alarm system. Everyone dropped whatever they were doing and rushed in the direction of the smoke, grabbing wet sacks or willow branches as they went. It could mean their livelihood, their property or even their lives. A fire could destroy hundreds of loads of hay—a whole year's supply—and livestock could be killed or severely burned. And, of course, homes could go up in flames as well.

May 24th, Victoria Day, was a great celebration for everyone on the prairie—Indians and settlers. Indians arrived from Moscwequan, Gordons, Poorman's, Daystar, Fishing Lake and Nut Lake reserves. Most came in Red River carts—with high squeaky wheels. But there were lots who came by travois. The mother rode the horse with two long poles tied together in front of her. These rested on the horse's neck and stretched along its flanks out behind the horse to drag along the ground. In a basket seat between these poles sat children anxious for the fun to begin. It was a comfortable springy seat, perhaps the best method of transportation of all, and probably superior to the new buckboards—buggies without springs—that some of the Indian leaders were able to afford. In 1897, one settler counted over fifty tipis, all painted, set up in two long lines. Settlers might come by horseback, wagon, driving team and democrat - an elegant horse-drawn buggy. They all came for the horse races.

Indian men and boys had not yet adopted the custom of wearing trousers or overalls. They wore a breech cloth and leggings, which had the dual purpose of protection and warmth but could be taken off and used as a ‘shopping basket.’ You might see a boy or young man carrying one or more leggings tied around the cuff. A foot or more might be filled with wild duck and mud hen eggs which he had picked up on his way past the many prairie sloughs. The difference in the incubation of each egg was not a concern.

Ducks of any age were good to eat.

At this time, there was more than a little concern about a second rebellion. Contradictory rumours flew: Riel was back in Canada from the USA; Riel was at the border; he was in Montana gathering support for an invasion; he had become an American citizen and was no longer interested in Canada. The air was filled with tension. Every movement of the smallest Indian Band was viewed with alarm, The federal government had more information than ordinary citizens and knew it must prepare for an insurrection. Communications would be crucial. The hot spot was expected to be in the north central part of what is now Saskatchewan, likely the settlement of Prince Albert. Many Metis there were in constant contact with Riel and filled with dreams of re-establishing their control over the West.

In 1883, the telegraph station at Humbolt was closed and the operator there, A.V. (Von) Lindeburgh and his wife, who would become great friends of John and Margaret Gooderham, was instructed to relocate about ninety miles to the east. There was no settlement there at the time so Lindeburgh had to name it. He chose Kutawa, (Cree for a gap between hills) Assiniboia, NWT.

The move of the telegraph station was part of a larger plan. John was then detailed to supervise the construction of the telegraph line from Humbolt to Prince Albert. It was 1884 and the government knew there was a growing

unrest in that area. The line was completed just in time. Not only did it supply information ‘over the wire’ but it also provided a trail which soldiers and suppliers could use. John showed a remarkable grasp of the situation, not to mention courage in his first five years west.

The rebellion did break out. Riel returned to represent the Metis’ land claims. Unsuccessful in the courts, he established a provisional government in March 1885. A rising followed. Every move of every Indian, no matter how innocent, was a threat to settlers who had no way of knowing the person’s intentions. Tensions remained high as only nine years earlier a number of these roaming Sioux had fought Custer at the Little Bighorn River. John was instructed to visit various Indian groups to provide what help he could and to persuade them to ‘stick with the government.’ He was successful. They all remained neutral, if not loyal.

At one point he travelled with an escort of ten Mounties over a hundred miles north into ‘enemy territory’ to make treaty payments to various bands in the Nut Lake, Fishing Lake areas and to find out whether these people were involved in the rebellion or remained ‘loyal.’ Once again the trip was a success.

According to George, John’s knowledge, not only of the language but the point of view of the various bands, gave him a very strong advantage over other government men,

*“he always had good rapport with the Indian people.”*

George also gave much credit to Edgar Dewdney who was made Lieutenant Governor of the North West Territories in 1881.

Dewdney had previously been Indian Commissioner and had gained the respect and confidence of many of the chiefs and their followers across the prairies. George said credit should go to Dewdney for the limited

participation of Treaty Indians in the rebellion.

George also emphasized that:

*“John never carried a gun.*

Relatives in Toronto had no such reservations. Albert Gooderham, who would later become Sir Albert and Colonel of the Queen's Own detachment which fought in the rebellion, was eager to 'go west.' He joined the militia with the specific intention of fighting in the rebellion, but was turned down as the complement of officers for the Queen's Own was filled. Some members of his family claim to this day he was there.

#### **Edward Acheson, The Rebellion, 1885**

There was, however, a young man who would later join the Gooderham family who was "in the thick of it." His name was Edward Acheson and he would return to Toronto a hero. He would later marry Eleanor Gooderham which would have some interesting consequences

Edward who was born in northern Ireland in 1857, left his home for Canada in 1881. He secured a job in a drygoods company in Toronto as an elevator boy but somehow also managed to enter University College of the University of Toronto. What's more he enlisted in the militia group, the Queen's Own Rifles. Trained and ready in 1885 when the insurrection began he was among the first to be sent out west.

At the Battle of Cut Knife Creek he was wounded in what appears to have been an ambush. When he saw a fellow soldier shot and fall in no man's land he ran out to pick him up. After bringing back the dead man's body he went back for yet another fallen comrade. Both he and the second soldier survived. Edward was given the Victoria Cross for Bravery. Perhaps because of this horrendous experience he became convinced he should enter divinity school. Some say he began his new calling in the

field and conducted his first (evangelical Anglican) church service at Fort Qu'Appelle, the center of John's world and John would be there to hear Acheson, the hero never guessing that Edward Acheson would later become a relative. His son Dean, born in 1893, would go on to become Under Secretary of State of the United States (1945-1947) where he secured Senate approval for U.S. membership in the United Nations and, even more important, outlined the main points of what became known as the Marshall Plan. President Harry Truman promoted him to Secretary of State in 1949 in which role he was a leading figure in the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. When he returned to private life he continued to serve as foreign policy adviser to successive presidents.

The rebellion never reached the Touchwood Hills area but the settlers had many stories to tell.

*"When the fighting started around Battleford, we were all afraid of the Indians around here. Being new to the country, we did not know what to expect. Some lived in fear and dread that the Indians from Day Star and Poor Man reserves would come and kill us all some night. Whenever we saw a fire, we were sure it was a signal fire made by the Indians. Then one night the dogs all began to bark. The men went out to listen and heard the clatter of horses' feet. Every man loaded his shotgun, ready for the worst, but the riders did not come near and everything quieted down. When the same thing happened the second night some of the men decided to go to Kutawa to see the police. They were told the horsemen were mounted police on patrol. We were relieved but we continued to gather together each night."*

Although the settlers formed nightly patrols and some had scary experiences, no one in the district was hurt and the rebellion was very soon over. But the 'war' meant that the trail from Qu'Appelle to Prince Albert

was a busy thoroughfare transporting supplies for the troops out west.

*“Everyone who had some sort of conveyance was ‘on the transport’. We were all glad when the rebellion ended but it seemed very quiet and dull and we missed the extra cash after the soldiers pulled out.*

Indians moving about the land after the rebellion continued to frighten the settlers. The government accepted their band organization and set aside reserves for all—Poor Man’s, Daystar, Gordon and Moscwequan. An Agency headquarters, which would be necessary if the Indian people were to receive the help they needed, was established in 1886—a stone’s throw from Lindeburgh’s telegraph station. There were three houses—one for the Agent, one for the Clerk (John) and one for the Interpreter, as well as an office building and a huge warehouse for Indian food supplies and horse stables. The agency was later transferred to a site just north of Punnichy. A police detachment was sent to Kutawa as well and their barracks erected less than a mile from the telegraph office. John noted that not only would his home be safe, but his eventual wife would have a neighbour, one Margaret Lindeburgh.

No one knew at the time who that wife was to be except John. He had just met Margaret McKinnon, a school teacher from Cape Breton who had already decided to ‘try the west.’ They were married in Portage La Prairie on July 11, 1886, witnessed by relatives of Margaret, Malcom and Margaret McLean.

## PIAPOT RESERVE–The Sun Dance

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**Touchwood Hills, SK, 1895**

John's son George was accepted as part of the Cree community and experienced celebrations as well as day-to-day events. He was (unwittingly) even present for a Feast of the White Dog—a ritual when a white dog would be sacrificed to the sun.

*“One afternoon I wandered down the trail from our house to the Indian community along the flats of the river. Something special was going on in one of the houses. I saw two men killing a white dog. They were careful to bleed, skin and gut it then carry it into the house. The hide was nailed to the door of the house. People started arriving. I was so fascinated I followed everyone inside. When we were all seated the medicine man came in and the ceremony began. The people prayed and sang as he circled the crowd and blessed the bubbling ingredients on a stove. Finally the pot was removed, cooled and with further chanting by all, one of the old men carried the pot around the group. He paused before each one and placed a tiny morsel of meat in each person’s mouth.*

*“It was clearly an important event and a little scary for George. He knew he didn’t want the medicine man to put any of the stew in his mouth. His concern was obvious and he was passed by. But the image of that tightly packed room with its religious seriousness stayed with him.*

During a summer in the mid 1890s, John took the whole family to see the Cree Sun Dance which was set up on the Qu’Appelle River flats. The Sun Dance was a religious festival where the people gathered to renew their relationship with the sun and all of nature. It was also a time for witnessing

*“the making of a brave.*

George, his parents and his sister, Muriel, arrived at the camp by democrat buggy just in time for the ritual. John parked at the eastern entrance to the lodge so they could see every movement. George remembers:

*“Facing east, the lodge, made of fresh boughs and 40 feet in diameter or more, was surrounded by tents and tipis. In the centre a huge tree trunk had been planted firmly in the ground. It was 25 or 30 feet high and crotched at the top. Seven foot high posts circled the tree and supported other poles leading up to the crotch. Strips of hide kept everything in place.*

*“From a small platform placed in front of the centre pole two rawhide ropes dangled. Drummers stripped to the waist and painted in red and yellow designs sat cross legged on the left. They beat drums over and over and over. Behind an inner circle of leafy boughs which formed a waist-high wall, a row of men and women danced close together around the inside of the lodge. They blew whistles in time to the drums. The medicine man sat in front of us.*

*“A young man was led to the medicine man by a group of women. He wore only a breech cloth and his body was painted with bright ochre markings. With the help of the women, the medicine man cut strips of flesh in the young man’s chest and threaded sharp bone skewers through the flesh and muscles. Then he tied the skewers to the dangling ropes.*

*“The young man stepped onto the platform and started to dance, throwing his weight back away from the centre pole. The drums beat louder and louder, whistles blew, both men and women sang and cried out. The young man’s flesh rose and fell but did not break. The medicine man stood nearby guarding and fanning the young man and himself*

*with a sacred eagle wing.*

*"Suddenly the young man's head fell forward, he staggered and hung limp from the dangling ropes. The medicine man stopped his fanning, grasped the eagle wing by the feathered end and gave the young man a sharp blow on the temple. The ritual had ended and the unconscious young man was carried out. I didn't know what it all meant. Perhaps the young man's offer to the sun was not accepted. Everything became quiet and we left."*

*"George did not know at the time that the young man chose to undergo this sacrifice because he had made a vow to the sun to do so. It was common practice for men and women of Plains tribes to vow a sacrifice to the sun in thanks or for good fortune in the future. It was an experience George would never forget even if he didn't understand it at the time."*

Later, someone, perhaps Piapot himself, or one of the other wise men did tell George what it was all about. The ritual he had just seen was not an essential part of the Sun Dance but it was the only time when this supreme sacrifice could be made. The Sun Dance itself was a separate ceremony petitioning the sun on behalf of all the people.

The making of a brave starts with the individual. First a young man fasts and meditates to become pure of heart. He must learn about the spirit world when he is still a virgin. He must have a deep, irresistible yearning to understand. He finds a hill or a secluded wooded spot where he will not be disturbed for days at a time. There he will be alone to pray and meditate for several days. He must neither drink nor eat, but spend his time and energy seeking his personal vision.

On the third or fourth day he may hear a voice or see a vision. He then

returns to camp and describes his experience to the medicine men who can tell whether his story is 'real' or just wishful thinking. If the message is real the elders will start training him in spiritual knowledge and understanding. He must sequester himself twice more over the following years. When he has three mystical experiences he may sponsor a Sun Dance or Rain Dance on his way to becoming a leader or medicine man.

If the elders allow a man to take on the great responsibility of sponsoring a Sun Dance he must prepare in the autumn when the leaves are turning colour even though the ceremony itself will not take place until the following summer, when the trees are in full leaf.

He must know exactly why he wants to perform the ceremony. Perhaps he wishes to pray for a loved one who is ill or handicapped or to express his gratitude for some good fortune. The band may be facing difficulties and he wishes to help find a solution. His concern may be for all of humanity.

Next a symbolic Thunder Bird is created. Wise, older women fasten twists of tobacco together into the figure of a bird and wrap it with forty braids of sweetgrass. As sponsor, the young man must supply the next wrapping. In the old days it would be the best fur he could find. After the Hudson's Bay brought in the distinctive blue, white and red blanket, or stroud, the Cree came to call it sacrificial cloth and it replaced the fur. It soon became the most precious fabric known. Two yards were required for the wrapping. More wrappings were donated to create a great medicine bundle. It was now the powerful, sacred Thunder Bird Nest which had taken on mystical powers and must be carefully guarded until the day of the ceremony.

The selection of the central pole was crucial. The medicine man sees the tree in a vision then asks its blessing before marking it with sacrificial cloth. It is cut and the whole community drags it to the site in a joyful parade. The tree is planted and the ceremonial Thunder Bird Nest is placed in the crotch

at the top.

When the sponsor raises his ceremonial rattle, the singers, drummers and dancers begin the Sun Dance. No one will eat or drink for three days and the sponsor and his assistants never leave. The dancers may come and go but they dance for hours at a time because they want to maintain the concentration which will lead to a mystical experience or revelation.

After three days, the leaders enter a Sweat Lodge. It is large enough to hold eight men and is built of forty willows bent and bound together with willow bark. In the centre are eight white-hot stones. Blue stones are chosen because they heat without cracking.

The men are dressed only in breech cloths. Water is splashed onto the rocks with braided sweet grass and the lodge fills with steam and intense purifying heat. More sweet grass is burned as incense. The men give thanks for their own purification and that of the community through them and the Sun Dance is completed. The sacred Thunder Bird is taken down and is opened and the tobacco and sweet grass braids inside are distributed in small pieces so that all may hold these symbols of Life.

The Canadian government opposed the ceremony. Canadians claimed the Sun Dance kept the Cree away from their farms and forced them to give away too many possessions. They were particularly upset by the ceremony of the piercing and tearing of flesh.

By 1889 a whole generation had passed since the buffalo-hunting days. Young people knew nothing about it. When the time for the Sun Dance came a group of twenty older boys became very excited about the romance of

*“piercing of the flesh.*

They asked to be pierced and allowed to perform the dance. None of these

boys were prepared for such an ordeal but Piapot thought it over and decided to call their bluff. He agreed to allow the ceremony.

The boys turned up at Piapot's home wondering what they had gotten themselves into. The Medicine Men who Piapot had asked to help, took the traditional bear claw, made the incisions and threaded the shaganapi (buffalo hide) through the flesh. The boys could not back down and must now dance until their flesh was torn and they were free.

One elder who witnessed the event said the ritual may have made good men of some of them. But all hell broke loose.

A reporter for the Regina paper wrote a blood-curdling description of the event and the news soon reached Ottawa. Church leaders demanded an explanation. An inquiry was made into this

*"Illegal and monstrous act.*

The Agent knew nothing about the ceremony and had to make inquiries. John Gooderham knew the boys and the medicine men. He knew the story before it was a story. More importantly he knew Piapot. They had been friends since the rebellion when they had discussed the advantages and disadvantages of staying with the Queen rather than joining the Metis. He was able to explain that this particular performance was an important spiritual lesson the young men must be taught. The Agent for the Piapot Reserve wired Ottawa saying,

*"I am informed that the so-called making of braves was a mockery and not a serious ritual compared with the old time Sun Dances.*

That explanation was not enough for Ottawa or for the churches who were particularly anxious that pagan practices cease. This rite was performed on the Piapot Reserve for the last time in 1899 and as Abel Watech, nephew of Chief Piapot remarked the end of the rite

*“...was the cause for twenty years of unhappiness for the Cree of Piapot Reserve.*

The fat was in the fire. Mounted Police came and arrested Piapot. When one of the band members went to visit the Chief in the Regina jail, he was told Piapot had been arrested for being drunk. As he never drank, everyone knew that was not the reason. It was the Sun Dance. He was released from jail but the government deposed him as chief and demanded the people elect another. They refused.

There was no chief for years. The people refused to elect another. He was their leader. And it was not until after World War II, when young soldiers came home, that the reserve won the right to perform the Sun Dance every year, minus the piercing of the flesh (for Canadians could never bring themselves to believe that agonizing ritual was necessary).

The Cree had changed by then. Preparing for the Sun Dance sponsorship took years of study and determination. It was almost impossible to find young men to embark upon the vision quest which was the basis for the celebration. In Abel Watetch's opinion,

*“...most young Cree men were contaminated by the worst of the white man's culture long before they were old enough to begin training.*

John and Chief Piapot were very good friends. The family had always treasured a red stroud war shirt with ermine tails along the sleeves and beaded geometric patterns front and back. It was a magnificent gift from Chief Piapot to John when the family moved to the Peigan Reserve in Alberta in 1903.

The Gooderham family was growing larger as the years went by. When they were at the Poor Man Reserve there were only George and Muriel. On the Piapot Reserve there were five: George, Muriel, Roderick (Rod), Catherine

(Kate) and Ishbel. The children continued to speak Cree to one another, a language more familiar to them than to their mother which created some family tensions and made Maggie worry just a little about her children's future beyond the reserve.

George, being the oldest boy, was allowed on occasion, to go to Regina with his father. He remembers the first trip by horse and buckboard, some twenty or thirty miles. In those days thirty miles was a long way and it took two long days travel. They stayed overnight in a German settlement.

*"I remember the settlement quite well. The people all spoke a particular broken English and lived in log houses with dirt floors. Home-brewed beer was served with the meal. It was the first time I had tasted anything but tea or milk. I took one gulp and that was enough. My tastes did change in later life and at university where I may have been noted for my ability to overcome any distaste for 'strong drink'.*

*"In Regina we stayed with a Mounted Police Sergeant friend of Papa. In Regina it was the first time I met white boys of my own age and I felt quite out of place. More familiar were the young RCMP recruits in training, learning the military discipline the Mounties have been famous for over the years. I was able to see firsthand just what went into making a Mountie. I was impressed and never lost respect for military discipline or for the Mounties who were so essential to keeping the peace on the prairies.*

In 1895, six-year-old George was taken to the Territorial Fair in Regina, a spectacular event complete with exhibitions, parades and the Governor General and his 'army' of body guards. In Regina, George saw his first train. And soon he was to have his first train trip. He and the whole family would travel to Meadowvale, Ontario where George would live for the rest of his childhood.

## The Making Of A Brave

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Papa took us to The Making of a Brave

at the Sun Dance Camp

on the flats

beside the river

All of us including Muriel were

in the buggy.

First of all we smelt the camp

all the fires

and saw their smoke

twirling up into the sky

like a great army of ghosts.

Then the tipi camp

was there

A huge circle

with sacred painted tipis here and there

animals in red and yellow

sometimes                          blue.

In the middle was a green arena made of branches

with a big tree growing in the middle

coloured cloths tied on.

'That's where they make the brave'

Papa said.

I could hear the drums

and singing

not like any ordinary day

but sort of spooky.

There was a whistle

I'd never heard before.

Mama held my hand

and Papa carried Muriel.

Everyone was there

All the Cree

There were'ent any whites.

I could just see the whistle man

in behind a leafy blind

that covered half his body

he was almost naked

painted yellow spots

on his body

and black and red

on his face.

He was jumping up and down

and the singing.

with the drums.

A man was tied to the big tree

with cords threaded through his chest.

Blood was running down onto the cloth around his middle.

He was dancing to the drums and whistle

dancing to get loose.

I was afraid to look

But when I took a peek                  I knew

he was our neighbour.

who was always teasing me because

I couldn't throw a lariat.

He laughed                  but then

he taught me.

I called him                  Man.

He called me                  Kid

or sometimes

scaredy cat.

He was my hero.

Why were they doing this to him?

Papa said it was a sacred ceremony.

He couldn't tear

his body

free

No matter how he tugged and pulled

no one helped.

The medicine man stood watching

then suddenly

raised his eagle feather fan

and struck.

The dancing stopped.

The drumming stopped.

The whistle stopped.

He slumped.

The strips of flesh cut through his chest stretched out

We all could see the holes

fill up with blood

He must be

dead.

I wet my pants.

Mama saw and said we better go

I started to cry.

I thought they'd killed him

and

all the Cree could see

I was afraid.

I was four.

## INSPECTOR'S REPORT

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### Touchwood Hills SK, 1887

A government job meant government inspection, even in the 1880s. John Gooderham's contribution was evaluated every year—once the government was clear enough on what it wanted done. The reports describe just how quickly the Indian people adapted to their new circumstances and point to some distinct differences between the way Indians were assisted and settlers were not. The reports praise John, various chiefs and their wives, as well as teachers. They also describe the birth of a welfare system probably meant to be temporary but which became a permanent fixture.

#### The Drought Begins

The Touchwood Hills District (part of Treaty #4) inspection and Annual Report for 1887 describes the end of the wet years.

*"Our crops which looked so promising at first, suffered considerably in consequence of the prolonged drought, so that we harvested but little grain.*

The Inspector did not think the crop failure was due to a lack of effort and at the time may have thought the drought was temporary.

*"The Indians worked well this spring and planted the ground in excellent order.*

Another pressing concern was the effort required to restrict the constant movement of Indian families and bands. It upset the settlers who were afraid hostilities had broken out again, the Red River Rebellion and Custers' fall still firmly in their mind. Instead of all bands meeting together on a food distribution day the Indians received their rations weekly on their own reserves which kept them at home.

*"The flour and bacon they have been getting are of a good quality, and in a good season, with an occasional duck or prairie chicken and with some potatoes and turnip they are able to manage very nicely in the way of food. The clothing distributed during the winter was much appreciated and did a lot of good .... However, those who were able were expected to give some work in return for the relief given. All the bands in the area were 60 or 80 miles from any centre where they might sell hay or other produce.*

*"The desire to roam is gradually leaving. The pass system is working well. When any of them wish to visit a relative they always come to the office and request a pass. There were no complaints from any of the settlers who surround us.*

Although the Indians in the north at Nut Lake had a good year trapping, those closer to the settled areas had little or none. Between 1880 and 1885 3,000 indigenous peoples died of famine in the North West Territories. This was vital work.

*"The hunt is nearly a thing of the past. Most fur-bearing animals have left these parts or have been killed out.*

Government help was needed now that the Bison were nearly extinct and trapping had culled the land of beaver, mink and fox as well.

Schools were operating at George Gordon's and Muscwequan's and were doing well.

*"The children are beginning to like attending school. Several swings have been erected which cause no end of fun. The teacher at George Gordon's received third prize for best conducted school in the North West Territories.*

*"Mr. J. H. Gooderham, who is in charge of Muscwequan, George*

*Gordon's and Yellow Quill, has a good deal of travelling to do; he issues the rations every week on Muscwequan Reserve and drives 18 miles to Gordon's. He spends half his time on each of the above, with the occasional visit to Yellow Quills at Nut Lake and Fishing Lake. They are hunters and do not need the same supervision. Mr. Gooderham is a hardworking man and a great favourite amongst the Indians.*

John's annual salary was \$110 in 1879, increased to \$460 in 1886 and to \$600 by 1900. The drought, however, was not temporary and was about to force many settlers to pull up stakes and leave the country. One settler explains:

*"The major problem was the water situation. Every year it got drier. The first winter we ran out of water we melted snow for the oxen and cows. Then we discovered they could survive by licking the snow. Those who could afford it, went back to the States. Some even drove their horses back. Others who did not have the money walked to Manitoba to look for work. The one and only reason we stayed was because we had to.*

Another remembers:

*"A lake near our home 13 feet deep dried up. Father drove cattle to Regina and took them home again as prices were so low.*

*The poverty that people talk about now is nothing to what we came through in those days. There were no government handouts then, either. We were all in the same boat, therefore no one could help the other. On one occasion we had to butcher the only cow we had to keep the neighbours and ourselves from starving. Woollen clothing was almost impossible to get and the mothers made mitts out of sacking.*

The Indians had a different problem. The old ways were less and less possible. There was a growing reliance on government support which for

some was almost total. Freedom of movement had been curtailed as more and more settlers took up adjoining land.

**Poor Man Reserve, SK 1888**

By 1888, John has been placed in charge of Poor Man's reserve and is living there. The inspection report states:

*"A new school house has been erected here; an addition has been made to the storehouse which will allow for a carpenter's shop and for the storing of grain. A corral for the cattle has been made and a number of houses and stables, including one of each for the Chief. A large quantity of hay has been secured and distributed on the reserve for the convenience of the cattle during the winter. Crops include wheat, oats, barley, peas, potatoes and turnips. There are 65 head of cattle.*

*"Mr. Gooderham has got married since my last visit and his wife is taking a great interest in teaching the Indian women the ordinary household duties. The Indians are working most cheerfully.*

In the 1889 report we are told the size of each band and reserve:

*"The first reserve inspected was Day Star's #87, Mr. Gooderham being the farmer in charge. The area of the reserve being 20 square miles; population at present being 81.*

*"As many as eight new homes have been constructed all of a good class, high, and with sloped thatched roofs and some with top floors. The logs are square cut and dovetailed at the ends, and will be plastered with lime, instead of mud, which is preferable as lime will exterminate vermin whereas mud is disposed to attract and shelter it. Some very good new stables have been built.*

*"The Chief hoisted his flag in honour of our visit and was very friendly.*

*He showed me a milk house which he had lately completed; it was very clean as were also the milk pans which were nicely arranged on shelves. His house was very clean as were all the houses and no rubbish of any kind was found around the premises. The gardens also showed careful attention.*

*"Haying, which was an essential activity, was becoming more difficult. Two hundred tons of hay were required for winter feed.*

*"Some good hay bottoms were found on the western boundary of the reserve, but in order to make use of the hay it had to be stacked at the meadows.*

*"It is proposed to winter 50 or 60 head of cattle at this spot this winter. With this in view a very fine stable has been built close to the lake which will hold 60 head. Hay stacks are close at hand and the whole is enclosed with a strong fence and an Indian is camped there to guard the place. There was no chance of reaching it by hay racks as a new road had to be cut through the woods, so that temporary racks had to be made on the spot. The herd numbers 105 and is one of the finest that can be seen.*

The Inspector found fit to mention that

*"A mud oven has been built near the school and serves the purpose of baking bread very well.*

He also remarked

*"The school house was in capital order.*

*"The next reserve was Poor Man's # 88 area 42.25 square miles, population 117. Mr. Gooderham is in charge here as well as at Day Star. Prettier fields or better breaking cannot be seen anywhere. The self-*

*binder, a new one, purchased by the Indians was cutting the wheat; it was drawn by three oxen, driven by an Indian, the binder being worked by the interpreter. The herd numbers 89.*

*"The chief has a nice milk-house and he took great pains in showing it to me; 11 pans of milk were on the shelves making cream. Mrs. Gooderham took special trouble in teaching the Indian women to scald all vessels. (Maggie receives an annual salary of \$120) The Chief's wife makes good butter and the Indian women are doing well at knitting, sewing and mending.*

*"At the exhibition held in Regina this week the band has gained prizes for butter, dresses, wheat, turnips and other articles. The Chief is doing well and is progressive. His reserve is a fine one and he is justly proud of it. No trace of the wild rice which was sown some time ago. No doubt the drying up of the small lakes and sloughs is one cause.*

*"Mr. Gooderham is very active and seems to get through a large amount of work.*

In the 1880s small reserves were often named after the head man of the group that lived there. Poor Man was the name of the chief of the group who took over the reserve the Gooderhams were living on at that time. The chief's son was called Ed. Years later researchers visited Poor Man's to speak with the oldest living member, Ed Poor Man. When they told Ed they knew a man called Gooderham who had been born on the reserve Ed said,

*"My goodness that must be little George. I played with him when I was a boy. I'm a few years older than he is. I certainly loved the Gooderhams. George and I had a lot of fun together. You must take a picture of me for George to see what I look like, and I hope you will bring a picture of him for me when you come back.*

The photograph arrived and showed a very fine looking old man. Because Ed Poor Man had such a treasure house of relics, costumes and stories the researchers returned many times. When they showed Ed a photograph of George his comment was

*"My goodness, he's grey.*

Ed was in his nineties then but wasn't willing to have George grow old too.

Shortly after those visits Ed was moved to a hospital in Fort Qu'Appelle where they cut off his hair. No doubt they needed to do so for health reasons but it was a very serious loss for this old man whose hair was part of his soul. The values of the modern world were very different—it is possible no one thought to ask Ed how he would feel about having his hair cut.

George was only three years old when the Gooderhams left the Poor Man's Reserve so his personal recollections of Ed were few but later he commented that Poor Man was a very forward thinking leader. His people had log homes on land which they farmed. There is a picture of a very 'modern' side-delivery binder harvesting a crop of grain on the Poor Man Reserve. It required three people to operate and was pulled by a team of oxen. One man drove the team, another made sure the machine was operating properly and a third gathered the stalks as they came off the machine and, using a piece of the same straw, tied them into bundles.

## Maggie

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I took a drive the other night  
Thinking it was no harm  
And called at Walkers  
And borrowed a skein of yarn  
But alas, alas I am sorry to write  
I have had the toothache ever since that night  
So Mr. Bill Brown very kindly did say  
Now Maggie I'll drive you to the dentist today  
So we drove to the dentist's and in my mouth he did look  
Smiled very solemn and his pliers he took  
But I'm sorry to say my tooth he did take  
And still I am suffering from this horrid tooth ache

## Jack

---

Spring is coming around again  
With its sunshine, flowers and its rain  
To gladden the hearts and harden the hands  
Of the boys that toil upon their lands

They request

Remember me Maggie in your sorrows and joys  
Remember me Maggie as one of the boys  
And never let sorrow your spirits depress  
And always think kindly of Jack in the West.  
Of your numerous friends so honest and true  
Put me on the list, now Maggie will you  
Just say that you will and it will be my endeavour  
To think of you always in all kinds of weather



## GEORGE-The Boy

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### Poor Man Reserve SK, 1889

John's first son, George Hamilton Gooderham, was born April 21, 1889 right after the Rebellion on the Poor Man reserve about 100km north by northwest of Regina. That year April 21 was also Easter Sunday, making the event particularly auspicious. George Hamilton was the first white baby to be born on Poor Man's or for that matter in the whole area. It was quite a celebration.

The Indians surrounded the house, riding round and round on horseback, shooting their guns. It was a very noisy and boisterous welcoming party but the family knew the celebration was for them not against them. The fact he was welcomed into this world by the Cree coloured George's whole life.

He was also welcomed by the Scots. His mother Maggie must have been more than a little concerned about how she was going to deliver this small package so many days travel from a hospital or doctor. She was lucky enough to find a Scottish midwife who had come to western Canada with her husband who lived ten or fifteen miles from the Poor Man's reserve. Maggie had been told there might be one small problem. The midwife spoke very little English. Her language was Gaelic. Maggie, however, was a McKinnon from Cape Breton which was just one step away from northern Scotland. Her first language was also Gaelic. So rather than a disadvantage, it was a great relief to be assisted by 'someone from home.' George came into a trilingual world: English, Cree and Gaelic.

When George was three, the Gooderhams left the Poor Man Reserve, first to a few kilometers south west to Kutawa and then later on to the Piapot Reserve on the opposite side of the Qu'Appelle river about twenty or thirty miles from Regina. John became the assistant agent (farm instructor) at

Piapot in 1892 and the family stayed for several years.

One of George's first recollections was the trip from Kutawa to Piapot. They travelled by buckboard over a pretty rough trail and forded the Qu'Appelle River.

*"I must have fallen asleep. All of a sudden I woke up on the ground. I wasn't seriously hurt but I was certainly startled. I'm sure shouts of alarm could have been heard for miles across the prairie in all directions. After that I sat up straight and held onto mama pretty tight."*

*"I remember we moved into what seemed like a huge house. It had been built originally as a school for Indian girls by the Presbyterian Church. The project was not a success so the government took it over as a residence for the farm instructor. It was much larger than normal houses, of course, with two stories and numerous rooms. There were six stoves and I had to pile wood next to each of them. In my mind's eye I can still see that never-ending pile of logs stretching along the back fence of the property."*

*"One day just before Christmas it was very cold and I brought in extra wood. Mama said it was too much but I wanted everybody to be warm all night and on Christmas day as well. I was thinking of Santa Claus and his long drive to our place. He should warm up before he went on. I was also worried about Santa crawling down the smoking chimney, but I was assured that Santa was used to that in Saskatchewan where winter was always cold."*

*"I had been dreaming about possible Christmas presents for some time. What I wanted most was a sleigh and harness so my dog could pull me out to the hill where I met all the other boys."*

*"There were no Christmas trees in that part of the country but that*

*didn't matter. We moved a huge elk's head with its rack of antlers and six big horns to a place where Santa would see it and Muriel, my sister, and I could hang our stockings on the horns.*

*"I admit I had trouble sleeping that night and heard a queer noise coming from far off. It wasn't coyotes howling. What was it? Was it Santa? Disappointment was extreme when I realized it was the noise of a squeaky Red River cart, returning home from Regina—probably one of the Indian men who had taken a load of hay to sell there.*

*"When I woke up the next morning it was still dark. I ran through the house to the elk's head. Reaching up to feel my stocking I knew that Santa had come and gone because I could feel something there. But more disappointment. There was no harness, only candy, apples, oranges and a little box. In my concern I hit something and bells jingled. I reached over and found Santa hadn't forgotten after all. There was a stiff dog harness hanging by the collar on one of the horns. And there were two bells on the back band. I was about to burst with excitement. I stood up and hit something with my foot, and there was the sleigh, with real round iron runners and handle bars on the sides.*

*"George could now enjoy the apple and the candy as he opened the little box. A mouth organ! He gave it a blast that woke up the whole family. John came down and lit a lamp. And everyone had a wonderful, wonderful time.*

Later, when George went outside to put the harness on his dog he looked up at the new snow that had fallen on the roof.

*"I couldn't see any tracks where Santa had landed so I looked around on the ground and then I understood. Santa hadn't driven onto the roof. He had driven up to the front door and tied his reindeer to the hitching*

*rail the Indians, Mounties and other visitors used. There were the marks of their cloven hooves in the fresh snow. Santa had tied them up while he went in to make his deliveries and to warm himself before moving on.*

George rushed back into the house to tell John and Maggie the news. They were very impressed and agreed that Santa was a very wise and clever man. It took some time before George's dog became as enthusiastic as George about the harness. But that didn't matter. There was lots of time.

*Since his childhood playmates didn't speak English, George spoke Cree. They had great fun together, particularly with his new sleigh, sliding down the river bank. His house, the ration house and outbuildings for the farm instructor, were on the bank of the river while the Cree lived along the flats. The banks were long and gently sloping, perfect for the home-made sleighs the children used. One boy had a very large frying pan which had been left behind by a survey party.*

*"He could sit on the frying pan holding the handle between his knees, whirling round and round as he went skimming down the bank. He was King of the Hill (or perhaps Chief) and the envy of everyone. Even the new sleigh couldn't compete with that. When we all reached the bottom we were, of course, just outside someone's home. In we would go and the mother would serve us bannock and tea. Delicious!"*

*"The house the Gooderhams lived in at Piapot was very big, so big that part of it was set aside for the Mounted Police.*

*"They would come on patrol, either singly or in small groups, and would stay overnight at the Gooderhams. They would use the ground floor which was a separate living quarters with one room set aside for an office.*

*"I really looked forward to their visits. They were all strong, athletic, young men who often took time after their day was over to show a small, admiring boy just how real men lived, rode horses, shot revolvers. There was a good deal of the military in their bearing and demeanor. I was a fan! I remember they were such good shots with their revolvers they could kill prairie chickens perched on the house fence posts on the other side of the yard.*

According to George, the Indians on the Piapot reserve did not farm, but haying was a good source of income. They cut it in the Qu'Appelle River valley where they lived and hauled it to Regina in Red River carts pulled by oxen. If they were lucky they would get \$1.50 for the load. Quite a lot of money in those days.

The carts squealed and creaked their way along the trail over miles and miles—a sound George went to sleep with many, many nights. The eerie howling of a prairie coyote frequently kept him awake as well.

Another exotic visitor was the ‘mailman.’ Mail to all points as far away as Prince Albert was dropped at the Qu’Appelle station and carried from there under contract. George remembers during winter months seeing half-breed runners with their dog teams speeding the mail across the frozen prairie. They invariably wore a handkerchief bound around their head, a print shirt even in the coldest days and baggy trousers held up by a large sash whose ends flew out behind them.



## GEORGE—Going To Meadowvale

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Meadowvale ON, 1897

George's prairie idyll was soon to come to an end. It was now 1897. He was eight years old and it was high time he went to school. It was decided that meant Ontario. He was to live with his grandparents, uncle and aunts in the little town of Meadowvale. The whole family went east with him as a holiday. None of the children had ever been on a train before. George was the only one who had even seen one. What an experience! The train had special places for sleeping, one bed piled on top of another. The berths were a great novelty. You could climb up a little ladder to the top one (from which you might fall) or you could choose the one at floor level, which was a bit like a cave. You could walk through cars until you reached the dining car, which was just like a proper dining room. Going from car to car was scary. If you looked down you could see the prairie rushing past just below your feet. What if one of the doors flew open or the floor gave way?

They went through Winnipeg to Fort William, the port at the western end of Lake Superior which was the end of the line for the train. Everyone had to transfer to the boat—"The Manitoba"—for the trip across the Great Lakes to Owen Sound.

It took two days and almost that long for George and the others to remember which cabin was theirs. There were many doors and passageways that had to be memorized if they were to get to breakfast or back to their cabin. What fun they all had getting lost, chasing one another, hiding and being found. The sun shone and the lakes were calm so no one was sick.

In Owen Sound they were met by John's aunt, Elizabeth Duncan, and her family who lived in a big house with a lot of furniture. The children had never seen such a place except, perhaps in a magazine. Aunt Lizzie—which

is what she wanted to be called—was particularly interested in George when she learned he would go to school in Ontario. There was room for the whole family to stay and visit before they took a train to Meadowvale, just a few miles past Toronto. George must come and visit whenever he liked. George thought he might never do that but the invitation helped him to be less nervous about being alone.

It was going to be a tremendous change for George. Everything was so different. On the prairie he could see for miles and be surrounded by sky. Prairie trees were thinner and not nearly as tall. A boy could see around them. He could wander for hours and never really lose sight of home. If he ever did get lost everyone knew who he was and how to direct him home. The east was one huge forest with fields here and there. A person could get lost and no one would know who he was! All the land was owned by someone and was fenced with logs or stones. There were roads everywhere and people! It seemed to George the whole world was on the move in their buggies, carts, wagons and even bicycles. How would he get along without his Cree playmates and the growing group of siblings? Would these old people he was to meet take the place of Mama and Papa? He didn't think so.

Not long after he arrived in Meadowvale it was Queen Victoria's 60th jubilee. George piled into the democrat with 'The Boss', Grandfather (Old George), his wife Catherine, George's grandmother, two aunts, Jennie and Jessie, and two uncles George Walter and Willie. It was a big celebration in the neighboring town of Brampton, a big town, bigger than Regina, five or six miles away.

The whole town was decorated for the Jubilee. George was told it didn't always look so grand. But he still thought it was enchanting. What's more, each child was given a bag of fancy cookies and cakes. Everyone went to a big arena where they heard speeches and sang songs - mostly about the

Empire. He was pretty tired when he got back to Meadowvale. He was beginning to think he might like it there. He also started to learn some of the old Meadowvale history.

#### George's first day at school

George was used to being pretty well top dog among the children on the reserve. But he was now at the bottom of the heap. He was eight years old and had never been to school. Not only did the Meadowvale children know all about school, but they had known one another all their lives. None of them spoke Cree or had even heard of the Cree. The first days were rough.

*"I certainly remember the first day in school—a one room school. I was introduced to the Principal and when he asked where I would like to sit—seats were all doubles in those days—I took one look at the situation and chose the biggest boy in the room. My preference was allowed for a few days but he was in Grade Six and I had to start in Grade One. I had to settle for a smaller seat up at the front.*

George had two or three things going for him, however. He was athletic and loved games so he soon overcame resistance from his schoolmates. He was a very articulate boy who wasn't shy. He learned early that both adults and children loved to hear stories about life out west. Eventually, his relatives, both in Meadowvale and Toronto became more and more impressed with this young man from the wild west. He especially charmed his grandmother and his two maiden aunts, Jenny and Jessie. Throughout his long life George would be a great raconteur and ladies' man.

It was part of his good fortune to be strong and willing and to love working. This was fortunate because the Gooderhams expected him to make a real contribution to the operation of the farm.

The barns, specially designed by a renowned Toronto architect, were

unusually large. There were different barns for different stock, the horses getting the biggest and best. The cattle were in the lower part—not a hole in the side of a hill as in western homesteads but a two-storied building with the lower walls built of stone and cement to a height of eight feet. The upper part was frame construction with ramps built to allow huge farm machinery, including threshing machines to be moved inside when not needed.

The horse was king and the horse barn the most attractive. Only Old George, Uncles George Walter and Willie and the senior labourer were allowed to look after the horses. George was detailed to the cow barn!

One of George's jobs was to bring in the herd for milking. The farm was 250 acres, huge for that part of the country at that time, and the cows were invariably at the far end. Getting them home required a lot of time and patience. In those days there was a lot of 'help'. Everyone had big families and there were lots of hired hands so convenience was the last thing that the farmer ever had to consider.

The well was never near the barn and any spring or creek was invariably over the hill and far away. George spent a lot of time walking, running and carrying pails of milk or water across those acres. One way to get to sit down was to learn how to milk. George was an expert by the time he was nine.

Once the cows were milked and turned out into the field, the milk had to be taken to the cooler. This was a manufacturer's box about one hundred yards away from the barn and in front of the ice house. The front of the cooler was filled with tall milk cans. First you had to pour the milk into the cans and then let it sit so the cream could separate from the milk and rise to the top. Each can had a glass top so you could see how much cream there was. A tap at the bottom allowed the skim milk to be drained off until there was

only cream left. George drained the skim milk every night and fed it to the pigs in yet another barn, and to the calves in the cow barn. The cream was taken to the house where some of it was used in cooking and on the table. Most was saved for butter-making.

The milk cans were stored in front of the ice house for the obvious reason that the milk had to be kept cool. In those days there were no refrigerators. George had to go into the ice house, dig around in the saw dust (which kept the ice from melting) to find a good piece of ice, then chop it up in pieces to fit the cooling system. The chunk of ice could not be so large as to be wasteful or so small it melted before it was time to remove the milk. George chopped the right-sized piece, carried it to the milk shed and loaded it into the rear of the cooler.

Another part of the ‘milky’ business was weaning the calves. As soon as possible the calves were taken from their mothers and the cow returned to the milking barn. The calves still needed milk, of course, but it had to come from a pail. That meant George had to teach the calf how to drink from the pail. He had to take one hand and force the calf’s head into the pail while he stuck two or three fingers of the other hand into the calf’s mouth so it would have something to suck on. The calf was used to butting its mother’s udder to get things working faster and that’s what happened to the pail as well. George had to keep the calf from knocking the pail over and also make sure it was drinking and sucking on his fingers. Every so often the calf would give the pail a good butt. If George wasn’t ready for the attack there would be milk all over the barn and George. He would also have to start all over again. After a few soakings he learned how to make sure both hands and legs were working in the most efficient manner possible. Cleaning up the barn after the milking and the calf feeding was also George’s job. Not his favourite.

In summer he was up at five. In winter he could sleep until six. The first thing he had to do was to light the fire in the kitchen stove and then get into his farm boots - heavy duty boots with brass toe-caps and rivets purchased at the local store for \$1.50 a pair. These boots and all the rest of his outdoor clothes were kept in a closet off the kitchen.

They weren't washed often and were clearly not for polite society. His overalls were so milk-saturated, even after he learned how to control the calves, they were stiff enough to stand by themselves.

Early morning chores had to be finished early because he also had to hike back to the house, wash, change, have breakfast and rush off to school. On Saturday and Sunday there was more time but even more to do. Summer holidays meant haying and harvesting as well as the daily chores so he was still too busy to spend much time wondering about what the rest of his family were doing. George didn't visit them until ten years later in 1907, when he was eighteen years old. His father visited once or twice and his mother came with his sister, Ishbel on their way to Cape Breton to visit Maggie's family. And when George finally made the trip home, home was in Alberta rather than Saskatchewan.

When the grass was green in the spring, the calves were turned out into a small pasture under the hill. They had spent their whole life in the barn so they had no idea how to handle the big outdoors. George had to help here too. With his encouragement, they learned to nibble the grass and scamper about. They were still fed chop (a special mix of ground grain). However, George had to bring their milk out to them in the field. You might say that George's best friends were the calves since he spent more time with them than any other living creature except his dog, who really was George's best friend and always there to help with the chores.

Soon after the calves were in the field George would choose a favourite

to halter and train. The fall fairs were coming up in nearby Streetsville and Brampton. He hoped to be allowed to take the calf and show it. The decision depended upon the head farmer and whether he would be showing a horse, or team. George wouldn't know until the last minute. Only when the day came and horses were ready to be taken to the show was he allowed to ask whether the calf could go too.

The decision was never made until the calf had been inspected. George's second choice might be selected instead but both would have to be inspected. The farmer might decide on George's second choice but George never objected or admitted he had not chosen 'the best' himself. What was really important was going to the fair as an exhibitor. Exhibitors were allowed in free of charge. That meant George had an extra 25 cents spending money. If he got a prize it might be as much as \$1.50 for first or \$1.00 for second—even third meant 50 cents. Any prize was incentive enough to try again next year.

If a breeder showed an interest in purchasing George's calf, Old George took an interest too. The Gooderhams raised short horns for breeding rather than merely for slaughter and so a good yearling could be worth as much as \$50. If George's calf was sold he might get \$5.00 for himself.

One of his greatest treats was to go with his grandfather, Old George, to Brampton by horse and buggy. It was quite a drive. His grandfather always drove a little grey mare called Kitty.

*"She would stop every time we met somebody. Old George would say Hello and Kitty would wait while they had a little chat.*

When they got to town Kitty and the buggy would be parked in a large yard at the rear of one of the hotels—quite similar to parking lots now set aside for cars, except each horse and buggy required more space than a

car. The hostler was paid five cents to look after the outfit and feed Kitty while they were in town. They might do some special shopping. George remembers being taken to a shoemaker and being measured for a pair of boots. A beautiful pair of handmade leather boots cost \$2.50. George was very proud.

George graduated from public school in 1902 and went to high school in Brampton. It was only six miles away but not always easy to get to. During the spring, summer and fall he could walk or ride his bike which happened to be a woman's—Aunt Jessie didn't want her bike anymore and turned it over to George. He was pretty embarrassed when he appeared at school on a woman's bike but those were the days when having a bicycle of any kind was quite a big deal. And he did get a man's bike later on.

The roads were not paved and the least bit of rain made it impossible to keep a bike upright and moving forward. On wet days he had to wait for a train which meant sticking around Brampton after school until late in the evening. Sometimes he would walk up the road to the railway tracks and then follow them home to Meadowvale. There was one advantage to that route. At just about the three mile mark the railroad took a wide curve on a steep incline. The freight train would have to slow down as it made the curve. George could grab onto the last car and ride on the back steps of the train all the way to Meadowvale—always hoping, of course that the train would stop there.

There was another alternative. Uncle Willie had a pacer or trotter which he had trained to a two-wheeled cart similar to a racing sulky. He would sometimes allow George to use the cart and George would make arrangements for the horse to be stabled in Brampton while he was in school. It was only a 'fine weather' solution though, because there was no cover for the cart. In winter he boarded in Brampton at \$2.50 a week. He

loved boarding and started as early as he could. He was good at all sports and if he was living in town he could participate in all of them: football, lacrosse, baseball, without worrying about getting home to Meadowvale at night. Someone else looked after the chores.

#### **Peter Macdonald-Another wealthy cousin**

Partly because Ezekiel's son Old George had been the manager of the Gooderham and Worts farm and still owned part of it, he had a high status in the small community. But George would learn that his rich Gooderham cousins in Toronto were even more formidable. And that wasn't all. His Grandmother Catherine's brother, Peter Macdonald, was also a rich Torontonian who, with his in-laws and friends, had created a bank known as The Dominion (which many, many years later would later amalgamate with the Gooderham's Toronto Bank to become the Toronto Dominion). They were all rich and impressive, and according to George, weren't above letting him know just how important they were.



## Chores

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Chores were every day not  
Just Saturday and  
We classified  
them Disgusting  
Down right boring  
Difficult  
Degrading  
First of the disgusting was  
The porridge pot  
cement stuck pot and  
Water hard as  
no suds no matter how much  
you rattled that little cage with the  
soap slivers  
around and around inside the pot  
No that eternal grip  
On Mother's perfect pot  
was there forever  
But  
It must at last become immaculate  
old dutch helped  
But must be applied

in secret

Winners in Boring

Were

separating milk and

butter churning

Separating came in second only

'cause

It was fast sort of

But

everyday

And all those parts to scald

The great big bowl  
the milk sat in

the tray and spout for milk

the smaller one for cream and

then the separating whirling dervish core

with all the little cones inside

What begins with 'M' George

Every single day

Churning won first prize

It only happened when the cream was right

But

Took all morning

afternoon?

evening?

The sooner you get started the sooner you'll be finished

George

Our churn was round

all wood

A handle that went round and round

And a lid

that slipped on

But

more often off

When you leaned on it while

reading

The Saturday Evening Post

resting on top

And cream splashed through

obliterating the

final paragraph and ruining

The magazine which no one else had read

And

The butter had still not shown itself

But just before the declaration

'This cream is bad'

The butter would appear

You pulled the plug and

drained the buttermilk or ugh

If Aunt Jean was visiting

save it

for drinking ugh

It's good for you you know.

butter on a platter

without salt

Then washing tub and paddles handle all

Hoping cows would soon produce

creamless milk

Digging clinkers from the furnace won

in Difficult

In the morning   freezing cold because  
the furnace had shut down  
'It must be full of clinkers  
And the draft has gone  
It's your job  
You know'  
The soft       and Blackfoot   coal  
had turned to  
prehistoric rock   preventing  
any whispering breeze  
to penetrate    and  
whip the coals to flame.

A huge weapon   six feet long  
smashed and prodded  
broke and lifted  
pulled and  
pushed        and  
finally deposited in   the waiting tub  
the chunks   of  
knarled and twisted cinder rock

Then next day again  
Because of Blackfoot coal.  
Degrading had to do with who was who  
Ironing was on my D list  
Except the new mangle  
A technological break through and hence  
O.K. for boys.  
Washing floors came next  
the kitchen every Saturday and  
Dusting the porch except  
There was an ancient gramophone with ancient songs to play  
'I love a piano a grand piano  
I love to hear somebody play  
Upon a piano a grand piano  
It simply carries me away  
I know a fine way  
To treat a Steinway  
I love to run my fingers oe'r the keys  
the ivories  
ta da ta da ta  
ta da ta da ta  
upon an upright or a high toned  
baby grand'

some jobs

came close to being just about O.K.

Chopping kindling

even in the winter

The axe was a real weapon and

took real skill

You could miss and lose

a toe

or leg finger life

Was this not just the weapon Henry used to

rid him of a wife

Besides the log made a such a super sound when hit just right  
and

that special smell of new cut wood.

And when we talk about

those days

we say

no one ever had a better.



## BLACKFOOT AGENCY– The House at Gleichen

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### Peigan Reserve AB, 1906

While George was away at school in Meadowvale John had been promoted to Indian Agent to the Peigan Piikani (Pee-kah-nee) Reserve 60 km west of Lethbridge. It was an exciting move to Canada's 4th largest reserve but the winter had been long and deadly. The Gooderhams had been snow-bound for days at a time, in a house without central heating or plumbing. They heard through the Moccasin Telegraph about the devastation of Peigan herds and of those of many neighbours. To make matters worse their mother, Maggie, was slowly losing her battle with tuberculosis—the dreaded consumption.

John learned he was to be promoted to the Blackfoot reserve in the spring and the whole family was excited at the prospect. They would be living less than 90km east of Calgary, just across the railway tracks from the thriving town of Gleichen—the fastest growing town in southern Alberta. The town was on the CPR line only an hour's journey from Calgary. There was a train to and from the city every morning and evening and the house was big and modern. They heard it was the talk of the town. It had a basement with a furnace and a central heating system, its own water system, piped into the house from a well and pressure tank which would provide water even in the upstairs bathroom. There was also a huge water cistern to collect rain water for washing and a large room for firewood or coal.

At Peigan the oldest of the four Gooderham girls, Muriel, was still in high school, dreaming of University and excited about the move up to Gleichen. Unknown to her a girl who would become her best friend was planning a trip to the same destination from a great deal farther away.

Isobelle Millie of Fifeshire, Scotland, had persuaded her parents to let

her go to Canada with her older brother, Charles, who had a farm and business in Gleichen. Her parents agreed even though Isobelle had just received a scholarship to go to university. Isobelle and her brother, together with Charles' best friend, Douglas Hardwick (who would one day become Isobelle's husband) left Scotland in April 1907, landed in New York and went on to Montreal to begin the train trip west. Isobelle described it to Muriel later that year after they had met and become friends.

*"Charles and Mr. Hardwick had a drawing room on the train, a neat little place with two seats opposite one another and a lounge all fixed in and a lavatory at the side and a bed to pull down from above. It was so nice and private. I had a sleeper just outside but they let me come in and sit with them most of the day.*

*"The country just outside Montreal was bleak, even wretched, with only a few trees here and there. I saw few settlers. A little farther west there were huge forests stretching for miles and miles, nothing but trees and masses of rock.*

*"The most beautiful part was around the lakes. We passed right close to Lake Superior and I did enjoy the sight. Then the train plunged off into the forest again and again. It all reminded me very much of the Highlands.*

*"But when we reached the prairie we saw the worst sights of all, hundreds of dead cattle. We would pass one here, one there and sometimes beneath a little hillock there would be a whole bunch. Dead antelope as well. But some were alive and kicking. Horses were in better shape than the cattle who were all miserable looking creatures. Sloughs were scattered all along the way and covered with ducks. I had never seen so many. And by the time I reached Gleichen I was pretty well excited.*

### Blackfoot Agency AB, 1907

It was also pretty exciting for the Gooderhams who were to arrive in Gleichen a month or two later. The family had come to the government house on the Blackfoot Siksika (Seeg-see-kah) Nation Reserve from the Peigan Nation Reserve nearly 200km south of Calgary in the spring of 1907 following one of the worst winters on record—referred to by old-timers as ‘The Hard Winter.’ It was a winter of blizzards and temperatures of 60 degrees below zero. There were Chinooks which blew through from time to time melting the top layer of snow only to freeze again into an impenetrable crust and creating worse conditions than before the balmy visitation. Cattle froze to death or starved because they couldn’t get through the snow to the grass below. In six months Alberta ranchers lost 65% of their stock. Some lost everything.

At the agency there were three houses for staff. The biggest and best, ‘the nicest in town with a most beautiful garden,’ which was to be theirs, was built for the Markles, Grandfather John’s predecessor. Mr. Markle had been named Inspector for the Western Region and would be moving, so the house would now belong to the Gooderhams.

In a letter home Isobelle exclaimed:

*“The Gooderham’s house is on the other side of the railway tracks on the Blackfoot Indian Reserve. It would be quite grand anywhere, but in Gleichen it is very grand. It’s like an estate. The house is made of wood rather than stone or brick but it is very large, with five bedrooms and an inside bathroom complete with bath tub, elegant little corner hand sink and flush toilet—the kind with a little handle not a tassel that you pull.*

*“Outside there is a large fenced garden and wide gravel paths running from the roadway to the house. Another leads toward a courtyard with*

*barn, carriage houses (there are two) a chicken house and run, an ice house (they have ice for their ice box all summer) and the office. At the back there is a pump house where their water supply is pumped out of the ground. There are lilac and honeysuckle trees all through the garden as well as evergreen trees and a hedge called Carrigana with pretty yellow flowers in the spring. On a side lawn covered with prairie grass rolled flat you can play lawn tennis. Everyone wants to be invited to parties at the Gooderham's.*

*"The inside is just as spectacular. A screened verandah surrounds the entrance to a reception hall with a bell on the door to let them know you have arrived. The first thing I noticed was the floor made of narrow boards of a creamy white colour. I'm told they are maple hardwood floors. A grand staircase leads first to a study or office and then turns a corner to another landing where there is a door leading to a closed-in stairway to the kitchen. The 'main' stairs turn again and take you up to the bedrooms and bathroom. The reception hall has panelling matching the banisters and the mantle surrounding a fireplace faced with green tiles and a matching metal cover when not in use.*

*"The two adjoining rooms, a parlor, or living room as they like to call it, and a dining room, can be closed off from one another by pulling out sliding doors hidden in the wall. I think they're called pocket doors at home. The ceilings in all three rooms are quite spectacular. They might be in a castle. Muriel's brother, George, who is here from Toronto on a holiday, told me the ceilings are made of tin which has been pressed out in a mold. They are painted a light creamy colour. Very elegant. They remind me of patterns designed by William Morris at home and so popular there.*

*"Each room has a matching chandelier of translucent glass in various*

*shades of orangey brown. It is pretty during the day but wonderful when the lights are all turned on and the whole ceiling glows. A large window in the living room has stained glass borders.*

*"There is a swinging door leading to the kitchen which is really two kitchens, a summer and a winter. The summer kitchen was built separate from the house so that kitchen heat doesn't fill the whole house. There is a separate pantry, with a pump beside the sink as well as two taps. The pump is attached to a cistern in the basement that collects rain water for hair washing. Soft water makes your hair so much more beautiful. There is a hot as well as cold water tap. We don't have anything that luxurious.*

*"There is a back garden as well with a long narrow vegetable garden and in the corner next to the pasture and the barn, a privy. I asked Muriel why they kept it and she said she was surprised how many people preferred it to the toilet in the house. It was certainly more convenient for anyone working in the garden, and what if something went wrong with the new system?*

Just after the Gooderhams had moved in Isobelle visited Muriel. By that time, Muriel's mother Maggie was bedridden with tuberculosis. She relied on Muriel, her eldest daughter. The Gooderhams had a piano (another luxury) and sheet music so Isobelle amused herself by trying some of the pieces. She and Muriel both sang in the Methodist church choir. The minister started a literary club—a poet each month—and the two girls belonged to that as well.

They went to the movies.

*"After the show (a cowboy rescuing a girl from the Indians) there was a concert and a cinematograph. Just imagine my seeing that in Gleichen.*

*It was San Francisco before and after the earthquake. You should have heard the exclamations of surprise, particularly from the Indians.*

Everyone rode horses and Muriel lent Isobelle her riding habit to copy so Isobelle could fashion her own riding costume. But the girls were to learn that the main entertainment in Gleichen was dancing. The big dance of the year was the Ranchmen's Ball, but there were many others almost as grand. All the girls got dressed up.

*"I wore my black velvet skirt and my new blouse. I pulled the sleeves right up to the elbow and had on long black silk gloves and my little yellow fan with a black velvet ribbon on it. So, with Mother's shawl to top it off, I looked quite fine.*

They had to learn to dance the waltz.

*"Reversing was a problem but soon became the best part. There were quadrilles—sometimes a most fearful mix up. There was the Jersey two-step to learn—a business known as a pas-de-quatre. The French minuet was a new dance. Three steps forward, three steps back then a steppy business, a whirl then a waltz. The dancing might last till five in the morning and men rode as much as 60 miles to be there.*

*"Men? Well. Gentlemen in Britain would be put in the background by many of the men who came to the Gleichen dances. Even if they came in working clothes it didn't take long to tell who they really were. It does seem funny at first meeting so many men of good families speaking perfect English but wearing overalls instead of white collars. Boys from the bank are also much sought after. Gleichen has a very mixed population. There are a lot of Mormons and French people so we just dance with our own lot.*

There were lunches at midnight and the girls had to take their turn

preparing layer cakes either caramel or white, swiss rolls, little queen cakes filled with jelly, little ham sandwiches on brown or white bread.

Fashion was important with ladies wearing imported clothes from London:

*“But woe to those who step down from their carriage. Everything is mud, mud, mud filled with alkali and clay that sticks to everything. And mosquitoes, so many you can’t protect yourself and your whole face swells up. Muriel tells me that you get used to them after a while and their stings don’t hurt so much. I know I have a much worse time than she does, so I hope she’s right—and it doesn’t take years to become immune.*

There was also Calgary!

*“We came up to Calgary last night. The train was very late at Gleichen, 11 PM instead of 5:30, so we reached Calgary at 1:00 AM. I was perfectly astonished. Such a nice looking town, nice buildings and each one of them lit up. All the lights are left burning during the night. After dinner we went to see The Merchant of Venice which wasn’t bad.*

A year later, in 1908, Isobelle was to tell her parents that

*“Mrs. Gooderham is to take a long vacation with some friends of hers in Saskatchewan, for her health’s sake.*

Isobelle, and other friends in Gleichen, were never to see her alive again.



## GEORGE—Home, To Alberta

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### **Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1907**

John's son George graduated high school with a 'senior matic' in the Spring of 1907, with a 'supp' or two, but good enough to get him into university that Fall. There was time for him to go home and visit his parents in Gleichen. He had not been West in ten years and had only seen his parents if one or both traveled East. Many changes had been made. The family had not only moved from Saskatchewan to Alberta, but were in the process of moving again. This time they were going from the Peigan reserve in the south western part of Alberta, between Fort Macleod and Pincher Creek, to a town called Gleichen just east of Calgary. His father, John, had been made Agent of the Blackfoot reserve—an impressive promotion. George was both excited and worried about this reunion.

*"What would his family think of him?*

*"What would he think of them?*

It was scary. John sent George a cheque for \$50 to meet the expenses of the trip—that was a lot of money. George intended to save part of it to buy things he could not previously afford.

Searching for the cheapest way to get to Gleichen and back, he found there was a special fare called 'Harvester's Excursion' available in June and July to encourage Easterners to go west to help with the farming. The ten dollars got you as far as Winnipeg where you were given a form to fill out at the end of the season signed by the farmer to prove the young person had been working on a farm. When the form was approved you could purchase a return ticket to Ontario for \$18.

George and a friend, who wanted to go out west too, went to Toronto and

boarded a train. The coach looked very comfortable and they were very proud of themselves for obtaining such good accommodation at such a low price. But when the conductor saw their ticket he said,

*"Well, boys, you're on the wrong train.*

He did let them stay as far as North Bay. They got off with their luggage—a small bag with a change of clothes, an overcoat and a lunch that George's Aunt Jessie made for them. They waited and waited for a second class coach which they assumed would be less comfortable. When they boarded in the very early morning they discovered second class meant 'on your own.' The other travelers were much better prepared and had all ordered straw mattresses at a cost of 25 cents.

A quick examination made it clear why this expenditure was necessary. The seats were wooden slats, uncomfortable to sit on and worse for sleeping. They were designed to slide down to make a bed on which to put the straw mattress—if you had one. Unfortunately, the straw mattresses were all sold so our young adventurers went without. Their light overcoats were used as mattress or as pillow—not both. They did not sleep much.

George's friend left him in Winnipeg. Now alone but still in the harvester's part of the train, George discovered there was a tourist section reserved for families exploring Canada or looking for a new home. George's luck was with him. He met one of his teachers from Brampton traveling with his family for the summer. George was accepted as a guest.

You could cook food on a stove at the back of the car and make a cup of hot tea or coffee. Always hungry, George got off the train whenever the station had a small cafe and supplemented the lunch his teacher had given him..

Outside the train windows country that looked so familiar and home-like just ten years ago now seemed terribly bare. Where were the trees?

He did not recognize any Saskatchewan towns, even Regina remembered as a bustling metropolis now seemed mean and pokey. At Medicine Hat everything looked so barren he wondered if he could stick it. George was very depressed. The western prairie was flat as far as his eye could see with patches of trees only near scattered water holes. He did not recognize anything.

He started to cheer up after Medicine Hat, reminding himself that his mother and father, his sisters and brother were now only a few miles away. He had been told the Blackfoot reserve bordered the CPR line.

*"How soon would he see it?*

*"What would it look like?*

At that time Medicine Hat was a thriving little town—emphasis on little. There were no other towns between it and Gleichen. In fact, only Gleichen and Medicine Hat were between Calgary and the Saskatchewan border.

George had already learned some of the romance behind the name Gleichen by reading 'When The Steel Went Through' by P. Turner Bone. The CPR decided in the summer of 1883 it needed a divisional point at the 14th siding about 60 miles from Calgary bordering the Blackfoot Reserve. It was given the name Gleichen two or three years later in honour of a German count who had assisted in financing the CPR. George speculated, in his mind, about this very cosmopolitan beginning for such a rural hamlet. He would learn the remote little village of Gleichen was indeed more cosmopolitan than it seemed.

Much later, in 1939, Baron Von Stuterheim, a German newspaper correspondent, visited Gleichen and told George more about Gleichen's namesake. In Alberta Gleichen was pronounced Gleeshen. In Germany it was Glyken. And in Schleswig-Holstein, Gleichen was a famous name

according to Von Stuterheim.

*"In the 11th century, the first Count Gleichen, a crusader, whose home castle was in my native province of Schleswig-Holstein, went to the Turkish court in Constantinople on his way back from a crusade. He was there for some time and as his family did not accompany him the Sultan's favourite daughter became his constant companion. The Sultan was pleased and everyone was happy until the day the Count was ordered to return to his homeland. They would all miss him but they would miss the Princess even more.*

*"The Sultan voiced his regrets but stated that there was now a strong bond since his daughter was Count Gleichen's wife. This pronouncement put the Count into a bit of a dilemma because he had a wife and family awaiting his return to Germany.*

*"He pondered the situation and finally wrote his wife telling her everything, adding that if she wanted to see him again it must be with a second wife—the Sultan's daughter. She understood. On his return, the Count built a second castle and the two castles are still there today.*

That story added some romance to a town George was to find manufactured quite a bit on its own.

Gleichen finally appeared and George recognized his father, John, all alone on the station platform. There was some unsettling news. Muriel had contacted diphtheria and the whole family was quarantined. George would not be able to see them until the quarantine was lifted. The news was scary because in those days diphtheria was a killer.

*"Would Muriel recover?*

The bright side was that George got to live in a large marquee that had been set up on the lawn beside the house to accommodate Prince Arthur and his

party of visiting Royalty. They had stopped off in Gleichen to see how the Indians used to kill buffalo. A demonstration was held on the flats beside the CPR tracks where a large group of Blackfoot gathered. A large steer, acting as a 'stand in' for the buffalo, had been turned loose. One of the old hunters, Dying Young Man, had been chosen to show how the kill was made.

It was understood that, if Dying Young Man killed the animal with bow and arrow, it would be cut up and distributed among those attending the ceremony (an insurance of a large attendance). Dying Young Man chased it on horseback and shot it with so many arrows some observers suggested the animal looked like a pin cushion.

The Blackfoot rushed in to cut it up and divide the steer among themselves. The Prince chatted with his hosts and visiting dignitaries until it became more and more apparent there was a severe disagreement among the Blackfoot. John was new to the job and did not understand Blackfoot customs so was unable to give an explanation.

Finally an interpreter was found to solve the mystery. An old woman was demanding the 'guts' as was her right as an elder. In her opinion this was the best part of the animal. She got her way.

The custom still existed thirty years later. When the Gooderham family was young, cattle were butchered at the reserve slaughter house every week. Old women sat beside the building next to the cattle corral waiting. The animals were herded one at a time into a shoot, shot in the temple and dropped through a trap door into the building where they were strung up by the legs and their throats cut. Their warm blood was saved in a pail and the liver and other innards immediately removed. The whole carcass was cut into appropriate roasts in a matter of minutes. But the prized liver and kidneys belonged to the old women. The blood was also theirs and was often saved

to be used later.

Kent, George's son, remembers them sitting in a circle in the sun, each with a sharp knife in her hands, carving and eating the still warm liver. It was of course a perfect diet supplement for older women as the Blackfoot understood. No Blackfoot elder was going to allow the visit of some foreigner to change the rules.

The marquee was a fine place to live and cool in the hot summer months. George continued to sleep there even after Muriel recovered from diphtheria and he was reintroduced to the rest of his family. He was struck by how much older his mother looked. She was so grey. He assumed it was just the passing of time and did not ask questions. His sisters, even Muriel, were full of beans and ready and anxious to tease George about his Eastern ways. He remembered the three oldest siblings from the Saskatchewan days but had never met Ishbel and Jean. It was a full house.

George did not work on any of the farms but he did make himself useful looking after cattle near the agency. John also turned over a large, very attractive garden to George's care.

John had a very fine team of horses and more than one carriage was required by his position as Agent. One, very like a democrat but with a fringed top, was George's favourite. It was often used to drive visitors and senior officials around the reserve—sometimes a distance of ten or twenty miles from the Agency.

There were two residential schools on the reserve, one Catholic, in the east and one Anglican, in the west. There was also a small hospital operated by the Anglican Church, next to their school about five miles from the agency on the flats near the Bow River. This chauffeuring job made George feel useful but it was also interesting and informative for him. He met and

made friends with missionaries and famous visitors doing this chore.

He enjoyed going to town to see how the locals lived. At that time Gleichen was the centre of the ranching country. Ranchers and cowboys came into town from fifty to sixty miles around to do their buying, drinking and to have a little fun. They would stay for several days. The hotel, beer parlour and pool hall were the main centres of interest. George thought the men looked pretty wild—but what did they think of him? George had worn a pair of white duck trousers (canvas sailor pants) to Gleichen one evening and one of his sister's friends said,

*“Why is your brother wearing his underwear in town?*



## EDMUND MORRIS

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### Siksika Nation Reserve AB, 1907

While visiting his new home in Alberta there was a treat in store for George. He met the famous artist, Edmund Morris, who had been commissioned to paint portraits of western Indians and knew a lot about their history. Edmund's father, Alexander, had represented Queen Victoria at the signing of many of the western treaties including Treaty Seven with the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Stony and the Sarcee. Edmund spent most of the summer in 1907 on the Blackfoot reserve and George was often delegated to accompany him on his sketching trips and to take him to the homes of Blackfoot who had agreed to have their portraits painted. George and Edmund had several things in common. They both came from Ontario, were strangers to the West and would have to learn about the Blackfoot ways.

George realized soon after he arrived he could not spend the whole summer with one change of clothes. He asked his aunts to send him a trunk with his eastern clothes. When it arrived it contained a straw hat, a blue coat and white duck trousers, which, of course, he would be wearing in Toronto during the hot weather. He remembers one day proudly putting on this outfit. His father, still the brand new Agent, was having a meeting outside the Agency office to discuss a reduction in rations. At that time the Blackfoot were very poor and a reduction in support was not going to be looked upon with any sympathy.

George arrived, dolled up in his white duck trousers, blue jacket and stiff straw hat—the typical University of Toronto freshman, which he was to become that fall. He also had a brand new Kodak at the ready. What an opportunity—all these colourful men sitting around on the prairie.

Suddenly George noticed a very fierce-looking man arriving on horseback. He glared, then rode his horse full tilt straight at George. The Kodak flew and the white ducks were stained green as George rolled on the grass in his attempt to save his life. The straw hat went flying and was never the same again. Eastern dignity was gone along with Eastern duds.

George learned an important lesson about respect that day. The rider was Iron Shield, one of the three head chiefs of the Blackfoot. It was his dramatic way of telling George he counted for nothing in Blackfoot territory and had better wait in the background to see where he stood in the scale of things. Iron Shield was not a lover of whites and young white bucks had better proceed cautiously. Much later the two men would become friends when George replaced his father as Agent to the Blackfoot.

Edmund met Iron Shield that same summer with similar results. Edmund was anxious to paint Iron Shield's portrait. The chief was a striking figure famous for his anti-white point of view. He was also very angry because of the threatened cut in rations. All the authorities, including John, the agent, told Edmund he should forget the idea of painting Iron Shield's portrait, but Edmund was determined. He went to Iron Shield's camp with some young Blackfoot men and after Iron Shield had made it clear that many older Blackfoot had starved two years ago because there was not enough food, he agreed to discuss a fee for sitting.

All went well and Edmund was pretty proud of himself until the afternoon. He suggested Iron Shield might like to rest from time to time but Iron Shield wanted his portrait done right away. He sat on and on. Edmund did not understand that Blackfoot considered it quite normal to sit still for long periods of time. Suddenly Iron Shield jumped up with a yell, tore off his buckskin clothes, tossed them aside and stalked away naked.

Edmund was just as shocked as George had been earlier. He asked his

interpreter for an explanation, but of course there was none. Iron Shield had retreated to his house which had formerly been owned by Crowfoot, the famous Blackfoot chief and Iron Shield's relative. Inside, Iron Shield was aware of the consternation he had created. After some time he relented, came back out, shook hands with Edmund and agreed the sitting could resume the next day.

This time a still suspicious Iron Shield sat with a mirror in front of himself into which he stared during the entire sitting, carefully comparing what he saw in the mirror with what Edmund put on the canvas. It was a hard day's work for Edmund.

George and Edmund were able to laugh about their similar experience with Blackfoot men but only much later when both had been accepted and trusted by the Blackfoot. Edmund visited the Blackfoot reserve during the next four summers, from 1907 to 1910. He became good friends with the Gooderham family and particularly, George who, like Edmund, moved back and forth between Toronto and the Blackfoot reserve. In 1909, Edmund presented the Gooderham family with a pastel drawing of Crowfoot. It had a black wooden frame into which he carved a pictograph representing the signing of Treaty Seven between the Blackfoot and Queen Victoria.

A peace pipe joined the Blackfoot and their allies with the white men. In the upper right hand corner of the painting he also wrote Crowfoot's name in Blackfoot syllabics. John had a framed collection of photographs Edmund had made of portraits of famous Indians. Appropriately, they were hung right beside a signed photograph of Duncan Campbell Scott, Superintendent of Indian Affairs. He was a poet and great friend of Edmund's who had influenced Scott's administration of Indian Affairs. Scott wrote one of his most famous poems about Edmund after Edmund

drowned in the St. Lawrence River.

But in 1907 George and Edmund were discovering a great deal about the Blackfoot together. Both men were interested in the Blackfoot as individuals and how their lives differed from other people living in Canada. George remembered his childhood spent with the Cree, Edmund his father's stories about the signing of the treaties and his father's deep respect for the Indian people.

Edmund and George went to the North Camp—actually in the west but so-called because it was where Blackfoot from the most northerly part of their territory chose to live. Appropriately, the South camp was in the eastern part of the reserve. That geographical anomaly interested George. Edmund's explanation was both surprising and illuminating. He said the designation referred to the past when the North Camp of Blackfoot hunted around the Saskatchewan River while the South Camp hunted in the southern part of what is now Alberta and the United States.

Edmund had also been told that the Catholics, or Romanists, as they were often called in the early days, first came to Blackfoot territory in 1883. Father Doucette, who was to be Edmund's translator and friend, called on Chief Crowfoot (of the South Camp) and asked if he might instruct his people in Christian beliefs. Crowfoot agreed and a mission was established. At almost the same time an Anglican minister named Tims arrived. He also went to Crowfoot who turned him down. Tims went next to Old Sun, chief of the North Camp, who allowed him to start a mission.

Things went quite smoothly with Doucette and the Catholics but it was a rougher journey for the Anglicans. Soon after Tims had established the Mission, Low Horn, a chief, offered his two daughters to the missionary. Tims declined. Low Horn arrived later with money he had borrowed from a white money lender. Tims still said 'No'.

Low Horn and the whole North Camp were insulted and Tims was invited to leave before the Blackfoot threw him and his belongings into the Bow River. The Bishop had to come and explain that Tims could not have two wives and could not accept any wife as a gift. He was able to pacify the Blackfoot. Tims was accepted under these new strange provisos and from then on the South camp was Catholic and the North Camp Anglican. The South Camp Catholic residential school was named the Crowfoot School and the North Camp Anglican school was called the Old Sun School after the North Camp Head Chief.

George was not surprised to hear about the Catholic and Protestant differences. But more curious, he learned the Blackfoot had not always lived where the whites found them. The next question was: Where did they come from? Were they immigrants? The answer surprised George.

According to Edmund, Father Doucette of the Crowfoot mission, had learned from Running Wolf, a Blackfoot historian, that the Blackfoot lived in what is now northern Alberta in the Lesser Slave Lake area.

They were forest rather than plains people and hunted and fought on foot, using dogs to pull their belongings on a travois when they moved from place to place. When the Spaniards arrived in Mexico they brought horses with them. Some escaped and some were stolen by local tribes who recognized their great value. Herds of wild horses roamed throughout what is now northern Mexico and the southern United States.

Running Wolf said when the Blackfoot saw the southern Indians on horseback they knew they had to have horses. Young Blackfoot men caught wild horses when they could and went on raiding parties to steal horses from enemy tribes. The Blackfoot quickly learned how to master the horse and became famous for their horsemanship. Only the old people preferred to walk.

Running Wolf went on to say there was an ancient fortification on the reserve which had not been built by the Blackfoot or by the Crow who had occupied the territory before the Blackfoot. It was the work of a tribe who ruled the land in the ancient days before the Crow. The Crow had used it when they were attempting to defend their land from the Blackfoot.

He also said the Blackfoot got their name when raiding parties went south and often walked through country that had been burned over. When they were first spotted by the southern people the soles of their moccasins were black.

As the Blackfoot mastered the skills of raising, training and riding horses they left the protection of the forest and moved out onto the plains, forcing those who lived there to move farther south.

Edmund wondered if the Crow Indians might have reconstructed the fortification near the south camp when they were defending their country against the Blackfoot. Edmund said he was told that when the Blackfoot Confederacy made up of the Blackfoot, Blood and Peigan tribes moved south they found the Crows occupying the land. They fought them at what is now High River, three miles from the mouth of that river where it empties into the Bow.

The Blackfoot were victorious and fought a second big battle just below what was later called Blackfoot Crossing on the Blackfoot reserve. It was there that Treaty Seven was signed with Queen Victoria.

Edmund believed the Crow or even earlier people had dug huge pits as part of a defence strategy against enemies. He couldn't resist visiting the site. He found a horseshoe-shaped trench with ten large pits fifteen feet in diameter and six feet deep. When he and his Blackfoot helpers dug one out they found a fire had been built in the centre perhaps to illuminate the night so

the enemy could not creep up on them unawares. They also found thin gray pottery and a stone with designs cut into it. The Blackfoot were not potters and neither were the Crow. Who were these earlier inhabitants? Edmund hoped the earthworks would be preserved in their original form. He piled stones to mark the last stand of the Crows when the Blackfoot took over their country.

The Blackfoot had a few flint-lock rifles obtained from traders in the north. Although most warriors still used a bow and arrow, they drove the Crow out of the country as far as the Missouri River. Edmund said that at that time the Cree and Blackfoot were allies. This information came as a big surprise to George. He had spent his early childhood with the Cree in Saskatchewan and he 'knew' the Cree and Blackfoot were enemies.

A little reflection taught him one of the truths of history. When the Cree and the Blackfoot were both moving south onto the plains they had much in common. Both were pushing out former owners. Once the two tribes had reached their new territory they had to establish their presence and defend it, quite often against their former friends.

When Edmund returned in 1910 he asked two Blackfoot, Spring Chief and Wolf Collar, the famous shaman, to bring teams and ploughs to examine the old site. About eight or twelve inches under the surface they found pieces of pottery, buffalo bones and antelope horns. In some places they discovered human bones and shell earrings. In another they unearthed a fireplace where they found stone tools used for arrow making and food preparation. Wolf Collar was a nephew of the old leader Running Wolf, who had told him about the Crow fortification and said the hollow in the centre of the earthworks was used by the Crow to confine their horses.

One Gun, a more recent Blackfoot historian, said that Edmund was wrong, and that the fort had not belonged to the Crow but to another earlier group.

## He also disputed the war with the Crow.

Note: Many years later, when George was working with Calgary's Glenbow Foundation during the 1960s, he mentioned this archeological site to Dr. Richard (Dick) Forbis, archaeologist for the Foundation. He subsequently investigated the site. According to Forbis, a Hudson's Bay employee named Peter Findler had recorded, in his diary dated 1800, that he passed a point along the Bow River where there were seven circular mud houses which he surmised were about twenty years old. The Indians who were there at the time said the houses had been made by a war party from the Missouri. Neither Forbis nor any other historian has been able to ascertain exactly who built the houses or whether they were part of the fortification. It brought history into focus for George. Not only had the Blackfoot just recently come to this area, even their predecessors may have been recent immigrants.

## Holy Paint

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Today

an ancient artist

said

colour is music and God

And

Brush strokes

are lost

when

they don't have rhythm

and

can't sing

God's song

It's sent through grissle and guts and gonads

until they're full enough

to feel enough

to

dance enough

to

paint enough

And to

sing the song of colour

And then

the people world

will no longer hear

what they see

they will hear

what you see.

## What is life?

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What is life?

It is the flash of a firefly in the night

It is the breath of the buffalo in the winter time.

It is the little shadow the runs across the grass  
and loses itself in the Sunset.

-Chief Crowfoot



### Chief Crowfoot—Blackfoot

Photographed by Alex Ross, c. 1885. Chief Crowfoot (aka Isapo-Muxika) was a chief of the Siksika First Nation. His parents, Istowun-eh'pata (Packs a Knife) and Axkahp-say-pi (Attacked Towards Home), were Kainai. His brother Iron Shield became Chief Bull. He was only five when Istowun-eh'pata was killed during a raid on the Crow tribe, and a year later, his mother remarried to Akay-nehka-simi (Many Names) of the Siksika people. The young boy was adopted by the Siksika, who gave him the name (Bear Ghost), until he could receive his father's name. Head Chief of the South Siksika, by 1870 one of three Head Chiefs of the Siksika or the Blackfoot proper.

# CROWFOOT

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## Siksika Nation Reserve AB, 1907

Through Edmund Morris, George was to meet many of the Blackfoot leaders and learn their stories. He also heard about Cree chiefs such as Big Bear. On his trip west Edmund had stopped in Winnipeg to visit one of his father's old friends, Col. Acheson G. Irvine. In the days just before the second Rebellion, Col. Irvine was tracking Big Bear for the crime of blocking surveyors from mapping the country. While Irvine was still searching for Big Bear he met two Blood Indians who took him back to their camp. Irvine felt at home with the Bloods because they had always supported law and order and the North West Mounted Police.

According to Irvine it was night and a fire was burning as all the warriors came in and seated themselves around the fire. Suddenly they stood up, threw off their blankets and stood stark naked in their full war paint with Winchester rifles in their hands. They performed a war dance and announced they would follow Irvine until Big Bear was killed. Irvine was pleased with this show of support but said he would send for them only if he had to. The political scene was very complex at the time and the last thing Irvine wanted to do was to re-ignite old Cree-Blackfoot animosities. Big Bear was detained several times and eventually imprisoned, a controversial action even today.

## Cutter Woman's Portrait

In 1907, Crowfoot and Old Sun, two of the most famous Blackfoot, were dead but Crowfoot's widow, The Cutter Woman, was still alive. She sat for the first portrait Edmund Morris painted during his 1907 trip. At first she demurred saying,

*“But why does the white man want to paint my portrait? I am nothing but skin and bones.*

The Blackfoot were polygamous so The Cutter Woman was neither Crowfoot's first wife nor his only wife but Crowfoot valued her highly. She always accompanied him and was known as his 'sits beside him wife.' Of Crowfoot's many sons only one, Bear's Ghost (Ka Ye Star Oh) was still alive. Crowfoot had also been called Bear's Ghost as a young man, before his status changed, as per Blackfoot custom. Crowfoot's son, Bear's Ghost, was totally blind. His wife, Susie, (formerly called Without A Doubt A Bear) had to look after him entirely. They had one son, Joseph (Joe), a handsome boy and man who would become Head Chief and a significant man in the lives of the Blackfoot and the Gooderhams. In 1907, however, as widow of the great Crowfoot, The Cutter Woman was boss of the small family. Both Susie and son Joe often quarreled with The Cutter Woman, but they were devoted to her and she always got her way.

#### Cree and Blackfoot

Through Edmund's many amazing stories about Crowfoot, George began to see the famous Blackfoot chief as a much more complex and intriguing individual. Before the white man's diseases took his children, one after another, Crowfoot had a large family. One son got into trouble with a white man with whom he had been drinking in a saloon. The two chased each other across the prairie. Suddenly Crowfoot's son turned and faced his pursuer ready for a final confrontation. Faced by the angry Blackfoot warrior, the white man escaped as fast as he could and ran to the police telling them his version of the incident. The fat was in the fire. Crowfoot was not only seen as a king throughout the country because of his great administrative ability, but was Head Chief of the whole Confederacy—Blackfoot, Blood and Piegan. He had the power to protect his son if he

wished.

The North West Mounted Police, who had just established themselves to bring order to the country, were anxious to establish a reputation for fairness and firmness. Their leaders, Col. Macleod and Col. Irvine, were afraid this incident might lead to real trouble, but they knew they had to instill respect for the law. Crowfoot's son was tried and given two months imprisonment for attempted murder. The Chief listened quietly to all the proceedings and then asked to speak to his son. A hush fell over the court room. There was great consternation. What would happen now? Crowfoot walked up to his son, stepped back a pace or two, pointed his finger and said,

*"I warned you to go to three places only, the barracks, the store and the H.B.C. post. You went to saloons and other places where you met bad men. Now go and take your punishment.*

#### Poundmaker

Edmund also learned that at the time of the rebellion, Crowfoot was very much against the government. Likely he would have joined with the Cree had he been living closer to them. Crowfoot supported his adopted son, Poundmaker, the Cree Chief who led his people in the Rebellion. Edmund said Crowfoot had lost a son in one of the many wars between the tribes. When he saw Poundmaker's strong resemblance to his dead son, Crowfoot went to the young man's mother and said

*"Your son is my son. I will adopt him." This was a great honour for Poundmaker and his family. Poundmaker's mother said to him. "Go! Follow this man.*

When Crowfoot adopted Poundmaker, the Cree and the Blackfoot were at war. Poundmaker, who came to know and respect the Blackfoot, persuaded

the Cree to stop fighting and make peace with the Blackfoot.

Crowfoot was proud of his adopted son, Poundmaker, and his fight for independence. He was deeply depressed when Poundmaker was captured and imprisoned when the Rebellion failed.

Both Edmund and his father, Alexander, were great admirers of Poundmaker. Edmund recalls going into his father's study one day during the Rebellion days and finding him very depressed. His father said

*"Poundmaker has been imprisoned.*

According to Edmund, Crowfoot was both cunning and farsighted. He could see the wisdom of supporting the whites who would soon arrive in their thousands. Father Doucette, a missionary at the Crowfoot School, was convinced that at the time of the signing of Treaty Seven, Crowfoot had a better understanding of the situation than did Commissioner Dewdney, who negotiated the Treaty for the Queen in 1877. Consequently Crowfoot was able to

*"out smart Dewdney every time*

and introduce terms to the Treaty which favoured the Blackfoot.

Father Doucette said the Blackfoot knew, almost on a daily basis, what was happening during the Rebellion and he personally saw the Cree escaping into the United States, hiding among the bushes by the river just south of his mission.

Accompanied by Father Doucette, Edmund visited Poundmaker's grave on the Blackfoot reserve. Poundmaker died in 1886 during their visit, after Poundmaker's imprisonment. His grave was all grown over with grass and the original cross had decayed. A mass of strawberry plants concealed the whole plot. Edmund and John Drunken Chief, Crowfoot's nephew, cleaned

up the plot and placed stones from the Bow River around it. Edmund inscribed Poundmaker's name on a wooden cross using the ancient Indian sign of the four cardinal points. The two men also marked Crowfoot's last camp. They made a large circle for the tipi and a smaller one for the fire place. Both circles are still there. It is a beautiful place on the edge of the Bow River overlooking the valley.

#### Crowfoot's Power

Another story of Edmund's showed Crowfoot's absolute power over his people. Once some Blackfoot were camped near the Bloods. Both were drinking whiskey and in a dispute, one of the Bloods was killed. Crowfoot called for the murderer and shot him dead himself. Another time a prairie fire was sweeping down toward the camp. The people saw it but seemed unable to organize a strategy to stop it. When Crowfoot came out of his lodge he ordered everyone to go and put out the fire. They acted immediately and successfully.

At the time of his last illness it was said Crowfoot told the people not to mourn. He would die and in three days come back to life. He then fell into a trance. No one would let the doctor take Crowfoot's pulse but the doctor placed his hand on Crowfoot's ankle and knew that he was alive. After the three days Crowfoot regained consciousness and told the people not to worry, but it was the beginning of the end.

When he died the whole Blackfoot nation was stunned. On the reserve even the dogs seemed to know. Not a sound was to be heard. Crowfoot was buried underground in the Christian way but his brother, Three Bulls, claimed he could hear Crowfoot kicking up the dust in an attempt to free himself. The Blackfoot believed that the spirit would have great difficulty freeing itself from the body if the body was covered with a box and with earth. A compromise was reached and the coffin was raised nearer to the

surface.

#### **Joe and Susie Crowfoot 1907**

By the time George was on the reserve in 1907 Crowfoot's daughter-in-law, Susie, and his grandson, Joe, were living in a house near the agency and looking after blind Bear's Ghost.

At that time the Blackfoot were very poor. The Band's herd of cattle ran together but was individually owned—ownership being shown by a numbered brand. The terrible winter of 1906 - 07 nearly wiped out the Crowfoot herd and Susie went out to work for agency staff and for people in the village of Gleichen, washing clothes and scrubbing floors. Her earnings augmented the subsistence government rations so the Crowfoots and some of their friends lived better than those who could not find work. Susie was friendly and outgoing and understood English well enough to joke with anyone she met on the street. She was known for her wit and back chat and was not adverse to a little firewater if offered. She was a colourful attraction in the town and her son, Joe, shared in this jovial acceptance.

One of the Gleichen families remembers that Susie, then in her sixties, used to baby-sit them and help around the house. She hadn't learned enough English so the family learned Blackfoot. She had many Blackfoot visitors who were curious about how the whites lived. Susie would explain what the family was having for dinner and if it sounded good to the visitors they would stay for dinner. No one objected.

*“Some meals at our house looked more like a potlatch than a normal meal.*

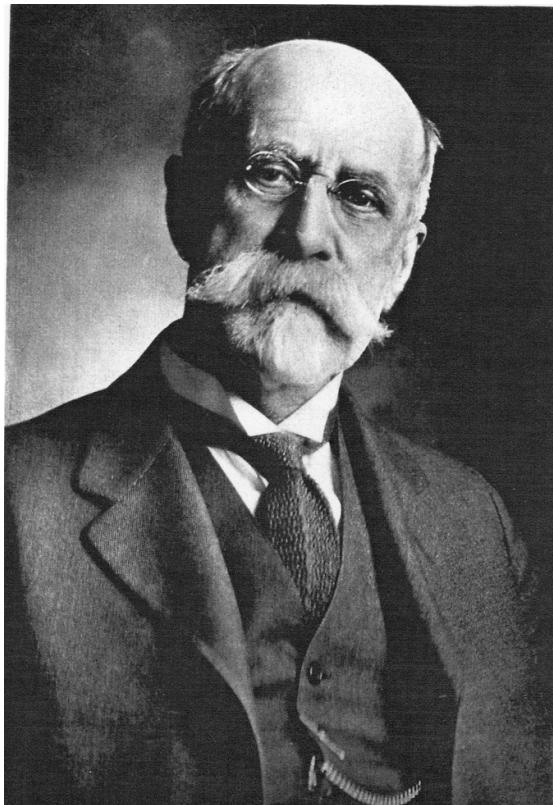
Susie was a great help to the Gooderhams and to many other families. All her 'families' enjoyed her visits.

Joe Crowfoot should have attended school but Susie said he was needed

to look after his blind father. He quite often accompanied his mother from house to house. He was a bright, attractive boy who spoke English. Everyone liked him which translated into lots of treats and extra food.

In 1912, when the band was rich from the sale of land, they built a comfortable two-room house for the Crowfoots a mile south of Gleichen and just east of the Agency. They also put Susie and Bear's Ghost on relief. Joe got employment with the government stockman and was no longer at home so Susie retired to look after her husband, now bedridden.

When Bear's Ghost died, a few years later, Susie and Joe placed his body and his personal belongings, unburied in the Blackfoot manner, on a hill overlooking the small pond which faced the house. People started calling the pond Susie's Slough. It was difficult to imagine how this fair sized body of water could materialize in the middle of the prairie so the story grew that it was made from Susie's tears.



**William George Gooderham – 1853 - 1935**

"W.G." Son of George Sr. the third son of Old Willaim,  
Ezekiel's brother and cousin of Old George.

## GEORGE– The Student

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Toronto ON, 1908

After the summer of 1907, John's son George returned to Ontario. The summer had been a major education for him. He learned how Southern Alberta was still pioneer and Indian territory but quite different from Saskatchewan after the Rebellion where poor and hungry pioneers struggled through drought in the summer and freezing temperatures in the winter.

The Alberta pioneers were frequently remittance men—younger sons of British aristocratic families sent out to the colonies to make their way, but with an allowance from home. The Blackfoot were settled on a reservation and were soon to become very rich by selling land at the top of a land speculation bonanza. George was impressed by Albertans and somewhat ambivalent about leaving for the University of Toronto and returning to the conservative but high-living Toronto establishment.

As soon as George returned to Meadowvale, his grandfather, Old George, set about advancing his status and career. He was proud of his handsome grandson and anxious that his university studies be a success followed by a career in the huge Gooderham empire which now spread across the whole country. He arranged for a visit with the head of the Gooderham family business in Toronto, William George, or W.G., as he was called.

At the appointed time, George and his grandfather, Old George, appeared at the Flat Iron Building in downtown Toronto. It was built by W.G.'s father George Sr. who, at the time of his death, was the richest man in Canada. As he had been among first arrivals from England, he had been not only rich but also appreciative of the life Canada had provided him and his family. He made no attempt to avoid his succession taxes which were more than

enough to retire the entire debt of the Ontario Government!

W.G. now occupied the President's office, a huge room in the triangle shaped "Flatiron" building with windows looking east toward the distillery and most of the city. Toronto had not yet moved west and the Gooderham's had done their best to prevent such a move by building a luxury hotel named after King Edward just down the street. Their aim was to ensure the centre of the city and the centre of the Gooderham empire remained one and the same.

The Meadowvale cousins were ushered into W.G.'s office. He sat at a huge mahogany desk with a thick glass top inherited from his father. The only items on the desk were a blotter in a leather frame, a chronometer in a case, a standard building brick full of matches in its hollow and a large ashtray for pipe ashes. There was no telephone. W.G. hated phones.

George was fascinated by W.G.'s appearance—full beard and mustache, a trifle thin on top, dressed in a business suit with high collar and dark tie—no surprises there. It was his eyes. They looked through glasses which sat on his nose without any other support. George had difficulty not staring, a childhood trait which would stay with him all his life. He had never seen a pince-nez before. Would they pop off when W.G. least expected it? Another surprise came when W.G. stood up. He was six-foot two, taller than George by two inches and just as ramrod straight.

George was thankful not to face this interview alone. Fortunately it was all easy going for his grandfather who had worked for the firm under both Old William and W.G.'s father, George Sr. He also knew that W.G. (much his junior) was intrigued by the idea of helping the 'wild Indian' Gooderham boy become civilized and might possibly teach some of his city cousins a thing or two along the way.

George did not disappoint. He looked every bit the successful student and much better turned out than W.G. had thought possible. One of George's talents was a keen sense of style. Not only did he look good, he could talk. He was a born story teller and would weave tantalizing stories for private audiences all his life. W.G. was impressed. He agreed to give the student a small allowance and to introduce him to all the family.

The first introduction was to his son, Leys (John Leys), who was a year older than George and already at University. Leys would end up studying chemistry, much to the satisfaction of W.G.'s brother, Albert, who had taken over the management of the distillery. Albert would hire Leys when the distillery was turned over to producing acetone for the government during World War I. Ironically, Albert would be working for the teetotaler Joseph Flavelle who hated everything the Gooderham business stood for (except the industry and dedication). Both Albert Gooderham and Joseph Flavelle were knighted, Joseph holding out, successfully, for an hereditary title. Leys, who became chief chemist when whiskey was still being produced, took his four-year-old son, Peter, up on the top catwalks to see how it all worked. It was a little too early in Peter's life for such an experience and in spite of holding on tight to his father's hand he later admitted he threw up spraying every level of the plant.

Another cousin George's age was Gibbs Blackstock, who was also at the University. Gibbs and Leys would help introduce their western cousin to society—including life outside university where they were known for their sailing and other athletic skills—very much to George's liking.

As for the rest of the relatives—Gooderhams, Blackstocks, Gibbs, Worts, and the rest of Toronto—W.G. let it be known that young George had his backing and support. On his part George would present himself before W.G. and give a report each month. George would be invited to the family

Sunday gatherings where he would meet many relatives. W.G. would also introduce him to the business community.

Starting in 1905, when W.G. inherited the King Edward hotel, until 1930 when he sold it, W.G. hosted a lunch every weekday for male family members and other Toronto businessmen. He made a table available for about a dozen men who were honoured to be invited, made great business contacts and received an excellent lunch. George was given an open invitation to join the group as often as he could.

All the big Gooderham houses were open to George—and there were a lot—as well as those owned by other prominent families such as the Pellats, the Cawthras and the Oslers. All of W.G.'s family used to meet at his house for tea on Sunday. In the winter it was at the family home called Alberthorp (in the woods) on a beautiful wooded lot at the corner of Elm and Sherbourne—or Albermere (on the sea) on Centre Island in the summer. There were five Gooderham houses in a row—W.G.'s big house and four others. According to Peter Gooderham, Leys' son, when the Gooderhams came out to get their mail they frequently heard people on the boardwalk gossiping about all the Gooderhams living in these houses.

All the cousins would be there and have a great time at their grandfather's place. W.G. had a large assortment of Japanese artifacts and costumes (a gift from one of his Japanese associates. They were just the right size for the children who had a great time staging wars with one another. Peter claims the whole family knew which uncles had been partying too much (something which happened frequently). They were the ones who didn't show up. It often included his father, John Leys. Peter Gooderham said all his father had to do was smell the cork to become inebriated.

W.G. didn't like being in the whiskey business. He never drank it and you couldn't get a drink of it at his house. Society was not the same as it had

been in Old William's day. In the 1870s the distillery produced one third of all the spirits in Canada, building up a pool of capital with which the family could buy farms, the Bank of Toronto, Manufacturers Life and the Toronto & Nipissing Railway.

The Methodists with their temperance message were becoming more and more dominant. The public mood shifted towards moderation, then temperance and finally Prohibition. W.G.'s favourite sister Harriet Victoria had married into the Gibbs-Blackstock family, famous for its strong temperance stand. Her husband, Thomas Gibbs Blackstock was a mainstay of the Gooderham business and responsible for the vast mining interests the family was accumulating. It is very likely that W.G. saw the end of the whiskey business coming long before a man called Harry Hatch arrived with his initial offer to purchase the distillery in 1923 and a successful bid in 1926 with the amalgamated Hiram Walker and Sons. The name was to change, officially, to Hiram-Walker Gooderham and Worts Ltd.

George was deeply impressed by the overwhelming acceptance he received. Although he acknowledged the major factor in his success was the enormous respect W.G. enjoyed, he also

*"was very much lionized and I'm afraid it went to my head - in fact I know it did.*

He was later to reflect that he did not handle his immediate fame with great maturity. But W.G. continued his support and Toronto appreciated George's charm and his stories about the Cree Sun Dance, Red River carts, the arrival of the Sioux into Canada after their famous battle with Custer.

He reminisced about days spent playing with children whose fathers and grandfathers had fought against Custer at the Little Big Horn and had fled to asylum in Canada's North West Territories. He could regale his relatives

with stories of the Riel Rebellion. It had taken place just before his birth and was still a topic for discussion in the North West Territories around Regina where he had spent his first six years speaking Cree. George could also tell exciting tales about his experiences with fierce Blackfoot warriors, the famous artist William Morris, and Alberta's remittance men who were members of famous European aristocratic families. It was romantic stuff for the very proper and conservative Gooderhams.

George had to dress the part. There was little or no money from home and W.G.'s allowance would not cover the expenses he had in mind. Again his good looks and athletic build, as well as his last name and the name of his sponsor, came to his rescue. Leading tailors were happy to dress him free of charge. All George had to do was mention where he had 'purchased' the outfit.

He had to choose the fraternity he would join. Both Leys Gooderham and Gibbs Blackstock were Zetes (Zeta Psi). George would be welcome. The Zetes all came from very rich families and George hesitated. He had chosen to specialize in political science where he had met another student, Creasor Crawford, from Winnipeg. It was a friendship which lasted the rest of their lives. Creasor belonged to a local fraternity called Psi Delta Psi and persuaded George to join with him there. He surmised correctly that he might have more in common with this group of ambitious but less affluent men than with the young men whose social position had already determined their future. It did not escape George's notice that Creasor was very good friends with a pretty, young, dark-haired student, Mary Kentner, who would also be very much involved in his future. It seemed to him that Mary was surprised but pleased to see this Meadowvale face at University, sponsored by W.G. Gooderham and a friend of Creasor Crawford. New found friends and relatives accepted George's decision to join the Psi Delta Psi and doors remained open.

One set of doors was perhaps opened wider because of this choice. He met Mrs. Emily Rogers, daughter of Henry Pellat Sr. who was famous as a broker along with E.B. Osler in the setting up of the Dominion and Imperial Banks. She was also the sister of Sir Henry Pellat, knighted by Queen Victoria for his part in the second Riel Rebellion. Immensely wealthy, Sir Henry was also building what would be Toronto's largest private home, Casa Loma, on a huge property between Bloor and St. Clair looking down over the whole city of Toronto. It was being designed and furnished as a showpiece which meant huge receptions and balls. George was invited.

Mrs. Rogers held a salon for talented young people and one of her favourite guests was an engineering student, Dave (D.W.) Harvey, who happened to be George's fraternity brother and roommate. George was welcome too. In fact, Dave encouraged his attendance because of the Roger's daughter, Amy. Mrs. Rogers thought Dave would make a perfect husband—bright, attractive, and ambitious. George's responsibility was to deflect this attention as Dave's interests lay elsewhere. George appears to have been very successful in gaining Amy's approval if not her mother's. He became very close friends with both the Rogers and the Pellats.

Henry Pellat Sr. had built a summer resort on the shores of Lake Couchiching near Orillia which was famous for its running streams, its drives, tennis courts and croquet lawns. There was an orchard and vegetable garden known for the quality of its produce. There was also a steam launch and smaller pleasure boats. To this Sir Henry added a farm north of Toronto, at King, famous for its roses. George was to spend vacations at both of these pleasure domes. More parties. More excursions. Not much time for studies even though George professed to have enjoyed many if not all lectures.

He was not a dedicated student. In 1907 the Ontario school system had two

separate graduation standards. The first was called junior matriculation which was accepted as entrance to the first year of University. The second, requiring an additional year of schooling was called senior matriculation and enabled the graduate to enter the second year of university. George chose the second route and graduated with a senior matriculation (two courses missing). But he opted to enter first rather than second year at University. He knew his weakness as a student and suspected he would need some advantages if he was to succeed. Repeating much of the work he had taken in his last year of high school should give him a much needed advantage.

But he made so many new friends through his Gooderham connections that studying—or even attending class—took second place. In addition to a very heavy social life George was also interested in politics and spent many hours in the public gallery of the legislature instead of at classes—with one significant exception.

The head of the Political Science Department was a ‘grizzly old chap’ called James Mavor who appears never to have graduated from University but was internationally respected for his intellect and understanding and particularly his knowledge of the Russian economy. He was a friend of Count Leo Tolstoy and helped him persuade the Canadian government to accept the Doukhobors, a Russian sect, into Canada. George was entranced by James Mavor and impressed with the staff he had collected around him. George never missed Professor Mavor’s classes but he continued to ignore the others.

As might be expected, George did not pass his two supplementals at the end of the year but was allowed to continue providing he cleared up this deficiency the next year. He did return to University in the fall, but he continued his old habits. He moved into the fraternity house at the corner

of Bloor and St. George, just across the street from the mansion built by W G's father, George Gooderham, and around the corner from Gibbs Blackstock's parent's equally grand home.

It was also just down the street from the University and was filled with seniors who were serious students. It should have been an ideal place for George to change his ways but he was having too much fun and W.G. continued to have faith in him. He may have found this upstart young relative a breath of fresh air. George admits during one interview W.G.'s brother, also a George, who was visiting at the same time, said

*"Do you know this young man is using your name all over the city?"*

W.G.'s response was,

*"Well, it's his name too."*

That was the end of the opposition and George went on using W.G.'s name and influence which he discovered was enormous. He would later discover W.G. had influence just about everywhere.

W.G.'s sons and grandsons believed he had spies everywhere—or at least knew everything about everybody all the time. Suddenly you might be called into his office by his secretary Arthur Balm, a delightful man according to Leys, who was the one to call you up. Your phone would ring and Arthur would say,

*"Mr. Leys, your father would like to see you at 11 tomorrow."*

Then he would hang up. No reply was necessary. Just show up.

Peter Gooderham says

*"My father, Leys, arrived there one day when everyone was getting hell. It was much later, at the end of the twenties just at the time of the 1929*

*crash.*

W.G. said

*“You didn’t do what I told you to do, did you?*

Leys had been told to sell his 10,000 nickel shares. He wasn’t able to sell them in Toronto without spooking the market so he had to go to New York where he did sell most of them. How could his father know he had bought them back? But W.G. softened the admonition by saying

*“Well, you weren’t as bad as Alex. He lost two million.*

On the way out Leys ran into his brother, Alex, waiting for his interview.

*“By the way you’re a damn fool.*

*“Who says so?*

*“Father says so. You lost two million dollars.*

*“Father’s the fool this time. It was nine million.*

According to Leys’ son, Peter, W.G. decided around 1923, when they sold the distillery to Hatch, that his sons didn’t need any money. They were all millionaires. That’s when he started giving his money away to his own private charities. One of the rules was that the recipient must never mention where the money came from. In four or five years he gave away 14 million dollars or more. Most of the family was against this largesse. They considered the money theirs. After all he had inherited it from his father. Shouldn’t he be responsible for guarding it for future generations? Wouldn’t it be better to establish a family trust for all his descendants as the Masseys had done?

Since George did not pass the supplementals he could not enter fourth year without clearing them which meant doing all of the third year over. But

George had no future mapped out for himself.

Reality threatened!



## MARGARET

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### Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1908

George's university career was seriously interrupted in 1908. His mother, Margaret had suffered from consumption for many years. Now dangerously ill his father, John, urged George to come home to Gleichen during the summer break.

At that time the C.P.R. gave students a special rate from Toronto to western Canada - round trip for \$60 with part of it by boat. The boat trip included meals at no extra cost, a great plus. George's friend and fraternity brother, Creasor Crawford, from Winnipeg, was looking forward to spending the summer with his family at their island cottage in Lake of the Woods near Kenora, Ontario. The two students decided to make the trip west together.

It was agreed that George should stop over in Winnipeg to visit Creasor's family in their large home at 270 Roslyn Road. Creasor's mother, Lily, was a widow. Her husband, Horace Edgar, a prominent Q. C. in Winnipeg, died in 1903 when he was only forty-one years old. Lily was thirty-eight at the time and pregnant with their fifth child which she later miscarried. In spite of this Lily built and furnished a very elegant home on the banks of the Assiniboine river in the heart of Winnipeg's most fashionable district. It was the kind of house George had grown used to visiting in Toronto.

George was amazed Creasor's mother could accomplish so much and also educate her four children (two boys and two girls) in Canada and in Europe. Of course she had the moral support of her business-minded mother and her sister, Georgie Burroughs, as well as Georgie's husband, Theodore, one of Winnipeg's most successful business men and later Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba.

When George first met Creasor it never crossed his mind the meeting would have such a profound affect on his future. First, Creasor would introduce George to Mary Kentner who would become George's wife, and much later, George's son Kent (Kentner) would leave Gleichen to go to Winnipeg's Ravenscourt School, where he would meet Creasor's family and later marry Creasor's daughter, Helen.

After his visit with the Crawford family and their friends George was more than a little lonely on the rest of the trip to Gleichen. Knowing he would soon face an invalided mother increased his feelings of dejection. George suspected the fun and games part of the trip was over.

Margaret had gone to Saskatchewan to visit with her very old friend from the Touchwood Hills days, Margaret von Lindeburgh, hoping that a visit with friends away from all responsibilities would help her recover.

George's younger sister, Ishbel, remembers her mother's death in the surreal manner of most children who witness experiences they don't quite understand. Ishbel thought her mother was fine at the time and saw the two women off to Punnichy on the train. The two women were among the first pioneers to venture into 'Indian territory' and had much in common even to sharing the same first name, Margaret.

Ishbel speculated later,

*"I suppose she wasn't fine but we children didn't notice. Anyway she went for this trip and I can remember her writing to my father, Dear Hub, she would say. She always called him that. When she took really ill there they had to send her home with a nurse on the train. My father and George (he was home then) went in the little buggy to bring her from the station. George carried her into the house and upstairs into the centre bedroom. I remember we all went in to see her. Anyway my*

*mother lived that night and I think she was just bound she'd see us all. And then she was home. And that was nice. And George was there. She had to be carried because she was now too weak to stand.*

*"I was sitting in the back bedroom, the one just beside the stairs and next to the bathroom and I could hear all the sounds of people moving about and fixing things, and all at once everything was still. And I can remember I thought maybe my mother had died. It was just an intellectual thing for me. Oh it was dreadful for my father. But you know when you're a child. Children don't suffer like adults. They don't realize what's happening. It was August 22, 1908.*

*"But then when I think of the procedures that we went through. We were all in mourning. The women in Gleichen got together and we were all draped in black from head to foot. They made black dresses for us to wear to the funeral. At that age! And we wore those black things for a year. And everybody with a veil. And my father wore a black crepe band around his hat.*

*"You know in those days they had the funeral in the home. We children didn't go. We didn't go to the graveyard either. I remember I had to study. I had my grade eight exams and I was afraid I might fail the grammar. I could remember anything but it was all rote learning and I didn't know what it meant. I was ten years old.*

George stayed after the funeral and for the remainder of the summer, always expecting to go back to Toronto in time for classes. But one day he was playing tennis with a friend and suddenly he began coughing blood.

Panic! Another Gooderham with T B. George appealed to Dr. J. D. Laferty, the government doctor. It was his opinion that George was in serious danger and considering his family history he should stay in the west and

live outside as much as possible. That was the treatment in those days. Dr. Laferty put George in a tent, separate from the rest of the family as much as possible. Dr. Laferty hoped that

*"With care and rest George would recover shortly.*

University would have to wait!

George was still in the tent when winter arrived and beginning to be concerned as to which would kill him first, consumption or cold. He was able to persuade Dr. Laferty to let him live in the house set aside for the doctor during his trips to the reserve. In effect, George became Dr. Laferty's guest and they spent a considerable amount of time together. He learned a great deal about both the doctor and his large extended family of newspaper fame, the Southams.

George recovered and never had a recurrence. Some members of the family have even suggested that his 'attack' was much exaggerated and perhaps had more to do with the scare he had suffered watching his mother die. There was also the matter of his university course failures back in Toronto. It is a possibility. The family all recognized George as a bit of a hypochondriac.

*In Memoriam*

*Died at Idlewild, Blackfoot Indian Agency,  
Glenchen, Alberta,*

*Saturday, August 22, 1908,*

*Margret McKinnon,  
beloved wife of J. H. Gooderham,  
aged 46 years.*



## MURIEL TAKES OVER

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**Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1908**

When Margaret died the whole burden of running the home and family fell on George's eldest sister Muriel. She was now 25 but she was the oldest and had always been her mother's help-mate. She was still in school and had the (not so secret) ambition of going to university. Everyone knew she had the ability. Her sister, Ishbel, admitted,

*"She was the smartest of us all.*

But sadly for Muriel it was not to be.

One plan was to have Aunt Jessie Gooderham come from Meadowvale to look after the house and family. She was a music teacher of some fame rather than a homemaker. She played the organ in the Methodist church where her sister Jennie conducted the choir and sang the solos. She lived with her mother and father, her older sister Jennie and her brother George Walter (Uncle George). They could perhaps spare her. But running a household was going to be quite a stretch for a piano teacher. Would she be able?

Jessie was very highly recommended by George who had grown up with that family in Meadowvale. She was his very favourite aunt and she, in turn, considered him the perfect boy. But in the Meadowvale house George was the only child surrounded by a grandfather, grandmother, two maiden aunts and two uncles! In Gleichen Aunt Jessie would be confronted by Muriel, who had run the household; Kate, who imagined everything; Ishbel, who critiqued everything; Jean who excelled at everything and Rod who stood and watched everything with amazement.

Jessie decided to help out, thinking how nice it would be to become

reacquainted with her brother, John, and to meet his children. Would they all be as charming as George? Beautiful, refined, Ontario-raised Aunt Jessie was very much on her own. Would she survive? She wrote to Meadowvale saying,

*"We have such a busy life. Company interrupts us at any time. There are so many callers here. The Agency especially seems to be the place where coming and going never stops except when they are asleep.*

Ishbel explains,

*"And then of course Aunt Jessie came, and we had Muriel, and things went on. We went to school. Then, Kay went to the convent in Calgary and later Jean and I but Muriel never went. She had to leave school to look after us. It was unfair but that's the way things were done then.*

*"Aunt Jessie was just the nicest person. She was beautiful too - very patrician looking, should I say. And she had the loveliest neck, the way her head sat on it. She just had the most beautiful neck. She taught Jean and me to play the piano. We were very much impressed that she had studied at the Toronto conservatory. And on Sunday she'd get all dressed up, you know, with a hat, and she played the organ in the church in Gleichen. I don't know how old she was but she dyed her hair. In those days dye meant henna. You know that red, dark red. But I think we were too much for her. And, well, I don't know how she and Muriel got along. After all she was an old maid and pretty set in her ways. But she was awfully good to us.*

Aunt Jessie was in Gleichen for less than a year. She found life in Gleichen strange and a little scary. Her letters home - to her sister, Jenny, her sister-in-law, May, and her brothers, Willie and George Walter, in Meadowvale described the world she saw. She wrote her sister-in-law, May:

May 12, 1909

*"It's 9 o'clock at night and still quite light. Received your letter with the recipe enclosed. Thank you very much. We made two pies the next day and they were lovely but not such a nice white colour as yours. I made two more last Saturday. I boiled the corn starch first, perhaps that is not right.*

*"This is a lovely day. It rained hard all yesterday for the first time since I came. My, but it was nice. The air is so fresh today and more like our own climate. It is so dry here. Even now the grass in the fields looks brown. The garden has to be watered every week. We carry pails.*

*"Muriel is much better (she had suffered from both diphtheria and rheumatic fever) and has been out planting sweet peas and wild cucumber. It is used a great deal here in place of virginia creeper or boston ivy. I think because of the dryness. Some people even use wild hops.*

*"The children are beginning to talk of the 24th of May already. Muriel expects to have some girl friends visit here.*

*"You will be house cleaning in Meadowvale. It is hard to get it started here. So much cold weather. The furnace has been going just as in the winter. Alberta farmers have about finished seeding even though the season is so backward. I'm sure your sister will enjoy Muskoka. She enjoyed it so much last year. I sent her a little booklet from Banff when we went for a visit there. I wonder if she received it? Give her my love.*

In November of the same year Jessie wrote her brothers, Willie and George (Uncle G. Walter). Neither had mapped out a satisfactory life for himself. They had read the propaganda put out by the Federal Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway describing 'this land of opportunity' in western

Canada. Jessie was not encouraging.

Nov. 28, 1909

*"The altitude here is considered too high for nervous people. Many people cannot live in Calgary at all. I often tell Johnnie (John) the climate does not agree with him but it is not easy for him to make a change with a family so utterly dependent upon him. I am almost sure he is not going home this winter. But he is looking very well now. It's just a year since Margaret died.*

*"Now I'm not saying that to discourage you from coming out - not at all. Only this. Nervous people may take a dislike to their own home and when they go to a new one cannot stay there either. For the world is much the same, go where we will. But that has nothing to do with a trip for pleasure.*

*"The land is covered with snow now. Although today a chinook wind has taken most of the snow away. But for about four weeks the temperature registered zero degrees minus 10 or even minus 15 everyday, and to drive in that weather means furs galore.*

*"Opportunities here are much greater of course, but unless you are very strong and have a certain amount of money, no use coming to put up with inconveniences when you could be more comfortable at home. And if you have a comfortable home you are just as well off as a millionaire. But I say come and have a look at the country. And the change may do you good.*

*"The Piegan reserve land went very high. The lowest, I believe, was \$2 an acre. Americans came in and bought it all up. Jack (John]) did not get any. It was too expensive and the land is no use to speculators at that price. Besides there has been a deal of disputing over it. The Indians*

*are not pleased.*

*"There is no need to have regrets over the Piegan land. It would be of no use to you whatever. Still there are many other parts not so expensive.*

*"It is necessary to see the West to understand much about it and why it is so very different from the East. Living is very expensive and the people do not think any more of \$5 than an Easterner would think of a cent.*

*"George is looking well and I hope he will not have any serious illness. The great danger is another hemorrhage. He rides, drives, skates and everything normal. We all hope he will get through the winter safely. He took me for a little drive this afternoon and both of us had excellent appetites for dinner.*

She writes her sister-in-law just before Christmas.

**Dec. 19, 1909**

*"Gleichen is not much like Meadowvale. Dancing is the principal amusement but of course entertainments of all kinds are held in connection with the church. Miss Wilson and I staged a duet at the box social. My box sold for \$2. The manager of the bank bought it so I had to eat supper with him and enjoy his company which was very pleasant.*

*"I have been busy preparing Ishbel and Jean to play a duet at the Xmas concert in the town hall. But I think it is postponed on account of diphtheria.*

*"Muriel is coming out at the Ranch Men's Ball on the 29th. It is the major social event of the year here. And Kate will be home from the convent. And so the whole family will be together.*

*"I am not sending you anything, May. There is no choice in the stores*

*here and everything is such an exorbitant price.*

*"I am a long way from you all but I am going to make the very best of it. My life here is very strenuous and no rest. But if you and Georgie (Jessie's brother) can come I'll do my best for you.*

By 1910 Jessie was able to convince the family she should return to Meadowvale.

**Jan. 18, 1910**

*"I must close now, Jean is undressing beside me. She sleeps with me.*

## GEORGE-The Land Boom

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### Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1908

George helped with the reserve's Fall cattle round-up, considered light work, and not too taxing and he was feeling great by the end of the year. He asked the doctor if he could go to work. He was thinking of opening a real estate office. The doctor agreed that kind of activity would not endanger his health. No advice was given about endangering his economic future.

The C.P.R. had a large block of irrigated land east of Calgary, some dry lands to the north and more southeast of the Blackfoot reserve. All were being advertised internationally for sale. The railway brought prospective purchasers to Calgary or other selected stops on the C P R line, then picked them up in one of two rather amazing automobiles which they had specially built for the purpose. The Blue Bird and the Red Bird, as the two cars were known, were the essence of luxury. Enough to impress the most sophisticated American. In 1908 any automobile was impressive but these were something more, almost like a minibus.

The cars were often in Gleichen, the centre for sales, and George got to know the chauffeurs. There were no roads but merely wagon trails, two parallel ruts, which wandered across the open prairie according to horse sense and power. Created by and designed for horse-drawn vehicles they were almost impossible for mechanical vehicles to manoeuvre. George knew the way of the land and was invited along.

On this occasion the car hit a sink hole just west of the reserve. A sink hole was a kind of quick sand. The ground grabbed the vehicle and dragged it further and further into the hole where it remained floating in the muck with no traction and no escape. The young men abandoned ship and George was forced to walk to the nearby town of Strathmore where he

could take the train back to Gleichen, glad he had brought some money with him.

George was not discouraged. During Christmas week he went on another such trip. This time the prospective American buyers were to arrive in Gleichen and inspect a district called Dead Horse Lake near the present town of Hussar.

December 30th was a nice brisk winter's day with a light dusting of snow but no deep drifts - a perfect winter day. They arrived at the designated ranch where they would have dinner and sleep before traveling to the sale site the following morning. Their sleeping accommodations were in a bunk house with the least desirable bed on the outside wall reserved for George. It was a long cold night and he was the first one up and eager for breakfast which was served in the very warm kitchen of the ranch house.

George wondered how the buyers would know what they were getting when it was all covered with snow while they thought only of possible real estate profits and did not complain about this small technicality. They inspected the site and arrived safely back at the ranch house for an early supper.

As soon as they had eaten they headed for Gleichen and had traveled about ten miles when the car started to sputter and finally stopped at a large hill above a small stream known as the Crowfoot Creek. The guests looked at one another and wondered if they would be back for New Year's Eve. The chauffeur got out and lifted the hood examining all parts. The verdict: out of gas.

George knew the only rancher in the area, a man called Desjardine. Would he have gas? Not likely. Work on his ranch was done with the help of horses. What would he do with gasoline? Nevertheless the chauffeur said he would go to the ranch and get gas if possible. It was suggested the passengers walk

on ahead and he would pick them up as soon as he had the car running again. They never saw him again.

It turned out that all three of the prospective buyers had suffered crippling 'accidents' of one kind or another in their youth. One had a gimp leg, another a damaged ankle. They doubted if they could walk the very long distance to Gleichen.

George 'the youngster' of the group, was also the only one who knew the area. It was up to him to save them all. They made it to the farming area north of Gleichen - but the group decided to press on and try to catch the train which was due at midnight - New Year's Eve. The thought of a train to Calgary and home gave them all extra strength and they reached the station in time. There were no sales that time out! The long walk had allowed lots of time for realistic contemplation.

George crossed the tracks to his father's house on the reserve. No one was there. They were all in town celebrating at the New Year's Eve dance. When John and George's sisters returned he told his story. Sympathy? Not a whit. Concern? Not a jot. Amusement? Certainly. George felt sure the whole town of Gleichen, still awake, could hear the peals of laughter from the Gooderham house on the reserve.

#### **Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1909**

George was not discouraged. In January he rented an office in Gleichen and started a real estate business. He also wrote insurance and handled loans from life insurance companies. Since he had to travel quite a lot around the country his father allowed him the use of a horse and buckboard. His territory stretched from Calgary, where he would use the street car, to Medicine Hat which he would reach by train and improvise from there.

In the middle of the summer he heard there was a new town sprouting up

in the eastern part of Alberta, near Medicine Hat.

There was a stop on the C P R line about 35 miles west of Medicine Hat which had been neglected by land hunters for a very good reason. It was in the short grass belt in the middle of the Palliser triangle, a huge triangle of land stretching across southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Farmers had been warned against breaking the land and destroying the very thin protective grass cover which kept the soil from blowing away during the inevitable drought and wind storms. Nevertheless sod busters had invaded the area. Between 1909 and 1910 people went land crazy. A boom started around Carlsbad, the might-be town. George was tipped off by a company agent who had brought land seekers from the US. The word was,

*"Get in fast or miss the boat.*

It was George's opportunity to make it big. It was a hot day in June. George was twenty-one and about to make his million. He got on the train in Gleichen heading east to Carlsbad (changed to Alderson during World War 1 when German names were not popular). On the train, sitting beside a Sergeant of the Mounted Police, George asked if he was checking up on bootleggers, a popular, if illegal occupation in the territory at the time. The answer was No. The sergeant was looking for two very violent prisoners who had escaped and had been seen in the Carlsbad area. Because it was a brand new town it was seen as a good place to hide.

George and the Sergeant arrived in Carlsbad at 5:30 in the afternoon. The town was like a set for a western movie. Hop-Along Cassidy might be just over the hill - if there were a hill. A few wooden buildings had been thrown up but no hotel. The restaurant was a large tent. The proprietor found sleeping accommodation for his restaurant guests where he could. He also knew where liquor could be found - should anyone inquire. The proprietor was deeply concerned.

*"Why would a Mountie in his red coat be in Carlsbad?*

Had he heard about the illegal liquor outlet ‘blind pig?’ The restaurant owner and his helpers were so nervous it was clear to George and the Sergeant they were guilty of something - probably illicit trafficking. The Sergeant had other matters on his mind. They were served the best meal on the menu - no charge!

It all took some time and George was a little late at the land office. Others ahead of him had grabbed the choice lots in the centre of town. There were two 25-foot lots on the outskirts at a total cost of \$250 - one third down and the balance in two installments, three months and six months. George jumped at the opportunity.

Where were they to sleep? With guidance from ‘the dining room’ they located a room in a shell of a building over a pool room. The search for the two convicts would start bright and early the next morning. The sergeant was expecting to find two criminals masquerading as labourers. George and the sergeant were awakened at midnight by a rapping on the door. Neither paid any attention to shouts of,

*"How did you get in here?"*

Finally the man wrenched the door open. Of course the first thing he saw was the Sergeant’s uniform and revolver lying on a chair beside the bed. The Sergeant turned over in bed picked up his revolver and pointed it at the intruder who suddenly thought better about disturbing The Law.

The next morning George discovered that he and the Sergeant had slept in a room reserved for the local rancher, Jack Morton. Jack, who had a large ranch along the Red Deer River, was famous for his rough and ready ways. He was a huge man with strength to match and a way of getting, or taking, what he needed or wanted.(We will meet Jack Morton in a susequent

chapter).

The first person to warn them of the situation was the terrified poolroom operator. Jack Morton had to sleep on the pool table. When he woke in the morning he went after the operator and the restaurateur ready to slaughter them for allowing someone into his room. The two 'visitors' were asked to swear they had moved into the room on their own without telling anyone.

George and the Sergeant, who were now friends, had other business to complete - the escaped prisoners. The Sergeant got a team and buggy from a local livery barn and the two took off for a farm about five miles away where the two prisoners had been reported dressed as workmen. After a trip bumping across land that never had been ploughed and should be left as grassland for the pleasure of gophers, badgers, antelope, foxes, pheasants, hawks and rattlesnakes, they saw two partially completed buildings.

As they drew nearer the Sergeant said,

*"Now look, I think they are both here. I want to get up as close as I can - within a couple of hundred yards. I'll leave you with the team and the rifle and I'll go up to the building.*

George was becoming concerned about how he would play his part. What if the horses got spooked and made a dash for it? What if he had to use the rifle at exactly the same time?

He had no choice but to sit and watch. He saw the Sergeant call the two men down from the building and make them walk back and forth in front of him. George remembered that one of the men was reported to have a limp. He could see clearly from where he was that one man did have a definite limp! It must be them! George saw the three talking and talking. What could be going on? Finally, the Sergeant waved George over. Would the prisoners be handcuffed? Where would they sit? Would they have to lie

on the floor?

When George drove up he was told the men were honest carpenters who had never seen another soul in the neighbourhood. The Sergeant and his ‘assistant’ had to return to Carlsbad, the train, and Gleichen, empty-handed. The next day was another scorcher. Old timers said it was the driest summer anyone could remember. Dry and hot enough to remind people of the admonition,

*“Do not plough this land for if you do it will blow away.*

As the summer wore on, rumors from Carlsbad were not good. By the end of August George started wondering if he would be able to sell. Would he be able to pay the next installment? More important, should he pay it? George’s old friend, the itinerant land salesman, fortunately reappeared with orders from New York to buy. Did George still have some land? Would he sell? New York could pay \$100 more than George had paid if George could see his way clear to splitting the profit with his friend.

*“Sold!*

Carlsbad survived the war when it was renamed Alderson which didn’t stop its rapid decline. But the New Yorker had paid cash and kept on paying his taxes until notices were no longer sent out.

1910 was boom time for George and for Gleichen. The town had just been incorporated and a mayor must be elected. There were three candidates: Dr. William Rose, the local physician; Emil Greisbach, the richest man in town; and J.B. Ostrander, a friend of George’s. George wanted to add a little pep to the campaign. He suggested to Ostrander that he would like to play a bit of a trick on him. Ostrander, not knowing what the plan might be, nevertheless said,

*“Go ahead.*

George had the local painters cut two pieces of cardboard about three feet square and paint a red rose between two thistles. He took the two paintings to the livery barn where the proprietor had a nice phaeton - a covered delivery wagon, and fixed a painting on either side of the cab. One of the livery staff drove the 'ad' all around town. Almost everyone thought it was a great joke on the two 'thistles.' And Dr. Rose did win.

In those days it was understood the winner would be taken to the Gleichen Hotel where he would buy drinks for everyone. Rose was a prohibitionist and very close with his money. But he honoured the tradition. Everyone (almost) had a good time. Ostrander thought it was a great joke but the other 'thistle,' Griesbach, shook his fist in George's face and shouted,

*"Don't look for any more business from me!"*

Griesbach did own most of the land around Gleichen but it was all too expensive for George and George's clients. So George was not worried about the threat. Besides, it was time for him to get back to school.

Another western idyll was over. George had made a complete recovery and went back to Toronto and to University with some very practical experience - and a little money.

## A HOME FOR JEAN

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**Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1910**

Jean, who was only seven when her mother died of Tuberculosis in 1908, came to rely on Aunt Jessie who was helping Muriel run the house. When Jessie decided she must return to Meadowvale the first question in everybody's mind was,

*"What about Jean?"*

The family wondered if she should go to the convent in Calgary? Was she too young for boarding school? Should she stay at home to help Muriel? Would that be fair to Muriel whose dream of university was already fading.

Another possibility arose. Duncan Campbell Scott was a close friend and an Indian Affairs colleague in Ottawa. The Scotts had just lost their only child, a daughter, and Mrs. Scott was disconsolate. John and Duncan commiserated with one another and wondered what they might do. Would it help if Jean were to live with the Scotts in Ottawa where her various talents could be nurtured and developed and where she might also be a great comfort to Mrs. Scott? Both might benefit. Jean would have a mother and Mrs. Scott a daughter.

The two men reckoned the plan might work. Their families had much in common. Both had been looking for a career back in 1879 and both used the direct route to employment, through the Big Boss in Ottawa – the Prime Minister. John was 22, Scott just 17.

Scott explained:

*"My father was an old friend and supporter of John A Macdonald. He was not only Prime Minister but Minister of Indian Affairs as well. In 1879 that was how most people got their job. No examinations, you just*

*found a powerful friend in the Government and asked for a job.*

In John's case almost the whole Gooderham clan supported John A. Macdonald and his answer to John's request for employment was direct.

*"Well, you were raised on a farm and I think we'll need men like you. The Indians will have to learn how to farm. They may want to try large corporate farms similar to the ones run by Gooderham and Worts. If you're prepared to go out west, to the North West Territories, and do whatever is required, there'll be a job for you.*

Both young men took the opportunity and the challenge and joined Indian Affairs at the bottom of the ladder. John became a 'rationeer' in what is now Saskatchewan - a rationeer was a young man who travelled across the prairie bringing food to isolated Indian bands entitled to food rations under treaty.

Scott, son of a Methodist minister, was a perfect candidate for a job in Ottawa and he became a clerk grade three, a person who looked after, and recorded, all the details of government no one else had time to remember. They both were at the bottom of the pile but were not easily overlooked. Both kept being promoted even though in quite different capacities.

They were both poets by nature but they did not see this interest as antithetical to business. Scott has been quoted as saying at a luncheon meeting of authors in Ottawa in search of better copyright laws,

*"I am a poet and therefore a good businessman. Both the good poet and the good businessman feel the inner urge to express themselves, the one in the mastery of words and the other in the adept use of things and forces.*

Both John and Scott were raised with a healthy respect for the role business had to play in the making of Canada. They did not meet until John became

an agent and Scott an official in Ottawa. But they appear to have become instant friends. They had more things in common than poetry and humble beginnings in the Civil Service.

They both knew the 'Indian' business from the bottom up. John dealt directly with the Indian people, learned their language and much about their ways. Busy people had no time for that. But there came a time during the rebellion of 1885, when knowing the Indian leaders, their language and customs was invaluable. As for Scott, he was in charge of remembering all the things other 'important' people were too busy to think about. And in Ottawa where the elected bosses came and went with regularity, knowing the facts became invaluable. In no time at all, the answer to the question,

*"Who does have the answer around here?*

was...

"Better ask Scott.

The two had other things in common as well. They were both raised in Ontario in strong Methodist families where music, art, literature and education were not only valued but part of every day life. They both spent their entire career with Indian Affairs. Others came and went but they carried Indian history in their being. They both appreciated and admired Canada's very diverse native peoples. Both were vitally concerned that these peoples, scattered across the country in small groups, not become marginalized as more and more immigrants filled every province. It was this basic concern - that the Indian people not be left behind - which motivated all the policies either made.

John and Scott felt Jean would find it easy to adapt to Ottawa and the Scott household. Scott and his wife had visited the Gooderhams in their home in Gleichen and could recognize the similarity in living style.

The idea was presented and Jean agreed to try it. Later she was to say:

*"They were very kind to me but you know Mrs. Scott was still mourning her daughter. What could I do or say? Besides, I was a little afraid of Mr. Scott. He seemed so stern. Mrs. Scott certainly looked after me, sent me skating at the Old Minto Club, tobogganing on the government slide. And Mr. Scott took me to see the Mint where I was given a just-minted quarter.*

*"They lived in a big rambling house at 108 Lisgar street. Isn't it funny I should remember that? Mrs. Scott made me memorize the address - just in case. They didn't have many visitors because Mrs. Scott was so down but Mr. Scott was really interested in music and theater. He would often be out in the evening and the maid told me he was at a play or at the symphony. Sometimes he even had musicians come to the house to play for Mrs. Scott and some of their friends. I've been told he started the Ottawa Little Theatre which was still going strong when I was in Ottawa fifty years later. Of course he also worked very hard - just like Papa.*

*"I went to Mr. Scott's office once. It was in one of those big old buildings in Ottawa near the Parliament Buildings. There was a kind of piano there. When I tried to play it the keys went down but there wasn't any sound. He called it a dumb piano and explained that when he had a really difficult problem to think about he would sit down at the 'piano' and play. He understood music so well that he could hear all the notes in his head and while he was playing the solution to the problem often became clear.*

*"They were very kind people but you know I was only eight and there were no children around. I really missed Ishbel and Rod and Kay and Muriel and, most of all, Papa. It wasn't easy for Mrs. Scott either. I don't*

*think she ever recovered from her loss and I didn't stay with them very long.*

Jean chose schooling in the convent in Calgary.

## The Onondaga Madonna

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She stands full-throated and with careless pose,  
This woman of a weird and waning race,  
The tragic savage lurking in her face,  
Where all her pagan passion burns and glows;  
Her blood is mingled with her ancient foes,  
And thrills with war and wildness in her veins;  
Her rebel lips are dabbled with the stains  
Of feuds and forays and her father's woes.  
And closer is the shawl about her breast,  
The latest promise of her nation's doom,  
Paler than she her baby clings and lies,  
The primal warrior gleaming from his eyes;  
He sulks, and burdened with his infant gloom,  
He draws his heavy brows and will not rest.

– Duncan Campbell Scott–1898

## RESCUING GEORGE

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McMaster University, Toronto ON, 1912

George returned to university in Toronto and to bad news. He had failed two courses and had not written the supplemental exams. The verdict:

*“We will allow you to return to the Faculty of Arts but you must repeat the third year.*

The news should not have taken him by surprise, but it did and he was very upset. Although he had returned with some money it was far from enough to finance an extra year. There was also his pride. He did not look forward to explaining his failure to friends and relatives in either the West or the East. Who could help?

The obvious answer was W.G. Gooderham whose magic had solved problems in the past. After some consideration, W.G. announced that McMaster University might be the answer. McMaster was a small university, originally a Baptist Theological College, which was in the process of broadening its student body to the general public. It was just a block east of George's fraternity house on Bloor Street. What a splendid idea! George's grandfather had been a Baptist preacher in Toronto's pioneer days and although George was not a Baptist he was a Methodist and he felt sure his Methodist upbringing would help. It would be like revisiting history. McMaster was willing to replace the two failed subjects with two courses on religion but allow George to finish a degree in political science.

George was rescued.

George didn't know many McMaster students, nor did he want to. He was still at the same fraternity house and still able to associate with his friends from the University of Toronto. He attended lectures, went home to the

fraternity house and picked up his old friendships—including his growing interest in Mary Kentner. He made one significant change; he worked a little harder to ensure passing grades. He graduated in 1912 just one year later than his classmates but with no honours and no future.

George realized his only work experience was time spent in Gleichen in real estate and insurance. It so happened he had a cousin, Henry Macdonald, who owned a very successful real estate business at 2 Toronto Street. He was sure he could do just as well in Toronto as in Gleichen and persuaded Henry to take him into the firm. The firm specialized in buying and selling large properties, each transaction involving large sums of money. George would be expected to bring in additional business in the same category. After all, everyone knew he had extensive contacts with the Gooderhams, the Pellats and other members of the Toronto establishment. He would be an immediate success.

The plan had a flaw or two. There had been a land rush in Gleichen. There was no hysterical land frenzy in Toronto. No one came knocking on the door pleading to buy. George's contacts were all social. He knew little or nothing about the business interests of his famous friends and found he didn't know how to acquire that information. He soon discovered he had few if any of the skills of a salesman and even fewer prospects. He brought no business to the firm although he spent his time in the financial district looking for it. He frequented the King Edward Hotel, a popular meeting place for Toronto businessmen on King Street just opposite Henry Macdonald's office.

Gold and silver had been discovered in northern Ontario near Cobalt and Porcupine. New companies were being established weekly and the hotel was filled with mining men. George sensed a similarity to the land frenzy in Gleichen, which had been so economically rewarding. He got caught up in

the fever.

Two American promoters persuaded one of George's fraternity brothers to set up an investment firm with George as part of the deal. George had only the Gooderham name to offer and no idea that it was only the name they were looking for. A name like Gooderham was certainly worth more than \$15 a week but George considered himself lucky.

The Americans turned out to be crooks and the firm was accused by a periodical called Hush of misappropriating funds that should have gone to a mine development. The Gooderhams learned of George's connection to the scandal and W.G. sent a message he was to resign immediately. George had 'blotted his copy book.' It was 1914. He had no job, no money and may have lost his sponsor. But when everything looked pretty bleak another rescuer arrived. This time it was his fraternity brother, Dave Harvey.

In 1914, Toronto had a privately owned street railway system which serviced the most southerly part of the growing city. Neither the rolling stock nor the rail bed were being properly maintained in spite of public demands for better service, and in 1914 the city council was forced to take action. They inaugurated a public company called the Civic Railways and Dave Harvey was named general manager. It had no stock of course and he had to construct, pave and install rail lines as well as install streetcars on the new lines. There was no service north of Bloor Street but the area had already developed into a very popular residential district known as The Annex. The area was particularly popular with Toronto's elite who had their eye on land even further north beyond St. Clair.

The company decided to start with the St. Clair highway from Yonge Street west and to get streetcars operating on it. They first had to negotiate the purchase of the necessary land which happened to be owned by Sir Henry Pellat. He was one of Toronto's most prominent businessmen, who grazed

a herd of deer on a large open area south of St. Clair. The timing for the project was good. Pellat had started to build his huge home, Casa Loma, near the foot of the hill about midway between Bloor and St. Clair. The project was costing a great deal of money and he was glad to sell the deer park to the city. It may also have been significant that Dave was a very good friend of Sir Henry.

The proposed road crossed a large valley which would have to be filled and brought to grade. Dave had to put together a huge work force familiar with excavating and constructing a roadway using the only tools available at the time—horses and men. George could be trusted and was given the job of timekeeper, which meant site administrator. It required a lot of running around making sure men were where they ought to be when they ought to be. George enjoyed it and pocketed the \$2.50 per day for six days a week.

The job was done in record time. The street was paved and rails constructed east to Yonge Street. Was George out of a job? No. Next he was trained as a motorman and learned how to operate a car along this new route. Stopping and starting being the scary part. Particular care was to be taken when women were getting off. They invariably stepped off with their backs to the front of the car. If the motorman started too soon before the woman was clear of the car with both feet on the pavement she could fall back and crack her head against the car. A severe head injury could result in a damage suit.

George was also involved in the next project at Davenport Avenue east of the Don River just north of an area known as Cabbage Town. Most of the residents were working class or small shop owners and in need of public transportation. Two large factories, a brewery and a soap factory situated in the Don River Valley, would be serviced and at the southern tip there was the extremely popular Woodbine racetrack at which the Queen's Plate had been run each May 24th since 1862.

Cabbage Town had expanded as far as Davenport Avenue but without any connecting railway east and west, and just north was a glue factory. As the population moved north public outcries filled the newspapers. The glue factory was an offence and must be moved. But glue was in high demand and the factory was big business. It might almost be called a public benefactor. The glue was produced primarily from dead horses and if a horse died on a Toronto street the company wagon would soon arrive to remove the carcass to the plant.

There were further complaints. As an adjunct to the factory, the owner had erected small houses on parcels of land which provided for the raising of pigs or fowl. There was another public outcry. Some people were beginning to call Toronto Hogtown. It was clear both the factory and the small farms were an impediment to the development of the city. When defending his position, the owner was able to prove the community was in fact healthy and no one had become sick. However, for a price, he might be willing to sell and relocate. Thanks perhaps to Dave Harvey's negotiating skills, the city was able to make a deal and it did not take long to pave Davenport and to run cars on it.

Another area just north and west was building up rapidly and had no streetcar line. The company constructed a temporary line running from Dundas Street two or three miles into the area known as High Park. This spur line was to be George's home away from home for the next year or more. Some of the area was residential and some was parkland, so the area attracted two different types of client for the railway. Residents needed transportation in and out of the district and, perhaps even more significant, visitors (of which there were hundreds) needed an inexpensive way in and out of the park to enjoy picnics, fishing, boating or walking.

As the Humber (and the spur line) meandered south it passed an old

abandoned mill, a perfect spot for a restaurant where diners could enjoy architectural history while looking out into nature. It was a site filled with promise. An enterprising promoter took over the wreck and turned it into The Old Mill Restaurant. His foresight has been recognized over the century as the restaurant has been rejuvenated, expanded and improved. In 2001, it was still a major Toronto attraction—some say better than Casa Loma—and was still advertised as ‘Toronto’s landmark of hospitality since 1914.’ It was an immediate hit and a favourite destination for many of George’s passengers.

George no longer ran a car but was now cashier for the whole project which was serviced by three passenger cars and a work car, a foreman, four conductors, a motorman and George (still at \$2.50 a day). He was now working seven days a week as the highest traffic was on the weekends catering to people visiting the park—and the restaurant. The new job had many advantages. The first was that he was able to walk to work from the fraternity house at the corner of Bloor and St. George. Although George was called cashier he was actually the manager, the title merely a reminder that cash was the number one consideration and the manager’s primary responsibility was receipts.

Each conductor carried a fare-box to collect fares—three cents cash or a ticket at twenty for fifty cents. George gave each conductor an initial collection of coins, which was subtracted from the amount received back when the fare-box was returned at the end of the shift. Each fare-box was locked with George holding the only key. He had to account for all the tickets and make rolls with the cash which he then banked. An accountant arrived on site every two weeks to confirm the accounting; he knew how much a thousand tickets would weigh and never failed to make the check by weight. George’s calculations were all accepted and he was left alone to run the line as he saw fit.

There was a second serious responsibility. The line was temporary and consequently merely laid on top of the ground without a proper bed. At a low spot where the eastbound and westbound cars passed each other, the bed was never firm and waved up and down, particularly in wet weather. Every so often this waving would cause a car to run off the track. Once notified, George and the foreman would jump on the work-car and rush to the site. They would tamp the earth back down under the rails and spike them back into the wooden ties, then jack up the car and put it back on the rails. No one ever seems to have been hurt. Customers forced to stand about watching this performance felt free to make remarks—rarely complimentary. Some demanded their fare back. Some walked the rest of the way. Some hoofed it to the competitor's line.

The small crew of regulars enjoyed working together. There was very little stress. They were on their own and enjoyed meeting all the passengers who were often on holiday and full of fun. They had a good time. George kept his job until he enlisted in the University of Toronto Officer Training Corps in March 1916.

In retrospect, George had to admit his post-university practical education, although sometimes painful, was perhaps more useful than the political economics he studied. He learned many lessons without the need to pass a supplemental. He also learned he liked being boss and men liked working for him. He was a natural leader.



## MARY'S DIARY–University Daze

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**University of Toronto, Toronto ON, 1910**

Mary was an orphan. She was also an heiress. Her mother, Rebecca Kentner died in 1905 when Mary was sixteen and still in high school. There were many relatives with whom she might live but she chose her mother's sister Sarah's family. Mary thought of her cousins Will and 'Did' (Elizabeth) Mathews as her big brother and sister. Mary had spent so many summers at their cottage in Muskoka that her Aunt Sarah was certainly a surrogate mother.

Mary had already determined she would go to university and the Mathews were living conveniently in Toronto at 5 Chicora, just blocks north of the University of Toronto.

In 1910, in her third year at the University, Mary began keeping a diary which reveals: Mary the student, Mary the politician, Mary the athlete, and Mary the socialite.

As a student, she was perhaps less than dedicated:

*"Up early. Went to German late*

and the same week...

*'Uncle slept in and did not wake me. Did not get to Ethics. Went to French. Missed History but stayed for Constitutional History.'*

As a politician, she was popular with her sorority sisters but lacked the killer instinct:

*"Alice told me who were up against me in the elections for vice-president. Talked to Thetas about nomination. They advised me to give up vice-president. Home early. Talked to family about the nomination."*

*They advised me to run for vice-president. They forgot it might mean I would spoil two of my sorority sister's chances. In a terrible state of mind over nomination.*

The next day:

*"Gave my withdrawal but they did not want to accept it.*

Mary insisted and four days later,

*"Danced and voted until twelve. All Frat girls turned down. Louise (Theta) stayed up until the last and only lost by three votes.*

Mary the athlete writes about a visit to Prince Edward Island:

*"Played tennis in the morning and again in the afternoon. Made candy for the tennis party. Put on white skirt and midi blouse. Played quoits as well as more tennis in the evening. Had coffee and little cakes. Enjoyed the whole thing.*

After many childhood summers with the Matthews at their St. Elmo cottage in Muskoka, she developed a passion for paddling, rowing and, particularly, sailing. Later golf was added to her repertoire.

Mary was also a skilled socialite:

*"Played the piano most of the afternoon, then went to Mrs. E.B. Osler's tea. The house is grand with wonderful paintings. There is a heated conservatory and the dining room has dome skylights. Mrs. O. was charming. Afterwards walked along Roxborough to hear the band.*

Mary's Methodist upbringing was not abandoned. In her second year, she was elected Spiritual Advisor on the Student Council at University College; and in her third year, Evangelia. We do not know when she began ignoring the Methodist proscriptions against dancing, alcohol, cards and smoking

but she did.

*"In the evening Uncle John, Did and I smoked Will's cigarettes while he was away.*

As for card playing,

*"We were learning how to play bridge.*

Early in 1910 she says;

*"Wish some fraternity would ask me to a dance—one ambition.*

Almost on the next page invitations to dances arrive and are accepted.

Mary was very attractive and records bewildering array of young men who send flowers, take her driving, skating, sailing, to the theatre and for long walks. Most are identified only by their first name.

There is Pete, a beau from Parkdale days, and Creasor, George Gooderham's fraternity brother, who appears on the pages long before George does.

There is Harold, who takes her to the theatre, also Pelt, Lyman, Tommy, Allan, Wilf, Bert, Hubert and more.

Pete, the engineer and heir to a construction company seems to have the inside track.

*"Pete came along about nine with a box of candies.*

There are many entries documenting gifts of flowers ('more violets'), chocolates and candies and many distractions from studies including skating to popular bands. But Mary maintains the balance.

*"Went to all my lectures including Latin. Walked up Bedford. Studied all afternoon. Went skating with Pete in the evening. The ice was cracked all over. Nearly fell many times. 'Did' made a party for us at Chicora afterwards. R came to pick up Pete and the two stayed to visit.*

There were rides in automobiles, which were rare and unusual at that time

*"Met Pete at Bedford. Went for a grand drive into the country. Got blossoms. Pete is gold.*

Sounds definite doesn't it? What's more, Mary visits Pete's mother.

*"Went to call on Mother Godson. Met several other women. Talked church and babies. Enjoyed it splendidly.*

But then, without warning, when Mary is leaving to spend the summer with friends in Prince Edward Island she writes:

*"Said good-bye to Pete. Told him I could not get along with him. He really said the words 'marry me' and I believed him. He said he couldn't tolerate being one among many. It must be he alone. Really hated myself for a minute but recovered as I walked along Bathurst past Davenport and on Dupont at the bridge.*

There was Creasor, classmate and favourite of the Thetas, and Mary's friend and confidant as well as part of the gang:

*"Saw Creasor in the library and we talked about his fraternity brothers.*

*"Dance closed at twelve. Creasor telephoned for a taxi but it did not come and so we all walked to Bloor and got a (street) car there.*

*"Was not ready when Creasor came. Got to rink for the 5th band. Skated all the time with Creasor and S. Had a dance in the small room. Only danced with Creasor, S. and Tommy H. Creasor developed a huge crush on K.*

Lyman makes a brief appearance.

*"Went downtown about 5:30 to have hair done. Was not quite ready when Lyman called for me. Had a glorious time. All dandy people—*

*including Creasor. Pete and Lyman both sent me flowers.*

Pelt appears to be a theatre lover:

*"Went to see Viola Allen in the 'White Sister' at the Royal with Pelt—four acts and demanding throughout—terribly pathetic. But I did not weep. The whole company was splendid. Wore my white dress under my coat.*

Harold, one of Pete's competitors, also understood the spell of the theatre.

*"Harold called from Kingston and asked me to go to the theatre next week.*

*"Harold came up to Toronto and also sent the loveliest flowers. Met him at Murrays. Had seats in the front row of the balcony. He walked home with me and stayed for tea. Dunlops delivered flowers (from Pete) at 1:30 in the morning. Got up and put them in water.*

Wilf, another mystery man, makes more frequent appearances:

*"Went to church at night. More violets from Pete. Wrote to Wilf.*

*"Had a terrible headache. Pete telephoned. Letter from Wilf. Went with him to Massey Hall for the Extravaganza.*

Pete also has to compete with fantasy men.

*"Dreamt about 'The Only Man'. Had just boasted I never dreamt of what I was thinking and then I did it.*

*"Passed 'The Only Man.' Didn't see him at first but felt it was he and looked around. Pete phoned.*

On the return trip from PEI there were many onboard distractions.

*"Saw ever so many exciting men getting on board. Two men from*

*Detroit and Cincinnati talked with me. The handsome, dark-haired man sang. Up at seven. Sat at the breakfast table next to the dark man. Harold came on. Put my baggage on board the train to Toronto and we walked to the Fort. He got my ticket fixed and then we went to lunch.*

Soon Bert comes along.

*"Went to the rink with Wilf. Skated with him, Lyle and Bert. 'Did' made us cocoa afterwards. Bert knows everyone and likes plays as well as skating but is passionate about sailing.*

Is he the right man?

*"Got furs in the morning. Decided on lynx instead of fox. Was not ready when Bert arrived.*

(Have we heard that before?)

*"Never enjoyed a play more. It was Maude Evans in 'What Every Woman Knows'.*

Mary is making no choices.

*"Bert walked me home after six.*

*"Harold came in and stayed for tea. Bert came in and I made him go with me to mail parcels.*

*"Went for a hayride with Wilf. Dreamt of 'The Only Man'.*

*"Harold telephoned and came up. Gave him one of my photos.*

*"Bert was terribly nice. Had supper with him. Danced until almost two. Enjoyed it all immensely.*

## MARY-The Woman

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Toronto ON, 1911

In July of 1911 Mary had graduated and had made no further plans. But she was in Toronto rather than Muskoka or traveling and intended on enjoying her new status and freedoms. Bert's family had a very fast sailboat called the Viva III.

*“Met Bert at the wharf but it was cold and looked like rain so we did not go sailing.”*

The next day

*“Bert came up in the evening. We went for a long walk and planned a day sailing party. Bert invited ‘the only man’ to join the party. He was lovely.”*

*“Had tea on the verandah of the club.”*

Two days later.

*“Went sailing with Bert and had supper on the sand bar. Drank lemonade at the club afterwards.”*

And again two days later

*“Went sailing on the Viva III in the afternoon with Ed Gooderham and Bert. Never had such a sail. Stayed at the club for dinner.”*

For those hoping Bert was ‘The One’ a warning bell rings out a few days later when

*“Bert and a girl friend came in a little car and took me for a little ride.”*

But Mary planned a trip to Lisgar to visit relatives for a week. Bert invited her to dinner at the club and took her to the 5:45 train. He also was at the

station when she returned.

*"Bert picked me up with his car and went for a little ride before taking me home.*

Later she

*"Went to the club with Bert for dinner. Walked to Ward's Island and back. Were late for dinner so had a table at the back.*

There were social scheduling problems.

*"The Mortimers were here at #5 Cicora for tea. The Davis family all landed about nine. Harold stayed until train time for the guests to go back to Muskoka. Bert phoned but fortunately I did not let him come up.*

Mary was thinking it perhaps unwise to have the 'rivals' in the house together. But the next day

*"Went for a ride with Bert in the Cadillac.*

The late summer races began at Centre Island.

*"Viva lost first race so Bert was consequently blue.*

But two days later

*"Viva won the George Cup races. Bert was much better. We went to the theater after and I wept for the first time.*

A few days later Bert appears with pictures of the victorious Viva III.

A week goes by and we don't hear from Bert but

*"Pete came for me. We walked the streets and talked a lot about our future. It was all so confusing and difficult. We finally decided to leave it all until Sunday week.*

To make matters worse Mary does not hear from Bert.

*"Wish Bert would telephone. Have so much to talk to him about. If I were a boy I would ask him to come and talk.*

The very next day George appears in the diary.

*"Helen W. has a party planned for Tuesday night. George Gooderham and a fraternity brother of his are invited.*

But Mary has had bad news. Bert is seeing someone else.

*"Went to the Theta's room for supper and then to Professor Stephen Leacock's lecture at Convocation Hall. He was perfectly splendid but we sat behind Bert and J which rather marred my enjoyment. Bert left early.*

*"Unlucky day. Ha! It might have been better for me to have stayed away from Convocation Hall.*

Mary writes on July 2 from a cottage in Muskoka:

*"Must be Bert's wedding day. Hope it is as glorious there as it is here. Wrote him a fool letter but hope he will understand and imagine all the things I would like to have said had I known how. Missed one kind friend horribly more than I ever dreamed I would.*

Mary goes to St. Elmo again in September.

*"There was no St. Elmo boat so we went up in a motor boat—rough and cold—friends were on the wharf to greet us. Our cottage looked lovely. The next day was perfect. Went for a climb on the rocks. Saw a curl of smoke on the clearing and chastised the B's for firing their stumps. The Rowntrees came by so did Mrs. Davis and the Birds. In the evening we went out in Zenda (family motor boat) —a glorious harvest moon.*

*Heard the neighbours singing. The next day was glorious too and the family went out on the lake with the Birds and other neighbours. Saw fire on one of the islands. Went to the neighbours and everyone grabbed a kettle or pail and rushed to put it out.*

The next day

*"The Oriole (the Gooderham's legendary yacht) came in to pick up the Ks who were not there so it waited. Dashed back and forth wanting to see what transpired and wrote letters in the meantime.*

All too soon it was nearing the end of September.

*"No curtains on the windows so woke up at daybreak. We closed up and caught the Cherokee back. Rained on the way down to Toronto. Just made connections.*

Back in Toronto, Wilf is very much in the picture.

*"Wilf drove me around Colonel Pellat's home and we went to the Blue Inn for tea.*

Dora Mavor was another friend. Daughter of Professor Mavor, but more importantly, actress and mother of actor Mavor Moore, Dora was known as a pioneer and free spirit.

*"Went to Dora Mavor's for tea. The queerest party. People came and went whenever they pleased. Little Mona (sorority sister) phoned about Dora's play. Saw Little Mable (another sorority sister) and asked her about Dora's play. Unusual but very good!*

Toronto ON, 1912

Early in 1912 Mary writes:

Wilf visits on a regular basis and in March Mary says,

*"Had lunch with Wilf at English Inn. He is a dear and truly I am ever so fond of him. He came to the train and found a seat for me (going to Lisgar to visit relatives). Altogether he thrilled me more than ever before. If I could only not be afraid of myself with men it would be so much easier to know them.*

*"Wilf was ever so good to me. Am afraid he is too fond of me or I of him. He walked to St. Joseph with me and said I must be tired because of dark circles under my eyes. Isn't he a bold youth?*

Wilf has no better understanding of the modern woman than Mary's other beaux.

*"Wilf came to see me in the evening. We talked about women's suffrage and trade unions. Wilf thinks women should have dearer problems than how to vote.*

*"Wilf drove me in the evening. Had such a good time. All the old people were there. It was so satisfying to see them and be recognized. Bert was a dear. Truly he was so good to me and after the way I have abused him for his views on women. I'm just crazy about him, of course, now it is so impossible and hopeless.*

Mary, no longer at University, feels somewhat lost with everybody scattered and starting their new lives.

*"George was on his way West. Showed the family and me the beaded jacket Chief Piapot gave to his father when the Gooderhams were living with the Indians in Saskatchewan.*

Mary may be falling under George's spell. She decides to do a reality check with the Thetas.

*"Talked about going West with sorority sisters. Now I am more anxious*

*than ever to go out West.*

“Went for dress in the afternoon and got shoes to match. The family thought it looked lovely. George called for me early and I kept his taxi waiting. Crowded dance but had such a good time. There were ever so many girls I knew.

Mary asks George how to see the real West. He tells her she could get a job as a teacher. Her B.A. would put her at the top of the list. He finds the right address. Mary applies and is hired immediately for a rural school at a place near Red Deer, Alberta called Happy Hill.

Mary fulfills her contract and does not return to Toronto until late fall. The experiment, however, was not a great success. As was the custom, Mary lived with a local farmer and rode a horse to school. It rained and rained and rained. The world turned into mud. It was everywhere. Escape was impossible. What was worse was it nurtured mosquitoes, which rose up in clouds ready to devour any exposed flesh. Life was agony for both people and animals. Many days no pupils could get to school because of the swarms of biting insects. Both pupils and horses relied on smudges that had to be built and kept smoking constantly.

Mary’s horse, ‘Dick,’ had a mind of his own and Mary struggled to convince him she was to be obeyed. He knew she would soon be gone just like the other teachers before her.

The whole community recognized that Mary was out of her element. They liked her and believed she needed protection. There were several young men willing to provide this service. One ‘mother’ warns Mary she should not associate with men socially beneath her. A ‘father’ wonders why a young woman like Mary would come

*“way out here all by yourself.*

The experience does not make Mary decide against the West (George's West must be different), but she did spend a miserable summer.

*"I missed St. Elmo dreadfully.*

Mary has other worries too, as later that year, on November 12,

*"Uncle (Henry Matthews) took a very bad spell and could not talk at all. So many visitors! We were all up at three. At a quarter to four Uncle died. Telephoned everyone myself. Bought black gloves. Did not put black on the door until Will came from Tennessee. Went to Holt Renfrew to get 'Did' a black hat. Never had such a sinking feeling as when I saw her all in black. Will got a carriage for the family to go to the cemetery. Walked in from front gate—quite a distance but beautiful. The flowers were all piled one on top of another.*

Mary reached her majority that same month and started handling her own financial affairs.

*"Uncle John came down with all my papers in the evening. Not finished until after midnight.*

Under her Mother's will only two investments were allowed—the two farms and mortgages on known properties. Mary expressed her new found independence by purchasing bonds issued by her cousin Will's chemical factory.

*"Got Will's interest today.*

There were innumerable transactions to be looked after.

*"Uncle John and I went to the lawyer's office to get discharge of mortgage.*

*"Received a cheque from the lawyer for the Robinson house.*

*“Received \$22 from Mr. W. Uncle John came in with the McBride money.*

Will was later to suggest that she might make more money investing in shares of a public company. He could not help, as his company was private. He took her bonds back and Mary began investing in Canadian blue chip shares as well as in mortgages on neighbouring houses in The Annex. Investments in stocks suffered after 1929 but mortgages became a complete write-off. Mary lost money, but not all.

#### Toronto ON, 1913

While in Europe with Auntie, ‘Did’ and several girlfriends went everywhere and saw everything. Mary, always interested in buildings and interiors of buildings, reveled in never-seen-before architectural wonders. It is 1913 however, and political tensions are obvious even to tourists. They are happy to return to Canada. But Mary comes home with an idea:

*“Could I ever be allowed to study architecture?*

The answer does not come immediately but the War changes things. Men are needed for the armed forces and opportunities for women open up.

Mary opens a kindergarten in Newmarket, but investigates the possibility of studying architecture. She will need more than academic abilities. She takes drawing lessons from the famous artist and illustrator C.W. Jeffries who just happens to be part of the Staff of the University of Toronto School of Architecture. He encourages her to apply.

## ISHBEL-TRIP EAST

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Meadowvale ON, 1914

*"I went east to visit all the relatives in the summer of 1914. I was 18 and had been teaching school so I could afford to buy my own ticket. I'd been to the Maritimes with my mother and the whole family had gone to Meadowvale when we took George east to go to school. But I'd never been on a trip by myself.*

*"Our friend, Frances B, who boarded at our place when she taught school in Gleichen went as far as Owen Sound with me. She was on her way to the Maritimes to visit her family. It seems every Nova Scotia girl becomes a teacher on the prairie. In Owen Sound I stayed with Papa's cousin called Mrs. Wright but we called her 'Klean'. Her first husband was MacLean and that's where she got the nickname. She came to Gleichen to help arrange Muriel's wedding to Hayden Curran earlier that year. Hayden was a banker, sent to Gleichen from Winnipeg where his father was a judge. And anyway she was lovely and we just loved her. She was so elegant and engineered the wedding so nicely.*

*"Klean arranged parties before the wedding as well as the wedding itself. And 'The Gleichen Call' wrote them all up. Kay and I were at the 'At Home' just before the wedding. Kay wore pale pink silk crepe de chine trimmed with shadow lace and I wore white crepe de chine with touches of mauve. Aunt Jessie was there too and wore silk trimmed with cream lace. Muriel wore mauve and looked great but Klean was the best. She had a black silk with a train and a tunic of embroidered fish net. She was a perfect 'Mama'.*

*"The table was decorated in shades of blue (including the Bachelor Buttons) and when people came in the front door they were greeted by*

*the sight and perfume of huge masses of honeysuckle and lilacs. It was terrible weather but everybody came and Klean made us all feel special. She was the one who persuaded me to take the trip east. Aunt Jessie was going to be back in Meadowvale by then too, so I would see relatives I already knew and liked.*

*"Well, I had to go to visit the aunts in Meadowvale. Klean took me over and I found out that the aunts were jealous of her—or at least Aunt Jenny was jealous because Klean was so beautiful and rich. She was a widow but she'd been married twice. She was tall with white hair and everybody looked at her. She had this lovely old home in Owen Sound, filled with everything. And her husband had left her money. She was just the nicest person.*

*"Meadowvale was so different, I couldn't fit in. Their idea of an evening was to sit around and tell jokes. Well, I never knew any jokes.*

*"I loved Aunt Jessie when she lived with us in Gleichen and helped Muriel bring us up. She was so good to us. She had been very kind. But things were different in Meadowvale.*

*"Both Aunt Jessie and Aunt Jenny were very narrow Methodists. Aunt Jenny was really mean-spirited, just, you know, an old maid sitting there, with all sorts of terrible things coming out of her mouth. When Cousin Louise was a little girl she went to visit Aunt Jenny in a brand new dress her mother had just made for her. Aunt Jenny just went on and on about what all was wrong with that dress. Louise burst into tears. And Holly Armstrong, Aunt Libby's son, well he came with his parents from Chicago and Aunt Jenny was just so rude to him he told his mother he would never come to Canada again if that woman was still there.*

*“Neither Aunt Jenny nor Aunt Jessie got married. I don’t think they ever found anyone good enough for them. Well, you see they were Gooderhams and stuck in Meadowvale. They were both very musical and Aunt Jenny had a beautiful singing voice. The story is that there was at least one person who thought she was ‘pretty special’. But she never married.*

*“Meadowvale was only twenty five miles from Toronto but the majority of people my age that Jenny and Jessie associated with had never been to Toronto. Mind you Meadowvale was a beautiful spot, right on the Credit River. They took me for a canoe ride. But that wasn’t any favour. I was scared stiff of water.*

*“Aunt Jessie took me to visit the Macdonald’s in Toronto. They lived in a big house on a huge ravine in Rosedale. They had big beautiful gardens but you could hardly sit anywhere because it was like the side of a mountain. They were all cousins. Peter Macdonald, the father, was Grandmother Gooderham’s brother and Klean’s uncle. He had a fancy store in downtown Toronto. But I think his wife inherited money from her family. There was one son, Henry, and three sisters, Eldred, Georgie and Howie. The girls thought George was really something. I think they had a secret crush on him. I found out there were a lot of women in Toronto who had a crush on George. I didn’t think much of some of them.*

*“I stayed a few days with George’s friends, the Rogers, relatives of Sir Henry Pellat. Mrs. Rogers was awful and they had one daughter, just as ugly as could be, with whiskers you know and of course, she was wanting George to marry her. She had really wanted Dave, an engineer who was a fraternity brother of George’s, but she had to give up that dream when he married someone else.*

*"Well, I said to George they were just the most unpleasant people I had ever met. It's true I grew up in the far-away-west but we were taught how to behave. They had nothing to be snooty about. As far as I'm concerned they had absolutely no breeding. Particularly that Mrs. Rogers! When I told George what I thought, he nearly knocked me over but he knew it was true.*

*"The last time I was talking to George I told him back then he was just like a valet for the Rogers. He was just a regular bum and he had to agree. They just wanted him around as a decoration. You know he was very nice looking and very presentable. He spoke well and knew more than any of them. Anyway when Mr. Rogers died George got all his clothes, an overcoat and that leather trunk. Their son was killed in the war and George got his jacket and tails. Maybe they did love him.*

*"Mrs. Rogers had taken me all through the Pellat's house. Well, it's Casa Loma now isn't it? The Pellats were away somewhere. You know Sir Henry Pellat was the O.C. (Officer Commanding) of some battalion in the second Riel Rebellion. That's how he got the 'Sir.' There were these fur rugs everywhere. It was a very impressive place but too ornate. We went all through the stables and everything. They even had silver things for the horses to drink from.*

*"George's friend, Dave, was running the whole Toronto streetcar system then. Maybe he owned it. Anyway when I was there his wife had their first baby so there was a huge celebration, put on by Mrs. Rogers.*

*"When I think of that woman. I had to go back to Meadowvale and she took me down to the bus stop with her chauffeur and just left me there. And I've often thought. I had to catch the train back to Meadowvale. And I knew absolutely zero. And they lived up in Forest Hill which was the new part of Toronto then. It was way out in the sticks. And when I*

*think about it she didn't have anyone take me back. I stood out in the middle of the forest waiting for the bus!*

*"Some man asked if he could help and took my suitcase. He took me down to the train station. And I got to Meadowvale on my own. I got back to Gleichen on my own too! First to Owen Sound and then across the lake and back onto another train to Winnipeg and Medicine Hat*

*"I got home by myself. I stopped in Medicine Hat to visit one of my first school teachers. We all travelled Pullman in those days. It was a nice way to travel. And I remember there were these two young men. We were sitting in the observation car and we chatted. I suppose I was attractive enough and, anyway they asked me my name. They were from the University of Toronto and when they heard the name Gooderham they said. 'My God if I ever had that name I'd hang onto the shirt tails'—and asked if I would like to have a drink. I didn't ever drink, not even then, so I probably had an orange juice or something.*

*"But I've often thought it was a great trip. It was the year war was declared. When they said it was declared I didn't think much of it at all. It was just so far away. But when I got back—that would be September—everything changed. I didn't teach again and Muriel was already married and Kay got married at Christmas. Maybe their husbands got married so they wouldn't have to go to war. Hayden (Muriel's husband) didn't go. Neither did Harry (Kay's husband). Rod did and you know what happened to him.*



## 1916

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The Toronto Star has learned  
this city will soon be home to  
a real live woman architect  
The first.

Her name is Mary Anna Kentner.

To date  
Few if any women  
have ventured near  
that male dominion  
School of Practical Science but  
The time is now  
With most men away in Europe  
Women's time has come and  
Mary Kentner who will enter second year  
says  
her dreams are coming true

She favours the domestic branch of architecture  
'Women in America have already made a great success of it'  
said  
this graduate in modern languages.  
from our own U of T  
'I think I have the background for it'  
says she

'In my travels in the U.S. and in Europe  
I have seen heart stopping  
architectural  
wonders  
never seen  
in Canada.'  
she says

'My art instructor                            C.W. Jefferies

First suggested I should try  
and  
working as a draftsman in Vancouver  
has convinced me  
I can make a contribution.'

Our research indicates  
Mary Kentner may be right.  
A scholar and a leader  
May we say                            a feminist

A teacher  
Kindergarten in Newmarket  
A one room school in the Alberta        wilderness  
She's twenty six.

We'll follow Mary Kentner's architectural    career  
with interest.

## Mary—Architecture And After

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Toronto ON, 1916

On November 14, 1916 the Toronto Star published a short article under the heading

### To Be Pioneer Architect

Miss Mary Kentner Sees Future In Profession For Women. Toronto is to have a real woman architect. Miss Mary Kentner of 5 Chicora Avenue is to be a pioneer in this new profession for women in this city.

"I feel my dreams are to be realized," said Miss Kentner. "The work is intensely interesting and I believe there is a great opening for women in the domestic branch of architecture. American women have already made a great success of it. Why not Canadian women?"

Miss Kentner is a graduate in modern languages of the University of Toronto. She has also spent several years abroad and has returned with the belief that the time is opportune for women to enter this vocation.

The December 8 edition of Varsity that same year also carried an article about this breakthrough.

"University students will be impressed when they learn that there is at present a woman student in the Faculty of Applied Science. Miss Mary Kentner (UC '11) has enrolled in Architecture, her intention to go in for Interior Decoration and Domestic Art.

Mary was 27 years old. The article went on to state that during her four years in Arts

"Miss Kentner had proved herself to be an unusually bright and energetic girl—and a leader.

Mary was back at university! She loved everything about it. Architecture used even more of her talents than studying languages had done. There was one hitch. The faculty was, quite rightly, a stickler for math. Computers had not been invented and calculating elevations, corners, thicknesses and joints all required stringent accuracy. Mary had learned to draw with great precision but calculating in the abstract was something different. Well, math was a problem but no one said she couldn't continue.

In 1918 she went to Vancouver for the summer. Friends had found a summer job for her as a draftsman. The same friends had a yacht. Mary would be in her element. She would be in the West—her interest in George Gooderham had become more than a passing fancy. They were now engaged and although George was in Europe rather than Alberta, Vancouver was closer to that part of George's world than was Ontario. Mary had a wonderful summer with lots of sailing and drawing.

Mary returned to Toronto for the beginning of her final year, quietly thankful that she had escaped the terrible flu that was raging through Vancouver. She was too optimistic. She contracted the bug and was very, very sick. Friends and relatives were delighted to see her survive. Only Mary gave any thought to her returning to school that year.

George was on the sick list too. He caught the flu which, thanks perhaps to the movement of so many soldiers, had spread throughout the world. He was not as sick and wrote letters to Mary describing their future together. Perhaps the letters helped her recover. And, of course, the war ended in November.

Mary realized she must make a choice—career or family. She would discuss it with George when he came back to Canada which wasn't until 1919.

He must find a business or a position. Both assumed George's war record would make this search short.

Mary assumed their future would be in Toronto. George may have been more ambivalent, but would be happy there too. After all he had been raised in the East. He was very sensitive to the fact Mary's friends were in Ontario along with her huge extended family.

#### Toronto ON, 1919

As is often the case, circumstances took over. George went west to visit his father only to witness his death and then be offered his father's position as Agent to the Blackfoot Indians at Gleichen. He wrote Mary saying,

*"I have a job. Now we can get married. It won't be Toronto but we can be married in Toronto.*

Once again things did not happen quite as planned.

The plan was for a summer wedding with all their friends. But at Gleichen there were innumerable problems requiring urgent solutions. When George asked for special leave to get married he was told he could not be spared for such a long period of time. What to do? He had already considered his fraternity brother, Creasor Crawford, and a favourite of Mary's as best man. He had an idea and phoned Mary

*"What about Winnipeg at Christmas?*

It would mean a small ceremony rather than the 'Big Affair' but Winnipeg was Creasor Crawford's home. He would be delighted to help and who better to stand up for the couple than their oldest and dearest friend. Creasor was not yet married and lived in the big Roslyn Road house with his family. It was just around the corner from Winnipeg's most beautiful Methodist church.

George and Mary were married on December 20, 1920 and the Toronto Sun remarked:

*"A wedding between Captain George Gooderham and Mary Kentner of interest to many Toronto people took place in the Fort Rouge Methodist Church, Winnipeg. After a honeymoon in Banff, Mr. and Mrs. Gooderham will be in residence at their home at the Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen, Alberta.*

## November

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"I've been nursing here for twenty years and

I think we have a special on our hands"

"I agree"

"Everyone who get's this flu

is on the danger list but

High society has been coming by inquiring"

"And the odd hay - seed too"

"It's partly 'cause she's Dr. Heggie's cousin"

"She's also rich an heiress I've been told"

It's something else as well

She's still a student something strange

at least for women

I think its architecture

She's the first and

They don't want to lose her

I've been told"

"Well

She doesn't look too bright

right now"

"Hey she's got my vote

She's

already twenty nine

I hope

She gets to finish her degree"

"Let's see if we can get her over                   this".

## JESSIE, ROD AND THE WAR

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**Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1916**

In 1910 Jessie returned to Meadowvale. Muriel and her younger sister Ishbel took over the daily household chores and looking after young Rod.

Ishbel reflects on Jessie's absence and it's affect on her brother Rod:

*"I often think of Rod - four girls and one boy and the girls were all good at school and he was slow. I can remember as well as anything when Aunt Jessie was there. I got up every morning at six to study, which was quite unnecessary but I felt it was what one did, and Aunt Jessie would get Rod up and he and I would sit at the table in front of the window in that little room that I was in when mother died. And we'd sit at the desk and dear Aunt Jessie - she'd always leave two pieces of fruit cake and two glasses of milk. And of course I would try to teach Rod but he wouldn't even listen.*

*"He was delicate. I can remember when we were little youngsters, out watering the chickens. You know you had to use boiling hot water in the winter when it was cold. I think it was when we were at the Piegan Reserve and I know the water spilled over onto his arm and of course Jean and I pulled his wool sweater up and we pulled his skin right off. All his life he had a little map of the world running up his arm in a raised series of scars.*

*"When he grew up he worked on the cattle round-ups with the Blackfoot, branding cattle and all. But he wasn't really strong enough. And then of course the war came. He shouldn't have gone. He really didn't have any soldier qualities. I've often thought he should never have been taken in the army. He went to Calgary to the barracks there.*

*I remember we all went up to see him. He came home for a holiday and got the measles in Gleichen. I had to get Dr. Rose over from town and Rod couldn't go back to Calgary until he was better. And Uncle George (from Meadowvale) was living with us then. We had to give his bedroom to Rod. Of course Rod recovered but we all wondered how he would get along all on his own and in an army.*

*"Then they shipped him overseas with his unit, and we never saw him again. He used to write long letters to father and I know before he went father gave him a silver cigarette case. My, but my father loved him so.*

*"And the first thing of course we got back from the army was a telegram saying he was missing. And we didn't hear any more for a whole year. He was considered missing for a year. It was so hard on my father.*

Rod was at the Battle of Courcelette (his very first battle) where the Canadians were just mowed down by the hundreds though the battle was considered a victory.

*"Well, eventually, after a year they found his ID disk with his numbers on it - this disk all pitted with little pinholes, you know, and they sent the cigarette case back. And that was the end of it.*

## To A Canadian Lad Killed In The War

---

O noble youth that held our honour in keeping,  
And bore it sacred through the battle flame,  
How shall we give full measure of acclaim  
To thy sharp labour, thy immortal reaping?  
For though we sowed with doubtful hands, half sleeping,  
Thou in thy vivid pride hast reaped a nation,  
And brought it in with shouts and exultation,  
With drums and trumpets, with flags flashing and leaping.

Let us bring pungent wreaths of balsam, and tender  
Tendrils of wild-flowers, lovelier for thy daring,  
And deck a sylvan shrine, where the maple parts  
The moonlight, with lilac bloom, and the splendour  
Of suns unwearied; all unwithered, wearing  
Thy valor stainless in our heart of hearts.

– Duncan Campbell Scott

**TRIPPLICATE**  
**ATTESTATION PAPER.**

No. 160737

Folio.

## CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

## QUESTIONS TO BE PUT BEFORE ATTESTATION.

(ANSWERS)

1. What is your name? *Roderick Gooderham*
2. In what Town, Township or Parish, and in what Country were you born? *Regina, Saskatchewan*
3. What is the name of your next-of-kin? *John Gooderham*
4. What is the address of your next-of-kin? *Glenchen - Alberta*
5. What is the date of your birth? *10<sup>th</sup> May 1893*
6. What is your Trade or Calling? *Labourer*
7. Are you married? *No*
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated? *Yes* *RG*
9. Do you now belong to the Active Militia? *No*
10. Have you ever served in any Military Force? *No*  
If so, state particulars of former Service.
11. Do you understand the nature and terms of your engagement? *Yes*
12. Are you willing to be attested to serve in the CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE? *Yes*

*R. Gooderham* (Signature of Man).  
*Charles Taylor* (Signature of Witness).

## DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.

I, *Roderick Gooderham*, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements by me now made, and I hereby engage and agree to serve in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force, and to be attached to any arm of the service therein, for the term of one year, or during the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany should that war last longer than one year, and for six months after the termination of that war provided His Majesty should so long require my services, or until legally discharged.

*R. Gooderham* (Signature of Recruit)

Date: *16<sup>th</sup> October 1915* *Charles Taylor* (Signature of Witness)

## OATH TO BE TAKEN BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.

I, *Roderick Gooderham*, do make Oath, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will as in duty bound honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity, against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of all the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

*R. Gooderham* (Signature of Recruit)

Date: *16<sup>th</sup> October 1915* *Charles Taylor* (Signature of Witness)

## CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE.

The Recruit above-named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.

The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.

I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me, at *Glenchen* this *16<sup>th</sup>* day of *October* *1915*.

*Geo. W. Morphett* (Signature of Justice)

I certify that the above is a true copy of the Attestation of the above-named Recruit.

*Geo. W. Morphett* (Approving Officer)

## GEORGE-The Warrior

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### World War 1, 1916-19

George's war experience would play an important part in determining his future. He did not enlist until 1916, a decision perhaps influenced by the death of his younger brother, Roderick, who volunteered as a private in the Canadian Army, went to Europe with the first Canadian troops and fought at Courcelette, part of the Somme battlefield. Roderick was killed along with 24,028 other men. And there was considerable family concern that both brothers could be lost.

It was April 1916 when George joined the Officer's Training Corps of the University of Toronto in field artillery. The unit was moved to Niagara where he became acting Sergeant Major responsible for moving the unit by train to Petawawa that fall. New officers would have to learn to ride, something George was well-suited to teach since he had ridden since he was a child. The unit had to make up time and rode all day, every day with George in front on the best horse available. Often there was a 'numnah ride' meaning a ride without saddles, not a difficulty for George, but an almost impossible task for most of the trainees who spent a good deal of the time bouncing on and off their mounts.

George did well but he was not happy. He wanted to be an officer and knew that, as a university graduate, he should be. The army agreed and he was sent to a course at Kingston in December of that year. George remembers that they stopped at Ottawa for a weekend where they stayed at the Chateau Laurier. This was very much to George's taste even though he realized he probably still reeked of horses and was not the ideal guest for this 'show case' hotel.

More riding followed in Kingston where it was a case of learning to ride

or be killed. George passed the drills easily but students with no riding experience actually did get killed. For George the hardest part was learning how to ride a gun carriage pulled by horses at a trot or gallop. It was risky but very exciting for a man like George.

He got his commission as full Lieutenant in Artillery before the end of 1917 and was offered the job of training recruits at camps throughout Ontario—not an exciting prospect. What about the British Imperial Army? It was an idea worth exploring. The Imperial Army was in fact looking for young officers to make up for heavy losses suffered over the last three years.

He was accepted as a ‘free man’—free meaning Britain paid his transportation to England and then trained him before granting a commission in the branch of the army for which he was best suited. George travelled by train to Halifax and then by ship, the Olympian, to Britain. On board he met men returning to the war who had been wounded or sent back to Canada for other reasons. There was a great deal of anxious talk about submarines, but the only thing they saw were icebergs. They did hear about a ship loaded with nurses which had been stopped and boarded, but the Germans left the ship undisturbed once they realized the passengers were on Red Cross work.

After docking safely at Liverpool, George travelled by train to London and had the new experience of English trains. Instead of one large car with rows and rows of seats on either side of a central aisle there were a series of little carriages where four to six people could sit facing one another. There were also three very distinct classes. First was very exclusive and Free Men were not offered that privilege although officers were. This was one of many lessons regarding the British class system that George was to learn quite a lot about.

Recruits were billeted in the Thackery hotel opposite the British Museum.

They went off to report for duty still dressed as civilians. At ‘headquarters’ they found they were to wear the uniform of the English private—a shockingly ugly outfit. They were embarrassed to return to their hotel. Things got worse. George was forced to muck out stables using his hands rather than a fork and to deal with horses that were far from top quality. His quarters were no better than a tenement, he had developed a cold and he decided he had better do something drastic.

At the next parade, taken by a Second Lieutenant, George stepped out of ranks and demanded to see the Officer Commanding. He produced his Commission as a full Lieutenant in the Canadian Army. The young Second Lieutenant had no choice but to snap to attention. George was granted an immediate audience.

The Officer Commanding switched him right away to Lord’s Cricket Grounds where he was to ‘take gunnery.’ George loved living right in the centre of the cricket world. This was his kind of England. He was a great success.

His next posting was at Lark Hill near historical Stonehenge. On his first day he was ordered to lay out lines of fire with a director—an engineering tool with which angles could be calculated. He was to use Stonehenge as a landmark. He rushed back and forth swearing,

*“Where the hell is that stone hedge?*

It was hard to live down that particular bit of ignorance, but he did know how to use a director. And he became very familiar with Stonehenge.

He was sent back to London to await a posting to a unit—and his commission. His grand new life contained one small stumbling block. In the British Army it was assumed that any man who was an officer was also wealthy. Little or no pay was forthcoming. What was George to do? He

located old friends and relatives such as Mel Gooderham (son of Albert Gooderham who was later knighted for his part in the war effort). Mel, who was in Britain with the Canadian Army, took George under his wing and introduced him into one of England's most prominent Masonic lodges, The Richard Eve, Great Queen St. W C where he was quickly accepted.

George found lodging where he was not forced to pay. He now belonged to the class no one questioned—another British custom. When he did have a ‘few bob’ in his pocket he would board a double-decker bus. Sitting on the top front seat, he took in the sights all around. Often the conductor pointed out historic sites and buildings. If there was a pub at the end of the line and George had any money left he would treat the conductor to a beer or two. After all, his first job after graduating from university was as a conductor-ticket master on Toronto’s newly expanded transportation system along St. Clair Avenue.

He received his commission and £50 . He joined a very posh outfit called the Camberwell Brigade of Artillery from London. It sounded great, but George was to learn another British custom. Most of the officers belonged to the Honourable Artillery Unit, a sort of club for wealthy well-connected men. Membership did not include, or require, training and his fellow officers did not know anything about artillery. They needed George.

#### War Horse–1917

In the summer of 1917 he was sent to the front line in Belgium with C Battery, 156 Brigade, 33rd Division—one of two brigades commanded by Brigadier C.F. Stewart. They were located close to Ypres at a place known as ‘Gelivet’ to the right of the Ypres Salient. Passchendaele was the focal point. Torrential rains had created a quagmire and casualties were heavy. Everything depended on horses and mules. Officers rode their ‘chargers’ which were the best horses available. The ranks waded through the mud on

foot. Horses weren't all that useful but it was the charger's legs in the mud not the officer's.

Chargers and riders stayed together, the best of friends, while each was alive. George did his best. It was a terribly cold and wet year. Men were up to their knees in liquid mud, casualties were huge, not only from enemy shelling but from all the ailments and diseases brought on by exhaustion and exposure. Hundreds were incapacitated with pneumonia, typhoid, rheumatism and trench foot. They were often days on end in the mud and never dry. The German offensive was unrelenting. It was not fun.

George was appalled by the 'reality' of the British Army which he had so admired from a distance. Of the other commanding officers, George said one was a charlatan, one an incompetent, others criminals. He did, however, admire B. A. Butler who led the 156 Brigade. George was only a second lieutenant but he 'knew his stuff'. Butler would detail shots for George to work out and would watch with satisfaction as the results came in 'on target.'

*"As for Brigadier Stewart, in charge of both brigades, the less said the better. Without his wife to direct him he was helpless. As for the O.C. (Officer Commanding) of C Battery, he was a newspaper man with all the pull in the world, a despicable person but all powerful in London. He knew nothing about guns so I did all the mathematical chores while he boasted to Captain Butler of his achievements and managed to get himself a Bar and Distinctive Service Order and also a Military Cross. No one else was mentioned in dispatches. How come? Butler had to recommend the honours—or else!"*

Col. Butler was killed in the summer of 1918. In mid-November George's unit began replacing the Canadians who had held the Ypres front. The Germans had been forced back behind the Passchendaele Ridge and the

village, or what was left of it, became the front line. George had a cogent remark about that ‘famous’ front too.

*“It was a disastrous assignment and one for which Central Command might be called murderers. It gained nothing but a wrecked town on top of a hill. I got to know it well from December 1917 to April 1918.*

While George’s unit was there, infantry was moved in and out on two ‘duck board’ lines, the only way across the mud. Men who fell off the duckboards that snaked forward to the infantry positions risked drowning in the mud. Wounded men sank forever in the foul soup. The fertile farm soil had been turned into one huge muddy lake pitted with shell holes. Dreadful weather provided one small compensation: German bombs and shells buried themselves in the mud, often without exploding.

George’s unit spent many months in the mud of the Passchendaele Front. He survived. His chargers were not always as lucky. He had three. Two were killed - one while the Germans were forcing their way through the English troops to reach the road to Calais, and ultimately to the Channel. They were never successful but each time the cost in lives lost to both sides was huge. At one point when George was commanding a unit, with the acting rank of Captain, he was gassed.

*“The enemy continually lobbed mustard shells which tore through the air with a hissing sound and sank into the mud without exploding. Mustard gas was inescapable and because the muck was saturated, the gas was worse on warm sunny days. We wore gas masks continuously. It was even worse when phosgene gas shells were added to the mustard. Phosgene has no odour but kills quickly. I was gassed but did not get sick. I relayed my orders through a Non Commissioned Officer to whom I would whisper.*

He did not lose his life but he did lose his voice and had to move back to look after ‘the wagon line’.

The Germans bombed that too. George and his outfit were forced to move farther back to a big farmhouse where the stabling was at one end of the house. All the officers’ chargers were stabled there when the bombers arrived. The bomb ripped through the roof of the stable killing all the chargers. Roof tiles flew everywhere striking George who was just outside the bombed building. Once again he survived. But he lost another charger and another best friend.

George’s last charger was a ‘wonderful little mare’ that had been taken out of the Cavalry because she would never keep in line—too high spirited—and perfect for George and the artillery. George chose her when he saw her brand. It belonged to an Alberta ranch owned by a friend. It was like a letter from home. George and the mare were well matched.

Artillery Units were supported by the Air Force—such as it was—with an outfit called the RES, an airborne reconnaissance unit. The planes were clumsy, but efficient, with room for the pilot and an observer in a seat behind. The artillery could not see the German units and had to rely on daily aerial information. It was incredibly dangerous for the pilot and observer because the German planes could travel at much greater speeds than the RES. It was all too simple for the German planes to swoop down and knock them out of the sky or drive them crashing to earth.

George was invited to fly in an RES as an observer—scary for anyone, but terrifying for George who was afraid of heights and suffered heart-pounding attacks of vertigo. How would he survive even if no Germans were in the air? They flew over the line he was so familiar with, but he was too busy to be worried. If he looked between his feet he could see past the canvas flooring to the ground below. He was more than grateful when he

made it back and his respect for the men who flew in the RES was even greater than before.

In the summer of 1918 American units began relieving British units. The Americans had no artillery so George's unit stayed in the field. They also had no experience which meant they made some pretty poor decisions. But George thought them 'a decent bunch.' All business, they tried to learn as fast as they could and did not waste time improving conditions for officers as was customary in the Imperial Army.

By the time his unit was moved to the Somme, where his brother, Roderick, had died, George was Second in Command of the batteries. The Germans were in retreat which meant moving every day. Officers rode their chargers and mules and horses were constantly on the move until they reached the Arras-Cambral highway. The enemy was now on the other side, facing them.

George, who had a skin infection, was removed from active duty and was picked up by the Red Cross. It was October and cold. But George's infection was worse in the heat so he sat outside with the driver.

The influenza epidemic was now raging throughout the world. It was especially bad along the fighting front. The base hospital was crowded with wounded, but just as many had the flu. George was in a ward with every sort of patient. His next-door neighbor received extraordinary care, flowers, special food, and visitors. It turned out that he was a doctor at the base who had caught the flu himself after working around the clock. By the time George's skin infection had improved, he also had the flu and it stayed with him past the armistice.

#### Armistice–1918

Following the armistice, George was billeted in a convent. He arrived at

dinnertime and was shown into the officers' dining room. As soon as he opened his mouth they all recognized his Canadian accent. Someone asked him where he came from. George knew none of them would have heard of Gleichen, Alberta so he said something very general. The questioner then said:

*"Well, I see you know something about Alberta. My name is Charles Bruce. I come from Gleichen and I know your father and your sisters. I suspect I've seen them more recently than have you. What do you say you and I go downtown where they have set up a wonderful canteen and dining room for officers.*

It was time to celebrate. And they did! But George was still recovering from the flu. When they went into the dining room he discovered he would have to excuse himself. The garden had a fountain at its centre. George decided to stand on the rim of the fountain but still weak, lost his balance and crashed through the ice into the water. He could just manage to climb out, wet to his skin, and just out of hospital.

Bruce took him back to their lodgings, made sure he got a hot bath and into bed. The next day he was able to meet with officers from units with which he had served. It was reunion time. He discovered his old unit was only 30 kilometers away and so George reported there and stayed until the New Year when he was transferred to Winchester, England.

With no duties to perform, George got to do some sightseeing, including Winchester Cathedral and the surrounding countryside. He was moved several more times but never far from London, which he visited frequently. He saw Mel Gooderham and his family. He had also developed friendships with several of his Masonic brothers and, of course, with men with whom he had served in Europe. He was moved eventually to London itself where he was able to stay in an hotel. Nothing to do and with money in his pocket,

George had a great time in one of the world's great cities. But when the opportunity to return to Canada came George was anxious to go.

As his ship neared shore, Canadian passengers were warned that Canada had laws prohibiting the sale of alcohol. The solution was to drink as much as possible while still on board. George agreed. This time he did not fall into the water.

George stopped in Toronto to meet old friends and most particularly, his fiancée, Mary Kentner. He told her about Alberta, the house his family lived in and the prairie, the rolling silvery green, later toffee brown, grassy hills he missed so much. He also told her about his plans to return to the East where they could marry and settle. Neither guessed they would see more of the Rocky Mountain foothills than they would of Lake Ontario over the next 25 years.

But it was time to take the train west. Canada was a shock. In spite of prohibition laws his friends all seemed to have liquor. They were all elegantly dressed as if there had never been a war.

*"Every time I wasn't killed I wondered why. Now back in Canada with my family who had never seen the war but who had lost a brother/son, I wondered why I was still alive.*

*"What did it mean?*

Was this George's preparation to work for most of his life helping Indian people cope with the fact they too had survived and must adapt to the twentieth century?

## Somewhere In France

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3 March '18

Mary dearest  
Today four letters greeted me  
I tried to read  
the biggest one  
with a gas mask on  
It being temporarily required.

We're in real battle and  
much in it.

Yesterday  
our Colonel offered me a job

temporary command  
a battery in trouble me  
very flattered he could think that  
I could whip a battery into shape.  
What a stern person you are going to live

with  
and "obey"  
I love discussing spiritual matters dear.  
Particularly  
the unorthodox.

We all fall short but  
I believe in living with high aspirations for  
the betterment of neighbors  
and myself.

To hell excuse me dear  
with regulation rulings right and  
wrong.  
You and I  
will have a happy future in this or  
in another sphere.

Sorry you have had financial losses but  
as long as you are O.K. 'till I get back  
I'll hammer out a living for us both.  
We'll be the happier for it all  
I know.

As for Rita  
What makes you think of her?  
I could not  
would not  
marry her even if  
she owned ALL of Casa Loma by herself.  
I do not care for her  
It's you and only you and  
not your property.

Wish you were here. I must admit I do fall off sometimes  
and  
raise cain with all the other boys  
Please forgive and  
for your sake I'll watch myself.

Good night sweetheart

With all my love

George

**23 March '18**

All is going well.

Officers and men work like trojans for me now.

Results are good and

appreciation shown by

higher command

but

it's work work work and

many nights with little sleep.

Weather good

and

ground drying.

Good Spring offensive weather.

Are Easter exams upon you now?

Here's best of luck.

**23 April '18**

Your birthday box arrived and

on the very day.

I can't believe I'm twenty nine.

Have moved again

fourth time this week  
still running all the show on my own.

These boys have not had clothes off  
for weeks

When I can give them clean socks

It's like

Heaven

for them and  
makes me feel better too.

We're in a big old farm house with some French  
who have artillery in the yard.

They have no English and  
as you know

my French is very ragged but  
I introduced them to your chocolates.

The Captain  
dropped by today to say they'd named me  
Candy King.

My bat-man Parker is a servant by profession and  
excellent

Perhaps one day we  
can introduce him into our  
establishment.

If you can come to England do  
We would be so much closer and  
I think you would be  
happier.

I won't forget this April 21st  
My camp was blown to bits and

men and horses scattered to  
all compass points.

Some boys  
were  
killed.

Been under fire for hours but am a lucky sod.

This is War so  
can't worry.

It is exciting and no time for thinking  
about myself.

Yesterday the boys killed and dressed a porker  
fresh  
pork is rather nice.

Weather is better dear and  
when there are no fireworks  
It's fine to get about  
a bit.

Thank you for asking

Voice still weak but  
otherwise O. K.

Try not to worry

SOMEWHERE

Paper headlines make the war look much worse.

Hope YOU are well.

We hear about an epidemic flu                   in  
  Canada.

With love my dear  
from your lucky  
"old man".

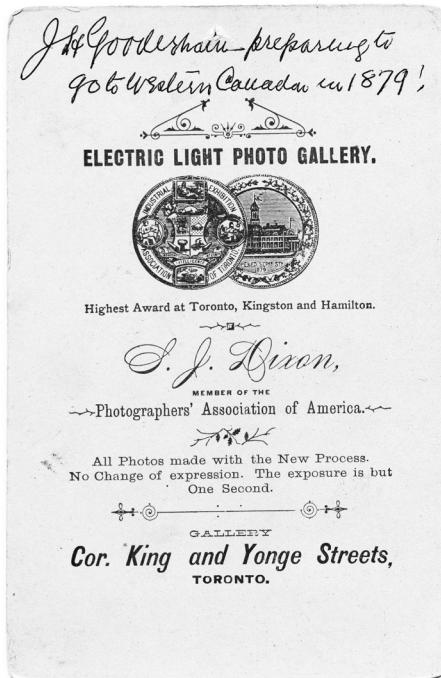
## **Raising A Family On An Indian Reserve**



John H. Gooderham—1879  
"Who's the Russian?"

**Back of Photo**

Annotation: "J.H. Gooderham preparing to go to western Canada in 1879".



## THE NEW AGENT

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### Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB, 1920

After his death the previous winter John Gooderham now existed only as a sepia-coloured photograph on the den wall. He was wearing a round cossack-style fur hat above a wide forehead, large elegant nose, eyes fixed on the viewer with a knowing look. A bushy mustache and huge fur coat definitely designed for the travails of pioneering in Canada's wild west prompted more than one visitor to exclaim...

*“Who’s the Russian?*

John’s legacy was a big act to follow. After two or three months George, now 31, began to realize that he was much better qualified for the job than he had thought. First, he knew the Blackfoot and they knew him. His long visits to the reserve as a teenager were remembered and he was thought of as a friend. He had just come back from ‘overseas’ where he had served as an officer in His Majesty’s armed forces. Serving in the British Army endeared him, particularly to the Blackfoot who were, at that time, extremely patriotic. They felt a direct relationship to George V, grandson of Queen Victoria, with whom they had signed the treaty which defined their lives. Living only 57 miles east of Calgary, the Blackfoot were often hosts to visiting British nobles: dukes and duchesses, princes and princesses, all considered a stop at the Blackfoot reserve a must.

His faraway employer in Ottawa noted that George had a university degree from the University of Toronto and quickly learned that George understood what they wanted done and was not afraid to tell them if he disagreed. He was always able to defend his position and persuade local businessmen and visiting officials that he knew what he was talking about.

If he compared himself to other applicants for the job of Indian Agent, he acknowledged some definite advantages. As a child he knew more Indians than whites and saw Indians as people rather than as foreigners. He had spent his early childhood with the Cree and Saulteaux in Saskatchewan where he learned to speak Cree and understand Cree although it did occur to him that the Blackfoot, sworn enemies of the Cree, might not be impressed with this part of his childhood.

In 1907, when he was 18, George had a longer visit in Gleichen because the threat of tuberculosis kept him out of university until he was well. This interruption in his university education allowed him to expand his Blackfoot education. It was often his responsibility to drive visiting dignitaries around the reserve and while he did so, he hoped that they would realize that the Blackfoot had something special to offer.

Famous Canadians, royalty and adventurers, all liked to visit the Blackfoot. Artists loved to reproduce their rugged ‘aristocratic’ handsomeness on paper or canvas. Authors loved to hear their stories and politicians dreamed of the day when all other Indians would be as successful as the Blackfoot.

In addition to his knowledge and respect of the Blackfoot, George had another advantage to help him do the job of Indian Agent: farming experience. His grandfather, Old George, who had raised him from the age of eight, operated a large company farm for the firm of Gooderham and Worts (the whiskey people). George had gained first-hand experience with farming as a corporate business—a perfect model for the farming operation being introduced to the Blackfoot at that moment.

George’s appearance may have been to his advantage too. He was a handsome man with an athlete’s figure and a unique sense of style. When in London and Toronto he had all his civilian clothes tailored for him. He turned up for work in a brown tweed suit, starched white collar on a brown

striped shirt, silk tie with a matching handkerchief in his vest pocket. A second handkerchief—also silk—also matching—tucked into the left sleeve—the tiniest edge showing below the cuff. A platinum watch was in one vest pocket with a delicate chain draped across his front to the other vest pocket where a tiny matching pen knife was hidden. His shoes were brown and polished to the highest military standard. They were partially covered by grey spats, a very popular winter accessory in the East at that time. George promised to be unlike any other Indian Agent. The Blackfoot understood the importance of being well turned out. George, something of an Edwardian dandy, fit the bill.

His first priority as Indian Agent was to locate feed for the 1,500 head of cattle which were close to starvation. He scoured the countryside. There was feed which he was able to purchase north of Gleichen where the land was irrigated and had not been harvested because of the early frost and ferocious hail storms late in the season. He also replaced a stockman who had been killed in an accident with Walter James, a member of an early pioneer family, who was better known by his Blackfoot name, Kepinox.

Kepinox understood ranching, had been raised among the Blackfoot, spoke their language and was accepted as a friend. His expertise helped bring the herd through the winter.

The job of agent included a Ford automobile but the combination of heavy snow and poor roads rendered this modern invention more of a nuisance than an asset. He had to fall back to the tried and true—a cutter and team of horses. Luckily, both were still available. He travelled up and down the country. Often the only road available was along the Bow River where the ice was thick and the snow packed.

George was busy. The Blackfoot had 8,000 acres under cultivation with an additional 8,000 acres in crop on a new experiment in large scale farming

called the Greater Production Farms. Slowly he became used to the car:

*"During the summer I went back to the Ford. It was more convenient in some ways but late in the fall I went to a grain loading stop on the CPR line called Namaka where I picked up some grain storage tickets. I headed back to the office along a side road. In those days farmers paid their taxes by making roads and some did not do the job lovingly.*

*"Often they would pile all the earth in the centre and never level it. I hit one of these soft hills and the next thing I knew the car swung around sideways and I was out on the ground. I got up and after deciding I was all right turned to look at the car. The roof and top of the car had been ripped away and it was now facing the opposite direction. I had to walk along the road until I found some help. In those days settlers all helped one another and we got the car back to the office. It required new seats and a new top but went on functioning. It was my first and last accident.*

The reserve was large and the responsibilities varied. The Agent was Justice of the Peace, Inspector of Schools, farm manager, building contractor, counsellor, and visionary. He also had to deal with the Ottawa bureaucracy. Letters went back and forth across the country explaining why such and such was required and this and that not allowed. He had to work as well with local businesses, ranchers and farmers.

*"Would they be allowed to lease the same land as before?*

*"Could they sell or buy?*

*"Were there men or women seeking employment off the reserve?*

#### Government ID, 1920

Each Blackfoot had a treaty ID number and it was the number that

mattered. Names might change and frequently did. The Blackfoot had a family structure totally unrelated to the European nuclear family model. Children might belong to one household one year and another the next. People received new names when their status in the band changed. It was never certain that the English translation of a name was correct or whether his or her relation to other members of the band had changed. Unilingual administrators did not understand the reason for the difficulty. Numbers would be faster and safer. The number would not change. It was the official record of a registered treaty Indian. The number sold a cow. The number bought a car. The number had a baby. And numbers died or got well. Everything must be recorded because every individual had a personal relationship with the government. George and his staff were involved in almost every aspect of every resident's life.

Although the Blackfoot had a complete set of social rules and religious guidelines, the Canadian establishment seemed preoccupied with their status as Catholic or Anglican. This division was stressed particularly when it came to schooling. There was a Catholic school and an Anglican school and great concern that one group should not 'raid' the other. Changes in religious status were frequent. Each time George was asked to ensure the change was a 'genuine conversion' and not a shift in allegiance due to influence from the opposing religion.

George was working every minute. When would he be able to go to Toronto and join his fiancée, Mary Kentner? There was never time and George had to tell her that they would be unable to marry in Toronto as planned. He simply could not be spared from the reserve for the time required to go to Toronto and back. It was a great disappointment for Mary whose many friends had already planned how to celebrate her wedding. What to do? Fortunately, the couple had a mutual friend, Creasor Crawford, in Winnipeg who would act as host, best man, father of the bride and any

other needed function. George Gooderham and Mary Kentner became Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Gooderham in Winnipeg, December 20, 1920.

Gleichen was past its glory days and was slowly shifting from the fastest growing centre on the C.P.R. to just another ghost town fading into the prairies. There was considerable speculation as to how long the new Gooderhams would be 'happy ever after' in Gleichen.

The Gleichen Call described Mary as Mary Kentner from Toronto and when she left Gleichen more than 25 years later the same paper had not changed its point of view. She was Mrs. Gooderham, originally from Toronto.

It wasn't easy for Mary to fit into western ways because she kept thinking of George and herself as Torontonians;

*"Just out west for a lark*

She made friends with many sophisticated men and women who had come to Gleichen from around the world, but she remained an Easterner.

George had two personalities. He loved the power, the parties, the sense of being at the centre that was Toronto, but he had spent his early childhood with the Indians and the rolling almost endless vista of the prairies. The West was in his blood and in his soul. Mary longed more and more for the East. George thought less and less about it. George had made a substantial effort to take over Duncan Campbell Scott's job when he retired in 1932, asking eastern friends and relatives to speak for him. He was not successful and some wondered if his heart was broken or relieved. Had he done it mostly for Mary or the Indians? Their friends explained the loss as

*"just more politics.*

The wrong government was in power. The same government lasted longer

than memory. And Mary and George spent the next 25 years together on the Blackfoot Reserve.

Although Mary had been teaching in Alberta during the summer of 1912 she was definitely a ‘city girl’ and perhaps even more significant, a Toronto ‘city girl’ with very little understanding of prairie life as it was then. The newlyweds travelled by train from Winnipeg and arrived in Calgary on December 31, just in time for one of the year’s best parties in the Palliser Hotel—a perfect time for George to introduce his new bride to Alberta society.

What could Mary, the architect, expect when she walked in the door of her new home? It was big—with five bedrooms and modern with running water and indoor plumbing. But it was furnished by George’s parents and included mementos of their stays in many other government houses on the prairie. The tone was western with stuffed elk, moose and antelope on the walls and skins on the floor. The furniture was sturdy and serviceable.

Mary was more than a little dismayed by the sudden appearance of Jack Morton and his friend. Jack Morton was huge, 6’3”, and his impressive frame was wrapped in a beaver coat. He and his friend had both been celebrating and were delighted to meet George’s new missus. Jack grabbed her little hand (everything about Mary was petite) in his big paw and gave it a shake which she felt through her whole body. His companion followed suit and then the pair went on their way.

*‘Is this what I’m going to be up against?’*

George heard Mary sigh.

Mary brought a complete dowry with her. She had family heirlooms treasured for years in her grandparents’ and then her mother’s or aunt’s house. She had collected even more as she prepared for and imagined

her own (Toronto) home. Each item was preserved only if it met her architectural aesthetic standards.

Mary had to move this substantial collection from Forest Hill—14 Oriole Gardens—where she and Did had moved after Auntie died. There were a large number of substantial items: two walnut four poster beds and mattresses, a chiffonier, dresser, buffet, a large dining room table made from a walnut tree on her Father's farm with eight matching chairs just rebuilt or refinished, several small tables, bookcases together with books to fill them. There was a regency settee and a Mason and Riche upright baby grand piano.

There were pictures and objets d'art— many purchased in Europe during her recent visit there. There were mirrors, rugs, china and cabinets. There was enough to furnish a house but she was moving to a house already furnished. Whose piano would sit in the living room? Where would all the surplus go? Fortunately George was not interested and Mary offered the Gooderham furniture, which she did not need or like, to her sisters-in-law.

The whole shipment filled the baggage room of the Gleichen C.P.R. station and the bill was a whopping \$240.81 which, in 1920, was a month's salary for a man like George. Gleichen took note. The news that George had married an heiress spread rapidly. So did the news the new bride not only had a B.A. degree from the University of Toronto but was an architect as well. It was suspected she was also a suffragette. They were braced for someone quite exotic and weren't disappointed when Mary showed up in her Toronto outfits.

Both Mary and George had their work cut out for them. Were they up to the challenge?

## THE TELEPHONE

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### Blackfoot Agency, Gleichen AB

When Mary and George took over the Agency house they made it look as much as possible like the houses they knew in Ontario. The office became the den.

The room had three tall narrow windows—one facing east which admitted shafts of light to stream across the room, even on cold winter mornings, as the family came drowsily down the stairs for breakfast. There were two other equally narrow windows facing south which lit the book shelves along both the east and south walls for the whole day and made it possible to sit and read in the natural light.

The bookshelves were shallow around the windows but deeper below so that one could sit and read, back against the bookcase, which framed the window. One could also sit there and stare out the window and watch people coming to and going from the office on the other side of the courtyard. In the spring the view was filled by a huge lilac bush covered with lush purple clusters of tiny flowers so sweet you could almost smell them through the glass.

Summer meant dust storms. Huge winds blew piles of sand around the bush coating the bright green leaves with grey dust. In the late fall every branch and twig could suddenly be covered with tiny sprigs of frost sprayed like white winter icing over the entire bush.

The Agency den had no hot air register so the only way to heat the room in winter was to leave the door open. It had one advantage. It meant that George's winter business meetings were shorter.

The west wall had George's desk and a wall full of pictures. The children

were rarely allowed to sit at the desk and certainly not to touch anything on it. But the pictures were important too. There were many of them—all with a story. Most were of family or famous friends.

The north wall had more photos but it also had the telephone. A wall model made of oak with a black earpiece hanging in a cradle on the left side, a mouthpiece projecting from the centre in shiny metal with a black bell at the end into which you spoke (when you were old enough to reach the apparatus, or on special occasions were allowed to stand on a chair to speak to some distant relative). On the right hand side there was a crank. You lifted the earpiece and gave the handle a good crank. The operator, who was sitting in an office in Gleichen, would ask you what number you wanted and you would say 78 the number of the neighbors across the road, the James family residence, or 71, George's office number.

Certainly the telephone was part of the magic of the room. It told us visitors would be coming soon; new relatives had just been born; there was a storm and help was needed; a friend or relative was dead or dying. Of course long distance required a good deal of shouting or at least that's what George thought. Somehow Mary managed her calls to Calgary, Vancouver and Toronto without waking the whole house. But the telephone slowly replaced letters as a main contact with the rest of the world.

## THE CALFCHILDS

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### Siksika Nation Reserve AB

Edmund Morris introduced George to another Blackfoot family when he visited the new Alberta home in 1907, famous in the past and important in the Gooderhams' lives in the future. The patriarch's name was Calfchild, a famous warrior and chief who, in 1907, was nearly blind. Father Doucette told Edmund that, although Calfchild was famous as a warrior, he first saw him as a medicine man beside the bed of one of the Blackfoot chiefs. He had painted his whole body and was praying, singing and blowing through bone pipes to drive out the sickness.

When Edmund went to the North Camp to paint Calfchild's portrait, Calfchild asked him to be seated, then took out a bundle, unwrapped it and propped it up on his knees. He spoke to it and waited for the reply. He explained to Edmund that he had asked whether it was wise to have his portrait painted. Fortunately the answer came in the affirmative. Edmund asked if he could look more closely at the bundle. It was a carving of a man with a large mouth and eyes and grey hair. The whole was painted red. The carving was part of Calfchild's sacred power and had been given to him by his guardian spirit.

Edmund told George that Calfchild's father, Lone Chief, was also a famous warrior. The British used to call him Big Charlie and recognized him as the most important Blackfoot chief at that time. Crowfoot took second place because Lone Chief was a famous warrior and Crowfoot merely a wise counselor. Only later when it became clear to the Blackfoot that the days of the warrior were ended and what was needed was a diplomat and negotiator, did Crowfoot become Head Chief. Calfchild showed Edmund one of his father's old caps and gave Edmund Lone Chief's buffalo's tail

whisk used to brush away mosquitoes.

When Calfchild's portrait was done he was too blind to really see it but he showed it to his wife and all those who had come to watch Edmund Morris paint. All approved.

When Edmond paid for the sitting, as had been agreed, Calfchild's wife, called 'The Sarcee Woman' hitched up the horses and the two of them went to Gleichen to spend their money.

When George met Calfchild he was living with his son Joe, 'a wild devil of about 30.' Joe was just out of prison. It was not his first incarceration. When still a teenager he had been imprisoned for seducing a maid at the industrial school where he was a student. Joe, it appears, was particularly attractive to women. According to Edmund, Joe stole his wife from an older man, although seduced might be a better word. However the couple suited one another very well and had three fine boys.

Calfchild knew he should record his personal history in the traditional way by painting the story on a hide. He told the story to his son Joe who was supposed to do the drawing and painting. But that was not Joe's style. He couldn't abide the tediousness of painting all the necessary stories so Calfchild had to look elsewhere for help.

In 1909, help came from an unsuspected source. A famous Metis guide and interpreter named Peter Erasmus came to the Agency. He would be of real help to Calfchild and to Edmund. Both Erasmus and Calfchild spoke Cree which meant Calfchild could tell his story in Cree and Peter could translate it for Edmund. Erasmus also had a direct link to Edmund. He had traveled with Edmund's father, Alexander Morris, during the treaty negotiations with the Cree in Saskatchewan in 1876. The Cree knew Erasmus and had asked him to be their interpreter. He already had an excellent reputation

as translator and Edmund's father decided both parties could use the same man.

In 1909, George, who was once again home from University, witnessed Calfchild's story being interpreted by Peter Erasmus. As a child, George had spoken Cree and as the story unfolded he was able to understand more and more of it in both English and Cree. Calfchild knew Edmund could record the story for all the world to read. It was a perfect arrangement. George agreed to be chauffeur and the three of them spent the mornings together at Calfchild's camp. Calfchild's story begins when he is a young man.

*"My father said to me, my son you are a fine looking man. Don't spoil your good looks by being a coward. You have a fine horse. Mount him. Take your war clothes and always try to be first. Above all try to capture some horses and take a scalp. That is how a man proves himself."*

Calfchild did what his father suggested. At one of his first battles a Blackfoot war party was hiding near a Cree camp. Calfchild and three others were sent out as scouts. When they saw a Cree in the distance they gave chase with Calfchild, who had a six-shooter, leading the way. He shot the Cree dead and took part of the scalp, sharing the rest with the other scouts.

In another encounter with the Cree, near the Eye Hills, the Blackfoot war party was protected by a fort made of branches. Calfchild had a horse famous for its speed so when the Cree charged, he jumped on his horse, naked, and raced out across the prairie to confront the enemy. One Cree ran his horse directly at Calfchild expecting to chase him away. But Calfchild charged straight toward the Cree warrior knocked him off his horse and took his gun and arrows, but not his scalp. He allowed the Cree to escape and return to his camp in disgrace.

Another time when he was camped near the Knee Hills, Calfchild's wife cried, "we're being attacked by the Cree." He rushed out, naked again, jumped on his horse to defend his family. He was soon surrounded by Cree. One warrior, on foot, rushed him. Calfchild grasped the man's scalp with one hand and his gun with the other. He killed the Cree and escaped, the rest of the Cree war party fearing to follow him. When the Blackfoot heard the news of this encounter they gave Calfchild the status of Brave.

In 1907, Calfchild's wife was still alive and showed Edmund a bullet wound she had received in her arm during that Cree raid.

Once, near the Cypress Hills, Calfchild and a group of Blackfoot, Blood and Peigan came unexpectedly upon some Cree from Piapot's band. In the battle which followed Calfchild killed one man, but a bullet struck him in the chest. Fortunately there was a large Blackfoot camp nearby and he was taken to safety and recovery. George listened and said nothing as the story gradually became both real and personal. The enemy of the story, Piapot, was his childhood hero and the Cree warriors Calfchild fought might have been the fathers or brothers of his childhood playmates.

Many of Calfchild's exploits involved defending the camp against war parties or horse stealing from the enemy—and the Blackfoot had many. Calfchild counted 32 fights against the Crows, Flat Heads, Nez Perces and Crees. Survival required more than bravery. A warrior had to be smart and creative as well. Calfchild illustrated this point by telling a story about a friend who was in a war party against the Crow.

He had a horse so slow and difficult it was a danger. The warrior dismounted and looked for a place to hide. He noticed a wolf's hole. With his knife and bare hands he dug at the burrow until it was large enough to hide him then crept inside. When a Crow came close the Blackfoot jumped up throwing dirt at his enemy's horse giving it such a start it reared onto

its hind legs and threw his rider, breaking his neck. The Blackfoot took the horse and rode away victorious.

**Joe Calfchild—The Agency 1920**

Calfchild's son, Joe, like his father, was famous for his exploits. And both were impulsive. Unfortunately for Joe, tribal warfare had ended so he spent his energy fighting the new order, particularly the incursion of the white man.

Some time after George became Agent he was the lone white person invited to a Blackfoot dance. It was held in a hexagonal shaped hall made of logs and rough lumber with only one door and no windows—something like a big circus tent.

George was welcomed by a committee headed by Joe Calfchild. Once seated he was asked if there was anything he might like. Although it was a cold winter's night the air inside the hall was thick with smoke and strong odours. 'Fresh air,' said George who went on to suggest that perhaps the building should have windows and a ventilator in the roof. Joe disappeared. A few minutes later George heard a chopping on the roof directly over his head. Suddenly struck by a draft of cold air, he looked up to find a hole two feet square which Joe had created for his guest's greater comfort. George knew there was more than one message in this demonstration.

*"Better watch what you ask for. You may get it!"*

Joe Calfchild was a great showman. He acted in early movies and put on such a good show riding through the foothills of Alberta that his movies ran for years. After the Great War, when Lord Byng was Governor General, he visited the famous Calgary Stampede and met Joe Calfchild. Joe, then in his prime, was a striking, athletic figure in a buckskin outfit covered with white, blue and red beaded designs in traditional Blackfoot geometric

patterns.

Lord Byng invited Joe to sit with him and asked him to autograph the program. Joe, who had no education, never hesitated a minute. He had seen many men make marks on paper which did not resemble anything real. He made what he considered appropriate marks and Byng was delighted.

Joe knew he had the attention of Byng's hosts and as he was preparing to leave he said to one of them who knew him,

*"Can I borrow a little money from you? I'll pay you back soon."*

Lending a Blackfoot money during the stampede was tantamount to giving it away and the man hesitated. Joe reached into a pocket and took out a neat bundle of papers.

*"I'm a big farmer. Look at all these grain tickets."*

It was clear six or eight of the tickets were in Joe's name and showed the grain elevator where the grain had been deposited. It would amount to about 500 bushels. The man was reassured and said,

*"Okay Joe, how much?"*

Joe admitted forty dollars would do. As Joe had expected, the man thought the slips were grain elevator storage tickets but they were in fact delivery tickets from a year earlier and represented money received, not money owed. Perhaps the loan was repaid. Perhaps not.

Joe was also unpredictable. Edmund told George that once when Joe was in prison he asked to see his wife. When she came to visit she brought an extra horse with her. With a yell, Joe smashed through a window jumped on the horse and the two of them fled into the hills. Only much later did he decide to give himself up.

Years later when the Gooderham children were growing up Joe Calfchild was frequently in jail and when he was out they were warned he might be dangerous, and to keep out of his way. He lived near the Agency and often walked down the road in front of the Gooderham house, presumably to the office. Should they run and hide? Should they say, 'Good morning, sir'? Joe looked interesting rather than dangerous and the young Gooderhams were intrigued as many had been before. He was a big, impressive man wearing a tall hat which made him look important but not scary.

Joe knew the times were changing. He fought for recognition of medicine men while at the same time demanding a hospital be built. He could see both were needed and could work together. Later he was a patient for months in the hospital he had sponsored before he died there. George mourned Joe Calfchild as a man who fought fair, asked no quarter, held no grudges and could be a real friend when a friend was needed.

Joe had a large family, one of whom was to play a major role in the life of the Agency. His son, Earl, became George's interpreter and eventually ran everything.

His hair was cut short as befitted the businessman he was. He wore a dark suit—black was best—a white shirt and tie. He was the first man visitors saw when they came into the Agency. He made most of the easy decisions himself. Difficult political questions required an appointment with one of the staff or George Gooderham—or Enuxina, as he was known in Blackfoot. It was a name George inherited from his father and translated as 'Little Chief'.

Earl took charge of events outside the office as well. A lot of maintenance was required on the grounds and buildings around the Agency, particularly during the summer. Earl was often around the house, garden and barns making sure things were being handled properly. He knew more about the

young people's activities than did their parents. And he wasn't shy in letting young people know when they weren't behaving up to standard. If he wanted to get Kent's (George's youngest) attention when he was too young to go to school, he would call him Rosie. 'Well, how's Rosie today?' and of course he always got the same furious response. But he also knew that Kent would listen to what he had to say afterwards.

In addition to his responsibilities for the Agency, Earl was also the lay reader for the Anglican Church at the Old Sun Residential School down the road. He was never thought of as Joe Calfchild's son. He was Earl, the perfect bureaucrat and friendly guardian. There were many rule infractions that Earl witnessed without turning in the culprits.

Although the adults all smoked it was forbidden to youngsters. Consequently most took up smoking as soon as possible. Earl said nothing when he discovered one or two hiding in the trees to have a smoke. He knew everyone smoked and it was a waste of time pretending otherwise.

When youngsters ran on the roof of one of the Agency's buildings, he said,

*"you know someone once broke his arm jumping off a roof like that."*

And sure enough within the week one of the Agency kids did land on his arm and broke it. This gave Earl special status with the kids: not only did he see everything that happened, he could see what was going to happen.

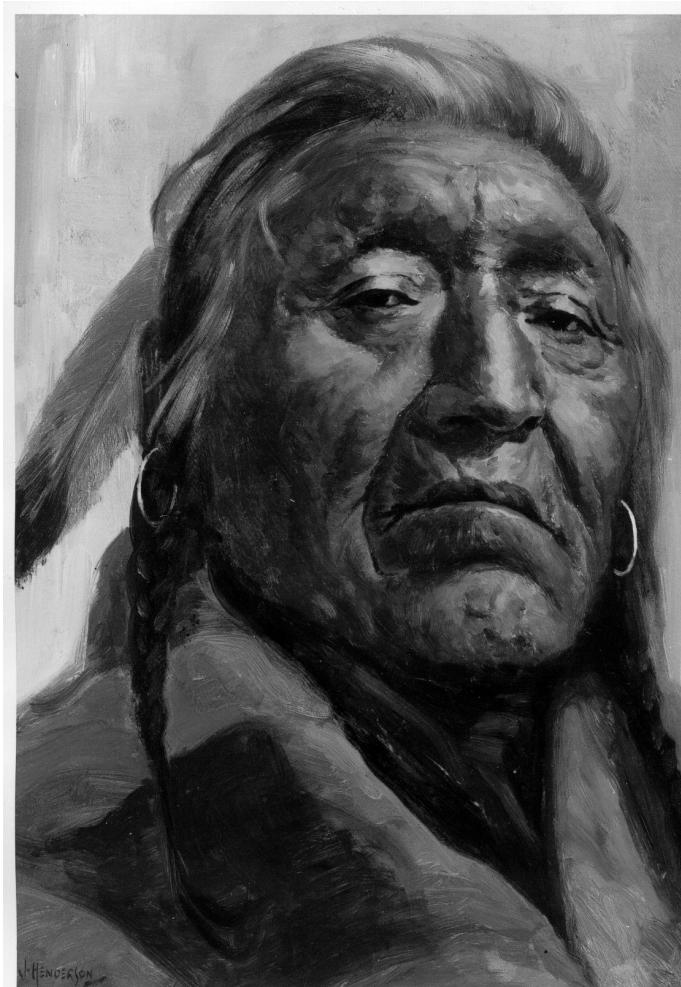
Flying experiments (never successful) were also conducted from the hayloft door of the barn. The hayloft was also the site of dangerous adventures—including secret sexual investigations. The hayloft was off limits, of course, tramping around ruined the hay and might even cause spontaneous combustion. If Earl saw anyone in the barn window, on the ground or even heading in the direction of the barn, the individual was likely to hear from him or from a parent at supper time. Also, it was never certain how

much Earl knew. Perhaps he ‘saw’ what went on inside the hayloft as well as outside. Better not take chances.

Later when the cow herd was increased and a new barn built in the middle of the pasture, the old hayloft became even more intriguing and more definitely out of bounds. The Holstein bull was kept in a fenced enclosure right under the old barn window and bales of hay were stacked in the middle of the enclosure. Not only could fantastic secret houses and passageways be made with the bales but—on occasion—a cow would be brought to visit the bull which involved a series of short encounters worth watching. Of course this meant getting from the fence to the top of the baled hay stack without alerting or alarming the bull. Getting to the top of the haystack was the first challenge. Getting off was the second and more scary, requiring speed and stealth. This adventure was definitely forbidden and Earl turned in any culprit he caught there.

When Kent was older and wanted to know more about serious things such as the Sun Dance, he found another side of Earl. Earl took him to the Blackfoot camp and persuaded important men to talk to him. He was also willing to sit and interpret as well as teach some Blackfoot. He knew where to gather sweetgrass, how to braid it, burn it and why it was important. Spirits liked the fragrance and once you got their attention they might be prepared to listen to what you had to say. Earl also knew about dangerous places on the reserve that were controlled by harmful spirits and should be avoided. In many ways he played the Grandfather role.

Knowledgeable about Blackfoot ways, but also a prominent member of the Anglican Church, Earl incorporated two cultures and had no problem with conflicting beliefs, attitudes and customs. They existed together and contributed to a richer understanding of the world and the people in it. Earl, like many other Blackfoot, knew how to benefit from both traditions.



#### **Wolf Collar –James Henderson 1923**

Wolf Collar was a remarkable sculptor and medicine man, he was recognized by the Blackfoot as the one who had power to predict weather disturbances, because he survived a storm when two other Indians were killed by lightning, and he was untouched although he lay between them. Though he was a lay leader in the Anglican Church, he continued to practise his native profession and farmers had such faith in his predictions that they took his advice and refused to protect their growing crops against hail damage, which was usually heavy, if he predicted no hail. It cost a lot to protect against hail, and sometimes he was right, but on occasion it did hail—however, he always had an excuse as to why his prediction failed.

## WOLF COLLAR: Magician in the Magic Room

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### Siksika Nation Reserve AB

The Agency den was a magical room. It had more light than any other room in the house. No trees obstructed the view of the courtyard which separated the house from the agency office and the many outbuildings originally built to house wood, horses, carriages, cows and chickens and, only later, cars. If you stood next to George's desk and looked west you could see the old barn which separated the courtyard from the pasture behind. In the early summer, just after the Calgary stampede, hay racks would arrive and Blackfoot men would fork hay up into the loft until it was so full small bodies could hardly scramble in.

During the hottest months there was too much light in the den. One could feel the glare—and the heat—pouring out of the room into the rest of the house. The books suffered from too much light. Dark red covers faded to pink; deep purple to violet; and navy to grey. In winter it was too cold to sit and read except for those rare glorious days when the sun shone in and the wind was a Chinook out of the west.

There was a small fireplace on the south wall with a metal cover. Above it sat a sandstone bust. In the morning, half the face would be in shadow and the other in high relief. Later in the day, the bust was eerily back lit and scary. He stared straight out the door observing everything. He was the magician in the magic room. The bust had been created by a Blackfoot shaman named Wolf Collar. The family assumed it was a sculpture of John (Grandfather) though it did not look much like him.

Wolf Collar was born in 1853, which meant he lived in a time when the Blackfoot 'ruled the world'. He hunted buffalo, went on raids against the enemy, the Crow to the south, and the Cree to the north. But he lived until

1928, one year after Kent, the youngest Gooderham, was born. Wolf Collar knew the new world as well as the world that John, long since dead, had immigrated into.

In ‘the old days’ Blackfoot men gained powerful supernatural help through their dreams and Wolf Collar had one of the most powerful helpers of all—Thunder. He told a story that in 1870, when sleeping on a hill with two other men, they were struck by lightning. He survived but his companions did not. Knocked unconscious, he had a vision.

Thunder, first as a bird then as a woman, took him into her tipi and gave him a drum and four songs. She gave him the power to heal people who had been struck by lightning. She also told him:

*“I am going to make a great medicine man of you. You will surprise all the people. I will come many times when you are sleeping and each time I will teach you something new.*

Supernatural beings have many forms and Thunder could also appear as Iron Voice. And it was as Iron Voice that Thunder appeared over and over again to Wolf Collar.

In 1900, Iron Voice showed Wolf Collar how to carve stone in a dream. When Wolf Collar awoke he was a sculptor. He carved the head which looked out at us every day, whether we walked into the den or merely just walked by. The head could be a man perhaps young, or maybe old. Could it be a woman? Perhaps it was Iron Voice himself. But one could not ignore that face.

Wolf Collar also carved a fireplace keystone for John’s office. The carving was part Indian and part European. It was hard to understand his choice of images. Included were a representation of Queen Victoria, the Prince of Wales, later King Edward V11, and a carving of Santa Claus in a sleigh

pulled by a single reindeer. At the bottom were two drawings of Blackfoot men on horseback, one chasing a buffalo with his bow drawn, the other chased by a buffalo and no bow in sight.

Some people believed Wolf Collar was describing the world before and after the arrival of the white man. But perhaps the carvings on the keystone were a kind of metaphor for his life as a shaman, which encompassed such opposite worlds.

When the buffalo disappeared and white man's diseases killed so many, Wolf Collar used his power to save lives during the terrible famine years between 1879 and 1881. Was it a coincidence that 1879 was also the year John came out to the West to work with the Indian people and that one of his first jobs would be to bring food to hungry Indian camps?

Wolf Collar was young when Blackfoot men were warriors and before white men played a major role in Blackfoot lives. We were told when he was 17 and until he was 24 he took the name Many Big Swans, wore a necklace of human scalps and in one raid took seven horses. In other raids he took five of the seven guns promised to him by Iron Voice.

In 1890 he was accused of killing a Sarcee man. The Sarcee were allies of the Blackfoot so this was seen as murder rather than as an act of war and the Sarcees went to the Horn Society, the most powerful of all the Blackfoot organizations, to seek justice. Everyone feared the Horn Society. They had ultimate power. The Horn Society gave Wolf Collar a sacred pipe to smoke. If he smoked the pipe everyone knew that he would die if he did not tell the truth. Wolf Collar smoked the pipe, refused to answer questions, threw down the pipe and walked out, defiant and alive. He was all-powerful and nothing could harm him. He was right. And his survival made him even more famous and feared.

*“Could he do anything he wished? Who would cross such a man?*

But Wolf Collar could see the coming of a different world and the need for change. The Blackfoot would need to learn new ways if they were to be as successful in this new world as they had been in the past.

In 1895, he had a vision that he was speaking with a white man who was a blacksmith and told Wolf Collar he could be one too. Wolf Collar bought tools and did indeed become a blacksmith. He was able to show other Blackfoot how to shoe their horses, and repair, or make harnesses for the teams that pulled the new wagons that replaced the travois and were becoming a necessity.

There was an open pit coal mine on the reserve in those days and with his new skills, Wolf Collar was able to repair the Blackfoot mine worker's picks and improve their method of mining.

In 1900, three years before John was sent as Agent to the north Peigan, the South Piegan Blackfoot (in Montana) could not agree on where to set up the Sun Dance Lodge. The disagreement was so strong they ended up with two different lodges and two separate holy women. Wolf Collar told them that what they were doing was wrong. The Sun Dance (Okan) was a time of healing, blessing and coming together not a time for division and competition. Wolf Collar sat on top of a hill between the two camps, singing his songs. On the following day one of the holy women was killed by lightning. The story of the dead Sarcee was remembered and Wolf Collar remained famous and feared.

In 1905, Iron Voice told Wolf Collar to find a camera and take pictures of certain people. His photographs of such figures as White Headed Chief and the widow of Sarcee chief, Bull Head, still exist. Iron Voice also told him to write the Blackfoot language in a new invention called syllabics in

which written symbols were created to represent each of the sounds that existed in the Blackfoot language. To accomplish this, he needed to become a Christian. In 1906, he took a Christian name, Silas, and added Christian prayers to his meditations. He began working with his good friend, the Anglican missionary, Canon Stocken, to develop a method for writing the Blackfoot language. And together they developed a Blackfoot syllabary.

Wolf Collar was a fierce adversary as his past showed. In 1920, just after George had been made Indian Agent on the Blackfoot reserve at Gleichen, and before the two men knew one another, George persuaded the Blackfoot farmers to buy hail insurance because, in previous years, hail had destroyed so many crops in southern Alberta. But the hail did not come that year. Wolf Collar told the people to drop the insurance. After all, they did not need it when he was there. In 1924, there was a terrible hail storm and many of the crops were destroyed. The people remembered why they didn't have any insurance and blamed Wolf Collar. He always had an answer. The tragedy was due to the fact he was away at the time.

Wolf Collar had a hand in most activities on the reserve, including the excavation of the archeological site which Edmund Morris unearthed. Wolf Collar knew he could do anything a white man could do and still be a Blackfoot. He was the integrated man Duncan Campbell Scott dreamed all Indians might be in the future.

Wolf Collar was not only an unusually clever and forward-looking man but, like many Blackfoot, he was also particularly arresting physically and many artists painted portraits of him. James Henderson, a friend of the Gooderham family from the Fort Qu'Appelle (Piapot) Saskatchewan days, came to visit in 1923 specifically to paint famous Blackfoot men.

During the day he would paint portraits of outstanding Blackfoot such as Wolf Collar (now in the Glenbow Museum), Bull Bear (purchased by

Riveredge Foundation), and Gunny Crow (purchased by the Manitoba Club in Winnipeg). In the evening he would help Mary and George with domestic tasks such as weighing their firstborn, Elizabeth, in the scoop of an old family kitchen scale, to see if she had gained the ounce the doctor said she should.

## The Car

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There's a car now

It goes with the job

You drive around the reserve

and

visit everyone and everything.

I don't know how

to drive one

or even how to start.

It's like a toy

You have to wind it up.

You stick this crooked lever in the hole

in front

No.

First you have to point this little stick

on this wheel

to spark.

You have to have this other stick that juts up from the floor

in the wobble position

Otherwise

the car will run you over

Ready

Now you turn that crooked one

as hard as you can.

No

Not like that

Like this

See

The whole thing shakes

when you get it right

You sit there and I'll sit here.

Bring the spark lever down to run

That's it

Now push the stick

I forgot

You have to push that peddle in

Or the whole thing makes that awful noise

and doesn't move.

Push with your left foot

take your right hand

and move this stick up here

Now slowly slowly lift your foot.

My God

we're moving

My God

What do I do now?

You turn the wheel

idiot

and steer us out of here.

No put your right foot

on this other pedal

and we'll stop.

That's called a back fire.

It sounds a bit like war doesn't it

It only does that when you've done something wrong.

Any way you got it going.

Better have a cup of tea

And try again.

I got it going

almost by myself

I don't think

I know how to steer it

out of here

You forgot to tell me about this other lever here.

That's gas

The more gas it gets the faster it goes.

You know that.

Watch out for the fence.

Lets get on the prairie

where there's lots of room.



## BLACKFOOT COAL MINE

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Siksika Nation Reserve AB, 1930

The Agency den was above the coal room, a huge unheated part of the basement where coal was stored after it had been delivered from the Reserve coal mine. It was deposited down a chute just outside the east window. Delivery day always meant cleaning day as well. The coal was soft with a lot of dust that seemed to get through every window and into every crack. Not all that good for a library.

Mary complained often about the quality of the coal but there was no possible alternative. The coal mine was part of an economic development plan which would help make the Blackfoot independent and self supporting.

For the Blackfoot the mine meant work and wages. For their neighbours it meant coal at \$2.00-\$4.00 a ton and many a relief order from municipalities was filled. The Great Depression had begun. Not only was everyone broke but there was drought and dust storms, until it seemed that the whole country south of the Bow River and all the eastern part of the province would be permanently destroyed.

The Gooderham children could go out onto the road in front of the house in winds so strong that when you opened your coat and turned your back it would blow you along the road like a sail boat—almost as quickly as it rolled the huge Russian thistles it had ripped up from their roots to go tumbling across the country spilling seeds everywhere. It was clear the Russian thistle would survive if nothing else did.

There was a huge irrigation project north of the town of Gleichen which was saving all the land that could be irrigated. The system included a large

holding pond just north of Gleichen. The town decided the reservoir could perform double duty. A diving board, docks and a change house were added and for some reason a barbed wire fence closed part of the access. It was over a mile north of the town and a long way from the reserve but everybody went there.

It was important for the reserve kids to have someone delegated to watch the sky; dust storms came up so quickly that they would never make it home if they didn't have an early warning of black clouds piling up along the horizon. Being caught in a swirl of a hundred sand pellets striking their naked bodies meant each grain of sand was turned into a tiny needle piercing the skin with such force that each child would be covered with tiny wind wounds deep enough to draw blood.

On one such day the warning came late and Kent got caught in the barbed wire. It ripped a gash in both knees. No time to stop. He left a trail of blood and both legs soon were covered in red mud. Keep running kid. What will your Mother say? Plenty!

The year was 1931. Canada was deep in the Great Depression. In southern Alberta it was also the time of the big drought. Crops dried up before they ripened. Everyone was poor except perhaps the Blackfoot who were assured food, clothing and shelter from the proceeds of their great land sale in 1912. They seemed to be very rich with more than a million dollars in their band fund. There was always enough money in the band fund. The mine was another great opportunity.

George found a land lease inspector, James Campbell, who was an experienced miner from Drumheller (Alberta's coal mining centre) and who had very little to inspect due to the terrible weather. George and Jim got together and started the cooperative coal mine, south and east of Cluny at a site the Blackfoot had used for years. The very same coal deposit that

Wolf Collar helped make usable. It had been kept up as a 'drift mine' by a Blackfoot called Good Woman's Son.

The plan meant modernization. The mine would no longer be surface only. A tunnel would be dug into the face of the cliff and a 'real' operation begun. Campbell was in charge. A village was built on the flats along the river to house miners and their families. There was a barn for milk cows, a wash house with hot and cold running water, a restaurant, and a first aid building.

Both the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches moved small buildings onto the site. The mine was an immediate success and at its peak employed 250 people—all Blackfoot or other invited natives—most of them living in the village. There was even a hockey team which was able to give teams from Gleichen and Strathmore a run for their money. In the thirties every town had a hockey team and everyone talked hockey from November to March (and maybe beyond).

The final blow was the development, in the 1930s, of a huge gas and oil deposit at Turner Valley, less than a hundred miles away. It would not mean country homes would be heated with gas or oil but country homes would soon be connected to the city by automobile over rapidly improved highways. It was to change the world entirely. By 1946 business at the mine had dwindled to such an extent that it had to be closed. The war was over. The new world had begun. The Gooderhams would move on too.

By the beginning of World War II there was a falling off of business. The quality of the coal was not high. According to George, the Indian miners lost interest. There may also have been some growing opposition from traditional Blackfoot who were afraid of the powers of underground spirits. Any difficulty or accident could be attributed to supernatural powers. Wolf Collar was gone. Others were in charge.

But all during the war years people were reminded every night, and sometimes every day, of the new world. It was common practice at that time to burn the excess gas at the well head. At night the whole western sky was lit in one huge, permanent sunset, proclaiming the world would be different, richer, easier and better once the war was over. They all wished they could have a gas stove and furnace instead of coal and wood-burning monsters they were stuck with. They also wished they owned part of Turner Valley.

Friends and neighbours bought shares in mineral rights to land near each new discovery and those who had a strike became instant millionaires. They left Gleichen for a big house in the most expensive part of Calgary. Everyone who was not part of that group talked a lot about it—and wished. The Turner Valley oil field changed more than the coal mine. It changed southern Alberta forever.

But on the reserve the Gooderhams kept the coal stove and furnace as long as they lived there. The softness of the coal had a disadvantage other than the dust. It left huge clinkers in the furnace. They were solid, unburnable deposits left behind after the coal had burned, which formed a barrier on the bottom of the furnace fire pot making it impossible for the fire to get enough ventilation. The clinkers had to be broken up and removed. It was a job passed down from one to another till it reached Kent as soon as he was deemed old enough. He agreed with all those who were against the mine. There must be a better way. It was also one of the reasons he blessed the day, scary as it was, when he went away to school in Winnipeg.

## WINTER SAILING

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When George Gooderham's children were old enough to ski, George would drive the Ford coupe with the rumble seat to Susie's Slough (Susie Crowfoot's Tears). The children skied behind, holding on to a tow rope, going up and down ditches on either side of the road—which could be dangerous as there were culverts and other obstacles. Another car on the road meant dropping the tow rope without being left behind and finding it again buried a foot deep in the snow. Fortunately there were only three or four cars in the whole neighborhood. Wagons were not a problem and often let the skiers manoeuvre around them.

Once at Susie's it was all clear sailing over what seemed like miles of deliciously flat snow. George would drive the Ford as fast as the skiers could manage without crashing. There was lots of room for fast turns where they could swing out in a huge arc travelling faster and faster catching up to and almost passing the car. Turning on ice, even ice covered with snow, could mean a tail spin for George and the car and a huge and rapid whiplash for the skier. Heavenly!

### Home on the range

The slough was famous for another reason as well. Most of the country was dedicated to cattle ranching in the early days and in the spring the cattle had to be 'dipped' in a disinfectant solution in order to kill mange and other debilitating diseases. The operation required lots of water and a gentle slope so that cattle chutes and corrals could be constructed and removed easily. Thousands of head were dipped at Susie's every year.

What happened to Joe? His grandfather, Crowfoot, would be proud. He grew into a tall, good looking man wearing the newly invented jeans and silver belt buckle. He was smart and everybody liked him. Almost

immediately Joe proved to be an outstanding farmer. He did well in his job as the government stockman looking after the band's herd of cattle. He was an ideal assistant, hard working and a perfectionist. He married a young woman, Maggie Spotted Eagle, shortly after she left the Old Sun Residential School. In 1921 they had their own farm complete with farm buildings and a four-roomed cottage.

Joe loved good horses and both his work and saddle horses were top quality. Maggie kept an immaculate house whose decor was the envy of housewives both on and off the reserve. The whole farm was managed to the same high level. In the 1920s Kathleen Shackleton, the artist and sister of the famous Antarctic explorer, Richard Shackleton, visited the Crowfoots to paint Joe's portrait. She and Maggie became good friends and Kathleen painted Maggie's portrait as a gift and remembrance of the visit.

Joe liked a good time. In the twenties when he was making big money he went to lots of parties with both whites and Indians—in the country or in Calgary's swish Palliser Hotel. When the Blackfoot were still using the hereditary form of band government Joe was put on the Council. The appointment did not last. Joe was drinking quite heavily and he was removed.

Later when the band adopted the elective system Joe was elected first as a counselor and then as Chief. George Gooderham and Joe did not always agree. Joe wanted more independence for the young people to strike out on their own assisted and encouraged by the Band. George would later agree that Joe was more often right than wrong. Joe knew he was right all along and he would eventually persuade everyone to his way of thinking—including some very conservative Blackfoot. No matter how often George and Joe might disagree they both knew they were aiming for the same goal—*independence for the Blackfoot*.

Joe was pretty much everything you could wish for in a young man and in 1938 when the Sydney Australia Fair Board came looking for young men to take part in their show, Joe Crowfoot was an obvious choice. The candidates had to be outstanding cowboys with winning records at the Calgary Stampede, appropriate costumes and a tipi. Joe went to Australia on the payroll with another Blackfoot, Joe Bear Robe, and ten other men from southern Alberta. Joe was the senior Indian representative because he was a Chief. The Band provided travelling clothes for both and a counselor's uniform for Joe tailored to fit like a glove. The contingent was a great success, but Joe was the star.

Joe found reserve restrictions difficult. They were designed for everyone with no room for personal differences. He liked parties and drove a car—a costly combination. He had a good sized herd of cattle which he wanted to look after himself. But the rule was all cattle in one band herd—no exceptions. When the policy finally changed, Joe and his son, Cecil, developed their own independent farm company. They got control of their cattle, sold some to buy machinery, cars and trucks and all the trappings owned by their white neighbors. An increase in the consumption of alcohol followed—not a plus, but Joe and Maggie raised a family of outstanding children, each a leader. Joe was trusted and admired by friend and foe alike in the 1940s and 50s, first as a minor Chief and then as the elected and re-elected Head Chief. All this he achieved without formal education. Later, when George's administration came under criticism, Joe not only defended George's point of view but convinced the critics to be quiet.

The Gooderham children remember Joe for his generous and jovial personality. The Blackfoot used to hold traditional dances late into the night at the Crowfoot Community Hall just across the field from the Agency. One, almost balmy New Year's Eve, they borrowed the agency car to go to the dance. They loved listening to the drums and the singers. In the middle

of the room there was a small band stand where the singers sat around a huge drum singing and drumming. Sometimes a drummer or two would use the small traditional Blackfoot drum.

There were circle dances for couples. They danced holding hands crossed in front, couple behind couple, in a circle around the band stand. The Gooderhams were invited to join. There were also special dances for 'Chiefs'—older men, who would dance in their very best buckskin costumes complete with headdress, never missing a step, never ruffling a feather and looking distant and aloof.

There were dances for young men—the prairie chicken or the hoop where young men with bells round their ankles, a cock's comb head dress and perhaps a fan of feathers on the back of their beaded loin cloth would imitate the mating dance of the prairie chicken. They amazed the audience by dancing in and out of first one, then two, then three or more hoops. They would swirl and dive and prance in time stopping only when the music stopped.

The room was always jammed with people sitting on benches around the dance floor, men and women in buckskin, women in multi-coloured shawls, children running around—and everywhere, babies, babies, babies. It was hot and it was powerful. The longer you stayed the more the drums got to you and the harder it was to leave.

This particular night the Gooderham children left late. Their car was parked against the building in what had been firm snow before the Chinook blew in. The car did not move. Racing the motor merely dug the wheels deeper into what was now slushy mud. Some Blackfoot 'friends' who guessed the Agency car was borrowed stood around watching and enjoying! What to do? The car would not move. It was clear the amused bystanders were enjoying the situation too much to help. Then

Joe Crowfoot showed up. Perhaps he had stepped out for a drink with a friend. Perhaps he had been watching the whole time. But there he was and suddenly six or eight of the bystanders picked up the front of the car and pushed it out of the parking lot.



## TOUCHWOOD HILLS: Order of the British Empire

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**Touchwood Hills SK, 1943**

The June 24, 1943 edition of the Punnichy ‘Touchwood Times’ boasted that

Two products of the Touchwood Hills were honoured in the King’s Birthday List. Marion Lindeburgh, President of the Canadian Nurses Association has been given the title of Officer of the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) and George H. Gooderham, Indian Agent at Gleichen, Alberta made Member of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.).

The names Lindeburgh and Gooderham go back to the very earliest days. They were here before there was a railway or even a school. Marion and George were the first white babies.

Amazingly, the Lindeburgh’s original home was still standing in 1943 and occupied by Frank Lindeburgh, the youngest member of the family at that time. The house where George was born was also still to be found on the Poorman’s Indian Reserve.

George, born in 1889, says,

*“In 1890, when I was just a baby, we moved from the Poorman’s Reserve where Papa (John) had been assistant agent to Kutawa, a tiny white community on the original telegraph line which crossed Canada. The ‘town’ consisted of three homes which, in addition to residences, served as telegraph office, Indian Affairs office and RCMP outpost. It was also a supply centre. After the Rebellion of 1885, the government expanded the Indian Agency buildings to serve all the surrounding reserves.*

Just after the Rebellion, Margaret McKinnon came out to the Touchwoods to visit her brother, Malcom. Although she was a qualified teacher from Nova Scotia—Strathlorne, to be exact—she appears to have taken time off to help her bachelor brother get settled on his homestead. When the prairie weather changed for the worse Malcom went back east. However, Margaret or Maggie as she was called by her friends, had long range plans in mind.

She had met a young Indian Affairs employee named John Gooderham and after some hesitation and a trip home to consult, Maggie agreed to marry John. Maggie had an aunt and uncle in Portage La Prairie who were delighted to ‘stand up’ for the young couple. The wedding took place there on July 11, 1886. There was a home waiting for them on the Poorman’s Reserve where George was born three years later.

Margaret Gooderham and Margaret Lindeburgh became fast friends. They both had a talent for pioneering and the friendship lasted the rest of their lives and spanned the distances between them when the Gooderhams moved to the Piapot Reserve, near Regina and then even further away, to Alberta.

Margaret Liggett had married the telegraph operator, Alfred Lindeburgh at Kutawa, Assiniboia, N.W.T. in 1884 just one year after he had named and opened that station. She was so proficient as a telegrapher that she was appointed assistant agent and could take over the office when her husband was out doing line repairs. His ‘beat’ extended from Fort Qu’Appelle on the east to Humbolt on the west - some 140 miles so he could be away from home for long periods of time. Mrs. L. had to look after the post office which they also operated. Mail came weekly, by ‘stage coach’, actually a democrat and team, from Fort Qu’Appelle Station. On mail days neighbours for miles around gathered at the Lindeburghs to visit and wait for the mail. It meant an extra leaf or two in the Lindeburgh dining table.

Mrs L. could manage that social responsibility too.

Like most settlers, the Lindeburghs owned cattle and horses which had free range throughout the Touchwood Hills. During the evenings of mosquito season you could hear and feel the thud, thud, thud of galloping horses' hooves as the Lindeburgh's horses raced home to the safety of the smudges prepared—often by Mrs. L. – to drive away the bugs.

Mrs. L. was also famous as the 'First White Woman Hunter of The Plains'. She carried a gun and knew how to use it. She was the only white woman for miles around and on good terms with the many Indians who came to have a look at the first white woman they had ever seen. The Lindeburgh's home was the centre for the whole district and provided the postal services as well as the telegraph station.

She spent many days alone without any concern. And this was just one year before the second rebellion when all the Indians who would later be settled onto the Poor Man, Daystar, Gordon and Moscwequan reserves were still travelling throughout that part of the country. Women of this sort of steel were not likely to let a little sickness 'get them down'.

The tiny town of Kutawa was many days travel from the nearest store. Bankers in Fort Qu'Appelle saw this as an opportunity and financed a young man from Montreal called W. A. Heubach to open a store just a mile or so beyond Kutawa. His Indian customers were fascinated by his youth and by the downy blond hair which covered his face.

Cree men did not have facial hair and were careful to remove any stray hair with tweezers. Young Heuback's whiskers looked to Cree men like the down of a goose. Descriptive names have always been a Cree custom so Heuback became Punnichy (down of a goose or fledgling). When the C.N.R. came through it passed close to Heuback's store. When railway officials asked the

locals what this place was called they assumed the question was ‘Who lives here?’ The answer, of course was Punnichy. The town of Punnichy was born and would later replace the ‘town’ of Kutawa.

Heubach and John became close friends and partners in various enterprises. Cattle were the cash crop and everyone who could afford it started a herd of cattle. The Montreal-born Heubach knew nothing about farming of any kind, but of course John was raised in Ontario and familiar with the Gooderham and Worts championship shorthorns. Neither had time to do the haying and winter feeding so they hired a local settler to supply and feed their herd during the winter. It cost the owners five dollars a head for the year. During the winter the cattle were fed slough hay which was cut and stacked during the summer. The cattle also had to be provided with smudges against mosquitoes which were a real menace to man and beast. Smudges cost an additional five dollars—a lot of money in those days but looking after a herd meant plenty of hard work.

Punnichy (Heubach) was not only a merchant and entrepreneur but also a dentist. Or at least he was a man willing to ‘pull teeth’. When one of his neighbours had a terrible toothache he was told to ‘try Punnichy.’ He borrowed a pony and set off for the store. Along the way he met a young man wearing a cowboy hat and a red bandanna. Casual conversation indicated that the dentist had been found. The cowboy was in fact ‘the tooth puller’ himself.

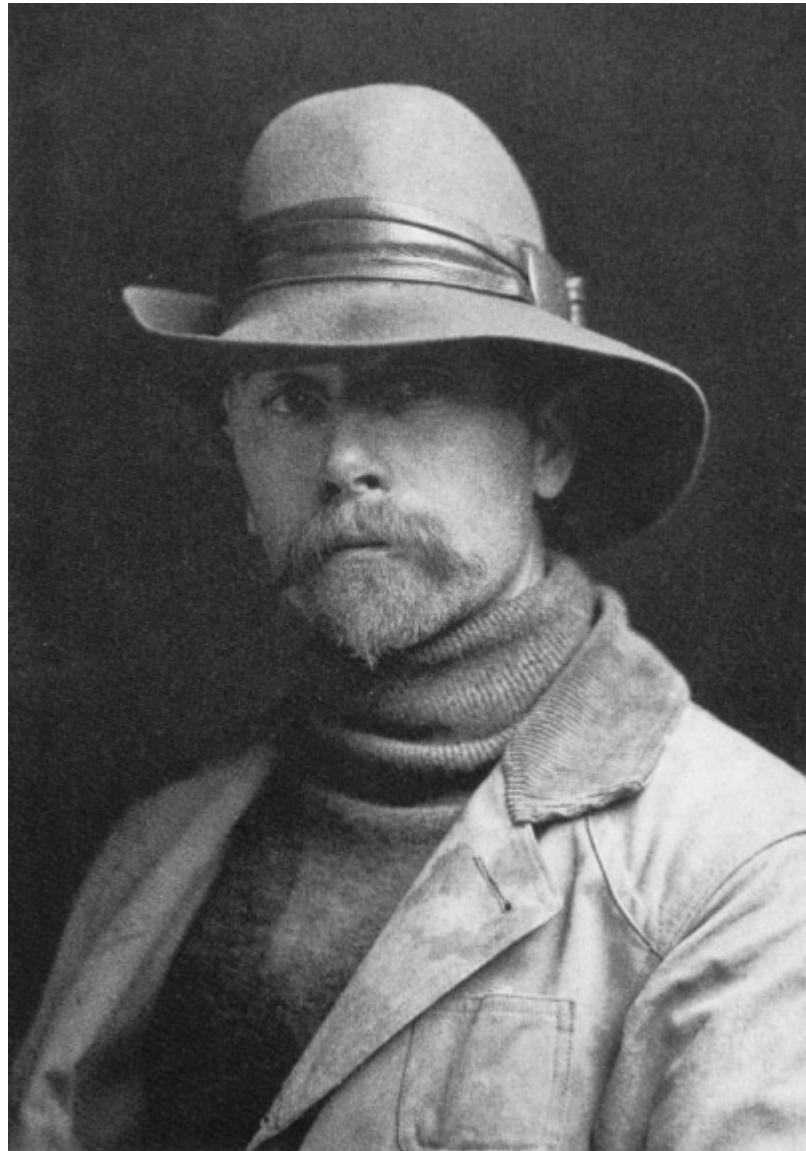
Back at the store he got out his equipment which consisted of a kitchen chair and a pair of forceps. Having located the ‘culprit’ Punnichy clamped the forceps gave them a mighty yank and out came the offending tooth. The two men chatted for a while then agreed that there was another offender. By the end of the afternoon five ‘offenders had bit their last.’ Quite an afternoon’s entertainment.

Pioneers depended on one another and developed long lasting friendships. Years later, when John and Maggie left to go further west, their many friends in Touchwood Hills gave John a gold-headed cane inscribed with his name and the date of his departure.



# **The World Comes to Visit**

1924–1945



**Edward Sheriff Curtis, 1868-1952**

The passing of every man and woman  
means the passing of some tradition,  
some knowledge of sacred rights  
possessed by no other.

## EDWARD S. CURTIS–Photographer

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### Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB, 1924

Many famous men and women visited the Gooderhams. Originally attracted to the mystique of the famous Blackfoot they soon became enchanted by the Gooderhams themselves and by the romance of the ‘birth of a native economy and lifestyle’ which George was spearheading.

One of the first visitors was Edward S. Curtis arguably the most famous photographer of America’s native peoples. But in 1924 when he arrived on the Blackfoot reserve he was just one of many struggling artists who hoped to make a living with his art.

*“It's such a big story I can't see it all.*

Curtis was compiling the text and photographs for a set of books which would be called The North American Indian. When Curtis and his assistant, Myers, a social anthropologist and essayist, arrived on the Blackfoot Reserve, Curtis had already visited most of the tribes in the United States. He hoped to complete the project within the next year or two but his health was beginning to fail.

One day Curtis asked George to introduce him to the local bank manager and to endorse a cheque he wished to cash. George already had bitter experiences with wandering artists and authors and was ready to decline. Curtis was used to the skepticism and suggested, as he passed the cheque to George, that perhaps he would be safe this time. The cheque was made out to Curtis and came from the house of Morgan, a bank famous even in Gleichen. George agreed he could help.

Curtis explained that before the turn of the century he and Morgan were friends. Curtis had a profitable smelter in Colorado which was well

organized and left him time during the summer to follow his hobby which was originally centered on photography alone. Morgan was intrigued and suggested the project should include a written story as well.

*"I like a man who attempts the impossible.*

Morgan House edited and printed the books and each winter Curtis would unveil the year's bounty at a special viewing and sale in New York. The project had the support of J.P. Morgan, one of the most famous American businessmen of the day, and consequently the sale made enough money to cover the incidental expenses of the summer. It was all a lark. Curtis did not need the income because his smelter provided a very substantial income. The two men, J.P. and Edward, enjoyed the luxury of making money while having fun.

Curtis went on,

*"When J.P. died his son took over and although the relationship was more formal it was still fun."*

But a second calamity did change things for the worse.

*"During the Great War the smelter was destroyed by sabotage and I discovered insurance did not cover this kind of loss. Overnight I was a poor man. The Morgans were happy to cover the costs of the project but I had to find a way to support myself and I was determined to maintain my independence. It looked like my avocation would have to be my vocation.*

*"My wife and I set up a photographic studio in Los Angeles and managed to make a comfortable living and, of course, when the set of books on the North American Indian was finished we got a royalty. There were a number of books and many photographs so the set had to be priced at \$500 if any profit was to be made. Sales were few. We were*

*not on easy street.*

George was curious about the Morgan family. Curtis confided that three generations supported the project throughout the thirty years it took to compile the history. And of the three

*“The best of the lot was the third.*

Curtis and Myers were photographing and writing a story (Myers being the essayist) which meant they must live close to the old people who would be telling the stories. George arranged that the two live in one of the two roomed houses which dotted the reserve and that a neighbour named Raw Eater head the group of elders who would be the storytellers.

Curtis and Myers enjoyed their company but understood they only worked for cash. And that was why the Morgan cheque must be changed into one dollar bills. Fish, whose house was being used, got \$1.00 a day; Raw Eater, \$1.00 an hour. Curtis began calling Fish, “Poor Fish” because he would appear bright and early every day for his dollar and smile only after receiving the money. He also admitted Raw Eater or ‘Eat-em-alive’ (Curtis’ pet name) was pretty gruff until he saw the day’s income clearly in view. It might also be noted that Raw Eater, when stripped to a loincloth, as he did in summer when about to eat his mid-day meal of meat, bannock and tea, looked the part.

While Myers was collecting stories, Curtis was arranging for the right photographs. He was a stickler for authenticity. The model must be a typical Blackfoot, the costume authentic, the horse a Blackfoot pony and the background a recognizable reserve scene. He sent the Gooderhams two photos—one of Pilar Fox dressed in historic regalia seated on a horse on the banks of the Bow River with the cutbanks in the background. The second was a close up of Duck Chief, head Chief of the Blackfoot, also in

full regalia and with his mace of office in his hand. George told his boss, Duncan Campbell Scott, about the visit and Mr. Scott purchased enough prints of another Curtis photo of the Blackfoot reserve, "On The Trail", for his 1929 Christmas card.



Travaux • Peigan (On the trail)

Edward S. Curtis 1909

## KATHLEEN SHACKLETON—Adventurist

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### **Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB, 1925**

No sooner had Curtis and Myers left than Kathleen Shackleton, another famous artist, arrived on the Reserve—another job for Raw Eater. George had arranged for several Blackfoot to sit—at a price. Raw Eater arrived in a shirt and slacks prepared to tell more stories but quite willing to sit for a portrait—at his going rate of a dollar an hour. Kathleen was intrigued by Raw Eater’s appearance as well as his history but the costume just wouldn’t do. Time was money. Kathleen was not a wealthy woman even though sister to the famous explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton. Could the situation be saved without sending Raw Eater home for a change—at \$1 an hour?

As usual, George came to the rescue. He had inherited a handsome red Stroud cloth coat from his father, John. It was made by a Cree in 1890 and was a gift to John from his friend Piapot, the famous Cree Chief. It was covered with traditional plains bead work patterns which Kathleen was very careful to represent accurately. Raw Eater may not have realized he was being immortalized in a Cree jacket and Kathleen did not think it would matter in the long run. She was much like her brother, Sir Ernest, nothing much fazed her. Also, like him, she was a traveler even if not an explorer, and had already been into the Northwest Territories where she was known as that crazy Brit whose brother liked the South Pole better than the north. She was a free-spirited woman, popular wherever she went—including the Blackfoot Reserve. This visit, the first of many, coincided with the annual Sun Dance which she was not only invited to attend, but during which she was honoured with a Blackfoot name (perhaps the first ever given to a white woman).

The portrait of Raw Eater was a success and it, along with the portraits of

other Blackfoot, formed a significant collection. Kathleen's trip west was sponsored by the C.P.R. publicity department and did not include support for Kathleen's number one aim—a show in Britain. Again, like her brother, she was not discouraged by such a minor setback.

When she returned to eastern Canada she showed the 13 paintings to William Southam, of the Ottawa Southam Press. He gave her \$13,000. He also agreed she be allowed to take them to London for an exhibit. They were returned to him, of course, and he kept the collection together over the years, eventually giving them to the Calgary Allied Arts Centre (The Cost House) who were persuaded to sell them to Mr. Eric Harvey for his Glenbow Foundation (coincidentally Mrs. Harvie was also a Southam).

Kathleen visited Canada and the Gooderhams often and although she continued to paint, she never became a popular artist. Perhaps, like her brother who is more famous in 2000 than in 1914, she will come into her own later.

## DUNCAN CAMPBELL SCOTT—Poet Administrator

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### Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB, 1927

A signed photograph of Duncan Campbell Scott, George's boss and Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, hung on the west wall in the den. To the young Gooderhams, Scott looked very much like any relative who had gone to the photographer for a portrait. They could not tell by looking at him that he was not only a major influence in Indian Affairs but also in poetry, music and theatre.

The children knew Dr. Scott hoped the Indian people would, one day, be able to adjust to the modern Canadian world. And there was one occasion while he was Superintendent General of Indian Affairs when the Government decided it was high time that a fair plan be found under which Indians could become Canadian citizens and the division between Indians and non-Indians gradually eliminated. It was a goal dear to Dr. Scott's heart. But Indian leaders who were afraid they would lose their special rights said 'no,' then, and have said 'no,' ever since. They did not think of themselves as potential Canadian citizens. Their identity and rights were established by treaty.

The plan to make Indians citizens of Canada with all citizen's rights and responsibilities was shelved, but the goal of having Indians participate fully remained and was reintroduced once again by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau many years later. The Indian response was the same—'No.'

Both Dr. and Mrs. Scott visited George and Mary Gooderham often when crossing the country on inspection trips or when on holidays. The Scotts loved the Rocky Mountains and stopped in Banff to visit the artist W.J. Phillips, one of the many friends they had in common.

On one of their visits, George, knowing Scott was also a great friend of Edmund Morris, took the Scotts to landmarks that Morris and George had visited when the two were on the reserve in 1907 while Morris was painting portraits of Blackfoot leaders and George was home just before he began university in Toronto.

One of the favourite spots was Crowfoot's last campsite. When Crowfoot knew he was dying, he asked that his tipi be set up on the edge of the high cut-bank on the east side of the Bow River. From this vantage spot Crowfoot could look down over the flats and across the river to the spot where Treaty Number Seven was signed. The Blackfoot showed Morris where Chief Crowfoot died. Morris and his Blackfoot friends marked the circumference of the tipi with a circle of large stones. The Blackfoot were careful not to disturb the stones but tourists visiting the site were not so respectful. Stones disappeared or were scattered.

Scott was now Dr. Scott and the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs. He was able to encourage the Blackfoot to enclose the circle of stones with a strong cement wall topped with an iron railing about four feet high. In the middle a bronze plaque on a solid concrete pillar the same height was added. The plaque bore an inscription of a line from a poem Scott wrote in memory of Morris.

*“...where he pitched off for the last time in sight of the Blackfoot Crossing.*

It was, in the end, a fitting memorial to three distinguished Canadians—Crowfoot, Morris and Scott.

A dramatic and significant occurrence marked the 50th anniversary, September 1927, of the signing of Treaty Seven. It was celebrated in the usual manner by the unveiling of an historical cairn and with a pageant

paying homage to Crowfoot and other treaty signatories and witnesses. Viscount Bennett, known as R.B. by all Westerners, was the main speaker. But before the ceremony and before the crowds came, a man known as Black Fever, a member of the Crowfoot family and closely related to the famous chief, made a surprise visit to the site of Crowfoot's last lodge. Protected by its stone wall the grave is only steps away from the new monument. Black Fever laid out the skeleton of a horse with stones and mortar on the ground outside the fence.

Few visitors at the celebration noticed this addition and those who did may have been unaware of its significance. But to Black Fever the site was not complete without the horse. Crowfoot had accepted Christianity but like most Blackfoot he did not think of one religion as replacing another. He saw Christianity as supplementing his original beliefs, and when he died, his favourite horse was killed beside his tipi so that its spirit could accompany the master to 'the happy hunting grounds'.

In George's opinion Black Fever was documenting this sacrifice and also remembering the Christian missionaries' consternation at the presence of so many Blackfoot medicine men at the great chief's death-bed. He also remembered the wrangle about the removal of Crowfoot's body from the Christian cemetery to this 'unsanctified' spot.

Just yards away from Crowfoot's monument Edmund Morris had also marked the Cree Chief Poundmaker's original grave. Poundmaker, famous for his role in the Rebellion of '85, had taken refuge with his great friend and adoptive father, Crowfoot, after the war. He died on the Blackfoot Reserve but his grave is no longer there. In 1970, the Cree took Poundmaker's bones to his home on the Poundmaker Reserve in Saskatchewan where a monument was raised in his honour.

After visiting the memorial later that year Scott gave George a copy of his

recently published The Poems Of Duncan Campbell Scott. On the flyleaf he quoted from ‘Lines in Memory of Edmund Morris’ in which he refers to a visit Morris and Scott made to a very old Cree warrior living at Qu’appelle, Saskatchewan, who remembered the old battles between the Cree and the Blackfoot. George found this gift particularly poignant as he too shared a Cree/Blackfoot history. He was living now with the Blackfoot, but was born among the Cree in the Qu’appelle area.

A year or two later the Minister of the Interior under the Bennett Government (1930 to 1935) came to Calgary on an official visit. The Indian Affairs Branch was part of his department and Dr. Scott accompanied him as Deputy Superintendent.

All the Alberta Indian agents were brought to the Palliser Hotel in Calgary to meet their new boss. The Minister was both small in stature and appearance and impressed the staff as having never held a position of such importance before. In some minds he never should have, and never would again. He told the agents he must move on and meet staff from other branches as well as a great number of political ‘friends’. They surmised the affairs of Indian people did not occupy him unduly.

George recollects that on this occasion Dr. Scott had a front room in the Palliser and being a very private man retired there whenever possible. George met an early Alberta pioneer friend of his who was also living in the hotel and told him Dr. Scott was in town. The friend suggested they might invite him to attend a movie with them. George wondered if Scott ever went to movies but they asked him anyway and were surprised to hear, ‘Why certainly.’ The two young men were delighted.

In June 1905, when the Gooderham family was still with the Piegan in southern Alberta, Scott was appointed one of three commissioners to visit tribes in northern Ontario, and to negotiate a treaty which would be

known as the James Bay Treaty. The party included a physician, an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company and two constables of the Dominion Police Force. They travelled north in three canoes, one of birch bark and 32 feet long. There was 2,500 pounds of luggage and supplies including a treasure chest of \$30,000 in small notes. There was a crew of twelve to seventeen, depending upon the difficulties encountered. They travelled to James Bay stopping to meet with tribes all along the way. It was well before the invention of airplanes or motorized water craft and it took many days to make the journey of hundreds of miles. The men got to know one another very well and all gained a respect for Dr. Scott, poet and pen pusher.

Scott was equally impressed by the crew, by his fellow travelers and by the people he met. There was one particular man, Jimmy Swain, who was unique. Jimmy was sixty-seven years old. He ran over the longest portages carrying the heaviest pack, enjoying a mighty old age after a mighty youth. He had once carried six hundred pounds over a portage nearly a quarter of a mile long. He ran on snowshoes with the mail from Moose Factory to Michipicoten, a distance of five hundred miles, in six days carrying only one blanket, a little hard tack, and a handful of tea.

Now 68, he was the equal of the best of the young fellows. He took all the portages at tremendous speed—barefoot. There was a thick layer of calloused flesh on the soles of his feet. He was proud of his efficiency. He was also an artist. How he could play the violin at all with his huge calloused fingers was a matter for wonder but play he did. Every night after supper Jimmy would withdraw to his tent, close the flap, and take out his violin.

*"A fine fiddle! It's an expensive fiddle. Dr. Scott gave it to me and it must have cost \$10,*

he said. Jimmy had scraped the belly of the violin and rubbed it with castor

oil, and the G-string had two knots in it. But Jimmy could make it sing.

There was a somber side to the trip. If Dr. Scott had thought the Indian people could easily become a part of the new Canada before the trip he was able to correct his prognostication.

*"But any forecast of Indian civilization which looks for final results (successful integration into Canadian society) in one generation or two is doomed to disappointment. Final results may be attained, say, in four generations by the merging of the Indian race with the whites, and with the help of treaties, teachers, missionaries and traders with whatever benefits or injuries they bring in their train."*

Canada's multicultural policy introduced in the second half of the twentieth century had not taken form in Scott's day.

## THE MACDONALDS–Meadowvale Cousins

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**Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB, 1937**

One of the strangest visits to the Agency House was from two of George's Toronto cousins: Mrs. Patterson Farmer and Mrs. Hillyard Robinson, both nées Macdonald. Their father was George's uncle on his mother's side. They had become very fond of him when he was growing up in Meadowvale and in later years when he was at university in Toronto.

It was Spring 1936, the year Edward VII abdicated. The sisters were making a western tour which included a trip to Banff where George's daughters, Elizabeth and Eleanor were enrolled in the Mountain School and a visit to Gleichen to see George and Mary. In Banff they were staying at the Banff Springs Hotel and took the Gooderham girls out for lunch—a 'knees together—sit up straight' affair.

Elizabeth and Eleanor could not remember ever meeting these cousins until Mary wrote reminding Elizabeth of a long-ago lunch in Toronto with Mrs. Patterson Farmer, (called Georgie). Painful memories invaded Elizabeth's consciousness. She did indeed remember having lunch at Georgie's.

When Elizabeth was eleven Mary had taken her to Toronto for an extended visit where they visited many friends and relatives and were invited to lunch with Mrs. Patterson Farmer. Elizabeth could remember the dining room, very attractive and the table setting, quite lovely: the food, delicious and served by a maid. Most memorable was a parrot, perhaps in a cage, perhaps on a perch.

When asked if she would like another helping of this or that Elizabeth had replied,

*"No, thank you. I'm full.*

The parrot immediately began repeating

*"I'm full. I'm full. I'm full.*

Elizabeth was humiliated. She vowed the upcoming lunch at the Banff Springs Hotel would be different.

As they prepared for the lunch, both girls felt excitement and alarm.

What to wear? It was easy for Eleanor. She had a grey flannel suit which she liked and Mrs. Greenham, the headmistress at their school agreed it would be 'fine, dear'. Elizabeth had only a 'ghastly-beige-old-lady-dress' with a silly cape purchased through Aunty Jean who, just released from the tuberculosis sanatorium, was working in a Calgary ladies ready to wear store. Elizabeth hated the dress but was assured by Mrs. Greenham that

*"It will be fine, dear.*

The girls went by taxi from the school at the bottom of Tunnel Mountain through the village of Banff to the Banff Springs—up the long driveway to the main steps and doors of the 'castle'. Once inside they announced themselves to the receptionist and waited in the rotunda for their elderly cousins to appear. Minutes later two elegant figures in chiffon gowns and carefully coiffed hair stepped out of the elevator. Elizabeth knew it was them. Kisses on the cheek and into lunch—quite a walk through rooms filled with antique furniture, past little shops specializing in jewelry, woolen suits, cashmere sweaters, or cigars, pipes and cigarettes.

*"What grade are you in dear?*

*"What do you like best?*

And to Eleanor:

*“You won all those cups for athletics? Well, I suppose if there were only girls competing. Skiing and mountain climbing, too!*

Questions kept coming as the two girls examined the opulent room and the amazing array of forks and spoons at each place. Fortunately they had been taught how to cope with a somewhat simpler version of table setting. They ate what was suggested and ice cream in a silver cup with a wafer cookie was for dessert.

After lunch was a tour around the immense ground floor of the hotel past huge windows and onto terraces providing views of Bow Falls and the Bow River Valley, Mt. Rundel and the famous golf course, Mt. Norquay and the ski slope, now green. Then they went to view both the inside and outside swimming pools where men and women lounged around in very modern (skimpy) bathing suits. And finally, the girls were released. They refused the offer of a taxi. They would walk. The school was not that far and it was a perfect day.

The ordeal was not quite over—at least for Eleanor. Mary had suggested, several months earlier that they should both be wearing corsets. Elizabeth gave that advice the respect she thought it warranted—none—and went without. Eleanor thought she should do her best to be a lady and, besides corsets came with clips to hold up her stockings. If you had to wear them at least that would keep them secure. Corsets were made of stern stuff with inset stays that kept everything in place—a walking torture chamber—not too bad when sitting straight but pretty hard on a kid used to running around on the prairie in jeans. Fortunately, the route back to the school was through forest which provided sufficient opportunity for Eleanor to divest herself of the corset.

When the Toronto cousins arrived in Gleichen, they found the table laid out with linen table cloth and napkins, the best silver and all the trimmings

that were customary for guests—individual salads with lettuce, tomato and asparagus with a tiny dollop of mayonnaise, light-as-air-homemade buns in a basket and flowers in the centre of the table. Mrs. M. was in the kitchen preparing to serve the baked stuffed tomatoes, the vegetable marrow squares, tiny potatoes and filet mignon—no uniform, but looking professional in a white house dress self-belted and starched.

The guests came down the stairs in very elegant gowns. Kent wondered why they were so unbelievably thin but being very young he assumed it was because they were so old—even older than his parents. The two sisters assumed it was their responsibility to entertain and they told story after story about people in Toronto who were mutual relatives or friends of Mary's and George.

*“Boring!*

thought Kent.

On and on they went, regaling the Gooderhams with stories about their most important confidant, their couturier, ‘but Madam has such a beautiful back we must design something to show off this beautiful back’. The interior decorator was the second most important advisor. He had transformed the family home including the design of expensive bathrooms which were ‘the latest thing’. Kent wondered if the Gooderham’s single, primitive, 1907 bathroom had inspired this part of the conversation. Were the ladies hinting that George’s and Mary’s life might have been as grand as their own had the couple been wise enough to stay in Toronto?

For dessert there was a favourite of Kent’s: chocolate sponge cake smothered with whipped cream and formed into a ‘jelly roll’. It was a smashing success.

*“Oh! I shouldn’t. It’s so rich. But it does look delicious. Just a tiny sliver.*

*I can't think when I've eaten so... It must be the western air... and, of course the scrumptious cooking, Mary.*

It became clear to Kent before the filet mignon had gone from the Limoges platter to the individual plates and down the individual throats that he was in the presence of 'society'. He knew there were Gooderham relatives who supposedly fit that description but these were called Macdonald and apparently no relation to the only famous Macdonald he knew about—Sir John A.

It turned out that these relatives' lives did centre around society. They came by it naturally. They were rich. They lived in Toronto's Rosedale district. They knew all the other rich people and belonged to the same clubs. When they travelled they went to the 'best' places and met the 'most interesting people' which included an introduction at Court in 1929, sailing to Australia, travelling to Florida, attending the Toronto Hunt, and endless dinners, lunches, and parties in the best homes of Toronto.

Years later, in 1950, the sisters' brother Henry died. Kent was in Toronto and was asked by his father to attend the funeral. The chapel—in Toronto's Timothy Eaton Memorial—on the edge of the fashionable Forest Hill area—was filled with mourners suitably dressed in elegant formal wear. Mr. Patterson Farmer in morning coat and striped trousers was acting as usher. He asked Kent, wearing a brown lounge suit not recently purchased, for his name. There was a clear suspicion Kent was an intruder. The response 'Kent Gooderham' allowed Mr. Farmer to relax, recover his composure and direct Kent to the second row directly behind his wife and two other close family relatives.

Kent had never attended a funeral before and certainly had never sat feet away from a corpse lying quietly in an elegant open coffin. To avoid staring at the dead body he concentrated his gaze on the women in front of him,

all in dark mourning dress. Which ones had he met in Gleichen those many years ago? He looked at the backs and tried to identify the one that had been ‘too beautiful to cover.’ The backs he looked at all these years later were rounded and frail.

As they were leaving the church a woman asked Kent what his name was and to which part of the family he belonged to. As they chatted Kent learned that he was talking to Lady Eaton. Kent smiled in what he hoped was an accepting manner. But the real reason for the smile was that he was living at the time in a beautiful house belonging to her. He shared it with five or six young men, friends of his all struggling in menial jobs with salaries of \$25 a week or less. The housemates often joked that they should invite Lady Eaton to tea. In that moment outside the chapel Kent had the opportunity. But he let it go. He walked home alone.

## THE SCOT–Canadian Historian

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### Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB

Frederick Niven was another name on the bookshelves. He wrote novels about western Canada that were a roaring success in his native Scotland and a critical success in Canada. He was very interested in the Blackfoot and came to visit the Gooderhams almost every year to do research and talk with the older Blackfoot men. He didn't speak Blackfoot but he had taught himself the sign language plains tribes used to communicate with one another before and after the white man came west. It was fascinating to watch him and two or three older men sitting for hours moving their hands and arms with no sounds except the occasional grunt of approval or hiss of disagreement.

The Blackfoot people were still raising sacred tobacco at that time. It was the Gooderham children's belief that it was absolutely forbidden for anyone except the holy people who planted and cared for it, to set eyes on the garden. It was particularly dangerous for a white man. The proof of this interdiction was the story of a farm instructor who had inadvertently ridden by the sacred garden. Shortly afterwards his horse stumbled in a badger hole and threw him to his death. The children were always careful not to look too closely behind thickets or over hills in strange parts of the reserve lest they should suddenly discover the sacred tobacco ripening before their eyes. They did know, however that this tobacco was different. Smoking it allowed holy men and women to see the future, and perhaps into the distant past as well.

Niven was, of course, aware of information collected by that other friend of the family, James Schultz, who had not only seen the tobacco dance but had participated in it. At one time Schultz was very anxious to have the

ceremonies, which accompanied the planting and harvesting of the sacred plant, preserved on film. He wrote many letters to George and to religious leaders on the reserve setting up a time when this ancient ceremony could be documented for all time. He was successful in arranging the coming together of the Blackfoot and the technicians, but for some reason the filming was a failure. The Blackfoot never received the finished product and considered this failure a betrayal. Schultz did describe the ceremony and its purpose in several of his books. He gave the tobacco its Blackfoot name Na-ho-wa-to-sin and said that botanists in California classified it as Nicotina Quadrivulvis. The planting required a shaman of the beaver or water medicine bundle to perform the ceremony. He and his wife would open the bundle containing the sacred pipe, paints and animal and bird skins while praying to Sun, Napi (a religious figure), and singing the songs that were a central part of the ceremony.

Not only was the planting accompanied by the right songs at the right time but even the way the seed was deposited and the type of manure used as fertilizer was carefully prescribed in order to ensure the best possible crop. When the seeding was completed the children ran over it all, covering the seeds. Schultz said the plots could be as large as half an acre.

The ceremonies were divided into three parts, planting in the spring, Holy Songs in the summer, and harvest in the early autumn. It was the planting in the spring that was the main ceremony. It could last ten days and included a camp almost as big as the one set up for the Sun Dance.

Once the planting was completed the land was holy and no one went near the crop until the harvest. But in mid-summer the shaman opened his bundle and conducted special prayers and songs to ensure the proper development of the crop. The harvest took place at the time when chokecherries were ripe and took two days.

Schultz said the plants grew to about twelve inches tall with about twelve leaves. But it was the bulb, about the size of a small onion, that was smoked. Although the white man's tobacco became popular for everyday smoking it was believed that the great sky god, Sun, found the white man's smoke offensive. The Blackfoot continued to grow Na-ho-wa-to-sin, the holy tobacco, for religious ceremonies only. Schultz admitted he had smoked it himself but didn't like either the odour or the flavour.

Frederick Niven was an inveterate smoker and used to go around with a hand-rolled cigarette dangling from his lips, made with chanteclair cigarette papers. They were famous for going out long before the cigarette was finished. The whole purpose was to have a cigarette without actually getting any smoke. It was a good idea which Mary copied. It didn't save either of them from cancer. But Mary lasted longer.

Niven was a scholar as well as author. He spent considerable time in the United States Indian Department archives where, among other things, he discovered the complete ritual for the Blackfoot Sun Dance. At that time the Blackfoot at Gleichen had discontinued setting up the Sun Dance and the line of oral inheritance had been lost.

A whole generation of Blackfoot had been raised in residential schools, where they were separated from their parents and 'native' religion was very much frowned upon. Niven obtained a copy of the complete ritual. It is possible the original was written by Clark Wissler, the early ethnologist, who documented so much of Blackfoot social and religious life. At any rate, George believed the Blackfoot used this material to revive the Sun Dance and it was going strong when the Gooderham children were old enough to go there with Nivens—not to see the secret ceremonies but to witness the public blessings and sharing of the buffalo meat.

Years later George's son, Kent, a student of anthropology at the University

of Toronto, read Wissler's report. And in the summer, he visited the reserve at Sun Dance time with his old friend and mentor, Earl Calf Child, who persuaded the leaders to let Kent watch many of the ceremonies, particularly the ceremony where the holy woman offers up the prayers to the Sun as it was done in the beginning.

The story was this: Morning Star, son of Moon and Sun had longed for a wife and chose a beautiful Blackfoot girl. He was the most beautiful man ever seen so the maiden was anxious to go with him even though it meant she would have to leave Earth and live in the Sky Lodge with Sun, Moon and Morning Star.

There was one restriction. She must never try to look back to Earth and see her people. If she did she would become homesick and unhappy. She found it easy to agree to that restriction at first. But there came a day when she could no longer resist. She pulled up a sacred turnip and peered through the hole. Everything happened as Sun said it would. She would have to return to earth. But she brought with her all the sacred information on which Blackfoot life was to be based.

## JAMES WILLARD SCHULTZ—Wild West Author

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### Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB

Gradually the Agency den turned into a library rather than an office as it filled with books. Below the windows there were shelves housing huge books like the family Bible, the encyclopedia, and Great Literature of the World. There were many books with a message from the author and a dedication to one Gooderham or another on the flyleaf.

The children were particularly attracted to one row of books. It was a collection of stories written about the Blackfoot Indians by a man who had lived with them in what is now the United States back in ‘the old days’. They were marvelously romantic thrillers with names like Red Crow’s Brother, Skull Head The Terrible and The White Buffalo.

The stories told of horse raids by Blackfoot warriors who travelled on foot for days, or nights. Once in enemy territory they must hide during the day and travel at night. The party would seek out an enemy camp—probably Crow because the Crow were famous for their horses. Late at night the Blackfoot warriors would crawl silently past the herds of ordinary horses grazing near the camp.

Without alerting the guards who were protecting the camp, they would creep right up to the enemy tipis where the very best horses were tethered inches away from where the owners lay sleeping. The slightest sound could bring the owner out, rifle ready, sounding the alarm to the whole camp. But the Blackfoot would have already cut loose the best, most prized horses and led them away, gathering ordinary horses up as they passed through the herds to ride triumphantly back to Blackfoot country before the startled Crow could be alerted and onto their horses. Where were the horses? The Blackfoot warriors would, of course, be hotly pursued by an angry platoon

of Crow warriors to no avail for the Blackfoot warriors would, of course, escape due to their superior skill and daring.

Once back in their own camp the Blackfoot would be greeted as heroes. Celebrations would commence immediately. Perhaps a second group of young men would leave camp, on horseback, to meet up with and destroy any Crow who dared to come into Blackfoot territory.

The returning heroes would also now be rich. For all the prairie tribes counted their wealth in horses.

The owner of a truly magnificent horse could offer it to the father of the most beautiful young woman in the camp. Such a father would be proud to allow his daughter to marry a rich and famous warrior. Surely she would be well looked after and bring credit to her family. The author of these wonderful books was James Willard Schultz. The children assumed he must be dead. How could a man who lived 'back then' be still alive?

One day they were dumbfounded to hear from George that Mr. Schultz was going to come for a visit. Imagine meeting the man who came from this bygone era. It was almost too much. When he actually stood in front of them they were struck dumb. He spoke Blackfoot. They were too impressed to hear let alone reply in any language. He had merely said 'Oke Nape,' Hello Friend, a phrase even they knew.

He was shorter than their imagined author and a little thinner, but he looked old enough to have lived through all those adventures. And he was dressed in a very expensive western riding suit with a silver Navajo belt buckle and a Stetson hat. Not the big wide brimmed cowboy hat but the more refined gentlemanly version. He was as grand as any hero needed to be.

George explained how much the children enjoyed the stories and the next

two books that arrived came with long dedications addressed to George's son, Kent. It took some time for George to convince Kent that HIS books should go in the bookcase with the others instead of by his bed (where all Blackfoot warriors kept their most precious possessions).

The children did most of their reading in the den and would devour each of the books, sinking deeper and deeper into the world of horse raids, sun dances and inter - tribal battles. At the end of the book they would, of course, be desolate. And would stare out the window at the 'real world' where Blackfoot people were riding by in their wagons with the metal rimmed wheels clattering over the bumpy prairie trail, and with their skinny hound dogs running behind. The horses pulling the whole noisy caravan along with their heads down and bodies almost as skinny as the dogs and with sores under the harness that stayed on their backs for hours and perhaps even longer.

The truth about James Willard Schultz was always on the large scale. George first met him in 1922 when Schultz had come to Alberta to research another book. George had by then been the Indian Agent for the Blackfoot for two years. This day he was sitting in his Agency office after all the other staff had gone. He heard the train from the west pull into the station, about a quarter of a mile, away but paid no attention because he was working on a report to Ottawa that was required immediately. He heard a footstep outside the door and then a knock followed by the appearance of a thin man wearing a stiff-brimmed Stetson. There were a number of photographs of old Blackfoot leaders hanging on the wall behind George's desk. The man looked at them and began to cry.

It soon became obvious the visitor was very much under the influence of alcohol. The fact that prohibition was in effect in Canada at that time had not been a deterrent to this gentleman. George recalled that the morning

paper had mentioned a famous author being in Calgary and he surmised that the famous Mr. Schultz was now standing in front of him. Much later when Schultz had sobered up he was able to explain his tears. Those photos were of his old friends. Not only were they now gone, but so too was the romantic life they shared together.

George closed the office and hustled his visitor across the compound to the house and into the den which was somewhat isolated from the rest of the house. The visitor was no sooner seated than he started searching through his pockets for a cigarette. George smoked a pipe at that time so he couldn't offer much help. Finally Schultz made it clear that he had lots of cigarettes in his luggage at the station. It was after closing time at the station and no one would be able to get the luggage for some time. George volunteered to go to Gleichen to purchase some cigarettes.

On his return he noticed Mary at one of the upstairs windows and their housekeeper, Birch, with her head out another. As soon as he came close enough Mary called out

*"We're frightened. There's a crazy old man wandering around downstairs!"*

George spent the evening with Schultz in the den and heard all about his life. He had a university degree, but was also the cousin of prominent fur traders who operated in the western United States. He decided to go out west to visit them where he became great friends with the Blackfoot and never returned. He married the sister in-law of an independent fur trader, Joe Kipp, and went into the fur trading business with his brother-in-law. George might have learned more about Schultz had Schultz been more sober.

It wasn't possible to get the 'crazy old man' to eat or to sober up much but

about midnight they got him into bed. Both Mary and George breathed a sigh of relief, believing he would be in good condition in the morning. But alas! They had not examined the small bag which he had taken to the bedroom with him. They were awakened by the early morning mumblings of their guest who was 'well on his way again'. The little black bag held the secret.

By that night he was in much the same condition as before. On the third day he was ill and everyone became worried. George contacted the local doctor, A.W. Bowles, who was able to persuade Schultz to go into the new Indian hospital. He remained there overnight and returned to the Gooderhams in good condition the following day, a most penitent gentleman. He said he was now too embarrassed to remain as a guest but hoped to return another time when, he assured them, such a situation would not occur again.

Before he left he asked for some note paper to write to his publisher, Houghton Mifflin Company of Boston. He showed George the letter which asked the publisher to send the Gooderhams copies of all the books he had written to that time. The letter was mailed and the incident forgotten. But three weeks later three packets of books arrived—eighteen in all, headed by one of the best, *My Life As An Indian*. A main character in which was Joe Kipp, called 'Berry' and of course Schultz's wife. The books went into the den and Schultz was often there in person as well as in proxy.

Schultz and his first wife had one son whose Blackfoot name was Lone Wolf. He had been raised by his father as his mother died in the 1890's. Lone Wolf came to visit with his father shortly after Schultz' first visit. He was tall, dark, and handsome, a leading rodeo contestant and a sculptor. The stuff heroes are made of. Lone Wolf and his father stayed in the Gleichen Hotel where, the hotel owner said, the two of them drank him

out of his whole stock of bottled beer. Father and son had a great time together—and a lot in common.

The last time Schultz came to visit, a Miss Donaldson came with him. They were gathering material for his latest book, *The Sun God's Children*, in which he described the Tobacco Dance. Miss Donaldson had been a Professor of English at Bozeman University in California and Schultz persuaded her to study anthropology at the University of Southern California and then to work with him. They were married shortly after their visit with the Gooderhams and she worked with him to do research on Indian Tribes both in the United States and in Canada.

## C.W. JEFFERYS—Illustrator

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### Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB

A constant flow of guests from Ontario arrived at the Gooderhams: old friends, visiting dignitaries and some, like C. W. Jefferys, the artist, were both. He was the author of a growing shelf of books in the library. Collections of drawings of Canada's history, they included Jacques Cartier arriving in the New World, Loyalists clearing land in Upper Canada, the Rebellions (both east and west), and the Indians of Western Canada. The illustrations, fascinating in themselves were even more intriguing because so many of them were in the Gooderham children's history books and, perhaps more important, in historical magazines or articles they read out of school.

When Mary was an architecture student at the University of Toronto, Jefferys was her art instructor. As the first and only woman student to enroll in architecture at the Engineering faculty, Mary Kentner could use a friend. C.W. was both her champion and confidant.

Although he is known primarily as an illustrator of early explorers, pioneers and statesmen in historic texts, he was also an artist, and one of the first to recognize the great esthetic of the western plains. He first arrived in the West at age 32, hired by the Toronto Globe to cover the cross country tour of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (the future King George V and Queen Mary).

In 1901, printers had not yet discovered how to reproduce photographs in newspapers, magazines or journals and had to rely on sketches drawn by illustrators noted for their accuracy in details and their speedy delivery. Jefferys was already famous for his skill as an artist and for his historic knowledge and accuracy. He knew what clothes had been worn, what tools

workmen had used, the weapons of the hunters, the means of transport in each era. He took pains to get the facts right and established a priceless record—in many instances the only authentic information still available.

He wrote:

*"My first sight of the country which was to exert such an important influence on my career, was when, after crossing the more cultivated wheat-belt of Manitoba, the wonders of the Prairie flashed before my eyes in Saskatchewan and Alberta.*

He appreciated the grandeur of the Canadian west with its awe-inspiring distances, dome-like sky, and crystal air in which forms are sharply defined by dazzling sunlight with no hint of shade or mist. In 1907, while out west on his honeymoon trip to Lake Louise and Calgary, he began painting the prairie foothills country. In Banff he also met fellow artist Edmund Morris who told him about the Blackfoot, people both men would grow to admire over the years.

Jefferys was determined to return west as soon and as often as he could. In 1910, he acted as the Canadian Courier's representative during Sir Wilfred Laurier's pre-election tour of the Prairie provinces. He was enthralled by the Qu'appelle Valley and decided to spend the rest of August painting there with Lumsden as his base.

In the summer of 1924 he had been commissioned to research sites in Alberta associated with the early days of the North West Mounted Police. Stops included the town of Gleichen. It just so happened that his young, architect friend, Mary Kentner, now Mrs. Gooderham, had settled on the Blackfoot reserve with her husband who was the new Agent. It was an opportunity not to be missed.

Mrs. Gooderham had her own car, a Dodge with an all metal body and

real glass windows that could be rolled up and down with a handle on the inside of each of the four doors. She drove Jefferys where he could sketch and paint. He completed a coloured pencil drawing of the Bow River cutbank on the reserve near Gleichen and another of grain elevators lined up along the railway tracks that separated the town from the reserve. He also sketched significant historical sights on the reserve—Treaty Flats, where Treaty number seven was signed, the site where Crowfoot pitched his tipi and Crowfoot's grave.

While in Morley to sketch the historic McDougal church, a young cowboy came to watch him work. The young man admitted to doing some sketching himself. Jeffreys asked to see some examples. He was so impressed he advised the cowboy to keep it up. Ronald Gissing's career as one of Western Canada's most popular artists was about to begin. As for Jeffreys, his sketches would all be included in his most significant contribution to Canadiana, the three volume, Picture Gallery Of Canadian History, published much later in his career, after the Second World War had come and gone.

That Jeffreys was the first artist to recognize and capture the unique prairie landscape is often forgotten as other younger, local, artists—W.J. Phillips, Maxwell Bates, Ernest Linder and Illingworth Kerr—also made artistic discoveries of western Canada.

Two letters to the Gooderhams tell us about Jeffrey's struggle with illness, his work and the effect the depression had on his family. They do much to illustrate his personal life as well as the Canadian world during the Depression and the Second World War:

*York Mills, Ont*

*Dec. 26 '33*

*My Dear George and Mary Gooderham;*

*I simply can't write Mr and Mrs with the warm glow at my heart on reading your kind messages. They were like generous wine, and of an old vintage too, for the date above reminds me of how many years it is since I enjoyed the hospitality of your home, and how many more since I encountered our first architectural girl. Such kindly thoughts and feelings almost reconcile me to Christmas, for which, let me confess it, I fear I have something of an unregenerate Scrooge feeling.*

*Don't let this make you think that I have sunk into melancholy or cynical senility, and don't infer from the newspaper article, which originally appeared in the 'Toronto Star Weekly' a couple of years ago, that I am or have been in desperate straits. It is a time I had a bad crack physically; I was suddenly stricken about three years ago with tic-doloroux, the most diabolical neuralgic head pains that afflict man-kind, followed by a nervous breakdown that forbade the surgical operation which might have helped. But we've all come through so far with no impairment of the real riches of life, but rather with an added wealth of love and courage. And I never realized before how many good friends I had.*

*So far as work is concerned I have had much to be thankful for. It is true that the 'depression' has cut down my income from royalties on school book illustrations, especially in your hard-pressed western country; but I have had two or three large mural decoration commissions (one for the Manoir Richelieu Hotel in Murray Bay, 1929, and one for the Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa, 1930) and these things are rare in our country. I could wish that they had come my way ten years earlier when my physical powers were stronger, for the covering of several square feet of canvas is a pretty strenuous job*

*in itself, and the prices were better; but I have had lots of fun doing them and the artistic problems have been sufficiently intricate to keep me keen. Just at present I'm in the thick of a series of panels 9 ft. x 6 ft. for the Royal Ontario Museum, depicting the life of the historic man from stone age to bronze.... three panels already in place have been satisfactory to the experts and encouraging to myself.... I have also in the publisher's hands, drawings and text for a collection of 50 pictures dealing with Canadian History (Canada's Past in Pictures).*

*It would have been out this Christmas, if the book-selling situation had been more favourable; but we thought it wise to hold off for another year in hope of better times. Will send you a copy when it does come out.*

*But this is more than enough about myself. The rest of the family are well, though I wish my wife could have a rest and relief from the strain which the last few years has thrown upon her. The daughters are women—no children around now—Katherine, the architect, has no architecture to do—like the bulk of the profession which has been hit disastrously—and she is working, like many others, selling goods in Eatons. She is an expert adviser now as to women's clothes and finds a department store a great field for the study of human nature. She is taking her job cheerfully and sensibly, in spite of much monotony—I can make no official announcement but I think I hint that she will follow your profession before long (wife and mother). Betsy, after a training for stenography and secretarial work, finds nothing doing in that direction and has temporary employment for the moment also in Eatons —also with a strong probability of your job later.*

*Peggy went in for kindergarten and primary teaching; nothing offering there. After graduation she kept herself in practice by voluntary (free)*

*work among the foreign kids at the University settlement in the ward, and was fortunate enough to get a Christmas present in the shape of an engagement as primary teacher at the Willowdale school about three miles north of us. Result she feels like a millionaire and has already, in imagination, spent her half-year's salary.*

*Barbara is in her second year at Northern Vocational School taking up art and kicking because she hasn't a paying job. You see what a mercenary set we are - She is doing excellently, draws remarkably well, has made some good watercolor sketches, and I think is doomed to be an artist. They are all good, wholesome girls with brains, character and good looks. Jeanette, by now is a staid, not too staid, married woman; they have no children, which they regret; but her husband is getting on well in the law, as partner in one of the best old law firms in the city.*

*It is good to know all your family (no longer babies either, I suppose) are well including, I gather your numerous red wards. All the good wishes to them. I think they are fortunate in having such a sensible and sympathetic guardian. So far as the Indian is concerned, I feel that perhaps his best safeguard is his racial pride—as soon as he gets the 'inferiority complex' which our so-called civilization so often imposes on the 'lesser breeds' imitation sets in and degeneration follows.*

*And looking at the mess that this civilization has made of things I can fancy that any really intelligent aborigine, whether of America, Patagonia or Polynesia, must have some doubts and some diminution of respect and admiration for our social structure. But this addressed to a government official smells strongly of treason, so I close up.*

*Nevertheless it's a good world in many ways; a world of good friends, of natural beauty and interest. A trip such as you suggest (to Gleichen and The West) and that we have dreamed of so often, would bring us*

*into such a world and both my wife and I hope that someday before we get entirely too old and feeble we may tumble into Gleichen in a covered wagon and camp along the winding Bow and find soothing and peace in the long flowing lines and soft harmonies of color of its slow rolling hills. The girls would love it too. I see no immediate prospect of it; but let the Gooderhams beware the inundations may sweep down on them someday and the Bow in shining flood would be a trickling brook by comparison. This long drawn letter is a foretaste.*

*P.S. I'm still at my job in the School of Architecture—have an assistant in one of our graduates, Carsewell, now a son-in-law of Professor Wright, who has announced his retirement at the end of this year.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Charles W. Jefferys*

He did not make that trip but the Gooderhams kept in touch and one or the other was in Toronto from time to time and able to look him up.

He was right about Barbara. She did become an artist—also a wife and mother. She came to visit the Gooderhams often as Barbara (Mrs. Orval) Allen. Once again, Mary helped her visit the West with the aid of her car—not the same one she and Jeffreys used but the same make, a Dodge without running boards and with small ‘ventilator windows’ which could be unlatched and pushed open allowing air circulation without the blasts that accompanied open windows. Some dust filtered in but nothing like the older model. Paved roads were not yet thought of and all roads were dirt though some had gravel added. The Dirty Thirties always lived up to their name. Dust was part of drought and both were a major part of life.

Barbara and one or all of the Gooderham kids would escape—in Mary’s car—to the River. There were trees and grass and moisture in the air. She

would sketch—often in the same location her father had used years before. The Gooderhams were encouraged to sketch too.

*"That's not bad. Most people can't see there is a form along the horizon. You don't see hills though. What makes it possible to see forms with the eye? Isn't it a matter of light and shadow? Remember shadows are not black. Try again.*

Perhaps they would try again or perhaps wander off exploring along the river and through the trees—sometimes romancing about the Blackfoot who wandered through those very trees before white men came. Perhaps there were enemies—Cree or Crow—just beyond that tree. Barbara taught them to see as well as look and that lesson enriched the rest of their lives.

The war came. Jeffreys wrote to the Gooderhams at the beginning of 1945 just as people were wondering if it would ever end.

*York Mills, On. Jan. 30, '45*

*My Dear Gooderhams*

*It was very pleasant to get a card and to hear from you again. A real western breeze, a Chinook wind to mellow our Arctic winter which is a record creator with snow, snow and more snow and no faintest January thaw. Hibernation is the only sensible thing, the animals know better than we humans.*

*The photo in the papers is more or less of a bluff—the retired general appearance which impressed you is only a false front, like those prairie town houses which simulate a second story. For the truth is it was my first public appearance—& in glad rags for several weeks—or is it months—for I have been laid up more or less since October and am still a house-tied convalescent, being coddled by my daughters.*

*I had a return of my old enemy, tic-doloroux, after 14 years quiescence, which required another operation which I underwent early in November. It relieved me from the agonizing pain.... However I am coming on and beginning to do some work, taking advantage of the opportunity to go through some of my earlier things and preparing them for mounting. It's been an interesting job, with no time limits or dates of publication or exhibition openings—a welcome change from the pretty strenuous life of the last couple of years, getting the second volume of my 'Picture Gallery' ready. I managed to finish it before I cracked down, and it is now in the hands of the printers, but when it will get out is uncertain, owing to war-time shortages of labour and materials, but probably it will be published this spring or early summer.*

*The first volume went over very well, required a second printing & is still selling, with many demands for the next volume, which we had hoped might have been out last fall. You will receive an early copy, also one of a monograph on me written by William Colgate, who got out 'The History of Canadian Art' a couple of years ago. It contains about 18 illustrations of my paintings, including a couple of prairie things and the author has done a good job—probably treating me better than I deserve. The little book ought to be out any day now.*

*We are all well here, the third generation going strong & noisy, so that York Mills is much as it was in general atmosphere years ago. I see Barbara and Orval pretty often, though gas rationing curtails all travelling considerably & they are living in the outskirts of West Toronto some distance from bus and car lines, but within easy distance of the Kodak Plant (where O was employed). Young Claudia is a creditable product, has achieved bipedal locomotion, but not yet articulate speech to any extent, though she quite evidently understands our language. My own belief is that she is holding out on us, so as not to commit herself; a*

*canny disposition which she inherits from her parents.*

*I think you have done a good job both with your family and with the Indians, especially if as you say, you are becoming like them. I was always sold on them, & I am now literally one, for a year ago last summer I was adopted into the Six Nations at the annual meeting of The Ontario Historical Society, of which I was president, held in Brantford & its neighborhood.*

*I was made a member of The Turtle Clan of the Mohawks at a most interesting ceremony on the reserve. I am really very proud of the distinction of belonging to this ancient community... I was given a name by a dear old lady named 'She who watches over the village', otherwise Mrs Green, who was my Indian sponsor, it being necessary in Iroquois custom for the women to select, accept, or reject all prospective members. I had to repeat my name in a loud and audible voice, which I did with considerable eclat and to the surprise of my Indian bretheren, for I had learned, several years ago, from a Toronto professor who knew Mohawk and Huron pronunciation, how to give the proper guttural sounds.*

*'Ga-re-wa-ga-yon' meaning I was told, 'Historic words'. So if you have any turtles among the Blackfoot, I shall claim kinship if I am ever among them again and, who knows, I may even venture on another visit, but one does not count on such enterprises at 75 years.*

*I was sorry to hear of Frederick Niven's death though I had known he had been in bad health for some time. I had some correspondence with him & admired his work. 'Flying Years' especially.*

*I am as ever yours sincerely*

*CHARLES W. JEFFERYS or 'GA-RE-WA-GA-YON'*

## NICHOLAS IGNATIEFF—Educator

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**Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB, 1933**

The front door of the Agency house, used only by strangers and those who came on business, opened into a large entry hall. The Gooderham children were always curious about anyone who came through that door. In November 1933, a tall powerful-looking Russian called Nicholas Ignatieff stood talking with George there—the two of them watching a freak storm swirling snow into the front veranda and worrying about a large herd of Herefords on the reserve caught on the open range by the blizzard.

Round-up crews had to work night and day to separate the hundreds of calves from their mothers and drive both adults and calves into separate feed lots. The six-foot-two-inch Ignatieff was very interested in this event and, when he learned the huge herd was to be moved across the Bow River some ten miles to the North Camp where there would be ample protection and food, he asked to join the cowboys.

Not only was Ignatieff tall and well built he was clearly ready for adventure. He was in Gleichen to talk to the Canadian Club. He hadn't brought clothing suitable for riding a horse across the reserve. Could clothing be found? Fortunately George was six-foot and about the same size and build. Clothing was soon found. George produced a pair of beaver driving mitts that had belonged to his father, John. The beaver fur was both inside and outside and the first finger was separated from the other three like a glove so the wearer could hold the reins but the rest of his fingers were warmly together as they would be in a mitt. The gloves were a perfect fit. There was a matching beaver hat. George did his best to persuade Ignatieff to wear it too; if not this hat then another. The Russian scorned a hat. But he was able to fit into a sheepskin jacket similar to those made famous by the Mounted

Police in pioneer days. Winter moccasins were made large enough so many pairs of socks could be fitted inside. A pair was located at the back of George's closet. Trousers and some long johns were found and, if anything, the strange costume enhanced the visitor's impressive good looks and bearing.

When he joined the crew of Blackfoot cowboys no one made any comment, but they all noticed that this crazy easterner was hatless—and expected the worst. They watched him during the whole trek with more and more respect. Not only did he not seem to be bothered by the cold but he was a magnificent horseman and could ride with their best. He also knew how to herd cattle. What they didn't know was that he was having the time of his life remembering how it had been as a child in Russia where his father owned a huge estate in a part of the country not unlike southern Alberta.

The Blackfoot were willing to accept anyone who knew how to ride and herd cattle like he did. They all spoke English and were willing to talk about their lives on the reserve and, because he was a stranger, to answer direct questions. And he asked many. He was clearly impressed by how much the Blackfoot had in common with the workers of his father's estate. As for the Blackfoot, they saw something else about this man over and above competence. That he could ride all day in freezing weather without a hat meant that he must have a special gift or power. He was a man to be reckoned with.

He was a hero to the Gooderham children who were quite used to being ignored by adults. This visitor not only noticed them, but treated them like real persons. He told them unbelievable, but true, stories about his life.

He was born in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1904. That was just one year after John Gooderham came from Saskatchewan to Alberta—and one year before Alberta was declared a province. Ignatieff's father was not only a

count in the court of Tsar Nicholas but also Minister of Education right up until the revolution of 1917. Count Ignatieff and his family would probably never have survived, had they not escaped to England.

They had to leave everything behind and arrived in London, England with only what they could carry. Fate was on their side. The English viewed White Russians like the Ignatieffs with great sympathy. No one could forget that Tsar Nicholas was King George V's cousin and that both called Queen Victoria grandmother.

One day a cotton manufacturer approached Count Ignatieff. He had an overdue account for cotton grown on the Ignatieff estate and purchased by his company just before the revolution. It amounted to almost \$40,000—a huge amount in those days. It was enough for the family to live on and to send Nicholas and his brothers to English schools and universities.

After Ignatieff graduated in engineering from the University of London in 1925 he immigrated to Canada. One of his first jobs brought him to Calgary where he helped in the construction of the Ghost Dam on the Bow River. It was just one of his many adventures.

He had an insatiable curiosity. In the early thirties Canada was in the midst of the Depression which demoralized almost everyone. Not Ignatieff. He travelled across far and wide, even into the far north. He sometimes slept in prison cells, sometimes in box cars on moving trains, sometimes in pioneer shacks and sometimes in city mansions. He loved it all. He was discovering his new country of Canada.

His stories gave the Gooderhams a new appreciation of the 'bums' who, during the Depression, rode into town on the train and slept overnight or for a few days in the small park at the edge of the reserve between their house and the railway tracks. The Gooderham children had to

walk through the park on their way to and from school. The men were scary looking even when they came to the door for food. They looked frightening, dirty and tired. The children never felt the same about them after realizing men like Ignatieff had been just as homeless. Perhaps they might have stories as marvelous as his.

The children never met a man in the park quite as interesting as Nicholas Ignatieff but after his visit they did make a point of befriending some. There were three in particular who used the early spring branches from the willows in the park to create picture frames. The children's job was to find buyers at 10 cents apiece. They were able to bring in about \$1 and that included each child buying one from an allowance of 12 cents a week. They may have got their personal frames at wholesale—5 cents—but more important was the contact that taught both the men and the children they were 'all in it together' and worthy of respect. An insight learned from Nicholas Ignatieff.

Later, when he was a master at Upper Canada College in Toronto teaching Canadian history, he took eastern boys on trips to western Canada to tramp through the mountains and to meet boys from the prairies and foothills. In turn he got scholarships to eastern colleges for western boys—Trojan work. Canada at the time was deeply divided with Westerners blaming easterners for their sad economic plight and easterners complaining Westerners were whiners.

In 1939, Ignatieff came to visit the Gooderhams again—this time with his bride Helena, daughter of the Ontario archivist, Alex Fraser. He and his wife led a group of boys from the east as far as the west coast. They were equipped with the very latest photographic equipment and took pictures all around the reserve and particularly at the coal mine where men were repairing coal cars. Ignatieff photographed men playing the hand game—a

popular Blackfoot gambling game which involved betting which hand of your opponent held which stick.

They took photos of a horse race in the valley of the Bow—perhaps the only Blackfoot sport to rival the hand game. Betting was part of that sport too—gambling was an obsession with the Blackfoot. You might lose everything, even the horse that ran the race but no Blackfoot worried about that.

Tomorrow was another day.

On August 14, the Ignatieffs came to say goodbye. The children were sorry to see them go. Ignatieff was visibly upset. The air was full of rumours of war and he felt he must hurry back to enlist the minute war was declared. He was thinking of his own past and of the raids the Bolsheviks had made from their mountain hide-outs into Russian cities, and how his family had been forced into hiding and living off the land. He went to his car and brought back a large framed photograph. Everyone recognized the figure in the centre. It was the Tsar and the general on his right was Ignatieff's grandfather. Nicholas reminded everyone of his great debt and feeling of appreciation for the British who had made it possible for his family not only to survive but to prosper.

War was declared on September 3. Ignatieff enlisted in the engineers. But, for obvious reasons, was soon transferred to Intelligence where he gained the rank of Lt. Colonel and was decorated by both the British and American governments. After the war he became warden of Hart House at the University of Toronto in 1947. He died suddenly only five years later. The Gooderhams never saw him again.

They did see his wife, Helena, from time to time and always unexpectedly. Mary and George saw her at a garden party at Buckingham Palace in the sixties when their daughter, Elizabeth, and her husband, Basil Robinson, were stationed in London with External Affairs. And many years later Kent

and his wife, Helen, ran into her at a party in Cuernavaca Mexico. The world is small.

## NICHOLAS de GRANDMAISON–Portrait Painter

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### Blackfoot Agency, Siksika Nation Reserve AB

Another Nicholas who often came through the front door was the artist, Nicholas de Grandmaison, famous for his powerful portraits of Native American men. A long term friend, he might turn up in any part of the house. The Blackfoot reserve suited his interests perfectly and the Gooderham home was an ideal centre. George could recommend models willing to sit (for a price) who had the strong Blackfoot character that so fascinated Nick. He also knew the models and was able to provide Nick with biographical information which made the portrait more real and more saleable.

But Nick was most often in the dining room. Not because he came to eat but because he liked to talk and visit. Besides, he had very special eating habits and taboos. Returning late in the evening you might often find the three of them, George, Mary and Nick, still sitting around the dining room table, ash trays full, tea cups, silver and dishes still scattered across the white table cloth—all ignored, as Nick expounded one of his many theories about the wrongheadedness of Canadian social structures. Politics were often on the agenda. Nick knew Canadians were hopelessly naive and constant warnings did little to help. Nick and Mary took the artists point of view and might wander off into marvelously exotic abstract speculations. George called the two of them crazy but he always stayed around for the fun.

Nick was a White Russian immigrant in spite of his French surname. Born in Moscow in 1892, his parents belonged to both the French and Russian aristocracy. His great-grandfather, Jean de Grandmaison, was orphaned during the French Revolution and he, along with the many orphaned

children of aristocratic families, was raised in Russia at Imperial expense—it was an initiative of Catherine the Great. The young Jean arrived in Russia to be educated in a military academy and grew up to become a colonel in the Russian Imperial Army. He defended his country against Napoleon who invaded Russia in 1812.

Jean's son and grandsons all served in the Russian Army and Nicholas was expected to do the same. He was raised with other aristocratic young men both at college and at a military academy and was commissioned as a sub-lieutenant just before the outbreak of World War I. His career was short, however, as he was one of the first Russians to be captured.

Nick had always been interested in art and during the long years of internment he did many portraits of fellow officers—and even Germans.

At the end of the war, back in Russia, he served in the army for a short time during the Bolshevik uprising. Fortunately, he was sent to a Russian officers' training camp in Britain and when the Bolsheviks took over the country Nick was cut off—no country, no job, no profession. But he was alive.

Luckily he was registered as an artist and with the help of many English aristocrats, particularly women who found the young Russian charming, he found many portrait commissions.

England provided a new start. Friends arranged for him to study at the St. John's Wood School of Art in London. They found him commissions and in 1923 provided him with another opportunity very much 'down his alley'. They gave him a ticket on a horse which had an excellent chance of winning in a local race. It did and Nick made enough money to immigrate to Canada—'the land of opportunity.' English aristocrats were familiar with Canada. It was one of the places you sent younger sons who would not be

able to inherit. Given some monetary assistance the hope was that they might have an opportunity to make more.

Nick loved to paint and he loved to gamble, making and losing small fortunes several times. Although his family (once he had one) may have gone through some scary times he always seemed to land on his feet.

At first he made his way in Canada by painting portraits of those wealthy enough to hire him. But in Winnipeg he discovered Indians. Although he always continued to paint portraits of whites, it is his portraits of Indians which made him more and more famous.

During World War II Nick was driving the Trans-Canada highway near the little hamlet of Crowfoot when he had a terrible accident. His passenger was killed and Nick hospitalized in the Bassano hospital for some time. The verdict was that Nick was not responsible, but it was a horrifying experience. Nick often hired drivers after that, including George's son, Kent.

There were many paintings left behind in the car which the RCMP recovered and held at the detachment at the Blackfoot Agency while the accident was being investigated. George and Mary provided as much support as possible and when Nick was recovered he asked Mary if she would like a portrait. She admired one pastel of a young Blackfoot girl (Lorraine Drunken Chief) and when Nick got out of the hospital he brought it to her.

When George retired from the Government in 1954 Nick presented him with a large portrait of a Blackfoot called Turned Up Nose—a famous character. The Grandmaison family eventually lived in a spacious rambling house on Cave Avenue in Banff, but Nick spent most of his time at the Palliser Hotel in Calgary where he could be close to prospective customers

and the stock market. When Kent drove for him the market was always on the list of spots that had to be visited. The young driver got some very helpful instruction about that market.

*“Don’t listen to the brokers. Do your own research.*

Often Nick’s expertise in the market helped put food on the Grandmaison table as with most artists, a perennial concern.

Nick was no shrinking violet and could be spotted on a Calgary street blocks away. He always wore a brown Stetson with the brim turned down all round—western but not cowboy, a sport jacket, tweedy and expensive—but country. Everyone knew him so his progress down the street was slow.

Nick had to go where the models were and that meant travel. This involved moving all the necessary equipment as well as driving. Nick was always looking for drivers, preferably ones who didn’t mind lifting, carrying, or reorganizing canvases and other paraphernalia. They must be free to go anywhere at any time and not be concerned about the level of compensation. He had to make some profit or his family of two sons and three daughters would starve. Kent often fitted the driver description and Nick would say;

*“Let’s go Georgie (his name for Kent).*

When asked where they were going the answer was

*“Let’s just go and see what happens.*

Either by plan or by accident the two turned up in Rocky Mountain House in May, 1950 for a treaty signing. When it came time to witness the signatures of the chiefs, Nick and Kent were standing around watching the proceedings when George, who was the Regional Superintendent for Indian Affairs at the time, said

*“Would you like to witness these signatures?*

Nick's response was

*“Come on, Georgie! Let's be part of history.*

During their many car rides together, Nick shared his views of the world and offered copious advice to his young chauffeur:

How to eat:

*“Only eat boiled eggs in country restaurants.*

How to observe:

*“You have to learn how to see. Most people go through their whole life without seeing anything. Did you see that barn back there? Turn around, I want to take a photograph of it. Do you know why that barn is worth painting?*

How to drink tea:

*“With lemon and sugar*

Geological truths:

*“Pumping oil out of the ground would sooner or later cause earth movements that could wreck the world.*

One summer in the 1950s Nick phoned the Gooderhams in Calgary and said;

*“Can Georgie drive me down to the Blackfoot Sun Dance? I think I might find a good portrait there.*

Kent was free so he drove the big van Nick had at the time down onto the reserve. The idea was that the model could sit inside the van where Nick had all his supplies and both he and the model would have a little privacy.

As they got close to the Sun Dance Camp Nick said;

*"We'd better stop here and see if they will let us come any closer.*

Kent was somewhat taken aback because he'd been going to the Sun Dance all his life, but he had also learned to listen to Nick. Sure enough a young man, whose name happened to be A Young Man, came running out to warn them away. Although he and Kent had known one another all their lives he looked at the two men, one young, one old, as if he had never seen them before. He also told them no white men were to come near the sacred lodge. Nick explained their innocence and long time connection with the Blackfoot and after checking with the elders A Young Man allowed them to move the van up to the circle of tents and tipis. Friends again, they carried on as if nothing had changed, but clearly something had.

Nick knew that he had to be one of the boys if he was going to find a willing subject. He expected Kent to continue thawing the ice. Kent could see several of his friends and acquaintances in a group near one of the tipis. It was clear they were involved in a hand game rather than in the religious ceremonies. One of them, Cecil Crowfoot, said

*"Did you come to gamble Gooderham?*

Kent explained that Nick was hoping to do some painting but offered to lend some money to the gamblers. Nick joked with the people around but he could see things weren't developing the way he had hoped and decided they should leave, but not before Kent's team admitted they had lost the cash given them and could do with some more. Things were changing.

It was the end of an era. Kent was the principal of a school near Calgary and would soon be married. It would be the last time he drove for Nick. And perhaps the last time Nick visited the Blackfoot.

## **Pioneer Friends**



## PETER ERASMUS—Buffalo Hunter

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### Gleichen AB 1909

When George met Peter Erasmus in 1909, Peter was 76 years old, but looked more like 50. He was an impressive and powerful man of over two hundred pounds with thinning black hair, a beard and a prominent nose. He suffered from a serious skin disfigurement. His deeply sun tanned face was scarred by a mass of pitted flesh which hung loose and could even be folded back—very disturbing to those who didn't know him. In spite of this unusual appearance he was a great favourite of George's sisters and brother, particularly Jean, the youngest, who had a wild spirit which Peter appreciated. He would often give her ten cents for candy. That was against family rules but there was no way Jean was going to give it back. So Ishbel, her older sister, was delegated the task. Peter understood and he and the John Gooderham youngsters remained buddies.

Erasmus lived in a room over the office, as did Edmund Morris. There was a cook stove, bed, table and chairs with a few utensils and a lamp. He wore pants and dark cotton shirts with the traditional Metis sash around his waist. The Gooderham children found him to be both gentle and kind and he told wonderful stories.

Erasmus was very proud of his strength and prowess as a young man. He claimed he could raise himself to a standing position from kneeling on hands and knees with eight hundred pounds of shot piled on his back. He would show the children, with a gleam in his eyes, a six inch scar across his stomach - and wait for the exclamation

*“How did you get that?*

His answer:

*"Oh, a bit of a fight with the Blackfoot.*

One of his best stories was his encounter with a herd of buffalo. Riding up the valley of the Bow to Morley (near Banff) the river flows swiftly. It twists and turns on its way to the prairies with the force of its current eroding huge sheer cliffs called cut banks.

Erasmus was riding at the water's edge at the foot of one of these cut banks when he heard a rumbling sound ahead. He thought it might be a sudden gust of wind, perhaps a Chinook, which rushes out of the mountain passes stirring up leaves and branches. As he entered a broader valley he was astounded to see a huge herd of buffalo, stampeding toward him.

He was horrified. On one side he faced a cut bank and on the other a deep, rapid flowing river. Young and a quick thinker he sat his horse until the herd hit then jumped on the back of the nearest bull and leapt from back to back of the closely packed herd until he landed on the ground again.

*"I didn't have a scratch on me. But of course, I lost my horse.*

It was a story the Gooderham children never forgot.

Peter Erasmus was one of that small group of men who accompanied and guided explorers, traders, missionaries and government representatives who crossed the country. He was born in 1833 in the Red River settlement of Kildonan of a Scandinavian father and Metis mother. His father had fought at Waterloo and later became a Hudson's Bay employee. Peter was educated in the settlement school and at age 20 entered St. John's College, Winnipeg. It was hoped he would become a minister of the gospel but that was not Peter's way. Instead he took a job as guide and interpreter for Rev Thomas Wolsey, a Wesleyan missionary.

When the Rev. R. B. Steinhauer, an Indian from Ontario, was sent to work among the Indians east of Edmonton, Erasmus went with him. They settled

in the White Fish Lake area. But Peter was far too restless to stay on. He went back to Fort Garry, Manitoba and later joined the Palliser expedition, a geographic survey team commissioned to explore the southwest portion of the prairies, and to make recommendations regarding the best way to settle the land. Their most famous discovery was a triangle of arid land which covered almost all of what is now southern Saskatchewan and Alberta. They recommended that this land be used for grazing only.

It was their opinion that breaking the prairie sod would be a disaster and could lead to serious dust storms and erosion possibly leaving the area a desert. This was advice largely ignored although later proven to be all too accurate. It was a slow moving expedition and Peter left to return to Fort Garry before it reached the mountains. Forever restless he left again in 1862.

The Methodist missionary, the Rev. George McDougall, was about to travel west from Ontario to extend the early missionary work started by Steinhauer. He needed a guide. Erasmus worked with the McDougalls and they remained great friends but Peter moved from one community to another. When he married a ‘western’ woman he cut his ties with Fort Garry and spent most of this time in the Good Fish Lake, St. Paul de Metis area near his old friend Steinhauer. Lieutenant Governor Morris chose him as his interpreter when he was negotiating Treaty No. 6 in 1876.

In 1909, Erasmus and Edmund Morris were sharing the second floor of the Agency office on the Blackfoot reserve at Gleichen, and became friends. They had much in common both in their backgrounds and in their feeling for the Blackfoot and all native peoples. Peter told Edmund that in 1857 when the Palliser Expedition was heading to North Battleford they passed through vast herds of buffalo which opened up to let the red river carts pass through. There were vast herds all the way to the mountains.

He said that both grizzly and black bears lived on the plains then. One day, they saw a grizzly grapple a buffalo by the horns and break its neck. Evidently the bears had their dens in the cut banks.

Erasmus' 'Government Sit' at the Blackfoot Agency ended with the defeat of the Laurier Government by the Borden Conservatives in 1911. He returned to the Cold Lake district. It was a sad day for the Gooderham children.

Erasmus was restless even in his eighties and was so furious at the lack of interest the government took in the welfare and education of the Metis and half breed children that he started a school in which he was the unpaid teacher. In Alberta, until 1950, taxpayers had to sign a petition requesting the establishment of a school, and, of course agree to support it, in order to get a school grant. The Metis and half breeds were squatters who rarely paid taxes so they got no grant and no school.

Peter's personal history waxed and waned with the fortunes of the Liberals. In 1921, the Hon. Charles Stewart, a former Alberta Premier resigned to become Minister of the Interior in MacKenzie King's new Liberal cabinet. One of his early acts was a pension of \$500 for Peter Erasmus. And in 1930 the Geographic Board of Canada named a peak in the Rockies, Mount Erasmus.

Peter Erasmus died in 1931. He belonged to both the Christian and the Indian world and asked to be placed on a lonely hill near Good Fish Lake next to the bones of a good friend of his who was killed in the Riel Rebellion.

Men like Peter—intelligent, knowledgeable and resourceful who did not support Riel—were wrongfully branded as traitors after the rebellion. Metis and half breeds were treated as outcasts. It took many years for Erasmus to regain his rightful place in society.

## THE JAMES FAMILY

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### Gleichen AB

There was a steady stream of people visiting the Agency house in Gleichen. But the most dramatic was when the whole James family took refuge with the Gooderhams.

They lived across the street. Mr. James worked in the office for George, the Indian Agent. The adults never visited but the children, Rachel, Dick and Ted James and Elizabeth, Eleanor and Kent Gooderham were in one another's houses all the time. They were best friends. No one expected the sudden visit.

The James family were sitting in front of their newly-repaired fireplace thinking how comfortable they were while listening to the howling blizzard outside and also remembering how the wind used to blow right through the walls of the old house. Then came a huge thud. The living room chimney crashed onto the roof cracking the beams and giving the family heart palpitations. What to do? They put out the fire, sat down and hoped for the best. An hour later there was another crash. The kitchen chimney came down too.

The verdict: the mortar in the chimneys hadn't set properly before the frost came and the blizzard had knocked both chimneys down. If they stayed in the house they would freeze, so the whole family had to move to the Gooderhams. Fortunately Elizabeth and Eleanor were both away at Mountain School in Banff. So Dick and Ted slept in their room. Rachel slept in the maid's room, and Mr. and Mrs. James got the guest room. It was very awkward for everyone but most of all for Mr. James who had to be a guest in the boss' house.

The big test was the next night when George and Bert (Mr. James) came home for dinner. Bert was sitting across the table from Kent right next to George, the boss, looking very uncomfortable during the whole meal. Rachel sat between him and her mother, May. Rachel was having a great time—the only girl and sleeping in the four poster bed she had always admired. May was jolly and making the ‘best of it’. Mary was in her usual place at the end of the table looking severe and wondering how she was going to manage five long term house guests. Dick, Ted and Kent were in a row on the other side of the table hoping to have a great visit and time to play the games that were always interrupted because someone was called home. It soon became clear, however, that no one was going to play any games.

The James had been living in the original house the Gooderham family had occupied in 1907. It was old then, so old it was built with square nails. If you went into Mr. and Mrs. James bedroom during the winter there would be frost on the walls half an inch thick. It was a mystery how wallpaper lasted. Insulation had not yet been invented. But the children all loved the house. It had a long porch running in front of all the bedrooms. The hallway was lined with huge stuffed animal heads and the whole house was full of mystery and hiding spots. Over the years, as the house was added to, a new little jog or bend or cupboard was included—a perfect new hiding place for children.

The visit at the Gooderhams didn’t last long—not just because the adults found it difficult, but because it was winter and the chimneys had to be repaired as soon as possible or the whole house would freeze up—adding cracked water pipes to cracked beams and turning accident into disaster. Mr. James was especially glad to find himself in his own house. Although George and he worked together successfully everyday they were not a bit alike—except they had both been officers in the British Army during the

## Great War.

The Gooderhams were Canadians. The James were immigrants. They came directly from Guernsey, one of the Channel Islands and Ted knew their story well:

*"Grandfather, who was a solicitor and entrepreneur lived on Guernsey on a large estate with stables, orchard and a great big house. He must have been quite a guy. He even brought the first palm trees to Guernsey as seeds, I think, not as plants. His eleven grandchildren grew up believing they could do anything. After all they had Grandfather as a perfect model. Most stayed in Guernsey, but four of them, the Inseparables, Uncle Walter, Uncle Jack, Aunty Mabs (Mable) and Dad came out to Canada."*

*"Uncle Walter, who was the oldest, came to the Blackfoot reserve in 1894 as a missionary teacher. He was 17. The school consisted of classroom and farm—right down Uncle Walter's alley. He was busy teaching Blackfoot kids everything he knew about reading, writing and arithmetic but also about farming and gardening. I don't know how religious he was. I know Dad never went to church. But the James all knew the Bible. They all had to study it from the time they were kids. And we had old Bibles at home dating back to the 1880s."*

*"But Uncle Walter wasn't just teaching. He was also busy learning Blackfoot and Blackfoot ways. I guess that was before the whites decided everyone should speak English. Anyway Uncle Walter got to be so good at Blackfoot that he was later hired as the official interpreter. That wasn't the only thing he did. After he left the school he bought property and farm land in and around Gleichen, owned and operated his own store, was mayor of the town and became pretty much Mr. Gleichen as well as Mr. James."*

*“Dad came out in 1905 and worked for Uncle Walter in the Gleichen Trading co. for five years. Like so many people then, the doctors diagnosed him as having TB. He would have to sleep outside in a tent. He stayed there for over a year, but then went back to Guernsey to see if his health would improve. It didn’t so he came back to Canada.*

*“All the James came to Canada with money and Uncle Walter led the way in buying property. I think they all lost quite a bit. Dad invested some of his in property around Gleichen too. I don’t know how he lost it but he was a philosopher and an intellectual more interested in ideas than actions. There was terrific land speculation in the Gleichen area around then and everyone had to own a piece of the action.*

*“But WWI came. Dad went back to Guernsey to sign up. He was born in 1880 which meant he was 34 in 1914—pretty old to enlist. But he was the younger brother and the only one of the three to go. But cousin Walter—Uncle Walter’s son also went. Uncle Walter must have been almost forty. Dad was the one with the strongest ties to Guernsey and to Europe. He hadn’t immigrated as a ‘kid’ like Uncle Walter and Aunty Mabs. He had a whole career in Guernsey as teacher and headmaster before coming out to Canada.*

*“He came back to Gleichen after the war and around the same time my mother immigrated from Berton on Trent, England where her family manufactured large ceramics like sinks, bathtubs and toilets. Their market was in Europe and when the war came they lost their market. Most of her family went out to Australia but Mum had a cousin in Gleichen, Aunt May (Uncle Walter’s wife), who persuaded her to come to Canada.*

*“Both my parents were intellectuals. Dad was basically a philosopher. He used to sit up till the middle of the night talking ideas with*

*anyone who would listen. Do you remember when Abe Maslow, the psychologist, used to visit the reserve? It was in 1938. He came with another psychologist, Lucien Hanks Jr. (called June, short for Junior) and Jane Richardson, an anthropologist.*

*"Dad had a group of friends who would come to our place to talk and the discussion would go on until three o'clock in the morning. Abe Maslow fitted right in. He gave Dad a copy of his book 'Principles of Abnormal Psychology' with the inscription, 'To my dear friends the James'. I remember his asking all kinds of questions about what we believed in and what we thought about this or that. He said we were all in the book. I hope we were the normal ones.*

*"Like most visitors they came with pretty weird ideas about the reserve and the Blackfoot. It was Abe's idea. The three of them were to do studies on social psychology. Abe and June were both psychologists. Jane was an anthropologist and the only one who had any experience with field research. I think Abe wanted to see whether his psychological theories applied to people with a different cultural background. Anyway the three of them arrived for the Sun Dance in Jane's convertible and pitched two tents there. Abe and June in one and Jane in the other. No one will say when the occupancy of the tents changed but it did—maybe no one noticed but if they did certainly none of the Blackfoot cared. The fact that the guy was called June was harder to swallow. But they were all three really genuine scientists and were accepted long before they knew what they were going to do.*

*"Their first surprise was to discover the Blackfoot had a big income from a two million dollar trust fund, which was a hell of a lot of money back then. From cradle to grave no Blackfoot could starve because rations of meat, flour, and tea were issued every week. Houses*

*were built and equipped with stoves, furniture and bedding - no rent. Newlyweds got a team of horses and a wagon as well as the house and furniture. The sick and old got free medical care in the hospital and extra rations and clothing as well. Farm machinery was available from a reserve stock pile.*

*"Each man's cattle were run in a large herd cared for by staff. If one of his cattle were slaughtered for the weekly rations he was paid for the carcass by weight. The three scientists had to revise their thinking which had been based upon clichés and stereotypes. June and Jane realized very soon the situation had a lot in common with other welfare systems around the world and that economic security did not lead to contentment but perhaps the very opposite.*

*"Abe left the group when his psychological investigation was done. He wasn't needed for what turned out to be an anthropological study, published as Tribe Under Trust by June and Jane who were now married.*

## JACK MORTON–RANCHER

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### Gleichen AB

When George and Mary were on the Blackfoot reserve John C Morton was an important man. He ran a big outfit on the Red Deer River. To the cowboys on his crew he was known as 'old sundown' because he never got around to laying out the work plan until late in the day.

*"I always thought of him as Captain Blood of the Prairies. When he hit town he invariably started something which would be talked about and marveled at forever.*

In the early days, Gleichen had the only bank between Medicine Hat and Calgary. All the ranchers from north, south, east and west would have to visit. It was social as well as business and the two hotels (which incidentally offered the only bar service) were the centre of the fun. There was almost invariably a group of remittance men ready for a party too – the sons of aristocratic families who were sent a monthly remittance to remain in the colonies, and, rightly or wrongly, had a reputation. They were gentlemen who loved the wild west and were invariably keen horsemen.

After a 'few', Jack would get into an argument with someone and challenge him to a horse race. Bets were on. It didn't really matter who won as the winnings were kept at the hotel and well spent consoling the loser and praising the winner.

Jack was huge—well over 6 feet and weighing more than 200 pounds with hands like hams. He would come to town with very spirited horses. After all he was a horse rancher. It was a kind of advertising. In the bar, on one occasion, Jack said he could throw any horse by grabbing it by the ears and twisting its head until the horse flopped over on its side. His drinking

partner claimed even greater strength. He could lift a horse off its front feet and throw it over on its side. No one believed either of them but it was worth a bet.

Bets were placed and a horse brought out into the street in front of the hotel. To everyone's surprise both managed the impossible! Each using his own method, threw the horse onto its side. There was new respect round the town and territory. The decision—leave the bets on the counter till the whole town has celebrated.

Some cowboys would race their best horse up and down the streets with wild yipping and the odd rifle shot into the air. On occasion things might get out of hand and a tenderfoot or out-of-line cowboy might be roped and dragged down the street where he was allowed to escape to his digs to 'lick his wounds'.

By the time cars replaced horses, Jack was a very successful rancher and came to town in a Ford. He was still thinking in horse-day terms and expected the car to go anywhere. He was often disappointed. But he admitted the car had one advantage. He didn't have to get out to open the wire gates which were so much a part of prairie living. He just drove right through them.

It was told that one day when he was crossing the Rosebud creek the crazy car upset and pinned Jack underneath the water. There was no one around to help so Jack had to help himself. He lifted the whole car off his body with brute force and turned the 'critter' on its side - just like he would if it was a bronco.

When George and Mary met Jack at the Palliser Hotel in Calgary, people claimed he was worth a quarter of a million (a lot of money in those days). Certainly it wasn't lack of funds that would keep him out of the Palliser...

Jack, whose drinking habits hadn't changed, had very lively parties in his room. Complaints were made and the hotel police visited three times telling him to stop the noise. On the third visit Jack saw red. He grabbed the man by the throat and took him to the window, opened it and hung the poor fellow out the window.

*"The next time you come to bother me I'll drop you.*

The result? Jack was no longer welcome at the Palliser—or so the story goes.

The Calgary Stampede had become an annual event. It was right down Jack's alley where a racing team of four horses, a wagon with utensils and men on horseback riding as outriders had to

*"break camp, load up and race around the track with the outriders always next to the outfit.*

A hundred things could go wrong. And did. All eyes would be on Morton because he was sure to create a lot of excitement. Once when his centre pole broke, the sharp end dug into the ground bringing his wagon to a sudden stop. It threw Jack over the heads of the whole team to land on his head in the middle of the race track. Anyone else but Morton would have a broken neck. Not Jack. His comment the next morning

*"Well, my neck's a bit stiff.*

The men who worked for Jack had to be nearly as rough and tough as he was. They understood and admired him. This fact was impressed on George most graphically at a jitney dance in the Gleichen Town Hall. A jitney was a charitable event where participants had to pay for each dance. The floor was cleared after each dance by young volunteers who would rope off the dancers at the end of every song. This particular night one of the visiting cowboys got more and more out of control.

George, who was one of the rope volunteers, couldn't get him to behave. Two husky bouncer-types came to help with no success either. No one knew what to do until someone remembered the troublemaker was one of Jack Morton's men. Jack was in the bar down the street and told that one of his men was on a rampage.

*"Well, I'll fix that.*

George was still trying to get the jitney working when he noticed the cowboy

*"staring at something as though he were under a spell.*

The guy froze. Jack just reached out, grabbed him by the throat, turned and dragged him across the floor to the fire door and threw him out onto the grass.

Jack was rough, but people loved him. When he was rich his wife took the family to Calgary for schooling. It was a great success. There were five children. Lucy was brilliant and earned the Governor General's medal for the highest marks in the District. She taught school in Gleichen where she expected—and got—scholarships for her students. She was famous for her ability to write on the board with either her left or right hand and some said she could even write with both at the same time.

Her memories of the ranch and her father shed a gentler light on the Morton family:

*"To me, as a child, ranch life was the only way to live—free, full and exciting. Here one was never tied down to humdrum tasks, because there were none. Every aspect of life had its charm and its thrill. To awaken in the morning to my mother's loving care, my father's voice, and to have my own horse waiting just outside the door was the peak of joy. To follow my Dad, running to keep up with his strides, from corrals*

*to barns out onto the wide unfenced prairies to check herds of cattle and horses, or to visit a neighbor many miles away were highlights of my life. I remember the ‘Dipping days’ (disinfecting animals), the roundups, and most exciting of all, the stampedes in Calgary, Gleichen, and other centres, and the regular ‘ride outs’ at our own ranch.*

*“I remember the prairie fire that swept southward from the Rosebud Creek area carrying death and destruction to stock, wild animals and hayfields. When the heat and smoke got so intense and my Dad had to leave the ranch to fight the fire he put my Mum and me and my very young sister in the spring. It had an earthen igloo-like hut over it and with a floor made of flat rocks around which clear cold water constantly flowed. The three of us sat on those rocks until my Dad returned.*

*“Flies and mosquitoes were pests of the first degree. But I remember the excitement of helping to make ‘smudges’ atop the hills surrounding the CX (the Morton brand) where horses and cattle waited in droves for the smoke that drove away the insects.*

The wind-swept prairies are no more. Now the wind waves the wheat fields and this is as it should be. But my heart leaps every time I return to the Red Deer River with its deep coulees and its grass-covered hills. It is very little changed—even the antelope are still there.

Times changed. Jack’s fortune dwindled. No one needed his horses. His best customers, the Blackfoot, were not buying. His life dissolved and he suffered the worst defeat: He never did win the chuck wagon race at the Calgary Stampede.



## ELIZABETH—Is Romance Enough?

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### Gleichen AB

One character familiar to the Gooderham family was Tony Bruce, the son of Charles Bruce. Charles had owned land in Gleichen, but had returned to England during the Depression. After holding on to the land during bad times, Charles returned to Gleichen to dispose of the land and he brought his son Tony along. He wanted Tony to experience the Wild West while the family still owned a part of it.

Tony had been born when his parents were pioneers. As an infant, when the Bruces were invited to a party, they would bundle up Tony in blankets and put him under the seat of the cutter. Once they reached the host's house they would unbundle him and leave him in a bedroom with all the other children. When it came time to go home Tony would be bundled up again and off the family would go, Charles, who was a very heavy drinker, probably much the worse for wear and Tony's mother hoping the horse had more sense than her husband.

During his return to Gleichen as an adult, Tony was determined to visit any and all of these former friends. Who better to take him around than 18-year-old, Elizabeth Gooderham. Tony was staying at the Gooderhams and Mary lent Elizabeth the car.

It was not much of a hardship for Elizabeth. Tony was the best looking, most dashing man Elizabeth had ever met and she had a great time driving around the country visiting. Of course, all the farmers were delighted to see these two attractive young people.

Tony and Elizabeth planned a trip to Calgary to attend a dinner dance at the Palliser hotel—a dream of all Gleichen girls. Elizabeth's best friend, Joan

Leacock, lived with her father in Calgary (her mother, Dr. Evelyn Windsor, was the doctor on the reserve). Joan looked forward to their visit.

It was Elizabeth's birthday and Tony told Joan he would like to give Elizabeth a sweater. Joan, being a properly brought up daughter and niece of the famous Steven Leacock, nixed that idea. 'That's much too personal'. Instead, Elizabeth received a huge bouquet of gladioli—the biggest she had ever seen. The dance was a great success.

A favourite activity for Tony and Elizabeth back on the reserve was to take long horseback rides. Elizabeth had her own horse, Sicame, and the family had a sorrel and a bay that were decent riding horses. The Gooderhams rode with the flat, or eastern, saddle rather than the western style popular with cowboys, most men, and many women.

Tony assumed the Gooderhams rode as he was taught to ride. But the flat saddle was the only similarity in riding habits. The Gooderham children's riding was strictly western. At the time there were huge herds of semi-wild horses, called Cayuses, roaming around the reserve. Chasing, herding and racing with them was a favourite pastime. Tony was an excellent but civilized rider. Although he was a dare devil himself he was surprised by the way Elizabeth let her horse run. The Gooderhams were in the habit, although it was forbidden, to just let the horses go. Tony was conscious of all the gopher holes and other traps on the river flats that could break a horse's leg or the rider's neck. But he had to admire Elizabeth's spunk.

Tony welcomed WWII as a romantic adventure and saw being a pilot as the most romantic role. After a delay in his induction into the RCAF, he became an instructor at one of the Alberta training camps. Training flights took him over or near the reserve. One day, flying over the river flats he looked down and saw an elderly couple making their way along the trail toward the agency. He took out a player's cigarette box, tore off the back,

wrote a note to Elizabeth, rolled it up inside a tube and made a parachute by tying his handkerchief with his shoe laces. A note read 'Please deliver to Miss Elizabeth Gooderham, Indian Agency'.

He flew around until he saw the old couple pick up the message from the sky, crack the whip and speed up their trip to the agency. They had no idea of the contents but it must be important. Enuxsina (George) would know. He brought the message home that evening.

Tony would be able to visit on the weekend and, if agreed, would bring a New Zealand friend for Elizabeth's sister, Eleanor. They would be responsible for the corn on the cob for which Eleanor had a legendary fondness.

On another occasion, perhaps when he had received word that he was to be transferred, he flew past the house over the side lawn which had been designed as a lawn tennis court. There was a wire running across the middle of the lawn to the top of the house and another set of telephone wires just outside the yard along the road. The two sets of wires were no more than a few hundred feet apart. Tony flew around the house several times until he was observed, then under the first wire, dropped a note and flew over the telephone wires and off. The note said he was being shipped out and would contact Elizabeth as soon as he was able.

Elizabeth wasn't home but those who were went from amazement to concern to relief. They were amazed that anyone could try such a stunt; relieved and impressed that he had managed it, and concerned that someone might find out what he had done. Dangerous flying was actually against the law and could mean the end of his flying career, and his position as instructor was already very tenuous.

It turns out that Tony was in the air force with a false identity. He was

Joe Bartley there, and it was necessary to remember this other persona whenever an outsider was around. At the time of his induction Tony Bruce was only eligible as ground crew. That didn't suit Tony's image of himself and he was not one to let go easily. No one knew how he got the necessary new identity nor did anyone ask. It was weird but wonderful. The whole town and reserve were perhaps a little in love with Tony, or Joe.

Joe (Tony) was shipped out. Elizabeth and Tony lost contact. Rumor had it he married a woman in New York and was shot down. His body was never found.

## DOUGLAS HARDWICK–Rancher

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### Gleichen AB

Douglas Hardwick could talk with authority about ‘the old days’ because he was there for many of them—over 70 years. A typical second son of a British aristocrat, Douglas had made his choice. He would try his luck in the colonies rather than become a lawyer, doctor or engineer. If the decision was wrong he could always change it. It wouldn’t be the first time a Hardwick had made the wrong choice.

A direct ancestor, Sir Joscelyne de Havermere de Hardwycke, an Anglo Saxon Thane of the Kingdom of Mercia, backed the wrong side in 1066 and found himself reduced to the status of serf with all his lands confiscated. Sir Joscelyne’s son saw a chance to change the situation. He joined the new (Norman) regime and had all the Hardwycke lands and titles restored. The family had coped and adjusted ever since.

Some 800 years later, Douglas left England for Calgary, North West Territories, Canada. It was 1889. He was seventeen. His future wife, Isobelle and their friends Mary (Kentner) Gooderham and George (George) Gooderham were all born that same year far from the Calgary/Gleichen scene.

Douglas had a lead for a job on a ranch called the Quorn, the most famous Alberta horse ranch. He had a friend who was the foreman and he had promised Douglas a job. Once in Calgary, Douglas needed to find the Quorn. Passersby could give him directions but all assumed he had some means of transportation.

Not only did Douglas have no horse, he was now down to his last fifty cents, so he decided to walk to the ranch about 50 miles away. He had no

idea, of course, just how empty those 50 miles might be.

He started out early one fall morning. The weather was fine and he headed south down the well-travelled Fort Macleod Trail. He soon left the town behind and became surrounded by beautiful rolling hills. And no houses. He could see for miles—empty miles. Coming to the top of yet another hill, he could see a settler's home not too far ahead. He left the trail and went up to the door. Could he have a drink and some food? He got milk, bread and jam. The price—25 cents—was half his earthly wealth. And it was only noon of the first day. He went on his way but the milk and bread didn't last long. He was determined to eat even if it meant parting with his last 'two bits'.

The fabled western hospitality he'd heard so much about in Britain showed up at the next house. He was given a hot meal by the mistress of the house who listened to his story and sent him on his way with her blessings—and no charge.

So far so good. But what was he going to do about eating the next time—and what about sleeping? Towards night he came to another house with a barn surrounded by a barbed wire fence. An elderly man was sitting on a log smoking a short clay pipe. He introduced himself in a broad Yorkshire accent and invited Douglas to linger a while. Douglas explained he was heading for the Quorn where he hoped to get a job through his friend. 'I heard about your friend. He had a row with the Quorn management and has taken off.' Where? No one knew.

Douglas was easily persuaded to stay a few days and rest up before continuing his trip. His feet were sore and the rucksack had become larger and heavier as the day wore on. They had dinner together in the small cabin Douglas was to call home for some time. His benefactor's name was Jack Sissons and he insisted Douglas stay with him until a job turned up.

Weeks later Jack rounded up his four horses explaining he had some contracting work at a neighbouring ranch called the Bar U. He took one team (of two horses) and left Douglas the other—a pattern they established for the rest of the fall. Jack came and went and Douglas looked after the little farm where he spent his first Christmas in Canada—alone.

The farm was about three miles from Dewdney, now known as Okotoks. The village consisted of two buildings, a blacksmith shop and a store, house and post office all in one.

Douglas developed the habit of riding the farm horse to town, spending the day with the blacksmith and any neighbours who might also ‘drop by’. He also got mail from home—and money. Both seemed to take a long time to come and Douglas was often forced to use his mother’s letters to roll his cigarettes. He made the acquaintance of T&B plug tobacco which supplied him with many moments of reverie during the cold winter nights.

He rolled his own all his life—on the range—in the barn—in the house or at the dance. A permanent part of Douglas was the familiar tobacco-filled zig-zag paper in the corner of his mouth, black half way up from the many times it went out and the endless number of matches required to keep the smoke smoking.

Most cowboys at that time used the little cloth pouch of tobacco called Bull Durham with its draw-string top designed so the smoker could hold the string in his teeth while rolling the cigarette with one hand and holding the reins of the horse with the other—a good technique but Bull Durham didn’t have enough ‘sting’ for Douglas. But he was quickly learning entrepreneurial skills and bought a cache of Bull Durham sacks which he sold easily at a profit. But for his own pleasure he stuck with his old favourite—T & B.

Christmastime was coming. Douglas had some cash and discovered that it was possible to order treats for the season from the Hudson's Bay through the postmaster. The most popular hampers contained liquor in addition to candies, fruit and fancy biscuits. The 'wet' hampers were particularly appealing to a young man on his own. Douglas figured he could afford a small one containing two bottles, one brandy, one scotch. No one asked if he was 21. It did not seem to be a factor in the mail order business. He got his hamper well before Christmas.

He managed to save it all till New Year's eve. He was feeling a little lonely and perhaps a little sorry for himself, so far away from home. But he did have an invitation to a neighbour's on New Year's Day and that was something to look forward to. To celebrate the end of the old or the beginning of the new, he decided to treat himself to one of the bottles in the hamper. Once opened it seemed a shame not to finish it. He finally rolled into bed thinking happy thoughts about the party the next day.

When he woke it was already daylight and he realized he would have to hurry. He had to feed and water the horse and the cow, eat some breakfast, dress and set off for the host ranch. It was quite a ride and the snow was deep.

After lighting the fire he went to the barn and brought the animals to the trough at the pump. They kept on drinking and drinking. And he was in a hurry. Not only that but when he went to put hay into their mangers he noticed that they had eaten every last straw that had been put down the day before. What was going on? Perhaps it was the cold weather. Anyway no time to worry about that.

When he got to the host ranch things seemed pretty quiet for a house that was having a celebration. He was met by his hostess who said,

*"well we're really glad to see that you're all right. We waited all day yesterday for you".*

It was January 2nd. He and the brandy had slept through all of New Year's Day. When Douglas told them his story everyone had a good laugh and they became the best of friends.

That spring he met a man called John Lineham who gave him a job as chore boy at his logging camp on Sheep Creek. Lineham also had a ranch with a big herd of cattle. That's exactly the kind of business Douglas had in mind. Men were needed both at round-up and at branding time. Douglas was young, strong and eager. He might not know how but he was eager to learn and he soon caught on to the basic rules of the ranching business. He also learned how to cook and made lifetime friends with the other cowboys.

In those days everybody's cattle foraged on open range and might be miles apart with cattle from one herd mixed with cattle from one, two or more herds. Round-up crews were hired to bring the cattle all together in one spot.

The calves had to be identified so the crew herded the cows and calves together. As soon as it was obvious this calf belonged to this cow the crew separated that mother and calf and branded the calf with the mother's brand. There were always one or two calves which couldn't be identified. Cowboys with an entrepreneurial streak branded these calves with their own brand. Douglas saw how this approach would help him start his own herd.

Because the herds were scattered all across southern Alberta, the crews had to move from one part of the country to another. Getting the best camp site at the next location became a matter not only of convenience but of pride and bravado as well. All the cooking 'chuck' had to be loaded into the

chuck wagon, the team harnessed and all the crew saddled and ready to go. In the early 1900s both the Lazy H (Hardwick), and the N L (Pat Burns) were camped at Indian Springs. Each outfit had a chuck wagon, with cooks, cowhands, and well over 100 horses each. Teams were harnessed—no slick and groomed horses here—just some off-shade saddle broncs with one or two trained team horses thrown in to make it all work. The cook was on the chuck wagon and the night rider held the reins on the bed roll wagon. The two outfits hit the trail, each with its four horse team and riders strung out across the range. Each outfit wanted to reach the campsite on the East Arrowood Creek first to get the best water, shade and the camp-fire wood. The loser got the not-so-good site just south of the present town of Arrowood. And the ignominy of being second.

One day, Douglas was out in front of the wagon riding his favourite horse, Red Cloud. He gave the old calvary sign to the Lazy H crew and the race was on. Douglas knew it was going to be close so when he had to make a choice of going through a ravine where everything could fly apart or take the safe way around he went for the quick and dirty. Everyone thought the whole outfit would just pile up in the bottom but, no. The teams came scrambling out and over the rim intact, not a stove pipe or coffee pot missing!

It was open prairie straight to the East Arrowood campsite. Douglas and the Lazy H a mile in the lead. The Lazy H crew was quietly sipping coffee when the Burns outfit turned up. Douglas offered the losers a cup. The rivalry was friendly and Pat Burns was one of Douglas' best friends who would come to Douglas' rescue later, when times got really tough. It was this race to the next campsite that formed the basis for the now famous Calgary stampede chuckwagon race.

In those days Douglas and other bachelor cowboys roughed out the winter

together in a cowboy 'shack' which became quite famous. You could always find a good poker game and buy pork sausages the cowboys made. And it was there that the Bachelor's Ball was organized. The Ball, held in the Gleichen Opera House, called for full dress, including white gloves. Most of the 'boys' had come from 'good families' in Britain and had brought with them dress shirts, tails and gloves. The gloves were the first to get lost, of course. But the girls demanded gloves for fear the boy's hands would soil their dresses. The organizers had to supply substitutes. The substitutes turned out to be cotton and were purchased from Eaton's in Winnipeg. The dance became a tradition and the social event of the year.

In 1910 John Gooderham's daughter, Muriel, 'came out' at the Bachelor's Ball, as did all the other Gooderham girls. Ishbel recalls:

*"We always had balls, and all the men went in tux or tails. And they all had white gloves on. When I think of it, even myself—long kid gloves up to here. Just ridiculous. And there was no way of cleaning them. You just had to throw them away. But it wasn't like today. There was a dance program. And you had to dance with everyone—not just the person you went to the dance with. You had to dance with the president of the group and the father of the hostess or her husband and, well just everyone. You couldn't just do what you liked."*

Douglas had been too busy getting by to think about getting married but in 1914 he was 42 and perhaps ready. Isobelle Millie, who was 25, decided she should return to Scotland. Douglas and his best friend, Charlie Millie, Isobelle's brother, also decided they should make the trip. Douglas now had more long range plans in mind and he and Isobelle agreed they would marry in Scotland.

They were married Sept. 2, 1914. They honeymooned in England and Scotland and had a great time seeing old friends and relatives. In London

they met a typical 'London swell'—bowler hat, cut away, white vest, white spats, gloves and cane who, on close examination turned out to be none other than their old friend from Calgary, George Peete, in London on a holiday. The good times came to an abrupt end when World War I broke out. The newlyweds caught the last ship back across the ocean before all commercial shipping was stopped.

**Isobelle came back to a big outfit.**

Douglas had taken advantage of his opportunities. In 1912 he had purchased the 'Lazy H' brand from W.R. Hull. The price was astronomical for those days—some \$80,000. He and his brother also bought the Mansell herd from Fort Macleod. They had indeed survived and life was looking up. Isobelle and Douglas were to have two daughters, Helena, called Bumps by some, and Evelyn, called Babe.

The ranch turned out to be right beside a future irrigation project. In 1910, the Canada Land and Irrigation Company started building a system of irrigation canals through the Blackfoot reserve. A large reservoir was needed. A dam was built and McGregor Lake, the longest artificial lake in Canada, was born right beside the Hardwick property. The lake assured a constant supply of water for the cattle but there were drawbacks. Farmers wanted to move into the area despite the marginal rainfall and the rolling terrain which made irrigating almost impossible.

Ranching was a 70 hour a week job. There were 3,000 head of cattle in the herd and 60,000 acres (three townships) of tillable and pasture land. That meant 75 miles of fence.

When telephone connections were made to Armada, the post office closest to the Lazy H, the telephone was carried to the ranch on the top strand of barbed wire for a distance of about two miles. If the Russian thistles got

into the wire, which they did quite often during the windy, dirty thirties, the telephone connection went out and stayed out until someone from the ranch went along the fence and cleared out the thistle. It was definitely a 'party line'.

When Isobelle discovered she had cancer and would have to undergo an operation, she and Douglas were in Calgary. Douglas had to let his brother know the news but didn't want the whole community involved so when he phoned he spoke Blackfoot. Fortunately, the fence was free of weeds at the time and he got the message across even if there was no word in Blackfoot for mastectomy. Isobelle survived.



## BUMP'S STORY

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### Gleichen AB

Many Blackfoot worked for the Hardwicks on the ranch and for several years the ranch included two grazing leases on the Blackfoot reserve. Helena (their oldest daughter called Bumps) remembers that when she was seventeen they were wintering cattle on the reserve. She and her father went up to check on them.

*"We dropped in to see the Gooderhams. When we went in the weather was quite good. There was a lot of snow but no wind. But after dinner when we came out—I can still see it today—Mrs. Gooderham went to open the door. You remember there were two sets of doors—one to the porch and another into the house. Well, the wind blew us right back into the house. And Mrs. Gooderham said very firmly, 'Douglas you're not driving home in this. Isobelle would never forgive me. You can sleep here tonight and in the morning you can get up and go.'*

*"I stayed often with Mrs. Gooderham. She taught me how to wait on table properly. In those days people like her had a maid who served everyone separately around the table—I had to learn which side to serve on, which side to take the plate from, and to bring the serving dish between people without bumping into anyone, dumping the whole thing into someone's lap, or bonking someone else on the head. Mrs. Gooderham always did things so beautifully."*

*"I can see her now with that long cigarette in her mouth. I would watch the ash getting longer and longer as she bent over the vegetables she was preparing. And I would wonder when it would drop into the food. It never did. But it didn't always make it to the nearest ash tray either."*

*"The Lazy H was a cow-calf operation which meant the calves were sold each fall. A complicating factor was that all the ranch land was out on the bald-headed prairie without any winter protection or feed. We had to move the whole herd out every fall and bring it back in the spring. The calves were slated to arrive around the 10th or 12th of April.*

*"Of course we hoped to have the herd back home before that time, but winter wasn't always over by then. We could have terrible storms. One year when we had a blizzard we were stuck for three days. We were coming from Nanton and made it to Lake McGregor—ten miles from home. The lake started to rise and kept on getting higher and higher and the calves were dropping all the time. And, of course, the calves that were dropped during the night just drowned. Daddy borrowed two hay racks from neighbouring farmers and we took pig wire and built a wire corral on each rack and loaded all the calves that were still alive into them. Each calf weighed over sixty pounds so some of us were pretty tired by the time we headed for home.*

*"When we got there we had to make pens for each cow and calf. We took page wire fencing and divided the corrals into separate little pens. We put each wet heifer into a tiny pen and dumped a calf in with her. Of course we had no way of knowing which calf went with which cow. But then, none of the calves had been with their mother before anyway. The calf was starving and the cow's udder was full so they accepted one another. We just had to stay with each couple until they had matched up. It was terrible. I think it was in '37 or '38.*

*"We had lots of tough trips, but that was the worst. We lost an awful lot of calves. Daddy was pretty discouraged.*

*"It wasn't all black, of course. One of the bright spots was the friendships shared with people like the Gooderhams. There was a*

*cowboy artist called Charlie Russell who everyone knew. He lived most of the time in Montana but he wandered all through southern Alberta as well. There wasn't much of a border then. The Blackfoot (Canada) and the Blackfeet (U.S.) lived on both sides, so did many herds and cowpunchers.*

*"One day Daddy suggested to Charlie that he make a painting that would show the end of the day, the end of the year and the end of the Blackfoot Nation as it had been. Charlie thought it was a great idea so he did just that. When it was done it became Daddy's property. It hung in the house for years—much admired but never thought of as valuable. In 1926 Daddy was offered \$700 for it, a lot of money in those days. The proceeds sent Mummy, my sister, Babe and me to the old country for six months.*

*"Some years later, I saw it in a hotel in Dallas, Texas on sale for \$375,000! It's now in a museum and the public can buy a reproduction in any one of several sizes of this, now, very famous painting.*

#### Bump Talks About The Bull Sale

*"In the spring, after a hard winter everybody went up to Calgary for the spring bull sale. The 'week' required a strong constitution for the social life which was harder than the work. Each day would start with a pick-me-up Collins before breakfast, drinks in one room or another; lunch at McCrohan's across the street from the Palliser, where everybody stayed; more refreshments before the banquet—a different one every night—but with pretty well all the same participants; and then solid drinking and chin-wagging until the wee hours.*

*"Daddy and his best friend Uncle Charlie Millie were there and so were their friends John Gooderham, and later, his son George Gooderham.*

*The Blackfoot had used their very substantial band funds to build up a large herd, which required the yearly purchase of top flight bulls. Before 1920, it was John who was 'at the sale' and after 1920, G.H. joined the party! For George I think it was like the Brampton fair of his childhood without the Methodist constraint of Ontario. I don't think George missed that part.*

*"Our whole family spent the week of the sale in Calgary. I don't think Mrs. Gooderham ever went and if she did she spent her time visiting friends she knew from Toronto rather than partying at the Palliser.*

*"The Gooderham children spent the week at school in Gleichen. Our family often stopped to visit on our way back to the ranch. What we all remembered was the day the bulls arrived on the reserve. It was usually around Easter and sometimes right on Easter Sunday. The arrival was heralded by much bellowing and shouts of the Blackfoot riders who were unloading near the C.P. R. station—about a quarter of a mile from the house.*

*"If it was Easter Sunday, George would stage the annual Easter egg hunt in the yard to coincide with the herding of the bulls down the road on their way to the feed lot at the North Camp. There would be a momentary pause in the search for eggs to stand transfixed watching the parade of bulls. There would be as many as twenty Herefords all lumbering past, each looking bigger and more majestic than the last. Since the Blackfoot financed the whole herd themselves the cost was not limited by Indian Affairs regulations—it was Blackfoot money and some of the bulls going past were the best in the sale.*

*"They were magnificent with their wide white faces, curving horns, huge red shoulders, swishing white tipped tails and huge testicles swinging between their hind legs.*

*“Some years there were shorthorn bulls included in the lot. The Gooderham children thought it was a mistake because the stocky Shorthorn-build and plain red colour was not nearly as dramatic as the red and white Herefords. They were purchased because people’s taste in meat was changing. At the beginning of the century the trade was in well-matured animals because their meat was considered more tasty. After World War I when consumers wanted smaller roasts, ranchers sold younger stock but they wanted to get as much weight as possible because sales were then by the pound on the hoof. They got the extra early weight by crossing Herefords and Shorthorns.*

*“The bull sale was not only central to life in Calgary in those days, it was also held in the centre of town. The first auction was April 12, 1901 in the Frontier Stables at the corner of 8th Avenue and 2nd Street S.W. The sale was comprised of twenty seven bulls and ten cows and heifers. In those early days, just at the time when John Gooderham came to the Peigan reserve at Fort Mcleod, the participants included all the ranchers in southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan, Pat Burns, A.E. Cross, Archie McLean and George Lane, all central figures in the Alberta ranching community.*

*“Later there were other non-rancher notables such as Charlie Russell and Nicholas de Grandmaison who were there to make a buck by selling images rather than beasts.*

*“During the dirty thirties Nick was having an even harder time making a living than the ranchers. And he didn’t have Charlie Russell’s advantage of being a cowpoke. One day when George and Douglas were having lunch at McCrohans across from the Palliser. Nick came in hoping a buyer would turn up. He was in pretty low spirits. George said, ‘Why not paint a typical rancher’. Nick’s face brightened. But who?*

*One of the most colourful around was 7U Brown, a pioneer rancher who headquartered in the Porcupine Hills east of the E.P. ranch south of Calgary.*

*"7U was a bachelor whose name was Joseph but everyone called him by his brand—7U. Anyone who attended the bull sale over the years was interested in how 7U made his purchases. Toward the end of the sale he would appear in the sales ring immediately behind the auctioneer purposely not looking at the animal being auctioned. The auctioneer would have to turn around to see if 7 U was bidding. A nod of the head meant yes. 7U bought all his animals without looking at them.*

*"George suggested 7U could be found, no doubt, at the Palliser. Would he be sober? Would he be receptive to being painted? George suggested that if he was sober he might kick Grandmaison out immediately. If he was more relaxed Nick might just be able to sketch him without a rebuff. Nick got the portrait and sold it in Montreal under the title 'A Typical Rancher'. Later 7U's sisters commissioned Nick to make a second.*

*"When 7U and his sisters died their estate was very large. The will stipulated the ranch was to be kept as a running concern and the income was to be used to help older ranchers and cowboys who were down on their luck. The scheme had two advantages. It would avoid succession duties and help some people who really needed it. Everyone except perhaps Revenue Canada, thought the idea excellent. The Royal Trust held the funds which were dispersed on the advice of two rancher friends, Douglas Hardwick and John Glendenning.*

*"Daddy in his famous 'Quorn' hat with its flat brim and triangle crown was also immortalized by Nick de Grandmaison. All the portraits of these early pioneers have now escalated in value several hundred percent. But 'Douglas' is still hanging in our home.*

*“Because we couldn’t winter the herd at the Lazy H, Daddy bought fields of threshed straw and divided his herd among the farms—some here, some there—as far west as High River and as far north as the other side of the Bow River.*

*“He was the only rancher who wintered cattle on straw. Everyone else said it couldn’t be done. But he invented a way. First he needed straw piles large enough to feed 500 head for the winter, less wouldn’t support the cost of keeping a man on site for the whole winter. The cowboy’s main job was to dig a trough around the bottom of the stack every day by throwing yesterdays straw back onto the manure left from the day before. The cattle would then stand on this fresh bed of straw and toss the new straw into the air with their horns. All the grains which had been left over from the threshing would fall into the ‘trough’ where the cattle would feed just as if they were at a trough in a feed lot. This opportunity was lost when farmers began to use combines and the huge straw piles that had dotted the prairie like so many little mountains were now a thing of the past.*

*“Times were good in ‘27 and ‘28 when prices improved but then came the crash of 1929 and the terrible drought of the ‘30s. Our house burnt to the ground. We lost pretty nearly everything. The sixteen place flatware set with the Hardwick crest that Grandmother Hardwick had sent Daddy was now a molten mass. Two spoons and two forks were all that was left. Why only two? Babe and I were at St.. Hilda’s school in Calgary and, at that time, boarders had to bring their own spoon and fork with them. The Hardwicks had to make do in the former bunk houses.*

*“The modern world was moving in. Beef prices dropped to nearly nothing. But Daddy still had his old friend, Pat Burns, who took over*

*the bank loan and until the '40s. Daddy was able to rely on Pat. But he never relinquished the land, the lease, or the Lazy H brand.*

*"We survived. World War II broke out in '39. Both Babe and I joined up—Babe as a nurse. I was a Red Cross driver. Soon prices started to improve. Daddy was out of the red again. The Pat Burns Foundation offered to buy him out and in 1943 he accepted. The Hardwicks retired to Calgary shortly before the Gooderhams moved there too.*

## Kay

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Kay was the                    Black one

Middle one

She never played with dolls

Or

Other kids

She                            read

And talked to adults

Came to dinner

Every night                    as heroine

Searching for her stage

Already had the perfect entry line

“ Raised with the Indians and the Mounties I...”

Both actor and director

She

Built an orange and black silk hostess gown

performance

With votive candles incense coloured table cloths

And food a freezer full

Rye whiskey neat like the pioneers

parties

Birthday Easter Grey Cup Mardi Gras

And                      Valentines

Important people came

The play grew longer more complex

A managerial position

Out of control

Vanished husband

Drunken son

Stalled career

And

grand kids well !

Was the author Ibsen?

Edgar Allen Poe?

How would

The third act go

Others thought she lied

She only knew she tried to act the part

Until she died



**And In the End**



# Home

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I have no home.

The others

Put up fences

Where I used

To live

With Signs

That said

You

May not

Trespass

Here.

Now

I

Must live with

Now.



## GEORGE WONDERS

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### Calgary AB-1971

In 1943, after 23 years as Agent, George was made a member of The Most Excellent Order of The British Empire (M.B.E.) for his part in the unique economic and social developments on the Blackfoot Reserve.

He admitted to himself his own contribution was significant but he wasn't sure how lasting. He had worked a lot of overtime for the betterment of the people but as he reflected on the achievements, struggles and failures of the last 23 years he decided there were three fundamentals that were crucial for the well being of the Blackfoot:

- Health and nutrition
- Education
- Occupational training
- Spirituality (traditional and new beliefs)

His basic question remained. Why had Blackfoot leaders made decisions so different from other Native leaders?

He speculated there were two historical events which set the stage. The first was the migration of all the Blackfoot nation south from the northern Lesser Slave Lake area with its lakes, forests and small game to the treeless prairie, huge herds of buffalo and minimum moisture.

They may have been forced to move because their enemy the Cree got rifles before they did. The Blackfoot certainly learned how useful this new technology could be.

Even more important was the horse. Introduced to North America by the Spanish, the horse reached the Blackfoot hunting area two to three hundred years before the arrival of settlers on the (Canadian) prairie. The Blackfoot

had trained themselves to be outstanding horsemen. Constant competition for control of land and hunting had turned them into expert hunters and fierce warriors feared by most neighbors and admired by all. The Blackfoot took to their new environment with passion and by the late 19th century they controlled a major portion of (what would become) southern Alberta and northern Montana. They were kings. And in the habit of making things work to their advantage.

They were about to face a new challenge—the arrival of the Europeans—when a leader called Crowfoot began thinking about this newest challenge. He was a warrior—essential for any Blackfoot leader—and had been in 19 battles, before he was 20, against enemies such as the Crow, Cree and Shoshonie. He left the warpath to concentrate on raising horses which meant the acquisition of both wealth and stature.

Crowfoot had impressed the Blackfoot, but first came to the attention of the whites in 1865 when the missionary Father Lacombe was visiting a Blackfoot camp near the present village of Hobbema. They were attacked by Cree warriors who greatly outnumbered the Blackfoot. Lacombe tried unsuccessfully to stop the fighting and was wounded for his efforts. But word was sent south to Crowfoot. The Blackfoot held out during the night and the next morning Crowfoot arrived with a large number of warriors who soon routed the Cree. Lacombe told the world about this miraculous leader. The two men became friends and peace makers. It became a pattern for Crowfoot. The very next year he stopped Blackfoot warriors from looting a convoy of Hudson's Bay supply carts and then escorted them safely to Fort Edmonton.

Crowfoot and all natives faced another new danger — traders who exchanged liquor and repeating rifles for hides. During the 1870s young warriors not only killed one another in their drunkenness but were

constantly inciting war between the tribes. Crowfoot saw this as a threat to the very survival of the Blackfoot (and of course other tribes as well). The American government was at war with the Blackfoot cousins in Montana. Crowfoot could see this war would do the Blackfoot no good and welcomed the arrival of the Northwest Mounted Police who brought law and order to the Alberta frontier. Crowfoot saw them as saving the Blackfoot from themselves.

During the war of 1876 between the Sioux, and the American cavalry, Sitting Bull entreated Crowfoot to join with them. Crowfoot refused and even threatened to join with the N.W.M.P. against them. But he did not deny his ‘brothers.’ When Sitting Bull came to Canada, as a refugee after the Battle of Little Big Horn, Crowfoot befriended and supported him and his followers. He maintained an equally statesman-like role during the second Riel Rebellion. He refused to join with the Cree and the half-breeds even though his adopted Cree son, Poundmaker, was a leading figure in that fight. Because of his position Crowfoot was able to obtain Poundmaker’s release from jail after the war and he lived with Crowfoot until his death on April 25, 1890.

Crowfoot had a reputation for wise counsel and diplomatic sense well before he led all the Blackfoot people and their allies into the signing of Treaty Number 7. Once again he showed his forethought and wisdom. He demanded clauses which would be of long lasting benefit to the Blackfoot including the inclusion of land to the east which contained visible coal seams in the Bow River cutbanks. The treaty gave the Blackfoot over 300,000 acres 46 miles along the Canadian Pacific Railway, which, incidentally, Crowfoot also supported as being the Blackfoot’s ‘new horse.’

Crowfoot died April 25, 1890, long before either John or George Gooderham came to the Reserve but his spirit and example were there.

His reputation was the Blackfoot reputation. Consequently the Blackfoot started their experiment in reserve living with the enthusiastic support of the Canadian as well as the British government. It must be noted as well that Crowfoot's grandson, Joe, was alive and a leader on the reserve all during George's tenure. George relied on him although he was surprised that Joe was not always on his side. He wanted much more independence for the Blackfoot than was possible at the time. George admitted to himself that

*"Joe Crowfoot was a pretty stiff opponent but he convinced me and the Council that he was right. He was not only on the Council but head chief as well.*

In 1910, the Blackfoot were still poor. They had a lot of land but they were still hungry. They were about to take advantage of another new development. In the early 20th century there was a huge land boom in southern Alberta, and particularly around the town of Gleichen. White men and companies made fortunes buying and selling land. Perhaps the Blackfoot could also profit from this craze.

A land sale approved by the Council in 1912 and 1918 provided the Band with a trust fund of more than a million dollars. They now had land, money and a sound reputation. All they needed was a good administrator. George agreed his father, John, fit that bill and hoped he would too. By the time he became the Agent, the Blackfoot had created the first welfare state in all of Canada. George was expected to manage it. He had no experience or training in government administration, a disadvantage initially, but perhaps an asset later.

*"I was an easterner, pitchforked into the position, resented by some but I had an open mind, prepared to meet problems (of which there was a large supply) as they arose.*

The first order of business had been to ensure the necessities of life. The Council agreed money from the trust fund should be used to provide each band member a pound of meat and a pound of flour a day, tea and other foods as required, a home and clothing. Prospective farmers were to receive a set of farm buildings as well as the necessary equipment. The fund should also be put to work to provide long term income for the Band.

At the end of World War I wheat was in short supply. It was an opportunity for the Blackfoot to try an experiment in large scale farming which would produce more wheat than individual farmers could produce. Greater production farms were established. There would be many problems—big and small. George was always expected to have the solution.

In the Fall of 1920 a block of 2,560 acres of virgin prairie which had been broken and seeded to wheat under contract with white entrepreneurs was ready for harvest. It required 15 binders hitched to tractors and seven horse-drawn binders all of which went round and round the field (a distance of ten miles). It was the largest harvesting unit in the country. It was a new experience for all. The white foreman knew how to run the machines, the wagons and the crew required. He did not know how to get or manage the hand labour which would also be essential.

The binders laid sheaves of grain in rows all of which needed to be lifted and stacked in little tipi piles so that the grain was in the air rather than on the ground where it would sprout if rain came before it was threshed. This activity took a lot of hand labour. Young Blackfoot were busy on their own farms. Only the older couples were available. Even though this was the biggest field they had ever seen the Agent was able to persuade them to take up the challenge by stressing the opportunity to meet friends and enjoy the luxuries wages would buy.

All went well for a couple of days, but then the crew looked around and

realized how little they had accomplished and how much more there was to do. They held a meeting and told the foreman they were quitting. Final. No debating. He had no idea how to deal with this ultimatum but he had to have the grain stacked. Ask the Agent!

*"I knew I had to act quickly. If the workers 'pulled camp' it would be days, if ever, before they returned.*

George got two quarters of beef, black Irish twist tobacco and tea and drove the agency ford as fast as possible the 25 miles to the farm. The immediate reception was cool. But he was able to get them to listen to his words of concern and sympathy. He admired their work and was astonished how much they had been able to accomplish.

*"It called for an immediate feast and a raise in pay.*

First they smoked, then they boiled and ate the meat, drank the tea and went back to work. They did not quit again.

*"The camp cook was ordered to send good strong tea to the field every afternoon—a habit now popular even with office workers.*

The project was a success but the concept of large scale farming did not catch on. It was decided the land should be reapportioned to individual Blackfoot or white lessors. In reflection George decided it was just ahead of its time and the last crop under the greater production units was in 1921. George also discovered that managing the economic realities associated with the sale of land under long term agreements as well as the leasing of land to whites, also under individual agreements, required professional guidance. Hiring and supervising the right staff became another administrative responsibility for George. They made thousands of dollars. But George worried the young Blackfoot were learning only how to act like 'the idle rich.'

In 1912 and 1913 when quarter section farm units were being established the Council knew that no one would want to live on the prairie, away from the river and all alone. They must have neighbours. Consequently farm cottages were built at the corner where four farms met and a well was drilled in the centre of the crossroads. An immediate problem was that the wells were so deep, water could not be drawn up easily (if at all) using the hand pump. It was never certain whether the hand on the handle got tired just before the water reached the spout or that there was no water down there. There was also a matter of taste. It did not taste like that from the Bow river. What to do? 'Windmills' said George. More administration. Who should be responsible? George! He began worrying whether the farm experiment would work.

There were other difficulties. The four room cottages were built with a basement and a fireplace in the living room. No one used the basement no matter how romantic the concept. They might have been useful if they were heated but none of the houses had furnaces. Blackfoot homemakers found the basement a convenient place to throw rubbish—a great disappointment for George.

The fireplace, another romantic introduction, which would be a pleasant way of heating the house and a link to the open fire of the past, was not used either. Blackfoot homemakers found it was quite efficient as a refrigerator. The householder put a light board in front behind which they stored perishables like butter in the cool and airy draft. Another disappointment.

Houses built in the 1920s looked like the early model but without fireplace and basement. There was a bright side. Both George and the Blackfoot owners knew the houses were superior to those on any other reserve at that time and as good as or better than those of their white neighbours. Also,

houses without basements were easily moved and might be used at the coal mine, an irrigation experiment or wherever accommodations demanded it. Barns which were also constructed—with a loft and stalls for 8 to 10 head of stock on a concrete foundation—were more successful.

Most farms were on the prairie a long way from the river. And the Blackfoot, who had always lived close to the water, kept two houses, the farm house, built by hired carpenters and a ‘cottage’ which the owner built with logs by the river where the Blackfoot spent their winters. This communal living proved more and more popular particularly for older people and for all those who did not farm. George wondered if it was a disincentive to farming.

Drought, the Depression and other events outside the reserve provided many problems and adjustments for both George and the Blackfoot. The Trust was to provide every Blackfoot with the life of a most favoured child. And in many ways it did just that. The Blackfoot were forced to try many ways of living, but they did not suffer during the Depression, as their white neighbors did, thanks to the Fund which continued to provide food, clothing, shelter as well as complete welfare for the old or needy.

Babies died frequently. Tuberculosis was a scourge. Diseases like measles could carry off more. A tiny hospital at the Anglican mission and supported by the missionary society was not enough. It was too far away from most and Catholics felt uncomfortable there.

#### **The Hospital, Siksika Nation Reserve, 1922**

In 1922 George asked the Council if they would use money from the Fund to build and staff a hospital in the centre of the reserve. The Council thought it was a good idea as long as it was not affiliated with any religion. In spite of the objections and pleadings of both the Anglican and Catholic

Churches the Council was firm. Long discussions were held with the Medicine Men who demanded and received the right to practice their science in the hospital beside the white practitioners.

At that time doctors were hired by the government on a part time basis only—a very unsatisfactory arrangement. The famous Crowfoot was helped by two during his last illness and one remained with him for several days. An account was submitted to the Indian Commissioner for this extra attention.

*"I believe the bill amounted to \$30.*

It included transportation over 55 miles by train and 15 miles by team and wagon, board and lodging and special medical services including repeated visits from the Agency to Crowfoot's lodge.

*"The Government refused to pay,*

George recalled.

The Council was perhaps not as surprised by this refusal as was George but it might have explained why the Council said,

*"Yes, go ahead on the hospital project. We will build and fund a hospital ourselves.*

In 1923 a brick sixteen-bed hospital with living quarters for staff was erected and opened for business on January 15, 1924. Included were a field and barn as well as a garden to supply the necessary milk and vegetables for the institution.

The official opening was delayed until patients arrived. No doctor had been hired but the current 'attending physician' was both supportive and imaginative. He guessed some spectacular demonstration was in order. He located two patients who were willing to try the new treatment. One,

a middle aged man called Pretty Young Man with an unusual growth in his chest and a woman who the doctor suspected of having gall stones underwent the required operation. Success!

It was January 31st and the Council was at its monthly meeting in the nearby Agency. The doctor sent word the hospital was now opened for inspection. The Council walked into the hospital where they could see a man dressed in pajamas and dressing gown sitting on a bed in the centre of a large room (the men's ward). He was the picture of health and contentment. He addressed the Chief in Blackfoot.

*“And we all followed the Chief to shake the patient’s hand, being careful to walk around a large basin which was on the floor beside the bed. The patient pointed to his chest and to the basin which held an object the size of a man’s clenched fist.*

*“Yes, it had come from his chest. No, he was not in pain. The doctor had put him to sleep and when he woke up there it was floating in the basin. Yes, it was a fine place. The food was good. The bed was comfortable. And he could smoke when he liked.*

*“There were many exclamations of approval.*

The show was not over. As they were leaving the ward the doctor took out a bottle filled with a liquid and small round objects and asked the chiefs to guess what they were. It was agreed they were stones but what were they doing in the hospital. The doctor explained,

“You all know Medicine Shield’s wife. Well, I took these stones out of her body the other day. She is also recovering in the women’s ward.

The bottle was passed from hand to hand. There were 13 stones. A lucky number as it turned out. The hospital was a success even though there was much lingering concern about evil spirits which only the Medicine Men

could handle. It was a winter of epidemics. Influenza and measles were still killing many who did not go to the hospital.

A very worrisome fact was the high infant mortality rate. The Council demanded a full-time doctor. But would that help? Who could persuade pregnant Blackfoot women (none of whom had ever birthed a baby in a hospital) that it would be good to be looked after by a man even if he was a doctor? The answer was simple. The doctor should not be a man.

In 1927, a woman doctor did turn up in Gleichen. Who was she? Would she be interested in working for the Blackfoot Band Council?

Her name was Frances Evelyn Windsor. She graduated in medicine from the University of Toronto in 1908 and interned in Boston at the New England hospital for Women and Children. She transferred to Baltimore in order to take a post graduate course at the famous John Hopkins hospital. From there she went on to The Women's Hospital in Detroit Michigan and to various hospitals in Europe. When she returned to Canada in 1911 she chose to set up shop in Calgary, Alberta and was in general practice there until 1916 when she enlisted in the Canadian Army Medical Corp.

In London she worked in various hospitals and met a young man named Bennett who would later become The Right Honourable R.B. Bennett, Prime Minister of Canada. It was rumoured R.B. was much enamoured of the doctor and would like to marry her (if he ever married at all). He was a strong-minded man with many fixed ideas about how he should live and also how 'his future bride should live.' Evelyn did not take kindly to this circumscription. She broke off the relationship and married a young Canadian soldier named Edward P. Leacock who was the brother of the famous Canadian economist and humourist, Stephen Leacock.

George continues:

*"Edward and Evelyn returned to Calgary at the end of the War. But in 1927, they decided to live separate lives and Dr. Windsor took over a practice in Gleichen just at the time the Band Council asked me to find a woman doctor. She thought she might be interested. The Council agreed she should be hired on a trial basis. Next it was my responsibility to persuade Ottawa that this experiment should be allowed. Among other things, there had never been a full time doctor before. In the end it was agreed that, since the Band Council was prepared to cover all costs, approval would be given.*

*"Dr. Windsor and her staff of nurses got the confidence of the Blackfoot women almost overnight and the doctor was permanently established in the position in 1928. She stayed for 20 years.*

*"Expectant mothers flocked to the hospital where they were encouraged to enter many days before the birth. Living on the reserve was already very different from traveling constantly from one spot to another and young mothers needed additional education in the care and feeding of their baby. Baby clinics were established. A baby show was inaugurated with medals and money prizes for the 'best' mother and child. The response was enthusiastic. The hospital was enlarged in the 1930s to accommodate 40 patients and funded entirely by the Band until 1947.*

Tuberculosis was rampant among both Indians and non-Indians at the time with no real program of treatment. Sanitariums were operated and funded by the Province for Albertans which did not include Indians. Dr. Windsor X-rayed her patients and also the children in the two residential schools. Aware of the seriousness of the plague, she set up a program, isolating infected patients both in the hospital and in the residential schools. But no long term treatment was available as all costs of provincial sanitariums would have to be met by the federal government and no money was

available for that expenditure. Once again the Blackfoot Council came to the rescue. They were already paying all other medical costs from tribal funds and gladly voted the necessary money to meet sanitarium treatment costs. Blackfoot patients were immediately admitted—the first in Alberta.

#### Depression Challenges, Siksika Nation Reserve, AB-1930

There were problems to be solved but George had only positive recollections of this part of the experiment in living.

*"The Dirty Thirties struck. The Blackfoot did not suffer in the same manner as their white neighbors because they were guaranteed clothing, food and shelter. But they were without cash—irksome but not serious.*

The Band, however, had serious corporate problems. One was the care of livestock. There were now more than 3000 head in the Band herd who must share pasture with two thousand or more horses, each one of whom ate twice as much as a cow. And the prairie grass did not recover easily from heavy over grazing. George frequently suggested the horse was one of the problems. He knew the horse was still an emotional issue even if no longer an economic asset. Owners recognized the seriousness of the situation and sold many for as little as \$4.00 a piece. George wondered if this was a conversion—perhaps not.

*"I was interested to note that brood mares were not included in the sale lots!*

George obtained feed by going to the farmers north of the reserve, who were on irrigated land, and made deals with them to plant grass and legumes which the Band would buy when the crop was harvested. Even weeds were used as part of the solution.

The drought produced one large crop—Russian thistles. Many fields were covered with it. George suggested the Band buy the thistles at \$2.00 a ton

delivered. The new idea was a great surprise to Blackfoot farmers who had been told over and over to eradicate this noxious pest. Enjoying the irony of the situation as well as the cash, they raked up tons and delivered it to the feed camps. Mixed with green oats or hay (purchased from the northern neighbors) it made a palatable and nutritious feed.

It became obvious that the reserve must have irrigation, which was a job for the near future when water rights could be purchased and channels constructed. Irrigated farming was initiated if only in a modest way. It was another challenge for the Blackfoot farmer requiring yet more new skills—not everyone's cup of tea.

There was a possible immediate solution to economic downturn—the coal seams which Crowfoot had insisted be included within the reserve. In 1931, George proposed, and the Council agreed, to establish a cooperative mine. Logs were brought from the Blackfoot forest preserve in the mountains to build two rows of log housing. A barn and four room house, which soon became a Blackfoot-run restaurant, was moved to the site, a first aid station erected and both Catholic and Anglican churches moved on site. There was a laundry and a washroom with hot and cold running water at all times. Just as important was a regulation sized hockey rink soon to host a hockey team ready to challenge any team in the area. It was a well organized village with over 200 residents during winter months.

The Council decided how miners should be paid and how workers should be allotted work sites, based on information provided by the manager, a former miner, who had worked for years in the Drumheller mines. The men were well paid and enjoyed their wealth. They had weekends free and might live it up in Calgary or across the border in the US.

The project lasted for 15 years—until the end of the Depression and the beginning of the oil boom. It was a great asset to the reserve and also to the

neighbours who could get coal at the mine or delivered at a competitive rate.

*"I made an arrangement with local municipalities under which farmers in distress could get coal on a (welfare) order which the municipality would honour on a regular basis.*

The mine did not always run smoothly and disputes had to be mediated fairly but George always thought of this enterprise as one of the successes.

Working with the Council was an experiment and exploration. At first George couldn't guess which ideas would receive their support. He learned quickly there were two constants. Each Council member would propose and support ideas beneficial to his own band. Secondly, he would only agree to other ideas if he could see a profit (political or economical) in the present or future for the Band. In one of his first meetings grazing leases which would terminate in 1921 came up. George had learned the lessees paid only pennies per acre. Surely a better use could be made of this valuable land.

*"I recommended no renewals be given.*

If it was a test George passed with flying colours. The Council agreed there should be no renewals. Leases had often, if not invariably, gone to settlers with political connections in Ottawa. Some of the lessees were also George's friends and the Council knew it. George had proved to their satisfaction he was clearly working for the Blackfoot and not outsiders.

*"They decided they could trust me.*

George realized the huge fund and the many projects approved would require many significant decisions. He persuaded the Council to share the responsibility of making yearly Band fund expenditures with him. It was not a speedy process. The Council was composed of elders. Only one could

speak English. Some understood modern Blackfoot, which included new words and concepts, but some were only comfortable in the old Blackfoot used before reserve days. Not only did sentences have to be translated twice but often the idea itself had to be described. How for instance could you explain the intricacies of leasing land on a cash basis as opposed to a crop share basis to a man who had never thought about land in terms of ownership, investment or income. There was a lot of discussion, some of it quite heated, if a Councilor thought he was not getting the straight goods. Expenditures increased each year as new needs were discovered but

*“I don’t remember any items being deducted.*

The planning process started in January and involved several meetings. George needed to have the whole plan prepared and approved before the next fiscal year, together with a Band Council resolution, asking that these expenditures be made from the Blackfoot Band account. It was studied in Ottawa and when deemed satisfactory, signed by the Minister in charge. George and the Council were then able to carry out their business without constant letters to headquarters.

In addition to manager, George was also school inspector, magistrate, and truant officer. There were two residential schools on the reserve, Crowfoot in the east, Old Sun in the west. They were operated by the Catholic and Anglican churches under the general supervision of the Council and the Agent. Education was not any easy concept in the early days and truancy was a major problem. George had to make it clear that the law insisted children attend school. One of his employees had this to say:

*“Truancy was widespread among Indian children when George was Agent. They were getting quite modern and playing hooky from school. George had ‘kid roundups’ when the truancy got serious. He found kids running in the fields and even in the towns when they were supposed*

*to be in school. The parents depended on George to ‘bring their kids to time.’ As a last resort he read The Truant Act in both schools and told the students if they did not attend they could go to jail. The threat worked and after the last big round up very little truancy was reported. The parents thought a lot of George for a job well done.*

Times changed and George would later worry that parents whose children spent most of the year living away from home would lose their parenting skills and perhaps also their influence over their children. He was a strong advocate of day schools and schooling with non-Indians. That idea would come more slowly than he wished.

He was not worried as much about cultural loss. The missionaries on the reserve were more broad-minded than others and the study of native culture was present in both schools. But there were cultural misunderstandings and biases. One Anglican missionary, Captain House, introduced boy scouts into his school agenda. The program was not very popular. He decided to try cadets instead—a roaring success. Only then did it dawn on him that the Boy Scout program was designed for urban boys who never had a chance to camp outdoors. Blackfoot boys could write (and improve) the Boy Scout program during recess. On the other hand the opportunity to handle modern weapons and to learn army manoeuvres was a continuation and expansion of the warrior romance which was a highlight in the stories their grandfathers told them about ‘the olden days’.

#### **Rodeo Show, Siksika Nation Reserve, AB–1920**

In 1920, just after his appointment, George was told an English aristocrat would be heading a large delegation of people from the United Kingdom on a conference tour of Canada. Gleichen and the Blackfoot reserve would be a highlight on the list of stops. The visitors expected to see a traditional Blackfoot camp and a rodeo as well. Chief Yellow Horse was consulted. He

agreed on one condition. As it was a white man's suggestion, the Blackfoot would require compensation. It was agreed that food would be provided for all Blackfoot participants. A beaded buckskin outfit, made by Yellow Horse, would be purchased as a gift.

All went well. Better than well. The Blackfoot put on a great show and the next day George received a long wire expressing appreciation for the hospitality and deep regret that the visitors did not have a gift for the Chief which was in any way comparable to the beautiful suit. What could he do? George suggested a silk hat. Yellow Horse had one which had been a gift of the Hudson's Bay in 1912 and was now very badly scuffed from its frequent use. A steady flow of wires followed—including what hat size hat does the Chief wear? And the reply—6 3/4.

There was no news for several weeks. And during the very busy harvest season the R.C.M.P. sergeant asked George to hold a court sitting—at the time Agents had magisterial powers under the Indian Act and certain sections of the criminal code.

The problem involved two men, Water Chief and Blue Bird, both sons of the Chief. They were charged with drunkenness and as this was not the first time they were likely to plead guilty. If so he would like it decided before the night train left so they could be taken directly to jail. The only witnesses to this procedure were the two young men's mother and father, Chief Yellow Horse and his wife.

The prisoners were found guilty and Yellow Horse was asked if he had anything to say before sentence was passed. He was interested in closing the matter as quickly as possible. The two were sentenced to sixty days in jail. Yellow Horse saw them leave the 'court room' without any acknowledgment.

George had noticed a carefully guarded box beside the Chief all during the hearing and when all the others had left, Yellow Horse and his wife opened the box. There was the silk hat, including a three inch gold band. It was a perfect fit and a prized possession. When Yellow Horse died the following spring the hat accompanied him to his grave under a specially built wooden cover on the banks of the Bow.

There was a movement in the 1920s to stop the Sun Dance and other religious gatherings. But on the Blackfoot reserve, with the cooperation of the missionaries, the Sun Dance continued, as did the Tobacco Dance. The decision to allow native ceremonies did not come automatically.

In 1921 the Indian Commissioner demanded the curtailment and final abolition of ceremonies such as Sun Dances and Potlaches. Agents and the R.C.M.P. were instructed to stop the formation of large gatherings, but when George received these instructions the Blackfoot had already set up a large Sun Dance Camp on the edge of the sand hills in the southeastern part of the reserve. George notified his superior who decided the law must be respected. He and George would visit the camp to discuss the matter.

It so happened that Weasel Calf, the only one of the original chiefs at the signing of the treaty in 1877 still alive, was also on the Council. He was a man with a deep voice, imposing physique, a gifted orator, known for his disrespect for laws he did not value. His power was further enhanced by the fact he survived the smallpox plague of the 1880s and had the facial evidence to prove it. He would meet George and the Inspector at the camp.

On July 15 the two were graciously received at the edge of the camp and were kept there comfortably seated outside the circle of tipis on chairs which appeared miraculously. The two white men waited with some anxiety. In time a group of ten or twelve men led by Weasel Calf, in full regalia approached the visitors. Hands were shaken, but there were no

smiles of recognition. Weasel Calf's deep voice carried a long oration in Blackfoot across the prairie and into every tipi. The message was clear. This was a religious camp. It followed a tradition established well before the white savages appeared and would continue. No whites would be allowed to enter the camp. The Commissioner said the Blackfoot would be allowed to carry on their ceremonies as long as they were restricted to the Blackfoot exclusively. He also added a restriction of his own. A central reason for the government interdiction was the government's fear the ceremony would interfere with farming so he stated that the ceremony could not last longer than eight days. There was some discussion among the Blackfoot delegation, but they finally agreed.

George remained convinced over the years that mutual respect was good policy. In fact George and one of his staff, Colonel Lewis, who, along with George, was an officer in the First World War, were made members of the Crazy Dogs, an Indian society which honoured men who had a distinguished war record. At the ceremony these "warriors" were required to recount their exploits in the war which had just ended in Europe. George thought their exploits might seem tame compared to those of the Blackfoot who were often involved in hand-to-hand combat. Nevertheless both were accepted as Crazy Dogs and welcomed into the society. "Monthly meetings were not required.

#### **Band Fund, Siksika Nation Reserve, AB-1946**

The 1930s changed the world of the Blackfoot as much or more than their neighbors. The Band Fund continued to climb and in 1946 approached 3 million and provided an annual income of \$150,000—a lot of money in those days. A great deal of support was provided for young people just starting out. Older people began to feel they were not receiving a fair share, so they lobbied for, and got, an annual interest payment of \$50.00 for

those over 60 and \$25.00 for others. There was a string attached to the old person's grant. George was trying to introduce (quite unsuccessfully) the concept of saving. At the time of payment the older people only got \$10.00 and the rest was deposited to their account to be drawn on the half monthly payday. This control was not popular and was one of the first procedures to be revoked when George left the Reserve.

There was also a yearly payment to all band members under the terms of the Treaty. Members got \$5.00 each. Councillors and chiefs received slightly more. It was not a significant support for the Blackfoot and was treated as holiday pay. It was paid in the early summer just before the Calgary Stampede and just after the annual Sun Dance which was held in the valley of the Bow.

It was a pleasant celebration for the Blackfoot and brought them all together, including those who had not been able to attend all of the ceremonies. It was also a holiday treat for the staff who would complete the payment by noon. They and their families would have a communal picnic under the poplar trees along the Bow River. Usually the whole Blackfoot encampment would be packed up and on its way to Calgary by the time the picnic lunch was over.

In 1932, George returned to the site from the picnic and was surprised to see the whole camp still exactly as he had left it. A runner met him at the edge of the encampment and asked him to go into the central Lodge which was filled to overflowing. They were there to make George Honourary Chief Eagle Plume. He was given a war bonnet (worn only by chiefs) and other mementos including, at a later date, a record of the whole proceedings including a copy of the speeches made. It was a very emotional ceremony for George and for his staff and family as well.

The drought coupled with low prices made farming very unrewarding.

Farms on the reserve were abandoned or barely cultivated. Power farming—combines instead of threshing machines, tractors instead of horses—was the only viable method. The initial cost was high which meant farms must be large enough to support the overhead. The Blackfoot had already given up on large scale farming. The situation was made even more difficult by inflation. The 1920 dollar was only worth 60 cents in the forties. The reserve population increased significantly (750 in the early 1930s) and more and more Blackfoot were on welfare. By 1946, revenue in the fund was not sufficient to meet the cost of rations, salaries and other services which the Blackfoot believed they would receive as long as the sun shone and the rivers flowed.

After 1946, most small farms on the reserve were consolidated and rented to white operators. Most of the cattle and horses were sold and the rate of welfare kept increasing. By the 1970s 80% of the ever-increasing band were on welfare.

## MORE?

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**Calgary, AB–1948**

In his later years George worried that he could have done more. He wondered if things would have been better had he stayed on the reserve rather than accepting a promotion in 1948.

In the Fall, shortly after he left the reserve, the government was planning another of the increasingly frequent reorganizations. George received a private letter from R.A. Hoey, the then Director of Indian Affairs in Ottawa, asking his personal, private, opinion on how Indian Affairs should be organized. George gave his frank response.

*“As you know I spent the best part of my life on the Blackfoot reserve as Indian Agent. I was a bit of a dictator and I certainly retained all the reins in my own hands. As a result, I worked around the clock, while others, I’m afraid, did not do so nor did they take very much responsibility. They did what they were told. This applied not only to the staff but to the Indians as well. And as far as they were concerned they did little or nothing.*

*“I thought I was successful because I helped build up a small estate in which there was almost total security with a guarantee of a reasonably high standard of living for each Blackfoot. In later years and even while I was among the people I could see that a premium had been placed on indolence but none on initiative or private endeavor. From a modern point of view the Blackfoot are not advanced and to give them social security has not been to their advantage. In fact I fear it has done them harm.*

*“I did not fully realize this until I got away from them and studied other*

*Bands in other parts of the country. I found initiative in practically every Band that did not have close supervision. I found the greatest initiative and advancement in a band of Indians where almost all supervision had been removed. On the basis of these findings I concluded that it might be well to remove close supervision from all bands.*

Mr. Hoey, who had spent most of his life associated with organizations such as the United Grain Growers and The United Farm Movement in Manitoba had this to say in reply:

*"If we have learned anything from the administration of [central Ontario] reserves it is this—the Indians, at this stage in their development, require, perhaps more than anything else, the presence of a senior officer in their midst. Colonel R., for an example, is now in the centre of the Six Nations Reserve and his Indians are perhaps the most advanced group in the Dominion. What was the result of his attempt to administer the agency from Brantford? Complaints came in that nurses at the hospital are absent without his knowledge. School teachers fail to report for duty at the proper hours, the doctors fail to visit the sick and I might go on." Clearly, Mr. Hoey did not agree with George's views and supervision of Indian reserves across Canada was increased.*

After his promotion and move to Calgary, George continued to grow the legacy he had sown as the Agent of the Reserve.

Their children now grown, George and Mary started a new life, one that took them away from the Agency House. They left behind them a unique way of life and a wealth of experiences from the years they lived among the Blackfoot. Much change had come to Gleichen and the reserve since the long ago day when John Gooderham's sudden death in the study of the Agency House made everyone turn to George for his leadership. He had

been reluctant to don his father's mantle, but he had accepted it and found himself at home— both on the Prairie and with the Blackfoot. And he found himself in a role that allowed him to be both leader and adventurer.

One can only speculate at what George and Mary were thinking as they left behind them the reserve and the Agency House. It was the house where their children had been born and had grown; the house which, with its open doors, had welcomed so many of Canada's most intriguing and creative citizens.

But leave they did, because, after all, the house still, and always had, belonged to the Government.

Muriel married S.H. Curran and moved to Hanna, then Vancouver and passed away in 1963. Kate married H. Lyons in 1915 and lived in Vancouver. Ishbel taught school at Hammer Hill and married Mr. Forbes and was widowed while living in Vancouver. Jean never married and also lived in Vancouver.

Mary Anna Gooderham (Kentner) was Girl Guide Commissioner for Gleichen division and passed away in Calgary 1966. Elizabeth married Basil Robinson and lives in Ottawa. Eleanor married John Crawford Jr. and lives in the Vancouver area. Kent married Helen Rae Crawford. Kent passed away in Ottawa October 10th 2003. His wife Helen passed away April 27th 2013.



## **Epilogue**



## OFF RESERVE : Ted James

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Calgary AB 1985

*"You know Kent, it's ironic I had to leave the reserve to get to know the Blackfoot but working in the local Gleichen general store when I was in high school and, later managing the pharmacy, was the first time I actually dealt with them. That's where we got to know many who were our regular customers. The Blackfoot, who lived in the central or western end of the reserve came to Gleichen in wagons and stopped at the hitching rail that ran along the reserve side of the park next to the CPR tracks that separated the reserve from the town. Later some of them drove cars. I think cars were accepted in Gleichen no matter who drove them. But when we worked there most Blackfoot came to town in wagons.*

*"They walked through the park and across the tracks just like we did. But they were shopping instead of going to school. Often they brought an order from the Agency Office. It was part of a welfare system operated by the Blackfoot Band. The holder of the order gave it to one of us. We had an ancient billing system which provided space for their name and a list of goods purchased together with the cost (Two bread @ .10 = .20). The holder could order and receive any food items up to the value of the order (perhaps \$10). At the time all Blackfoot received a weekly ration consisting of staples such as meat, flour, tea. So they would order bread, fruit, vegetables or canned goods just as their white neighbors did.*

*"We had fresh fruit in season and almost always oranges, apples and bananas. A special bin for fruit that was less than fresh was popular because the price was right.*

*"The store sold everything. Men's trousers called blue jeans had just been invented and we sold hundreds of pairs. They were made in Calgary by a company called GWG (Great West Garments) and called Cowboy Kings. They were designed to fit tight without creasing which eliminated a source of irritation for the guy who was in the saddle all day. Cowboy Kings were also tough and never ripped or tore. The joke was "What do Cowboy Kings have in common with the cowboy's bunk house?" The answer "No ballroom." They cost \$3.25 a pair and lasted forever - you could even go on wearing them when the seat and knees were finally in shreds - still comfortable. They didn't need washing! "My Kings are working man's pants. They can stand up on their own." We all wore them. All the boys that is. And the truth was that if they were washed they became a little softer and fitted even better around all the curves young guys liked to see emphasized - particularly on Saturday nights.*

*"They were not for businessmen and women never wore them. Maybe your sister Eleanor. But she would be the only one. She cut her hair like a boy and wore slacks long before it was acceptable for women. But not my sister, Rachel or your sister, Elizabeth. Not even for riding (astride). They wore lady's jodhpurs. After GWG disappeared blue jeans became the number one article of clothing for both men and women on 5th Avenue as well as on the ranch. But in Gleichen in 1943 there were lots of jokes about buying a new pair of Cowboy Kings. "Should I try them on? I'm pretty big you know. Maybe the king of all cowboys. GWG only measures the waist and leg." "Well, maybe you better show us."*

*"I got to learn Blackfoot too. There were a lot of surprises. The word for grapes, raisins and currants was the same. You indicated with a sign whether you meant large - grapes, medium - raisins and small - currants. Grapes were popular and so were currants which could take*

*the place of prairie berries. But raisins had a special connotation.*

*"There was one couple who used to come in and order six tins of grapefruit juice, five pounds of sugar, raisins and two packages of yeast. I might tease them by asking if I was invited to the party. They could have all those items on an order. At the time there was a law against selling any intoxicant to Indians and purchasing anything containing alcohol such as shaving lotion or vanilla extract was strictly forbidden. But the law was just against buying alcohol. No one said they couldn't make their own - or at least no one told us they could not. We were there to supply (within the law) what the customer wanted - and we did.*

*"One of the first things we had to learn were the names for all the coins*

kepinux 10 c

nukanux - 25c

omukanux -15c

sapux - \$1.00

*"I got to know the Blackfoot even better when I managed the drug store/ bus stop. That's when I got to be friends with Linden Many Bears. I was 23 and I guess he was in his sixties. He spoke almost no English but we became real friends. He came into the store often and sat on a little bench just to the left of the door. He might be there for an hour or more. It was a strange kind of chemistry that didn't rely on conversation. He was happy to be there and I was happy to have him there. I don't think you could call him handsome but impressive certainly suited. He was one of the old chiefs. If he was in his sixties (as I thought) it would mean he was a young man in the 1890s before civilization took over. He had the stature and presence that made the Blackfoot famous. He volunteered to be my Blackfoot father which I took to mean he would*

*always defend me if I needed it. And even today I wish he was sitting there just where you are.*

*“But I’ll tell you a funny story. As you know the drug store was also the bus stop. One day there must have been 25 Blackfoot in the store - a lot of people for a store that size - when the bus from Calgary arrived. The whole bus load of people got off, looked in and saw all the Indians. Not one person came into the store! At first I worried I had made a big mistake but then I thought, “The Blackfoot are my customers. Tourists are here today and gone tomorrow. The Blackfoot will always be here.” And there was at least one Blackfoot in the store every day. They bought magazines, perhaps a comic book or a candy bar. No after shave lotion - all of them contained alcohol. Besides almost all Blackfoot men had so little facial hair that the act of shaving was used as a form of racist joke. “I heard you had a razor at your house. What kind of Blackfoot needs a razor?” Blackfoot men used tweezers to pull out the odd facial hair by the roots.*

*“But the temptation to get some alcohol was always there as a challenge. Every time I had a new staff member one of the Blackfoot would test to see if he could get away with a bottle or two. When I heard the question and my answer they would get the damndest, sweetest look on their faces. They knew I knew what they were doing and it was all a (not so) private joke.*

*“But our big seller to everyone, local visitor, white, brown, black or blue was a soda. We sold floats - a tall glass filled with coke or another flavour and a scoop or two of ice cream. You could have any combination you wanted. We had all our own flavours and mixed in a little soda with a mechanical mixer that made a wonderful whirring noise that added the final touch. There was cherry, strawberry,*

*chocolate or orange. Orange crush was almost as popular as Coke but we only sold it by the bottle. We never used bottled drinks for the floats because they were too expensive.*

*"We made our own ice cream too. We had the machine and bought the mix from Palm Dairies in Calgary. It came down on the bus in five gallon cream cans already to go. We divided it into lots and added the flavours most popular with the customers, strawberry, vanilla, chocolate. We made sundaes too. - chocolate, strawberry, pineapple, maple walnut. We had to buy the toppings separately and they were expensive so I had to watch new staff pretty carefully or they would blow all the profit with too generous a topping. I think a float was .15c and a sundae .25c*

*"We only had one thief in all the years I was there. He came down the coal-shoot at the back of the store. I decided to catch the devil. We had a disinfectant called potassium permanganate which was designed to stop the spread of athlete's foot. Athletes had to put their naked feet in it before having a shower. I put a pan of it at the bottom of the chute.... but we never found a purple footed Blackfoot or Whitefoot.*

*"I had more and more trouble trying to understand the attitude of people in Gleichen toward the Blackfoot. It was as if they only saw the clothing walking around without any person inside. Very few bothered to look or listen. And they didn't seem to notice that they never noticed. A lot of it was fear of the unknown I guess.*

*"It was really different when your family left. It was bad when strangers moved into our house but even worse when they moved into yours. Houses which we always knew were special were all of a sudden just government housing. We had all been there for twenty or twenty five years and all it meant was that things were pretty old fashioned and needed renovating.*



## The Guest

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I am the Guest

Minority

guest

Raised with Blackfoot

In the

West

But not

I Blackfoot

No crossing

Of the

Chasm

From them

To the

Rest

I live alone

as

guest.



# NOTICE

## THIS IS AN INDIAN RESERVE

Any person who trespasses on an Indian Reserve is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding fifty dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month, or to both fine and imprisonment.

DIRECTOR OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Department of Citizenship and Immigration,  
Indian Affairs Branch,  
OTTAWA.



# The House Belongs To The Government

# The House Belongs To The Government

G. Kent Gooderham

